

Changing Pattern of Selecting Marriage Partner: Arrange to Affair

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1. Introduction

Partners were chosen mostly by the guardians even a few years ago, doesn't matter daughter or son. Choosing own partner by own choice was thought kind of an insult to the oldest family members who are decision makers (Dion and Dion, 1993). But the scenario has changed now, son and daughters are allowed to choose their partner now but not in the name of affair but in the name of "family choice". This is because of societal perception regarding affair and love. It is quite accepted now that children will choose someone as their future partner but not sure life partner/wife or not. But still that thinking of the society is prevailing about the 'good girl' or 'good boy' concept, who listen everything told by their guardian without asking any question, doesn't matter if it is positive for them or negative. Also choosing own partner is thought of as a 'bad culture' which has come to our culture from 'western country' and 'destructive' for us, 'destructive' for our culture. Although, it is more related to power of decision making for both men and women or expressing own choice of choosing own partner. Of course, there will be always some issues of working out of marriage but still it is more related to own choice of choosing partner. There are theorists who think that affair is the outcome of the industrialization (Netting, 2006), also said that it is a continuous fight of the young people of the society who are searching for freedom and individualism (Hansen and Pang, 2010). But among our society it is a way of empowerment and taking the authority of decision making I found from my research. Moreover, it is not thought of as 'western culture' but an addition to our own culture.

Affair or love is explained as a 'destructive culture' by people, or a 'positive change' sometimes among our society. Also, in both cases family permission is always a big matter. If family members are okay with the decision of their sons or daughters to choose their partner by themselves, societal perception is still not positive to this in most of the cases. It is thought like a threat to our own culture. Mostly men and women from cities and towns are choosing their marriage partner by their own but in villages the scenario is not same most of the time. Men and women are married off by the decision of their family in village mostly. Among them, women are in more vulnerable situation than men. They are not asked about their consent regarding their marriage most of the time. In this situation, we can find a little hope of empowerment through this culture of choosing own partner. Again, adding something to our culture is not 'destruction' of our own culture I found from my research, rather an addition to our culture or a source of empowerment for

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both men and women. That's why I think my research is very timely and rational in present days.

Research focus

Now we are connected to the whole world through the internet, we come to know everything happening right now in the whole world. So, in this way we cannot stop ourselves from knowing about something happening to the world, rather it would be good to know everything and take things useful or helpful. Internet and social media are helping us to find new people to all over the country, even people from the different countries. That's how we meet people or partners from very different cultures (Pirone, 2000). People are choosing their partner by own now a days, but everyone is not taking this normally, rather questioning this sometimes. Some of them are forced to marry another person chosen by the family. This happens to women more than men among our society. When men and women are from different religion or someone is from tribal society, situation become more complex. If they marry to their chosen partner, then societal stigma doesn't leave them at all. Sometimes they are kicked off from the family or forced to cut off relations with family members. In my research I have found out this pattern of choosing partner as a way of empowerment to both men and women, also this is a widely used addition to our culture.

My goal is to focus on changing partner choosing pattern of our society and how does society perceive this. With this main goal I have divided my research goals into few subsections-

- a. changing partner choosing pattern
- b. social perception about affair
- c. Its implications on society
- d. reasons behind this change

I have conducted my research through these research questions.

2. Research methods

Choosing a research field is very important for every research and this is the first step of research. I have conducted my research in Dhaka. I haven't fixed any specific area because there is no such a place where affair is not happening. That's why I have chosen Dhaka city where people of all classes, occupations and different districts live. Men and women are actively engaged with public space for their education, job, business, and for shopping. They all are connecting themselves with the whole world through the internet also, so I find it easy to collect information about. My respondents are both men and women, because they both are choosing partners by themselves. I have interviewed 25 respondents, among them 15 are women and 10 are men. I have not taken any specific age group because I have taken interviews from the persons who have engaged them in affair, also parents who also have gone through the process as a guardian. People who don't belong to any of the above criteria but still they are part of society, and they have perceptions regarding this also. So, my respondents are from mixed age groups and status groups also.

I have used qualitative research methods in my research because it is easy to get detail information about actual situation of respondents, their diversified experience regarding having an affair, societal perception, psychology, social ideology about affair, affair, and

religion through this method. I also have used secondary data source like national and international books, newspapers, journals, and internet also to know the actual scenario of choosing own partner of different countries and their psychology related to this. I have used the In-depth-interview method which is unstructured, and checklist also when conducting interviews with my respondents to keep myself on track.

I have used case study method to know more deeply about an incident of affair of my respondents. In my overall fieldwork period observation method was always my important tool to know that information which they have not shared with me by observing their gesture, mood of talking etc. It also helped to crosscheck that information instantly from the respondents without asking any question by observation method. I have used FGD (Focus Group Discussion) method in my research because I wanted to collect more information within a short period of time from my respondents with crosscheck. And respondents were able to link themselves through this method also.

3. Choosing marriage partner

In a patriarchal society like us in Bangladesh women are still not allowed to decide anything by themselves, also for themselves where affair is the most important thing of marriage in American society (Simpson et al. 1986; Goode 1959). But now a day's partner choosing is a very different level here, women and girls are choosing their partners by themselves, and parents are welcoming them with it in most of the cases. Also, family members feel relieved by their decision I found, as they do not need to search for the bride or groom anymore. But if we look back a few years, it was totally prohibited from both sides. Guardians used to say, "We would rather cut you into pieces rather accepting your affair". Now parents expect to have affair and love from their children so that they can easily overcome the hassle to search for bride and grooms also. So, the previous version has changed now into this, "Please find someone and save us". Now that guardians are 'open minded' to accept love and affair, the young generation who doesn't have any affair, faces complexity to find one in most of the cases I found from my respondents. Complexity because they must choose a bride or groom perfect in every way. But when someone is engaged with someone then they easily consider any 'shortcoming' they each have. It can include financial background, specific district, educational background, occupation etc. One of respondents shared that she has restrictions from their family that she must choose any men without the district Noakhali and also Barishal. According to her, people from these districts are thought very 'complex' and 'bad' rather than others.

Netting (2006) has explained the scenario from Indo-Canadian perspective that, there is no clear line between arranged marriage and love marriage in real life as they exist in many combinations and degrees. Bangladeshi societal situation is also same. If men and women have an affair, then both families mutually solve every issue to arrange it into marriage. Here we call it "love marriage arranged by the family". Means they choose each other but married with the consent of both families. I have interviewed a few respondents who have gone through this situation. My respondent Shobuz (35) said, "I have told my family everything about my girlfriend and then they arranged the marriage and they said that it is arranged to my relatives". So, in this case we find Netting (2006) very relevant where he has chosen his partner on his own and family has arranged the marriage. Also, whenever there is restriction about affair from a family then it happens a

lot. In this case they are not allowed to tell anybody that they know each other. Ruma (29) shared her story matches with this. She said that her family was not in favor of arranged marriage or prohibited her to not to engage with anyone. But when she fell in love with her boyfriend and shared it with her guardians then they shouted at her at first. But later they agreed with her decision but were not allowed to share this with anybody. She said, "Our family is very restricted in case of love marriage, but they couldn't do anything after you choose someone". Means young people know that parents are strict but also, they would find a way out to agree with their decisions after. Also, this happens a lot in our society now a days.

I have come out with few interesting perceptions about affair among men and women from my respondents. Some of women respondents think that it is better to choose partner by own because there is scope to crosscheck about men's "character". Also, they will be able to know how "eligible" he is to be husband. Some of them said that they don't want to spend their life with a stranger, so they want their partner to know this way better. There is an issue of power practice also some said. In a patriarchal society like us "husbands or partners are controlling", but they expect it lesser from a known partner "who knows them well". Also, they expect to make it balanced between them which is not possible for an unknown person they think. It would be easier to decide who would contribute to which sector. In laws sometime don't let women to follow their aim or continue their job after marriage anymore, or wives quite job after having baby or in laws disagreement. Affair is also a way out for few women to create these clear boundaries. Which doesn't work out at last all the time also in many cases. My respondent Nidra (25) has completed her graduation and is searching for job. She has an affair with her classmate for three years. According to her, "I have chosen my classmate so that he cannot force me for anything". She is already doing a few "tests" from now on to "observe" his behavior. She said, "As a partner I am very strict in every case, so that he couldn't think of anything after my decision, and this is the plus point of having affair". So, she is not just sitting around after choosing her partner but also, she is "preparing" him for future husband by sustaining her decision over him. Another respondent Shuborna (22) has also said about "equal power" relation. "Men are controlling but you have option to search for silly one, then key will be yours to run him after you", she said. She is more interested in the men who is easier to control, who will oblige by anything she says and cannot think of anything without her. This is also a way to balance the power relations between partners here in our society.

Things are not equal in every way for men here in Bangladesh in case of power relation. Men don't think about who will power practice or not. Most of the men are worried about virginity of a women whom they will choose as a girlfriend, which is called "character" in a decent word here. Women who have slept with any other man without him, she is a slut. It should be her first affair and she should be virgin, that's the only rule in affair for most of the men. Most of my male respondents forced about this "affair rule". Shanto (27) has an affair for 8 years with her university's junior. The girl is 13 years junior then him and that is intentional he mentioned. According to him, "Girls are very slut these days, sleep with every man they find. That's why we men must be very sharp to grab a young girl, just arrived in university and doesn't understand these bad things by then". So, age is a very important thing to find "virgin" women he thinks and that should be very early age who just finished her college, don't understand about the outer world yet.

We have an idiom in our society, “Young women are like clay, easier to turn into whatever you think of”. Idioms are also made to express our social psychology, here this is supporting men to search for virginity. We have the tendency to control women’s sexuality, which supports and established men’s psychology regarding affairs here in our society. Here women are not allowed to have sex before marriage, or without husband.

Randhib (26) also said, “Youngling women are easy to control”. So, this is totally different version than women in case of power practice among couples. Men go for younger women than him which help them to control over their women partner most of them think. This is not only men’s thinking but also women’s thinking as well. Shilpa (30) said, “Men are afraid of us matured, and job holder women, they will not be able to control women like us. So, they choose girls who are still kids and under 18”. Rohan (25) thinks age gap matter to resolve any problem fast because younger women don’t understand much about world matter and if partner is elder than her, she is not going to manage to answer him back.

Some of my respondents think that affair is also a way to check partners another ongoing affair. Women mentioned this issue many times than men respondents. Romana (28) said, “Men are not trustworthy, at least I cannot trust, so I always keep an eye on him, I will be only women he smiles with”. This insecurity is not very uncommon among couples, even married ones also but this is not something doesn’t happen at all though. Some of my respondents said that they have been informed about their partner’s other affair and then they were so sorry to beg pardon also. Rikta (26) said, “My friend told me about boyfriend’s affair, I wanted to break up, but he was so sorry and tried to commit suicide also, I forgiven him then”. Affair in young age or before college are not that much “vital” to think critically my informants said. Some of them think it was not like choosing a partner but rather choosing someone to spend quality time with, or getting rid from friend’s taunt, or saving thyself from being loser. But there are also 3 informants of mine who have made it possible to be with the same college girlfriend. One of the women think she is “lucky” to carry this “burden” till now which help her to get rid from other men. But other men said he found “pure virgin” as he was dating her from the “beginning of her life”. He also thinks that it was not intentional but now he feels “lucky” about thinking that. Here social psychology has grabbed them also about women’s purity, virginity and sexuality about finding partners. Not only men but also women think about virginity of their partner as well. But that ratio is not much like men’s I found from my informants.

There are also few scenarios where family don’t support their decision of choosing partner as the man is not a job holder or does not have strong financial background. In these cases, couples sometime accept their guardian’s decision, or they decide to live on their own with them only. Lisa (26) shared her experience which matches this. When she fell in love with her boyfriend then he was her university friend and jobless. They both completed their education together and both were jobless. Immediately after completing her education her parents started to pressurize to marry. But her boyfriend was jobless. Her parent knew about her boyfriend but didn’t permit her to marry that man. And forced her to marry another man. So, she decided to marry and live with her boyfriend. She said, “Who will understand me more than him, so I decided to runaway”. Whenever a man and women marry their choosing partner without their parent’s permission then this is called “running away” in our society. That means she decided to marry her boyfriend and take

the risk of the future. Parents sometime do not accept this marriage at the end, or they accept it after a few years later.

There are a few other types of reason behind these rejections I found from my research, and also, I have seen personally. Few of them had inter religion affair with the partner from another religion, so their parents denied accepting. My respondent Durga (29) and Saikat (29) were classmates from university, and they were from different religion, Hindu, and Muslim. Their parents knew that they were only friends at the entire university period. They also went to each other's house even. After completing education, they started to build their career and tried to convince their family about their affair. But Durga's elder brother who is the present guardian of her family after her father died denied accepting it. So, they both married by themselves and lived together for 8 years. As Saikat is from Muslim family and Bangladesh is a Muslim dominated country, so his family accepted their marriage. Durga said, "I know it's a risk to marry a person from another religion, but I love him". Her worry also belonged to herself about an uncertain future but above all she decided to marry her boyfriend from another religion. Even though her family has abandoned her and denied accepting ever she said. On the other hand, her husband Saikat who belongs to Muslim family and "managed" to make understand his family to accept his girlfriend feels happy and shows liberal attitude to her. He said, "I never forced her to change his religion though". He has been very "generous" that he is not forcing her, which shows general ideology of our Muslim dominated society. Here inter-religion marriage system is through registration and there is only one person who does this currently in total Bangladesh. So, it is easier to convert into same religion to both bride and groom and then marry. So, it is believed that who is from minor religious group, he or she will change their religion. Saikat has expressed the same mentality in his statement also.

Also, there is another reason which is inter tribe affair, like in affair both belong to two different tribe, it can be Bengali and other tribe also. In these cases, normally a partner who belongs to tribal society strongly deny permission and they cut off the relation with that person. I have interviewed a few of my respondents who have faced this situation. My respondent Tannu (32) belongs to Chakma tribe of hilly area of Bangladesh. She fell in love with her year mate and from another department of the University. When her parents get to know that she is in love with a Bengali Hindu boy then they forced her to come back home. They took her forcefully home. After going there, she managed to flee from her home and came to her university. Her parents still tried to take her back. Then she decided to marry her boyfriend because her parents will be no more guardian legally and wouldn't be able to force. So, she did. And her family abandoned her then and stopped paying her education cost and everything. She was in her 3rd year only back then. Her boyfriend was from a very poor family. So, they both tried to manage money by doing tuition and continued to live hard. She said, "Sometimes I think I have taken the wrong decision, life is hard without family and relatives". Her family was very well off and she never felt what scarcity was. This is a reason she thinks so and tribes who decide to marry out of tribal society then they cut off any relation with him or her. Tribal society strictly maintains marriage within tribes.

There are different reasons why society is changing in this way and what are the factors pushing this in. Netting (2006) has said that industrialization has pushed these changes, which is also true among our society also. Because men and women are coming out

public places because of industrialization and that is providing the chances to meet them to engaged emotionally also. Hansen and Pang (2010) have mentioned same thing but in a different way according to rural Chinese young people. They said that love and affair is a part of their continuous fight to earn freedom and individualism (Hansen and Pang, 2010).

4. Societal perceptions regarding marital partner selection

Our society does not run like western individualism. Here nobody is an individual person but rather a social being and a family person. We all must abide by the rules and regulations made by our guardians and ancestors, which is not written of course, but nobody will break those. If anybody breaks these then they will be punished by the society also. Affair is not a new concept or trend in our society, but it was not this much open before few years even. "In most the world's culture marriages are arranged by the family members, not by the bride and groom (Skolnick, 1987). Just like this family members and guardians are also very important part of our marriages also. Guardians were very strict about affairs back then and nobody was allowed to choose their partner by themselves. The reason is not everyone perceives affair and love equally rather different persons have different perceptions regarding this (Knox, 1970). It was a very common dialogue among guardians that, "I will cut you into pieces if you think of choosing your partner by yourself". Parents were very strict about their daughter's choice rather son's choice. Women used to see their husband after marriage in all cases one of my respondents said. But it was not that much strict for men. Men were allowed to see their fiancé before getting married or can reject also if she was not fair skinned also. Even it also happened that women do not know that bridegroom and their family is coming to see her, seeing her they decided to marry, and they did. It was a very common practice in my village when I was an adolescent. One of respondents Saleha Begum (50) says that it was a "cost effective" trend and could save lots of money on both sides. According to her, "its money that matters, and decision should be made by guardians that when she marries or whom". So, she thinks that marriage is a "big" decision, and it should be made by the guardians only. She is also upset that man and woman are very "shameless" these days and do not listen to their family or guardians rather make "scandal" to family by "going out with anyone and doing naughty things". Fatema Banu (55) said, "We had very decent culture back then, I haven't seen my husband ever before marriage". Her thoughts match with Saleha Begum also as she is thinking that choosing partner by own is not "decent" for women, even not seeing. This is matter of analysis also which doesn't think that women do have any 'necessity' to see their partner before marriage. Our tradition and culture didn't support women to see their partner before marriage, so does choosing their partner. Patriarchal society thinks that women are not allowed to make any decision by their own and for their own, this thinking is sustaining our patriarchal regulations only.

There are some respondents who think that there is "no value" of women's choosing their partner but "bad luck" happened with them as their children did so. Shaeena Khatun (50) has four children, and all of them choose their partner by themselves. She thinks this is a positive issue and it helped her in many ways. She said, "It saved my time and prestige also, otherwise all are engaged these days". Her narration also expresses current scenario of affairs these days. Aysha Begum (56) said that she was so tired of searching for a bride

for her son. Her son is a government employ, BCS cadre but still women ignore her, because they were engaged. Then she blamed him for not having any affair and requested her son to search for a bride for him by himself. She said, “Studying only is not enough now, you have to choose your partner also from very begging, otherwise you will not get any wife”. So according to her the importance of choosing a partner is equal to doing study now a days. This is also because people do think that friends from school, college or universities are the most commonly seen partners. As they pass their time together for a long time so they can understand each other better than anyone else. Also, colleagues have fallen in love with each other for the same reason. I have found out that parents sometimes push their young children to choose a partner from their colleague also to overcome the “hassle” of searching bride for them. Shamsun Naher (52) Said, “I have told my daughter to choose partner from her colleague only, as they will be established already”. Here is another fact we can see that mothers most of the time talk with their young children to choose their partner but not father. So, a career is also a vital fact for choosing a partner. It doesn’t go for men only but women also. Now a days as women’s education has been an increasing priority for women themselves, their guardians and for the partners. There are different reasons behind this also. Women’s guardians think of safety for the future, they think that is necessary to be self-dependent rather than anybody else. And their partner thinks that they would help their in laws financially so it is best to find a job holder partner for future wife. Women and girls mostly try to choose a partner who is job holder or wait until he gets a job, otherwise her guardians do not permit her decision of choosing partner. Men are the accepted guardian among our society, so they must be job holder to run the family. Earning is not compulsory for a woman among our society that’s why it comes first. This also happened that family didn’t accept an affair and later that “couple” decided to marry and live on their own. From Indian context Dion and Dion (1996) explained that, here people are against this love and affair because it creates problem to control society smoothly. This is also relevant for our Bangladeshi society where guardians thinking is same in many cases, but we are coming out of this, and men and women are choosing their partner by their own.

5. Exploring the reasoning behind changes

There are several reasons behind this changing pattern of choosing partner by their own among both men and women in our society. Previously women were discouraged to come out of home and continue their education. Guardians would do their best to marry off girls and daughter as early as they can. The drop out ratio was very high back then. But Women has started to come out their house recently. They are completing their education. After completing education, they try to engage themselves to build their career. So, women are exposing in public places more and more now a days. They are meeting men and men are meeting them also. It has created the scopes to choose themselves. Most of respondents have shared that man and woman usually meet either in educational institutions or workplace instead. According to them they get plenty of time there to get to know each other and that’s how they fall in love. Aritri (32) shared, “We were 60 students in our class and had 10 couples among us including me”. This is an important scenario which helps us to understand that educational institutions play a vital role in choosing a partner because it connects people emotionally and helps to know more. Classmates usually spend maximum time with each other for several purposes and

that's how they their future partner also. One of respondents Sharmi (28) said about this, "Maximum best friends engaged with one another". Means best friends who know each other better than anyone they engaged because they have known him or her more. So, people who know much more about someone, or get the chances to know more, helps to be involved in an affair. That has happened in the above cases. Not only young men and women but also guardians think that too. Nazma (67) mother of 7 children said that she was worried to find bride and grooms for them, but they saved her themselves she thinks. Because they all have chosen their partner on their own, and she is quite happy with it. She said, "God has saved me from this enormous trouble that they all have chosen partner from their universities and workplace. Otherwise, it is impossible to find a single men or women now".

Job was not that much available for women also back then. The reason is women were not much more educated as per the conditions. Also, there was not enough scope for women to build their career. But Government has taken few necessary steps to bring women frontline. As there are quota in different sectors for women. Division of labor has been removed from defense and many other sectors. Government has also started to pay scholarship to women especially in schools and colleges so that they can continue their education. Nila (33) is a schoolteacher now and has chosen her partner on her own. Her parents did not say no because she was doing a job and her husband is also a teacher. He was an "ideal groom". But her family had a poor financial condition and still she managed to continue her education. Because school and college were free also books, moreover she used to get stipend from school and college. So, her parents let her study to get that money also. That's how she passed school and college. In the meantime, she was able to earn enough through tuition and a part time job.

Also garments sector has been arrived so women now from any background can enter a job here. It just needs their physical labor which doesn't need any educational background at all sometimes. Thousand and millions of women are working in this sector which runs the economy of the country also. My informant Shapna (26) serves in a garments factory. Even though she has two brothers, they are busy raising their own wife and kids. She has taken responsibility for her parents. She got married to her colleague whom she met after joining this factory. She said, "I am not educated enough but still earn enough to feed my parents". About her decision to marry her colleague she said, "I don't have guardian now as I am the guardian of my parents". According to her opinion she is the guardian of her parents now, so nobody is out there to stop her from whatever she wants. She is independent as she earns and that's why she takes her own decision.

Women were burden previously but now as so many sectors are open for women, so many scopes for women so parents are also investing behind their daughter more than previous time. That's why women are coming out and engaging themselves with the public spaces more and more. This also creates the scope of their decision capability. I have found several opinions from my respondents regarding this. Lima (32) said, "I was second daughter of my parents, so was abounded, but know they abide by my rules as I am earning good". She shared that her father was upset with her mother that she has given birth to a daughter again. He wouldn't go to see her for two years in her grandmother's house. So, her mother started to ignore her also. After two years she gave birth to a son. Everyone was happy but she was still abounded. She has completed her education with scarcity and lack, by doing several jobs. Now she earns well, and her

parents count her as vital member also. Her parents say that they should want more daughters like her back then. When a woman is earning money and runs her family then she becomes the decision-maker for herself and for her family. Which also provides power to her to decide her life partner on her own.

The ratio is much more in urban areas than in village areas I found from my informants. The reasons behind this are job availability and availability of education also. Except for this number of educated persons are much more in urban areas. Also, people from different parts of the whole country come and reside in urban areas. We have a centralized system in our country and that's why renowned schools, colleges, public universities, and government offices are situated in urban areas. So educated and high officials live here by the fault. Also, they have different lifestyles and culture of their own. They raise their children from different aspects from the village culture even though they have come from village also. But as they got educated and surrounded by the environment that daughters are not burden anymore for the state then they also start to invest in their daughter by educating and making them independent. Marriage is not the only goal they set for their daughters anymore.

There was a time when sons were the only heir for family and the person to carry the lineage ahead. Their perspective has not changed yet but a few of them have given up those expectations to carry it with their son because they didn't have any. Our society still think that daughter cannot carry out the lineage of the father as they marry to a person from another lineage. So, man is the only bearer of lineage in our society. I have interviewed few informants who do not have son and they have given up the hope to carry their lineage at the end. Lal Mia (62) has six daughters, and he serves a small company. He and her wife tried for a son again and again and then stopped hoping anymore. Now he has concentrated on investing in their girls as they can also work and feed them. He said, "Women are doing extraordinary things now a days, my boss is also a young woman, I will make my daughters like her". People easily get motivation from their surroundings. Now a days women have job opportunities much more than before. So other people who have daughters and were confused about them also get motivation from all the established well-educated women around them.

6. Socio-Cultural Implications

There are implications of this affair among our society also. This is not a new phenomenon, rather its implications have newly changed our society. This change has included people from all the districts of the country, all the classes, all the religions and all the occupations. It cannot be said that these people are not included here. But it has positive and also negative implications among society according to my informants. One of informants Mofazzol (60) said, "This love thing is prohibited in religion, so it is a sin". Some people try to explain and live their lives according to religion. It is also that type of example. He thinks that it is not accepted by the religion because men and women meet before marriage. According to Islam it is also a sin he said. Another respondent Shorifa (55) said, "I understand that they have chosen each other but women do not listen to her partner". According to our society men, husbands are the decision-maker for everything. Women are bound to follow their decisions. Shorifa has also done that for her entire life, which is normal for her. But in an affair, they both choose each other, and they become partners, not guardians. So, they live an equally decided life, take decisions which is also

a problem for the patriarchal society also. Kamla (60) thinks that divorce rate has also increased because of this affair thing. According to her, “They affair and marry within one month and divorce after one day”. She has shared the recent divorce rate of our society where women are filing most of the divorce cases against their husbands. It is true that affair marriage has increased but also divorce rate has also increased now a days among them also. This is another scenario that why this is happening and what are the issues that patriarchal society takes for granted to reach that decision, but Kamla has shared a ‘negative’ implication of this love and affair.

There are different perspectives also about this affair. Some of my informants shared that ‘loyalty’ has been decreased because of this affair. Now a days wives don’t listen to their husbands or shout at husbands. They always quarrel with each other. Sabrina Banu (45) has been married with her husband for thirty years, but she is still ‘obedient’ to her husband. She said, “I don’t even look back on my husband, ever”. According to her ‘looking back’ to husband is disrespectful and husbands should get respect. But now women are ‘shameless’ she thinks that’s why they don’t know who to respect or not. Shahida Begum (50) thinks the same as her. Shahida Begum thinks that women are trying to be ‘equal’ now with their husbands which is an impossible thing also. She said, “Women should declare equality everywhere now, even in home”. According to her conflicts are happening a lot among married couples recently because they married by choosing themselves and they are claiming themselves equal with their husbands they think. They are blaming affair marriage and affair because of this recent change. Not only few women but also men and there are other persons among society who also think that quarrels between couple are occurring because of this where researchers are getting other sort of versions. According to Canary et al. (1995) conflicts among couple are not something specific defined episode rather more unstable and continuous behavior of human being. So, it’s not something that is happening for any specific reasons or specific persons rather we live in this, and it is a common behavior pattern which we go through always. Zacchilli, Hendrick and Hendrick (2016) have been very specific about spouse conflicts, they have explained that conflicts usually happened because of lack of respect among couples controlling mentality of any partner”. In our society this is a bigger issue where husbands are thought to be guardian of their wives even though they are same age or financially independent (Akter, 2020). This controlling behavior turns into conflicts between both. On the other hand, Montgomery and Sorell (1997) said that emotional love has a different phase of its own and conflict is one of them. So according to them it is a normal part of partners, which will happen in a phase of their relation.

7. Conclusion

There is a proverb, “Change is the ultimate true after all”. This proverb is the most relevant about love and affair related perspective of our society. Love or choosing own partner was prohibited for both men and men in our society also even few years ago. It was thought that love and affair create obstacles to society (Dion and Dion, 1993) but the situation is different now. Now a day’s affair is expected from young men and women to avoid the hassles to choose and search bride and groom because everyone is engaged out there. Even the situation has turned into encouraging them to find someone or get engaged with someone. There are people who can call this ‘destruction’ of the culture, there are also some people who call this as a ‘western’ culture, but there are also people

who name it as an addition to our culture which is empowering men and women. Taking own decision by themselves is an important thing in all phases of life which empower people anyway, that's what this affair is doing with men and women of our society.

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