



# Career Trajectories of the Female Faculties in the Private Universities of Bangladesh: A Phenomenological Study

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## Research Article

### Abstract

*The education sector is considered as one of the suitable areas that facilitate women to pursue a prestigious career. Recently, along with public universities, private universities are significantly contributing to higher education in Bangladesh. Female faculties are building their careers in private universities. In university-level education, a faculty member plays a significant role in bringing out the talent hidden among the students and grooms them up for a future career. This study aims to trace the satisfaction, possible barrier, and progression prospect of the female faculties working in the private universities in Bangladesh. This study adopts a phenomenological research design to portrait the life experiences of ten female faculties regarding the respondents' attraction to the teaching as a career, satisfaction issues (self-satisfaction, enjoyment, contentment, etc.), barriers (challenges in managing family, discontentment, stress, etc.), and dream about their career progression. This study tries to uphold an extensive understanding of female faculties' thirst for involvement, struggle for difficulties, and motivation for advancement. The study sketches the career trajectories of female faculties in private universities, and it provides insight to the concerned authority to improve the working condition for the female faculties by taking proper steps.*

**Keywords:** Career, satisfaction, barriers, progression, phenomenology.

### 1. Introduction

In Bangladesh, the participation of women in different workspaces is noticeable. A country's backbone depends upon the education system of that country, where university plays a leading role in making a person for the ultimate contribution towards the country's economy. Faculty needs mental commitment, thrust for knowledge, loyalty, physical presence, etc. to get involved with the students as they are considered as the essential forces to develop the academic lives of

the students. Therefore, the institution needs to motivate the faculties in every possible way. It is not necessarily linked up with the extrinsic motivation but also to the mental peace. Besides male faculty members, females are also found interested in university teaching in both private and public sectors. At present, the entrance of female faculties is increasing day by day in university teaching. Teaching can be considered as a conventional career for females due to several reasons (Rahman & Parveen, 2008, Rahman, 2019). However, there is a remarkable difference in teaching, satisfaction content, possible barrier identification, and progression scenario among the male and female faculties. The University Grants Commission (UGC) wants to increase the number of female faculties in the private universities of Bangladesh. Professor Abdul Mannan (former Chairman of UGC) said that we need to increase the number of female teachers and students as well as male teachers in the private universities of Bangladesh (Abbas, 2017). According to the UGC's annual report, only 4472 females are appointed out of 15571 faculty members (Abbas, 2017). Empirical evidence from the private universities of Bangladesh concludes that working conditions is an important determinant of job satisfaction among academics (Masum, Azad, & Beh, 2015).

The subject matter of this research is concerned with the prospects and progression of a female faculty member in private university teaching. In Bangladesh, the number of private universities is increasing by coping up with the public universities for providing higher education. Therefore, the qualifications of teachers and teaching qualities both are important to flourish the career of the students. Universities are taking more initiative to attract the best-qualified faculties. The study tries to reveal the consent regarding the choice of entry in teaching by the female faculty members in the private universities of Bangladesh. They expressed their motivational forces, which expose their encouragement of involvement in the teaching profession. The study also covers up the area of barriers and their progression technique by having a conversation with a personal interview through phenomenological study. The goal of the phenomenological study is to interpret their original experiences regarding their teaching career so that ultimate essences can be revealed, and the scenario of female faculties of the university can be described.

### **1.2 Career Choice of Female Faculty in University Teaching:**

A total pattern of a person's activity during a person's lifetime is known as a career (Kim, Jang, & Baek, 2019; Natailie, 2006). A career can be proved life long experience by which an individual can earn money or livelihood. The need to choose an appropriate career is as important as choosing a life partner. Career choice is made by individual characteristics. Men and women both tend to choose a career, which gives positive vibes for intrinsic enjoyment. Prestigious factors matter most in identifying a perfect career. Although intrinsic enjoyment plays key roles in defining one's career, women are less career-oriented in our society. What matters most for the women in our society is prestige, flexibility, and intrinsic enjoyment (Dyke & Murphy, 2006). Initially, they entered teaching, as they believe that it would be possible to carry on domestic responsibilities around the demand for childcare; in essence, it represents only a pragmatic solution rather than a genuine career choice. Arudo (2008) found that the educational certificate can significantly influence the choice of career an individual wants to create. In university, a

teaching certificate has the highest value, which is very attractive for females because of their consistent results in the academic arena.

### **1.3 Satisfaction Factors towards Teaching:**

Satisfaction is not only related to the job itself but also with other factors like job environment, relationships, culture, style, quality of work, etc (Chakraborty & Rahman, 2013). All these factors have a different impact on a different person and different job criteria. It is revealed that faculties' job satisfaction has a long term effect on the development of a nation (Saadin, Ramli, Johari, & Harin, 2016). Sources of satisfaction for the faculty members are morale, higher degree, institutional support, autonomy, promotion, tenure opportunities, etc. (Laden & Hagedorn, 2000; Olsen, Maple & Stage, 1995; Rahman, Karan, & Arif, 2014, Rahman & Parveen, 2008). Existing literature reveals that faculties are most satisfied when the students interact with them (Clark, 2000; Romsa, Bremer, Lewis, & Romsa, 2017). Thanacoody (2000) and Obi (2017) found that faculties are least satisfied by the monetary aspects but incredibly satisfied by the relationship with co-workers. Still, private universities are improving their salary level and other research facilities to give the utmost satisfaction. However, the real scenario is the job satisfaction of female faculties is quite different from that of men. Female faculty members divide their attention and interest between the working world and their traditional role at home. Married female faculties with children may prefer their work which is consider as flexible so that they can balance their family life. It is observed that female faculties are satisfied with adequate compensation, an opportunity at work, total living space, and constitutionalism in the work organization (Mahboob, 2014). It is also found that female faculties are often seen as happy with their teaching careers as male faculties (Sultana, Sarker, & Prodhan, 2017). Moreover, in teaching, a prestigious career concept is highlighted mostly.

### **1.4 Barriers towards Teaching:**

Women's careers differ from men's in that they are more likely to have career breaks and work part-time. For example, more flexible working hours and leave for childrearing can affect career progression in negative ways. Rosser and Stake (2005) explained that faculty members are more satisfied with their job environment and pay. However, the reality in the academic lifestyle is no longer considers as attractive and prestigious as it once was. In the case of female faculties' long hours in teaching and research work, relatively poor compensation package in comparison with other sectors, personal development through research work is making university teaching more challenging. In private universities, teaching tenure and promotion are relatively slow (Bentley, 2009) also paid less than their male colleagues (Natalie, 2006). Fiorentino (1999) confirmed that the most dissatisfactory issues are salary structure and untimely payment, students' quality, and the prolonged working hours. Saadin et al. (2016) rightly identified that female's priority towards family life is seen as a barrier toward their progression. Similarly, Adhikary (2016) refers that although females are now capable of moving to a higher position they are halted by an invisible barrier. Barriers can be categorized into personal, societal, organizational, cultural, environmental, etc. (Rahman, 2019). In the case of university teaching female faculties often

confronted the dilemma between fulfilling job responsibility and family life. In this study, female faculties have openly discussed their barriers, which are listed as challenges in managing family and financing, stress, pressures, steady career, discontentment, complexity, etc.

### **1.5 Progression toward Teaching:**

It is more than a decade women are increasingly represented not only just in the university graduates but also among the university staff. It is already proven that female is not less important than male faculties in the university (Obi, 2017). Thanacoody (2000) and Khumaidah (2018) rightly stated the growing contribution of females in an academic institution. However, even though there has been an improvement in the participation level, there remain several issues to resolve. Career profile and needs of female academics are increasingly recognized both in the literature and in practice, but progression in career is not smooth for females as it with males. Clark (2000), Dugger (2001), and later Francis (2017) drew attention to the importance of sponsorship and networking to facilitate career progression and promotion. Formal and informal networks are other factors that are associated with females' satisfaction. Despite understanding their critical contributions still, females are facing a long and difficult way to express their abilities and competencies. Balancing work with family is a burning issue for female academics. Consequently, many women with career aspirations tend to leave universities, making it more difficult for women to establish a critical mass (Khumaidah, 2018). The scholars believe that society's development depends on the efficient use of whole human resources but in reality having a lack of higher female authority in educational institutions besides economic organizations (Wheatley, 2017). It has also consented that females are more energetic, enthusiastic, achievement-oriented, meritorious, dynamic, and can build their careers (Mahbub, 2014).

### **1.6 Research gap:**

Previous literature discusses the variables that determine employees' intention to stay or leave an institution (Rahman, 2019). Another study focuses on financial issues, environmental issues, organizational cultures, comparison between male and female employees' career expectations, overall job satisfaction, etc. (Ali& Akhter 2009; Faroque, Rahman, & Rahman, 2019). Most of these studies have mainly been undertaken to understand the influential factors of career satisfaction. Some studies summed up only females and minority employees' issues as they have distinguished characteristics from the male (Bentley, 2009). Ali and Akhtar (2009) argued that there is a plethora of studies examined the satisfaction issues of teaching career but still there is a lack of research that solely consider the female faculties' career expectations, satisfaction, complete career scenario in the private higher education sector of Bangladesh (Nas, 2016; Faroque, Ferdousy, & Rahman, 2020). The private universities of Bangladesh are trying to meet the growing demand for huge human resources. A recent research work highlights the importance of future research on this issue as women's career path is expanding gradually (Mahbub, 2014). Upon understanding the depth of this topic, the current study aims to depict the subjective perception of female faculties' choice of an entrance, satisfaction factors, barriers, and

progression issues in the private universities of Bangladesh through qualitative techniques. While most previous studies have generalized the findings by relying heavily on survey data with ranking and tabulating respondents' responses with quantitative analyses, this study summed up with an unanticipated phenomenon that emerged spontaneously.

### **1.7 Significance of the Study:**

To meet the growing demands of the students of Bangladesh, private universities play a significant role in higher education. Faculties are contributing to the improvement of the higher education sector of a country. Overall, under-representation of females in the academe has received considerable attention, which is no less an important issue. The study tries to portrait the career path of female faculties by analyzing their opinion regarding their choice of the entrance, satisfactory forces that contempt them in teaching, barriers they usually face, and overall thought of progression. As the study explored the experiences of individual faculty, it is appropriate to conduct qualitative research combined with phenomenological study so that this article can focus on the phenomenon rather than the outcomes. This study helps an in-depth understanding of the particular situation of female faculties in private university teaching so that possibilities and obstacles can easily be determined and improved in future times.

## **2. Objective of the Study:**

The objective of the study is to describe and interpret the experiences of female faculty members regarding their career choice, satisfaction, barriers, and progression pattern in the private university teaching of Bangladesh.

## **3. Rationale of Qualitative Research Design:**

Qualitative research attempts to make meaning of an individual's experiences and meaning in time (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Tuffour, 2017). Phenomenology as a branch of a qualitative study is an attempt to understand the lived experiences from the participants/respondents point of view and to seek meaning from the analysis of their descriptions (Creswell, 2007; Marshall & Rossman, 1999; Merriam, 1998 & 2009; Stake, 2005; Tuffour, 2017). A qualitative study with a phenomenological approach has been adopted in this study because the researchers wanted to interpret the lived experiences of the female faculty members consent regarding their choice of making university teaching as their profession, their inner feelings of satisfaction factors, barriers they often face and progression in this profession. The researchers engaged with phenomenological interviews for gaining rich descriptions from the respondents. This type of research focuses on the wholeness of the research rather than individual parts.

A phenomenological study follows some steps as first come with verbatim transcription of respondents' original responses. They were bracketing through epoche, where the researchers will bracket out all the presuppositions of mind. The researchers need to isolate the phenomenon by using an imaginative free variation. After that, the process of intuition emerges the researcher questions until that level of understanding emerges that the researcher had immersed. The analysis process started with rich descriptions from responses. The description phase represents

the understanding of the researchers by applying Noema and Noesis. In this study, all the steps of the phenomenological approach have been maintained to reach the understanding of the subject matter.

#### **4. Research Design:**

The research design is the conceptual structure within which an inquiry or research is conducted; it constitutes the blueprint for the collection, measurement, and analysis of data (Kothari, 2004). A research approach is appropriate and recognized when it enhances the rigor and sophistication (Creswell, 2007). This study uses a qualitative approach with a phenomenological research design. It is the method of exploring the life experiences of the respondents. In this study, female faculty members are considered as the respondents who are working at the private universities of Bangladesh. Phenomenology attempts to view an experience from a multi-perspective whole describes it in rich detail and seeks meaning through intuition and reflection (Bird, Litt, & Wang, 2004). To ensure robustness, rigor, and trustworthiness, 'Epoche' and 'Eidetic reduction' of phenomenology have been maintained, which ensures the ontological, epistemological, and methodological coherence. By applying 'Epoche', the researchers' natural attitude or simple common sense had been bracketed. So the essences (basic irreducible element) of the phenomenon have been extracted from the data given by the respondents.

In this qualitative study, verbal protocol analysis has been used to collect data. It is a method by which a detailed record of a person's verbal reports are collected and analyzed. The validity of verbal protocol analysis depends on the process where thinking aloud is facilitated to the respondent, and data is analyzed within the minimum time of the occurrence of thought.

This study analyzed respondents' detailed actual verbatim recording to ensure the validity and authenticity of the study. To extract the pure essences imaginative free variation technique has been applied. The trustworthiness of the study is ensured by transcribing the responses as it were. Isomorphic validity has been protected by transformation and synthesis. The corresponding meaning from the naïve description of the experiences of the respondents stood for inter-subjective validity. This way the reliability of the study tried to be ensured.

**4.1 Respondents of the Study:** Ten female faculties were purposefully selected from the five reputed private universities of Bangladesh. Purposeful selection often gives descriptions, information, and experiences that work on clarifying the phenomena being studied (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). According to Creswell (2007), purposeful sampling stands as a hallmark of qualitative research. Among the ten respondents, seven holding the position of assistant professor and another three is a lecturer from two different departments with more than three years of work experience. Their tenure in employment proves the ability to answer all the questions.

**4.2 Data Gathering Methods:** In a phenomenological study a variety of methods can be used including interviews, conversations, participant observation, action research, focus meetings, analysis of diaries, and other personal texts. In general, the methodology is designed to be less structured and more open-ended to encourage the participants to share details regarding their

experiences. That is why to collect data directly from the respondents' experiences; a phenomenological interview method was used. It was important to use this method to collect verbal data in the phenomenological approach. In other words, phenomenology emphasizes subjectivity. The goal of phenomenological research methods is to maximize the depth of the information collected and, therefore, less structured interviews are most effective. The interview method involves dialogue, speech, or conversation. According to Moyeen (1998), it involves an interpersonal engagement among the researchers and the respondents, where the respondents are encouraged to share their experiences in detail. To block the researchers' intervention and thoughts in data collection, 'Epoche' was maintained. The techniques of 'Thinking Aloud' and 'Stimulated Recall' were also used to collect verbal data. The respondents were asked to think aloud to describe the phenomenon experienced during their careers. They were also stimulated to remember or to recall their experiences to get the naive description of the phenomenon.

**4.3. Research Questions:** The following research questions were asked by the researchers for gathering data. We asked the respondents that 'we would like you (respondents) to recall your choices regarding your career path as it occurred to you from your experiences.' The research questions are:

- How this choice of your career satisfying you?
- How can you address the satisfaction factors that motivate toward teaching?
- Is there any barrier or barriers you have faced throughout your career?
- Can you describe your thoughts about career progression?

## **5. Verbal Protocol Analysis Method:**

The respondents describe their experiences from where the data has been gathered. Their experiences were shared in a very general way through the interview that makes the essential structure of experience. The verbal protocol analysis method depends on the data that has been collected from the respondents' experiences through transcription by allowing them 'thinking aloud'. Transcripts refer to 'original recording of a subject's introspective notes' (Lin, 2017). The 'thinking aloud' is an articulation of a subject about a respondent's experiences or what a respondent is experiencing 'here-and-now' (Adams & van Manen, 2017). Correctness, clearness, and understandability of information can be ensured by the protocol analysis method. The information can be broken down into small units by applying sequential steps. Transformation and synthesis are two important steps of protocol analysis that came from the extraction of essences. In phenomenology, essences stand for the irreducible elements of the life experiences. To identify the meaning, reflection and imaginative free variation techniques can be used. 'Reflection' refers to a careful reading of the experiences to find out and understand the true meaning. The findings are then tested through imaginative free variation. Imaginative free variation is a type of mental experimentation where the researchers use their imagination to alter the aspects of the experiences either by adding to or subtracting from the proposed transformation (Moyeen, 1998). A synthesis is a process of assimilating the transformed meaning into a reliable and systematic general description of the structure of experience being

investigated. To establish trustworthiness in the phenomenological study, the following criteria must be met:

**i. Authenticity:** The interview questions and the responses of the respondent (protocol) have been presented without interferences of the researchers to address the authenticity. The researchers have suspended all the presupposition during the research for ensuring authenticity.

**ii. Isomorphic validity:** Verbatim transcriptions (first-order construct) of the respondents' live experiences have been recorded accurately. Furthermore, the essences were directly derived from the respondents' verbatim.

**iii. Intersubjective validity:** The researchers used eidetic reduction by applying imaginative variation to derive the general structure description from the respondents' naïve descriptions to ensure intersubjectivity.

To establish trustworthiness, the following sample questions can be asked (Moyeen, 1994).

Sample questions	Criteria involved
Do the respondents' descriptions truly reflect his/her actual experiences? Are they influenced by the researchers in any way?	Address Authenticity and Isomorphic Validity
Is the transcription accurate – a verbatim representation of respondents' descriptions? Does it carry the meaning conveyed by the respondents?	Address Authenticity and Isomorphic Validity
Do the transformation and the syntheses flow from the respondents' original descriptions or have been imposed by the researchers?	Address Authenticity and Isomorphic Validity
Is it possible to evolve a conclusion other than those presented by the researchers?	Address Intersubjective Validity.
Does the conclusion hold as a general structural description of an experience that applies to the situation?	Address Authenticity, Isomorphic Validity and Intersubjectivity Validity

Source: Moyeen (1994)

### 6. Maintenance of 'Epoche' and 'Eidetic' Reduction:

In this study, 'Epoche' and 'Eidetic' reduction has been maintained through suspending the researchers' natural attitude where common sense about real-world existence has been bracketed (Moyeen, 1998). Epoche of phenomenology refers to abstain from questions of reference to focus on meaning (Hall, 1989).

The eidetic reduction is the second step where the researchers move from the consciousness and concrete the object to the trans-empirical realm of pure essences and achieve an essential structure. Eidetic reduction stands for neither induction nor abstraction; it tries to hold the suspense of the concrete statement. On the other hand, the eidetic reduction does not hold



empirical generalization. In phenomenology, the reduction is important. Through imaginative free variation technique, the researchers can reach to the level of understanding exactly with the respondents. Therefore, it does not depend on mental construction and joint construction. This way the authenticity of data can be ensured.

**7. Presentation and Interpretation of Data:**

This section draws attention to the guidelines regarding the presentation of data. To collect the necessary protocols on issues of career choice, satisfaction, barriers, and progression of female faculties in university teaching had been collected and recorded as they are given. 'Stimulated thinking' and 'Thinking aloud' were used to collect the necessary protocols. Before starting the interview, the respondent was first given a complete declaration of confidentiality. They were asked the following questions:

**We would like you to recall and describe your experiences regarding career choice, satisfaction, barriers, and progression of female faculties at university teaching as it occurred to you.**

The respondents gave their responses through audio media. The verbatim transcript of the interviews was used for the interpretations. Their original expression was offered on the left-hand side and interpretation presented on the right-hand side of a table. Epoche was maintained to find out the actual meaning of expression by closely and carefully reading of each protocol (Moyeen, 1998). Several questions have been formulated to facilitate the interpretation (Moyeen, 1994):

A1	What is ascribed as a valued end <b>(Noema)</b>
A2	What is ascribed as a shaper in realizing a valued end? <b>(Noema)</b>
B	What process of consciousness is involved in the ascription of such meanings? <b>(Noesis)</b>

Source: Moyeen (1994)

The first question was asked about the choice of the entrance into teaching from the respondents. The second question underlined the worth of satisfaction in this career by the respondents. The third question outlined the obstacles they are facing from this profession and lastly the fourth question regarding the progression of their career until now. Respondents gave their opinion in their style. The researchers had interpreted their responses under four head themes.

'Noema' and 'Noesis' are the two aspects of consciousness. 'Noema' refers to the object of consciousness, and 'Noesis' refers to the consciousness of the objects. Noema and Noesis co-constitute one another. Examples of 'Noesis' are thinking, perceiving, remembering, imagining, evaluating, comparing, etc.

**8. Interpretation of Verbatim Transcript:**

From the above verbatim transcript, the noematic elements (Noema-valued ends, denoted as A1) were identified from the verbatim transcript are categorized under the four sub-themes named, choice, success factors, barriers, and progression.

Noetic elements (Noetic process of consciousness, denoted as B) were identified from the verbatim transcript of the respondents are remembering, reflecting, evaluating, realizing,

perceiving, etc.). The researchers have identified shapers (A2) from the interpretation of the protocols. The analysis of the verbatim is presented under the four sub-themes according to the essences found through this phenomenological study.

### 8.1 Choice:

Kim et al. (2019) addressed career choice by considering how it can be limited as a result of being female, pointing out how stereotyping of occupations and women's compromised career aspirations work to limit women's career choices. The respondents of this study have given their opinion regarding their choice of entering this university teaching profession.

<b>Academic result:</b>	<i>My satisfactory result prompts me to start my career as a teacher. With having a bright result I always wanted to be a teacher. I always gave importance to secure good results so that I can be in the teaching arena. (Opinion of 3 respondents)</i>
<b>Contentment &amp; prestigious factor</b>	<i>I also feel that for women, teaching is the best &amp; prestigious</i>

### 8.2 Satisfaction Issues:

Job satisfaction is defined as an effective response provided by the organizational member toward his or her particular job. It is an outcome of the employees' expectations by comparing with the actual outcome and expected outcomes (Karan & Rahman, 2014). In Bangladesh, it is often noticeable that primary job features like sex, marriage, position, age, etc. have a great impact on career satisfaction (Haque & Taher, 2008; Rahman, Ferdousy, & Karan, 2010a). Ali and Akhter (2009) found no significant differences between male and female faculty's career satisfaction. Recent evidence shows that female faculties are at an advanced level of career satisfaction (Sultana et al., 2017). Although analyzing satisfaction is a complex phenomenon, but academicians can consider it as a unique group of worth studying.

**i. Self-Satisfaction and satisfaction on facilities:** Sources of satisfaction for faculty members are moral, institutional fit, institutional support, autonomy, promotion, and tenure opportunities (Johnsrud & Rosser, 2002; Laden & Hagedorn, 2000; Obi, 2017; Rahman, Ferdousy, Karan, 2010b; Rosser, 2005). The study reveals the following satisfaction dimensions by the respondents. One respondent said that *'I'm overwhelmed and feel honored in this profession.'* The respondents also agree that *'My bright result got a perfect identity.'*

**ii. Relaxation:** The respondents agree on an issue of relaxation in teaching. Two of the respondents agreed that *'private university teaching has some relaxation.'* This is one of the important drives for women to choose their career in teaching.

**iii. Involvement:** One of the respondents of the study clarifies her involvement in her statement by saying that *'We cannot think of taking a class without class preparation even for a single day.'* Another respondent said that *'I'm not only physically involved with teaching, also mentally.'* *'In my sick leave period of 2 months ...can't tell u how much I miss my students'* statement given by another respondent.

**iv. Establishing identification:** One respondent also agrees that *'My bright result got a perfect identity.'*

**v. Self-Satisfaction with teaching field:** One respondent said that *'I think there are such type expectations I didn't get or no sector will give.'* All respondents also argue in one matter that *'Salary & other financial benefits are poor but self-satisfaction is there.'*

**vi. Enjoyment, contentment, and self-contentment:** From the literature, it has been found that higher career self-contentment beliefs predict career achievement (Betz & Fitzgerald, 1987; Francis, 2017). Here the respondents believe that teaching gave them self-contentment. One respondent pointed out that *'I like this profession. I can share my experience, knowledge, my ideas, and my philosophies with my students.'* *'I think there is such type expectation I didn't get or no sector will give.'* *'I saw their achievement...much delighted.'* Another respondent said that *'I also feel .....teaching is the best.'* *'I'm overwhelmed and feel honored in this profession.'* They both said that *'I'm enjoying this profession.'* Another respondent said that *'Sometimes we at least got some flexible time, which I can't even expect in another job.'*

**vii. Pride, superiority, and autonomy:** One of the enduring and most significant sources of satisfaction for professionals is their autonomy (Tack & Patitu, 1992; Wheatley, 2017). Autonomy is defined by Tack and Patitu (1992) is having a personal rule of the self while remaining free from controlling interference by others. One respondent said that *'I can share my experience, knowledge, my ideas, and my philosophies with my students.'* *'I feel proud they listen to me.'*

**viii. Achievement motivation:** A person with stimulation toward seeking career attainments and accomplishments refer to achievement motivation. One respondent figures out that *'I'm doing my Ph.D.... cannot do anything because I need promotion.'*

### 8.3 Barrier Factors:

Barrier is defined as a factor, phenomenon, or event that prevents or controls access to individuals from making progress. Barriers may be tangible or intangible, actual, or perceived by the recipient. In the business world, many organizations are struggling to hold on to their best and brightest women. It is essential to understand these barriers that women face and to identify career strategies used by successful women to overcome the obstacles associated with balancing work and family responsibilities. Though teaching is listed as a less gender-biased job; but some existing literature shows that female faculties often experienced more barriers than males (Mahbub, 2014). Existing evidence revealed that the most significant barrier of satisfaction and progression lies in the domain of work-family balance because this is the only domain where gender differences existed (Obi, 2017). Teaching barriers with many challenges that are notified by the respondents of this study are described in the following.

**i. Challenges in managing family, belongingness, and comparison with male faculty:** Generally speaking, when family issues and domestic responsibilities are at stake, women academics receive less support from their male partners than men academics do from their female partners (Bird et al., 2004). Saadin et al. (2016) has also identified managing family beside work life is a great obstacle for female towards their careers. This is due to once they are more committed to their family they encountered slower career mobility. One respondent said that *'They are attached*

with their family in such a way that, it is tough for them to find out the scope.' In the study, one statement revealed the ultimate consent of female faculties by the following statement '*can't think to leave the family only for own purpose.*' "There are a lot of challenges for female faculty compare to male faculty.' Another respondent said that '*I can't concentrate on my career only...my family's responsibilities always on me.*'

**ii. Stress in balancing work with life:** Work-life balance is termed as the pressure factor when both play an incompatible role. One role makes the path difficult to play the other. Holton and Dent (2016) said that it is hard to develop one's career by balancing both wife and mother. Previous research also said that liberal role attitudes help women engage more fully in their career development as opposed to more traditional attitudes (Betz & Fitzgerald, 1987; Fassinger, 1990; Holton & Dent, 2016). Females in educational institutions felt their jobs are too demanding that causes huge stress. Six respondents agreed on an issue that '*Stress is there ...., stress to balance work with life.*'

**iii. Steady career:** Bombuwela and Alwis (2013) argued that no glass ceiling exists, it is they who left their job midways, worked for lesser time and joined low-risk jobs. This study differs from them, as it can be seen that they have to complete a stage of life as a daughter, as a wife, and as a mother. So the respondents strongly believe that '*I can say I am stuck in my career after balancing my life, maybe it's my fault maybe the situation prompts me to stable in this path.*'

**iv. Pressures:** Now, teaching is more or less related to pressures. One respondent said that '*Class test, quiz test, assignment, presentation, class lecture making, slide preparation, and answer script checking....huge pressures.*'

**v. Challenges regarding financing:** Teaching is related to pursuing higher degrees, but in the case of the private university, the respondents of the study felt distressed about the funding of their higher studies. Five respondents were disappointed with the issue of lack of financial support by the private university authority. They mentioned that '*We can't get any financial benefits.*'

**vi. Discontentment and discomfort:** One respondent said that '*salary & other financial benefits are poor.*' Most of the respondents believe that '*Situation is different from the public university teaching scenario.*' *They enjoy some more relax.*'

**vii. Complexity:** Women face complexity in progressing their careers. It is focused on the study as one of the respondents said that '*I have a strong desire to pursue Ph.D., Can't even think to leave them for a couple of days, it's tough for me.*' '*Women have lots of complexity, especially children, husband...dual responsibility.*'

#### **8.4 Progression:**

Career advancement is used to fit employees' goals with the needs of an organization through an organized approach. Career advancement can be defined as an individual influence and behavioral process, which leads to the aspect including occupation's choices, role integration, career pattern and identity, work values, and decision-making style. Prior research has proved that female faculties in comparison with a male are more likely to leave the academe and when they do stay are much less likely to occupy the position of the professoriate (Masum et al., 2015).

The reason clearly outlined in the previous studies that work-family conflict is a key obstacle of females towards their career progression (Bombuwela & Alwis, 2013; Mahbub, 2014). Changing over time, it should be expected that females with their subtle technique towards life and work will indeed solicit the obstacles. Some studies came up with the proper utilization of time to mitigate the differences (Nas, 2016).

**i. Commitment towards the job:** Even though respondents face challenges towards their career progression, but they feel that women are committed to their jobs. One respondent gives an opinion that *'I think women are more committed to their jobs than men; it is my observation.'* Another respondent said that *'I'm doing my PhD.....it is a requirement in my job.'* The second statement reveals that they are eager to engage in their jobs and also wished to enroll in higher studies while facing obstacles in balancing family and career.

**ii. Positive synergies, dedication:** The respondents agree on a statement that *'women have lots of energy...comparison with males;'* they believe they have that enthusiasm that put forward towards their career progression.

**iii. Dreaming about higher studies and achievement motivation:** Gottfredson and Lapan (1997) describes in the model of circumscription that how one's environment and heredity impact his or her career and how they compromise in career development. Steadiness, complexity in balancing responsibility and higher studies, distress about financing in higher studies, etc. are termed as the greatest barriers in the path of career progression. Four respondents agreed on an issue that *'Public university teachers, they can easily take leave, more time, career progression is very smooth.'* Another respondent said that *'I'm doing my PhD...cannot do anything cause I need promotion.'*

## **9. Discussions:**

Several studies have revealed that females saw a more comforting job environment in teaching (Aslam, 2013). The study recognizes academic results, contentment, and prestigious factors as inspiration for females to orient their careers in teaching. Eight of the total respondents agreed on 'academic results' as a top factor for choosing their career in teaching.

The study explores some satisfaction factors like self-satisfaction and satisfaction on facilities, relaxation, involvement, satisfaction with teaching, enjoyment, contentment, pride, superiority, autonomy, achievement motivation etc. Common satisfaction factors endorsed by almost all the respondents of this study are self-satisfaction, relaxation, self-contentment, pride, and autonomy. These factors have been widely recognized in the literature on faculty satisfaction (Ali & Akhter, 2009; Tack & Patitu, 1992). Though some previous studies reveal that female faculties do not have different job satisfaction issues than male as teaching is not gender biased (Ali & Akhter, (2009). But according to Sultana et al. (2017), female faculties found more peace than male faculties in a teaching career. This study came up with the inner satisfaction issues towards the career, unlike only primary determinants (personal characteristics) on job satisfaction.

Vigorous literature found that personal characteristics, organizational and cultural factors, gender stereotypes stand as an excellent barrier for females in case of upward career mobility (Bombuwela & Alwis, 2013; Nas, 2016 ). The study upholds some barriers to which most of them can be dealt with by personal tactics. Challenges in managing family, belongingness, and

comparison with male faculty, the stress in balancing work with life, steady career, pressures, challenges regarding financing, discontentment and discomfort, complexity uninterruptedly outspoken by the respondents. All respondents were pretty confirmed about the difficulties in managing family with work as a top barrier, similar to previous studies.

From the last decades, it has been noticed that females' participation rate is very impressive but compared with their abilities; there is still a considerable distance (Rahman, 2019). The respondents of the study notify their drive for progression in this career by listing some points as a commitment towards the job, positive synergies, dedication, dreaming about higher studies, and achievement motivation. Previous research has suggested that higher education with national and international degrees only can tighten the career of the academe (Adhikary, 2016). Female faculties have proven their enthusiasm and willingness to grab all the opportunities toward achieving higher degrees, possibly having family support (Khumaidah, 2018). With these findings, it can be said that female faculties can also contribute to society by enlightening them with the dreams of smooth career progression.

The results of the study can be treated as eye-opening realities of female faculties' feeling about their careers. The findings are consistent with previous researches in this field. Therefore, university and concerned authorities should provide a congenial environment by raising the satisfaction level, mitigating the barriers, and creating a smooth progressive career for the female academicians to meet the growing demand.

#### **10. Contributions:**

This study tries to depict the procedure of writing phenomenological research by reporting side by side the diversity of female faculties' experiences regarding their career moves. From a theoretical perspective, this study will certainly contribute to the phenomenological research field. The study tries to extract the pure essence from the respondents rather than focusing on the outcome. The study solicits with the consent regarding what satisfies most, what sort of barriers they face in the way of their career progression, and their ambivalent feelings about gaining recognition while balancing family life. This study would help in enriching the current body of knowledge among the female academicians of developing countries.

From the perspective of the application, this study is relevant to the policymakers of the education system, founder of private universities, as the consent clearly outlines some under-representation, unavailability of funding, imbalance of authority distribution, and also some traditional constructions of gender. Practically the policymakers will get an idea to critically look over the matter and create a positive arrangement for the improvement of employee attitudes. This era of advancement and social justice undoubtedly demands equal opportunity for men and women to develop their careers.

If we consider social implications, teaching at the university level is a highly prestigious career for females, so this study will fill the knowledge gap on the factor that led to under-representation of them in this field. This study surely provides insight into the female faculties of the university level, which helps to make policies that will soften their careers.

Finally, by conducting this study, some discontentment comes out spontaneously by the respondents, therefore, the university authority in question needs to work hard to create an ideal environment conducive both to retain faculties who are planning to leave and who might commit to staying. The university environment, which is perceived as a masculine culture also needs further examination. So the study can be a consideration as an aid for the respective authorities to plan for multilevel effort.

### **11. Limitations and Future Directions:**

This research has been conducted with a minimal number of samples comprising of five private universities. Future research could use larger samples and with a new model of analysis. It would also be interesting if similar research could be carried out by taking male respondents and providing suggestions. Comparative analysis between men and women can also be carried out in the future. This research has taken a phenomenological study where only essences have been represented; it could take a constructivist form of study for generalizing at least to some extent.

### **12. Conclusions:**

To cope up with the trend of equal employment opportunity, it is not enough to recruit and hire females unless promising a satisfactory environment. A good environment means in which they can perform and prosper in the end, as it is retention. As an attempt to retain female faculties, begin with asking what satisfies them most. In contrast, eradicating the barriers of their progression path can be a powerful tool for retaining. It is true that a prevalent theme about teaching as 'female-friendly', 'flexible working hours', 'long holidays' have been obsolete nowadays. In this era of education, passion, synergies, scarifies of personal space, leadership in building generation, positive attitude, commitment, and research have been added to the flavor of a friendly profession. The study sought to gain a deeper and more contextual understanding regarding how various perceptions help to shape female faculties' career path. In the first phase of this research; the authors tried to identify the factors which led females to choose their career as academicians at the university level. In the second phase, their satisfactory issues come with side by side, describing brief literature reviews. Barriers they often face are depicted by their conversation in the third phase, and lastly, how they plan their career for the future is presented uninterruptedly. The study argues the importance of collecting specific institutions' qualitative data concerning female faculties' retention. It will also help to understand the issues impacting faculty satisfaction and career progression. The negative thought always has serious implications for the career progression of female faculties; therefore, the authorities need to take the necessary steps to build a comfort zone for the female faculties. It is rightly identified that family barriers can be stood ahead against all, which can be lessen by offering females with proper day-care facilities, flexible working hours, home office, leave facilities, etc. The institutions can also arrange training programs and other development mechanisms to develop their faculties in positive ways. The authorities must appreciate those female faculties who play a role model of a mother and a mentor in educational institutions. Simultaneously, female faculties also need to show their eagerness towards their institutions in all possible ways.

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## Appendix

### Verbatim transcript and indexed interpretation (sample of 1 respondent out of 10)

#### Respondent 1:

I begin my career as a teacher, though I never thought that I will be a teacher. In my student life, I didn't like this profession very much. But my satisfactory result prompts me to start my career as a teacher.	B: Remembering A1: Academic result
But now I'm enjoying this profession,	B: Eidetic grasping A1: Enjoyment (I am enjoying this profession)
There are lots of reasons when I was a student, I was in dilemma about what path I will choose for my career.... my father used to inspire me to build my career as a government officer. My choice was for the banking sector as I did my internship in the banking sector, also my husband is in the banking sector. But now I like this profession. There are various reasons. I can share my experience, knowledge, my ideas, and my philosophies with my students, I feel good they listen to me.	B: Reflecting A1: contentment( I can share .....philosophies with my students) A2: pride and superiority Share my experience....with my students.....they listen to me.
When my student do better in any sector or I saw their achievement I feel very much delighted and satisfied. I think I may not get such type of satisfaction in other professions.	B: Reflecting A1: Contentment (I saw their achievement.....much delighted) A2: Delightful B: Reflecting A1: satisfaction (2) (I think there is such type expectation I didn't get or no sector will give)

	A2: satisfaction with own field(I think there is .....no sector will give)
Though the salary & other financial benefits are poor self-satisfaction is there.	B: Evaluating A1: Discontentment (salary and other financial benefits are poor) A1: Self Satisfaction (Self-satisfaction are there)
Stress is there. But I believe that there is much more stress in any other private-sector job, here the stress is less...I guess.)	B: Realization A1: Stress (stress is there but.....)
But I face lots of challenges, to balance work and life. Especially managing my family, I have two very young kids.	B: evaluating A1: Challenging: (I have face challenges..... A2: challenges in managing family B: Recalling A1: Stress: Stress to balance work with life. A2: Stress in balancing work with life.
Private university teaching has some relaxation, some free time but pressure also. Situations are different from public university teaching. They enjoy some more relaxation.	B: Reflecting A1: Relaxation: private university teaching have some relax, B: Reflecting A1: <b>Discomfort</b> , Situations are different from the public university teaching scenario. They enjoy some more relaxation. A2: <b>Negatively comparison with public university teaching</b>
There are lots of challenges for female faculty compare to male faculty.	B: Remembering (comparison) A1: Challenges in comparing with male faculty[lots of challenges.....compare to male faculty)
I have a strong desire for pursuing Ph.D., abroad.... my younger brother went abroad. But I have 2 kids. Can't even think to leave them for a couple of days. My husband is in a different sector. It's tough for me....women have lots of issues. Especially children and husband....dual responsibility.	Reflecting: A1: Complexity in balancing responsibility and higher studies [I have a strong desire to pursue a Ph.D., Can't even think to leave them for a couple of days, It's tough for me. Women have lots of issues. Especially children and husband...dual responsibility.]  A2: In the way of progressing higher studies.
Can't think to leave family only for my own interest. Women have lots of energy. Especially it's my thinking, women are never less dedicated than men.	B: Realization A1: Challenges in managing family: (can't think to leave family...) B: Realization A1: Positive synergies, dedication(women have lots of energy...comparison with male
Because of family pressure & family responsibility they face a challenge in career.	B: Remembering A1: Challenges (family pressures, management, responsibility)
I think women are more committed to their job then men, it is my observation.	B: Realizing A1: Commitment towards the job
From my perspective, I have lots of facilities getting from this university. There are also some problems. I feel pressure, less freedom, no leave, class pressure, routine. If I consider higher studies, no private university offers any financial benefits, but in public universities, the teacher can easily take leave, get more time. Career progression is very smooth there.	B: Realization A1: satisfaction with facilities (lots of facilities) B: Realization A1: pressures, less freedom, etc) B: Evaluating A1: distress about financing in higher studies(financial lacking in higher studies)
In private university teaching, I must take a Ph.D. degree. In public universities, it is not mandatory. But see I have to take leave without pay. The financial benefit is also important. and sometimes co-workers, male members think that we, the females get the benefit but it is not true. Overall I can say I'm stuck in my career after balancing my life, it's my fault maybe the situation prompts me to stable in this path.	B: Realization A1: steady career progression (I can say I'm stuck in my career for balancing my family life) A2: Stability (stuck in one place due to family responsibility )