

# **MOTIVATIONS AND CHALLENGES OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP: A STUDY IN CONTEXT OF BANGLADESH**

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**ABSTRACT**

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Date: 31.05.2022	Number of pages: 61
<p>Abstract</p> <p>Purpose: The thesis aims to identify the basic motivational factors of women entrepreneurs in Bangladesh to start their own business and ascertain the key challenge factors that obstruct a woman from being an entrepreneur. This study can be helpful for future researchers and policymakers to motivate women to be entrepreneurs.</p> <p>Approach: This study utilizes the qualitative research approach. A multiple case study has been employed as the research design. To find the answers to the research question, semi-structured interviews have been supervised with ten Bangladeshi women entrepreneurs from different business sectors. This thesis administered a within-case analysis to clarify the findings from the interviews and the case studies.</p> <p>Research questions: <b>What are the motivational factors that drive women to be entrepreneurs in developing countries? Why women do not want to be entrepreneurs in developing countries?</b> Is the barrier related to society? Is the family discouraging? Or, do women have lack of motivation?</p> <p>Findings: the entrepreneurs indicated different motivational factors including job-related, self-fulfillment, and personal factors. On the other hand, they mentioned the very basic challenge factors that originated from their families and social attitude. Although there are also business-related barriers, however mostly they pointed to family opposition as the key barrier. Thus, it is evident that women entrepreneurs are self-motivated as they are willing to create self-employment and continue business operations after enduring these barriers.</p> <p>Keywords: women entrepreneurship, motivational factors, challenge factors, family support, social attitude, flexible working hours.</p>	
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# 1 INTRODUCTION

Women entrepreneurship is an emerging concept in developing countries today. This phenomenon is not practiced widely since there are lots of challenges regarding the social system, institutional and infrastructural barriers, and especially barriers from a family standpoint. Notwithstanding enormous obstacles, women get inspired to be an entrepreneur of miscellaneous motivational factors. In this chapter, I described the background and purpose of my study on women entrepreneurship in Bangladesh, representing the true reflection of a developing country. I intend to find the motivational factors that inspired women to pick this challenging job in developing countries' contexts and also the challenge factors that restrict their smooth operation so that the basic reason for marginalized participation of women in entrepreneurship can be assumed. Later, I discussed my research questions and the outline of the study with the method of my data collection and analysis together with the research approach.

## 1.1 Background and purpose of the study

As an evolving phenomenon, women entrepreneurship has progressively been occupying a substantial domain in business research. Nowadays, women are predisposed to entrepreneurship to deal with the 'glass ceiling' as this issue is a kind of hindrance to the career progression of women. ((Morrison et al., 1987, as cited in Rahmatullah & Zaman, 2014, p. 65). Furthermore, entrepreneurship offers flexibility that enables women to maintain work-life balance and emancipation from financial enslavement. Rehman and Roomi (2012) argued that women are more inclined to create their own employment intending to adjust between work and life as well as have flexibility.

There is extensive research on women entrepreneurship in the background of developed countries but the proportion of research on women entrepreneurs in developing countries is not enough compared to developed ones. The research on women entrepreneurship in Bangladesh is very scant also.

Women entrepreneurship appears as an operative tool for alleviating poverty, creating employment, enabling empowerment for women, and economic development in the long run. Women can enact the dual benefit of contributing to family income as well as national income by practicing entrepreneurship. It has also been found that women entrepreneurs prefer to create employment for other women than their male counterparts (Banu & Khanam, 2020).

The participation of women joining the labor market in Bangladesh has been growing but it is not promising. Until now, women are confronted by miscellaneous barriers when deciding in joining the workforce. The familial values in developing countries evolve with the social system and cultural viewpoint, along with religious values in some cases, which have a great influence on women's business decisions (Jaim, 2021).

The purpose of this study is to achieve an explicit understanding of the basic motivational factors of women entrepreneurship in developing countries like Bangladesh. Moreover, this study also aims to identify the key challenges met by women entrepreneurs before and after embarking on their business which consequently denotes the reasons why women are not appreciably interested to take entrepreneurship as a profession.

## 1.2 Research questions

In this study, I concentrated on urban-based married women with children who represent the common scenario in Bangladesh. Additionally, the focus group was highly educated as all of them have master's degrees. These women decided to join the workforce instead of staying home and one of them specifically decided to be an entrepreneur instead of working for someone else. Since all of them are educated and motivated to work outside, I aimed to find answers that what motivated them to be entrepreneurs and what are the reasons that women are reluctant to be entrepreneurs. To obtain the best possible outcome, the research questions of the thesis have been set as follows:

- **What are the motivational factors that drive women to be entrepreneurs in developing countries?**
- **Why women do not want to be entrepreneurs in developing countries?**

To be more specific in the answers, there are three sub-research questions:

- Is the barrier related to society?
- Is the family discouraging?
- Or, do women have lack of motivation?



### 1.3 Outline of the thesis

This study is started with an introductory chapter where the background of this topic and its purpose have been recounted followed by the literature review and empirical data that establishes the connection between relevant research and practical scenario.

The introduction and background of the study have been presented in the first chapter with the indication of the research problem. Hence, the research questions and purpose of the study have been defined.

The second chapter guides the reader to the literature review on entrepreneurial motivation, entrepreneurial intentions, and women entrepreneurship. The theoretical discussion begins with entrepreneurial motivation and factors affecting entrepreneurial motivation. Subsequently, entrepreneurial intentions and their determinants have been enumerated in the light of relevant theory. Two major forms of entrepreneurship have also been discussed in this chapter. A detailed discussion on women entrepreneurship is the takeaway of this chapter. Later, the chapter is finished by portraying the nature of entrepreneurship in developing countries.

The third chapter depicts the methodology of the study. The research approach, sampling technique, data collection, and analysis method are the central focus of this chapter.

The findings of this research derived from the interviews and case studies are expounded in the fourth chapter. The motivational factors and challenge factors of women entrepreneurs are listed here.

There is a comprehensive discussion of the research findings is in chapter five. This discussion has been illustrated with the help of prior relevant studies discussed in the literature review. This chapter answers the research questions. The implication, and limitations and recommendations of the study are also in this chapter.

Finally, the sixth chapter embodies the conclusion of the study. There are the limitations of the study and some recommendations in chapter seven.

## **2 LITERATURE REVIEW**

In this chapter, the concept of entrepreneurial motivation has been narrated considering entrepreneurial intentions and their determinants. Since motivation is the prime factor to decide whether a woman wants to join the workforce or not, entrepreneurial motivation has been explained first to understand the initial concept of entrepreneurship. The theory of necessity-driven entrepreneurship and opportunity-driven entrepreneurship has also been taken into consideration since necessity-driven entrepreneurship is mostly relevant to the trend of women entrepreneurship in developing countries. As the central focus of this chapter, an elaborated discourse on women entrepreneurship concerning its typology, different facets, work-life balance, women employment, and behavioral patterns has been portrayed. Based on previous scholars' perspectives, I described the configuration of entrepreneurship in developing countries. Lastly, the motivational factors of women in developing countries have been integrated to give the review a complete form.

### **2.1 Entrepreneurial motivation**

#### **2.1.1 Definition**

Entrepreneurial motivation is an integrated function of the individual characteristics of the entrepreneur, personal environment, subjective goal, the idea of the business and its environment, and the extrinsic and intrinsic factors (Naffziger et al, 1994, as cited in Murnieks et al, 2020). So, it can be said that entrepreneurial motivation is something that inspires entrepreneurs to achieve their entrepreneurial goals by exercising utmost effort and determination. These motivational factors influence the extent of entrepreneurial behavior that drives the entrepreneurs to pursue the objectives through the business operation. Additionally, these factors also determine the entrepreneurial intentions which ultimately impact the behaviors of an individual toward the business process.

#### **2.1.2 Factors affecting entrepreneurial motivation**

In the entrepreneurial process, entrepreneurial motivation is the key determinant for the active participation of a person since entrepreneurship is quite an interactive and action-oriented system (Carsrud & Brännback, 2011). Thus, in this action-oriented process, the willingness of people to serve the purpose is highly required to make entrepreneurship possible (Shane et al., 2003). Shane et al. (2003) also claimed that discerning the development of entrepreneurial motivation is

indispensable to explicate who pursues entrepreneurial opportunities. The finding of Miller et al. (2012) is supported by this context to some extent because these authors argued that, individuals who do not have entrepreneurial motivation are not supposed to engross entrepreneurial behavior or action which are necessary to become entrepreneurs. Therefore, it is distinctly needed to determine entrepreneurial motivation to define the entrepreneurial behavior and whether the individual is driven to entrepreneurship either by necessity or by opportunity. For instance, it has been found by Benzing et al. (2009) that, extrinsic factors like income, job security, or independence are more crucial drivers to become entrepreneurs than intrinsic factors. Conversely, intrinsic motivational factors e.g., entrepreneurial ambitions, and personal goals, are predominantly important for sequential multi-unit entrepreneurs (Grünhagen & Mittelstaedt, 2005). Therefore, extrinsic factors are important for a person to be an entrepreneur and intrinsic factors are equally important for an entrepreneur to go ahead.

### **2.1.3 Motivation and entrepreneurial identity formation**

An individual's identity highly impacts his or her decisions in different aspects of life. Accordingly, the identity of an entrepreneur is also important for his or her course of action regarding the business. Mahto and McDowell (2018) argued that, the passion and way of behaving of an entrepreneur are influenced by the entrepreneur's identity. For instance, the authors said that the identity significantly forms the decision to founding the business. During the identity-formation stage, high entrepreneurial exposure, i.e., entrepreneurial actions that encompass the social environment, increases the entrepreneurial motivation of a person. Accordingly, the person exhibits the urge to strive for framing entrepreneurial identity. The authors also argued that, to develop entrepreneurial motivation, self-assessment of the person's identity is the key factor. Those who are not entrepreneurs yet, build up their entrepreneurial motivation by identity self-assessment (Mahto & McDowell, 2018). This identity self-assessment helps keep seeking enhancement of their identity or form a new identity that leads to entrepreneurial motivation. Moreover, Mahto and McDowell (2018) anticipated that unsatisfied individuals will endeavor to improve their identities or develop distinct identities. Afterward, these aspiring individuals pursue entrepreneurial career choices and build up entrepreneurial motivation within the social environment that is highly concentrated on entrepreneurial actions.

## 2.2 Entrepreneurial intentions and their determinants

### 2.2.1 Entrepreneurial intention

Entrepreneurial intentions (EI) have been defined as “the conscious state of mind that precedes entrepreneurial action and directs attention toward entrepreneurial career to be an entrepreneur by starting a new business” (Moriano et al., 2012, p. 165). There are several extant intention models (e.g., TPB by Ajzen (1991)<sup>1</sup>, SEE by Shapero & Sokol (1982)<sup>2</sup>, KEI by Krueger (2009)<sup>3</sup>) that not only detect individual characteristics but also help provide a means to comprehend the direct predecessors of a new business and forecast the effects of intentions of entrepreneurs that have long-term visions. Instead of scrutinizing individual or situational dynamics, these models suggest enhanced understanding to predict individuals’ planned behavior and elucidate the entrepreneurial behavior that analyzes potential opportunities by examining their intentions and the factors that influence their intentions (Shepherd & Krueger, 2002).

### 2.2.2 Theory of planned behavior

Among the intention models, the theory of planned behavior (TPB) by Ajzen (1991) is the most pragmatic and widely studied in the entrepreneurship literature. TPB posits that there are three determinants for intentions to carry out a behavior: a) attitudes toward behavior, b) subjective norm, and c) perceived behavioral control (Esfandiar et al., 2019).

*Attitude toward behavior:* the extent to which an individual generally evaluates a behavior either favorably or unfavorably (Ajzen, 1991). This attitude toward behavior is ascertained by some particular accessible behavior that is connected that different results and their attributes (Moriano et al., 2012).

*Subjective norm:* the individual’s perception toward his/her behavior if it is consistent to engage in entrepreneurial behavior or not (Ajzen, 1991). Ajzen (1991) also mentioned about two components of the subjective norm: normative beliefs that perceive that individuals will set the norms and will accept or reject particular behavior, and secondly, motivation to comply which concerns the willingness of an individual to follow the norms.

*Perceived behavioral control:* individual’s perception about their capability to carry out a target behavior (Moriano et al., 2012). The intention to carry out a target behavior establishes the fundamental element of TPB, i.e., the more robust the intention, the better the possibility of efficacious performance (Ajzen, 1991).

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<sup>1</sup> TPB: Theory of Planned Behavior

<sup>2</sup> SEE: Shapero’s model of the Entrepreneurial Event

<sup>3</sup> KEI: Krueger’s integrated model of Entrepreneurial Intention

TPB has widely been studied in entrepreneurial research as an effective framework to comprehend entrepreneurial intent (Shook & Bratianu, 2010). It has been found that the effects of attitude toward behavior and perceived behavioral control are very useful in entrepreneurial intentions, especially in western countries (Krueger et al, 2000). But according to Shook and Bratianu (2010), the effectiveness of TPB has not been established in transitional economies to project entrepreneurial intent. Nevertheless, TPB is useful to explain the development of intentions in an entrepreneurial context by including the “intention-behavior relationship” (Kautonen et al., 2015, p. 656).

Entrepreneurship is not only about intentions but also about actions; thus, the degree to which entrepreneurial intentions are translated into actions outlines the significance of intention research (Kautonen et al., 2015). TPB explicates succinctly the intention-action transformation. Intentions might be short of constancy or growth which can demoralize the individual not to act necessarily to devise action. Therefore, the robustness of intention signifies the measure of action. Additionally, the predilection of individuals may get changed due to their surroundings, e.g., personal or professional, thus their introductory entrepreneurial intentions no longer exist. Besides, some issues are quite instinctual that determine the translation of intention into action. For instance, individuals who are highly disciplinarian, tend to turn intentions into actions more competently. So, self-restraint or self-mastery can measure the extent of the intention-behavior relationship (Kautonen et al., 2015).

Afterwards, Esfandiar et al. (2019) stated that, the key determining factor of entrepreneurial goal intention is desirability. Besides, attitude toward entrepreneurship pointedly influences perceived desirability along with self-efficacy, feasibility, opportunity, attitude, and collective efficacy but not the social customs (Esfandiar et al., 2019). This research also revealed that, those who have entrepreneurial intentions, tend to be able to recognize any opportunity regarding business (Esfandiar et al., 2019).

### **2.2.3 Entrepreneurial motivation and EI**

Entrepreneurial motivation can be defined as the inspiration to start a business and entrepreneurial intention as the determination to achieve entrepreneurial goals. Entrepreneurial intention has been referred to as the goal which is influenced by motivational factors that ultimately influence the entrepreneurial action or behavior (Schlepphorst et al., 2020). Ozaralli and Rivenburgh (2016) stated that, entrepreneurial intention is any business idea that might or might not take the form of real business but if the motivation is stronger, it may result in establishment even if delayed. Therefore, entrepreneurial motivation tends to be the determining factor that positively influences the development of entrepreneurial intention (Hassan et al., 2021).

### 2.3 Necessity entrepreneurship and opportunity entrepreneurship: a dichotomy

As a relevant and consistent issue, business research has paid significant importance to ascertain the motivations of starting a business as necessity entrepreneurship and opportunity entrepreneurship. Necessity entrepreneurship is chosen when a person does not have any better alternative to earn a livelihood. Oppositely, opportunity entrepreneurship is starting a new business from personal willingness when it is found that there is a potential market or a prospective business that can be nurtured more. More precisely, it is necessity entrepreneurship when someone opts entrepreneurship for having no better option than opportunity entrepreneurship which is actually an active choice to form a new business because there is an immense opportunity for an underexploited business (Acs, 2006). As there are two generators of entrepreneurship, entrepreneurship is a resort to forthcoming unemployment or grasping opportunities to flourish innovative ideas to achieve self-esteem (Audretsch & Thurik, 2000). Therefore, an individual can be pushed to create self-employment because there is the threat of no alternative employment or pulled to chase a lucrative business prospect (Bhola et al., 2006). As stated by Uhlaner & Thurik (2007), entrepreneurs are attracted by pull factors to earn profits, whether material or immaterial and push dynamics are the state of occupational conflict between one's current and desired choice. Opportunity entrepreneurship is caused by 'pull' factors because there are some desires for a challenge, motivations to attempt something by oneself, being independent or to be acknowledged by the society, materializing hobbies, and so on, whereas necessity entrepreneurship is initiated by 'push' factors like poverty, not having any employment, helping family expenditures by money etc. (Tambunan, 2009). Table 1 encapsulates the difference between opportunity entrepreneurship and necessity entrepreneurship:

Table 1 Necessity and opportunity entrepreneurship

	Opportunity-based entrepreneurship	Necessity-based entrepreneurship
Push or pull?	Individual is 'pulled' towards entrepreneurship	Individual is 'pushed' into entrepreneurship
Objective	Individuals seek greater autonomy, independence, freedom, financial gain, social status or recognition	Individual needs a source of income, the person pursues self-employment because there are no better options
Trigger	Individual recognizes an opportunity that can im-	Often result of long-term unemployment or being

	Opportunity-based entrepreneurship	Necessity-based entrepreneurship
	prove or maintain their income or increase their independence	laid-off, or the threat of losing one's job
Economic impact	Concerns project with growth potential, spurs innovation and dynamism in economy	Provides employment option and means of revenue generation for otherwise unemployed. Businesses are financially less successful than those built upon pull factors
Example	Innovation based economies like Sweden, Denmark	Factor-driven economies like Pakistan

Note. From "Female entrepreneurship and the new venture creation: An international overview," by D. Kariv, 2013, *Routledge*, p. 108.

The push and pull factors have been discussed in previous studies in light of the gender of the entrepreneurs. Flexibility of job is an important push factor for women because of their family responsibilities, however, dissatisfaction with the job is also another push factor related to their professional life (Orhan & Scott, 2001). Thus, role playing in the family and threat of professional growth in male-dominating organizations have become two significant push factors for women. It is relevant to mention here that, Hisrich and Brush (1985) emphasized frustration and boredom as push factors that primarily arouse entrepreneurship among women. Hence, it has been found that push dynamics are more significant for women than their male counterparts. On the other hand, there are similar studies that denoted that women are motivated to entrepreneurial activities due to pull factors (Buttner & Moore, 1997). Contrastingly, women in developing countries are mostly motivated by these push factors, i.e., necessity entrepreneurship, while developed countries' women are seeming to be stimulated by pull factors or opportunity entrepreneurship (Anderson & Ojediran, 2021). It has been argued that the ratio of opportunity and necessity entrepreneurship is one of the major parameters of economic development and more opportunity entrepreneurship and less necessity entrepreneurship can stimulate economic development (Acs, 2006).

## 2.4 Women entrepreneurship

This part entails the definition and typical classification of women entrepreneurship. The significant facets of women entrepreneurship and how they influence women have also been delineated. I also focused on women's work-life balance which is a key factor for women joining the workforce. To understand the employment selection and behavioral patterns of women I also discussed preference theory here.

### 2.4.1 Definition and typology

Entrepreneurship is the process of starting a new business or invigorating an existing business to execute an identified opportunity (Onuoha, 2007). An entrepreneur is a person who assembles economic and social elements to convert resources to useful versions and is likely to bear risks and failures as part of the procurement task so that he/she can exhibit one's own initiative and illustrate creative ideas (Hisrich, 1990). Therefore, entrepreneurship is the practice of identifying opportunities and implementing the opportunities to make resources more functional by accepting a calculative amount of risk. Notably, women entrepreneurship is a business that is fully or majority owned by women where the prime owner or a major number of shareholders are women (McAdam, 2013, p. 2). Table 2 illustrates the classification of different women entrepreneurs:

Table 2 Classification of typical women entrepreneurs.

<b>Aimless</b>	The "aimless" young women who set up a business essentially as an alternative to unemployment.
<b>Success-oriented</b>	The "success-oriented" young women for whom entrepreneurship is not a more or less random or obligatory choice but a long-term career strategy.
<b>Strongly success-oriented</b>	The "strongly success-oriented" women, usually without children, who view entrepreneurial activity as an opportunity for greater professional fulfillment or as a means to overcome the obstacles against career advancement encountered in the organizations for which they previously worked.
<b>Dualists</b>	The "dualists", often with substantial work experience, who must reconcile work and family responsibilities and are therefore looking for a solution which gives them flexibility



<b>Return workers</b>	The “return workers”, or women (usually low-skilled) who have quit their previous jobs to look after their families and are motivated by mainly economic considerations or by a desire to create space for self-fulfillment outside the family sphere.
<b>Traditionalists</b>	The “traditionalists”, or women with family backgrounds in which the owning and running of a business is a longstanding tradition
<b>Radicals</b>	The “radicals”, or women motivated by a culture antagonist to conventional entrepreneurial values who set up initiatives intended to promote the interests of women in society

*Note.* From “Entrepreneur-mentality, gender and the study of women entrepreneurs,” by A. Bruni, S. Gherardi, and B. Poggio, 2004, *Journal of Organizational Change Management*, 17(3), p. 261-262 as cited in McAdam, 2013.

#### **2.4.2 Socio-economic, cultural, and behavioral facets**

Nowadays, the research regarding women entrepreneurship has increased since there are rapid changes in sociocultural conditions in the worldwide market. The interest in women entrepreneurship and their contribution to the global economy has been accelerated as gender equality has now been a widely discussed topic. Kuschel et al. (2017) considered that it is because of the important roles played by women entrepreneurs to ensure gender equality in the global market. Since there is an intensification of gender parity in global business, it has been expected that the self-employment of women is more likely to reduce poverty, empower women, and develop the economy as an effective mechanism (Al-Dajani & Marlow, 2010).

According to a country’s perception of women’s role in the respective society, there are different inferences about women’s work (Baughn et al., 2006). Jahan (2014) referred that, women’s work is a term itself in developing countries that is widely used because the status of women and their contribution is considered differently than in the developed countries. Besides, the socio-cultural environment in developing countries is quite conservative where the women are born and grow up. Such an unfavorable environment leads to lack of confidence both in women and in social perspective (Hossain et al., 2009). That is why, women’s endeavors are considered as ineffective and society’s common perception is not to recognize them as the decision maker.

Religious value is another significant part of the cultural system that guides the decision of career choice of women but this issue has not been taken into consideration widely in previous research. Although, some studies argued that, religion is sometimes responsible for affecting the development of women

entrepreneurship (Das & Mohiuddin, 2015; Banu & Khanam, 2020) as religious values do not approve the women working or conducting business in developing countries contexts. Therefore, cultural standpoint determines the status of women and their trend of work in many cases.

In case of starting a new business, women entrepreneurs manifest different behavioral aspects (Lewis, 2006). It has been found that these entrepreneurs are less expected to take risks and make courageous decisions in financial concerns than men even when both are influenced by the same decision making factors and are supposed to behave similarly (Tan, 2008). Therefore, it is evident that, women-owned businesses are more characterized by trust and cooperation building (Kuschel et al., 2017). A study by Kuschel and Labra (2018) also revealed that, these types of businesses are small in size in terms of manpower and capital. It seems that the lack of confidence in women influences them to behave in such a way that they are not intended to take higher risks or go for setting up a big venture.

#### **2.4.3 Work-life balance: a prerequisite**

The engagement of women in the business or labor market has increased extensively but still the household responsibilities and period of child rearing outline the rate of participation of women in such activities (McAdam, 2013, p. 11). Concisely, these factors determine the balance of work and personal lives of working women. Carter and Shaw (2006) denoted similarly by ascertaining parenthood as a significant influencer of working pattern of women either self-employed or paid employed. It is commonly agreed that, women are responsible for family and household activities in most of the countries worldwide (Ahl, 2004, as cited in, 2013). The unrelenting responsibility of household and child rearing tends to be the vital factor for the downgrading of women in the labor market (Bradley et al., 2000). Consequently, these undying responsibilities are more likely to be prioritized over their entrepreneurial tasks and create uncertainty in the commitment toward entrepreneurial responsibilities (Galloway et al., 2002). In many cases, it has been found that, this dual responsibility of women between home and work turned them to opt for home-based business (Carter & Shaw, 2006). Since mostly the household is prioritized over entrepreneurial activities, these businesses encounter legitimacy problems either in raising capital or capturing the market (Mirchandani, 1999). Likewise, a flexible working hour has always been recognized as the greatest reason for which women intend for their own business instead of paid employment (Heilman & Chen, 2003). So entrepreneurship can be a way to balance household and work demands, but occasionally self-employed persons have to work longer than the paid employees (Blanchflower & Shadforth, 2007).

#### 2.4.4 Preference theory: Women's employment and behavior pattern

Preference theory developed by Hakim (2000) states that, both childcare and career choice of women have relative significance at the micro-level that influence decision making of women including their personal values. According to preference theory there are three main lifestyle preferences (Table 3) that determine the employment selection and behavioral pattern of women (McAdam, 2013, p. 14). These three lifestyles also decide the priority of career choice and household maintenance of women.

Moreover, it has been found that there are glass ceiling and higher gender disparity due to the increasing number of women employment which has been explained in preference theory to understand the recent trend of disparity regarding women's career and their payment policy. (Hakim, 2006).

Table 3 Preference theory: three lifestyle preferences of women

<i>Home-centred</i>	<i>Adaptive</i>	<i>Work-centred</i>
20% of women Varies 10%-30%	60% of women Varies 40%-80%	20% of women Varies 10%-30%
Family life and children are the main priorities throughout life. Equivalent activities in the public arena: politics, sport, art etc.	This group is most diverse and includes women who want to combine work and family, plus drifters and unplanned careers.	Childless women are concentrated here. Main priority in life is employment.
Prefer not to work	Want to work, but not totally committed to work career.	Committed to work or equivalent activities.
Qualifications obtained as cultural capital	Qualifications obtained with the intention of working	Large investment in qualifications/training for employment or other activities.
Responsive to social and family policy	Very responsive to all policies	Responsive to employment policies

*Note.* From "Work-lifestyle choices in the 21st century: Preference theory," by Hakim, C. (2000), *Oxford: Oxford University Press*, p. 6 as cited in McAdam, 2013.

Home-centered women are minor in number, mostly in western countries, and they prioritize household activities over their career choice because most of them stay at home after getting married. Adaptive women are the highest in number who attempt to incorporate household and work responsibilities concurrently. Choosing part-time or seasonal works with flexible working hours is the key adaptive strategy. Work-centered women are also insignificant in number even

though a growing number of women are getting educated. This type of woman may remain childless after getting married for the sake of career demands (McAdam, 2013, p. 15).

#### **2.4.5 Summary**

Despite of many prerequisites and challenges, it has been commonly supposed that starting one's own business can be a prospective option to provide women with a socio-economic mechanism to a large extent and a feasible opportunity to escalate their status and proliferate their power. Moreover, entrepreneurship has been assumed as the solution to the subordination of women to male dominance. Nevertheless, this subordination is profoundly entrenched in the socio-economic context from the early stage of civilization that continued the trend of patriarchy which cannot be modified easily by entrepreneurship alone (McAdam, 2013, p. 21).

### **2.5 Entrepreneurship in developing countries**

The role of entrepreneurship has usually been considered as progressive change maker in developing countries. In developing countries, entrepreneurship can pave the way to employment creation, wealth maximization, innovation, and other aggregate development (Desai, 2011). Beck et al. (2005) argued that, small business or new venture creation largely contributes to a robust economy. However, the role of entrepreneurship can in no way be denied both in developed and developing countries as an indispensable part of productive growth and economic development.

The evolution of entrepreneurship in developing countries was not so easy as there were various modifications in economic policies. Earlier, two key industrial policies were most noticeable for developing countries in addition to various policies and strategies: import substitution and export promotion (Acs & Virgill, 2010). Unfortunately, except for several developing countries, none of the strategies were fruitful for the sake of economic development. After that, developing countries started to emphasize shaping proper business and economic environment for the advancement of their private-owned business which included indigenous entrepreneurs and foreign investment (Acs & Virgill, 2010). Thus, the emergence and familiarity of entrepreneurship along with small and medium enterprises has turned into a vital explication for economic development in recent years (Acs & Virgill, 2010).

### 2.5.1 Typical features of entrepreneurship in developing countries

The trend of entrepreneurship in developing countries is characterized by some particular phenomena. Three fundamental features: opportunity, source of finance, and human resource have been pointed out from different literatures which interprets the common scenario of entrepreneurship in developing countries:

*Opportunity:* entrepreneurs in developing countries enjoy extensive opportunities than the entrepreneurs of developed countries, which enables the enterprises to outline a better portfolio strategy to combat the utmost level of business and market risk (Lingelbach et al., 2005). The emerging economic system in developing countries is deeply embedded in the underlying economies. Such scenarios offer more opportunities in the form of emerging markets but it lacks steadiness and consistency. The entrepreneurs operating in the emerging markets avail the exclusive opportunities to proceed very close to the core of the economy (Lingelbach et al., 2005).

*Source of finance:* despite having widespread opportunities and prospective emerging markets, developing countries suffer from limited financial resources due to improper financial infrastructure and meager personal savings that confines the future development of potential ventures. Internal finance is the prime source of capital for startups in developing countries mostly, as entrepreneurs are highly dependent on informal sources to finance their business. Previous research argued that, countries tend to have more private savings which have undergone economic instability (Loayza et al., 2000, as cited in Lingelbach et al., 2005). Other formal sources are consisting of institutional loans provided by banks or other venture capitalists but this type of finance contributes very insignificantly in the primary stage of business (Lingelbach et al., 2005).

*Human resource:* skilled human resources with proper training are indispensable for a startup in the competitive market. These businesses require industry-specific training and they are usually established in industrial clusters of certain geographical areas (Lingelbach et al., 2005). Since entrepreneurship is kind of sole proprietorship, it is highly required to integrate appropriate mentorship of human resources for easy operation. For growth prospects, emerging markets need such manpower but there are not enough people with such abilities to materialize any radical change in markets. Consequently, entrepreneurs seek individuals who are suitable for local market conditions and have the expertise to adapt the political turmoil and economic instability in a crisis oriented developing countries (Lingelbach et al., 2005).

Therefore, developing countries have widespread business opportunities for entrepreneurship though there is lack of consistency initially. Limited sources of finance posed a potential barrier to entrepreneurship in developing countries. Besides, trained manpower is highly required to carry out business in such countries to adopt different risks associated with the start-ups.

## 2.5.2 Women entrepreneurship in developing countries

The evolution of women entrepreneurship in developing countries has remarkable possibilities in terms of women empowerment and socio-economic development. But the potentialities are still unexploited in many countries because the rate of economic development there is measured by the percentage of per capita income and degree of industrialization which has been low until now (Tambunan, 2009). Previous studies regarding Asian developing countries claimed that there are three types of women entrepreneurs (Table 4): “chance”, “forced”, and “created” entrepreneurs (Tambunan, 2009, p. 30).

Table 4 Categories of women entrepreneurs in Asian developing countries according to the reason for starting the business

Category	Reasons to be entrepreneurs
<b>Chance entrepreneurs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To keep busy</li> <li>▪ Pursue hobby or special interest</li> <li>▪ Family/spouse had business</li> </ul>
<b>Forced entrepreneurs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Financial purpose/money needed</li> <li>▪ Control over time/flexibility</li> <li>▪ Challenge, try something on one's own</li> <li>▪ Show others I could do it</li> </ul>
<b>Created/pulled entrepreneurs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To be independent</li> <li>▪ Self-satisfaction</li> <li>▪ Example to children</li> <li>▪ Employment to others/do something worthwhile</li> </ul>

*Note.* From “Problems faced by women entrepreneurs,” by Das, D. J. (2000), In K. Sasikumar (ed.), *Women Entrepreneurship*. New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House. as cited in Tambunan, 2009.

Chance entrepreneurs start their business without having any distinct objectives or plans. These forms of businesses basically originated from their hobbies that eventually turn into economic enterprises. Forced entrepreneurs' principal objectives are financial to start a business, they are enforced by situations, for instance, financial crisis confronted by family or death of the earning member. Created entrepreneurs are motivated by passion or self-actualization to prove themselves as a competent human being to society, besides, they want to be independent.

It has also been argued that the extent of women entrepreneurship evolution and development is intertwined with gender equity, whereas gender equality is less

practiced in developing countries compared to developed countries. However, the concept of gender equity is multi-faceted and relatively hard to assess as there is actually no perfect social indicator to ascertain gender discrimination in developing countries (Tambunan, 2009).

Women entrepreneurship in developing countries is mostly characterized by the social acceptance that thwarts the process of business segment selection and its growth (Sharma, 2013; Tripathi & Singh, 2018). Additionally, patriarchal society and region-based traditions form the male dominating social system that inhibits women entrepreneurship (Anderson & Ojediran, 2021). The socio-cultural and religious systems sometimes cause gender disparity and women subordination in Islamic countries which also constrains this process. Yet, it has also been noted that, those women who belong to the upper class of the society, have good educational backgrounds and have supportive families, are more likely to avail opportunities and privileges (Roomi & Harrison, 2010). On the contrary, Yunis et al. (2019) referred that, women from lower strata of the society face greater discrimination and they do not possess enough privileges to handle such disparity.

Family plays a significant role in women's career selection in Asian developing countries. It is expected that women would perform responsibilities practically to maintain the family (Anderson & Ojediran, 2021). The usual social concept entitles women as conventional homemakers and prototyped a tradition where women are being taught to depend on their male guardians to have social and financial support (Sharma, 2013; Tripathi & Singh, 2018). Such social values and prevailing economic context relegate the entrepreneurial role of women irrespective of their educational background or competencies (Parvin et al., 2012).

### **2.5.3 Motivational factors of women in developing countries**

Many people have the latent aspiration to be entrepreneurs to lead their teams and thrive for success (García-Rodríguez et al., 2017). Motivation for entrepreneurship has been categorized in three different ways: "internal motivation, external motivation through social aggrandization, and need of situation" (Samo et al., 2019, as cited in Qureshi et al., 2021). Qureshi et al., (2021) assume that internal motivation and social aggrandization are mutually coordinated. In numerous cases, women entrepreneurs become motivated by own aspiration to run their startups so as to work independently (Carter et al., 2003).

The glass ceiling effect, one of the significant motivating factors for women to opt their own business, is considered as a discriminating factor averting women in their career growth (Patterson & Mavin, 2009). The glass ceiling tends to be a "transparent barrier" refraining women from escalating "above a certain level in corporations" (Morrison et al., 1987, as cited in McAdam, 2013, p. 13). Therefore,

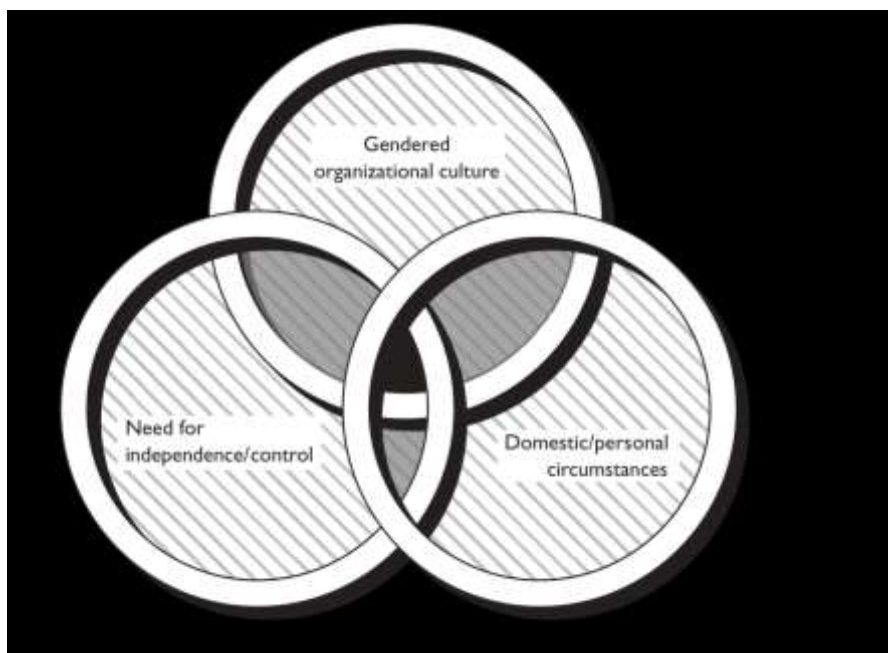
this is an unseen barrier faced by women in organizations which is gendered and drives them to move into self-employment.

Inflexible working hours in corporate life and lack of balance between family life and employment is another common motivational factor for women starting up a business (Patterson & Mavin, 2009). Since women are expected to perform childcare and home managing in parallel with their working lives, it becomes demanding to play both roles effectively and most women decide to career transition from paid employment to self-employment.

For some women, independence and self-actualization offer more attraction to pursue establishing their own venture. Achieving independence and having control rise the confidence of women, proliferate their skills – and this entire process can be possible by entrepreneurship as entrepreneurship unveils the potential of women (Patterson & Mavin, 2009).

Patterson and Mavin (2009) summarized three key motivational factors (Figure 1) for women to be entrepreneurs which are illustrated in the following figure:

Figure 1 A framework of career transition motivation



*Note.* From “Women entrepreneurs: jumping the corporate ship and gaining new wings,” by N. Patterson, & S. Mavin, 2009, *International Small Business Journal*, 27(2), p. 186



As per Figure 1, the black part denotes issues with three of the themes resulting in a greater sense of urgency for the women's immediate departure for entrepreneurship. Grey part refers that, two of the themes result in the women feeling uncomfortable enough to warrant the career transition to entrepreneurship. Lastly, the white part represents one of the themes which is perhaps uncomfortable for the women but bearable and they may switch career (Patterson & Mavin, 2009, p. 186).

Bruni et al. (2004) classified the motivational factors as "compulsion factors" and "attraction factors" where compulsion factors signify coercing women "more out of necessity than choice" and attraction factors encourage women to recognize entrepreneurship as an opportunity (p. 263). Attraction steers women to contribute to the family income, utilize their skills, experience, and education more fruitfully and compulsion represents the necessity for freedom and self-sufficiency in work, self-achievement, own income, or the quest for social assignment (Bruni et al., 2004).

Das (2000) specified that, financial benefit is the prime motivational factor for women, besides, being independent and doing something new or worthwhile also motivate them to set up a business. On the other hand, Stefanovic et al. (2010) considered that, the motivating factors of entrepreneurs in developing countries are very generic.

## 2.6 Summary

Entrepreneurial motivation and intention largely influence the incorporation of a new business. These two concepts are intertwined as well to direct the path of understanding entrepreneurial action and behavior. The theory of planned behavior is a significant framework in this context to connote the development of entrepreneurial intention. The action and behavior are demonstrated through the intentions; briefly, the stronger the intentions, the more obvious the actions are. The motivational factors are basically categorized into two: push (extrinsic) factors and pull (intrinsic) factors. Thus, these two factors lead to two types of entrepreneurship: push factors to create necessity entrepreneurship and pull factors form opportunity entrepreneurship.

Earlier studies found that, women entrepreneurship in developing countries is mostly characterized by necessity entrepreneurship. Moreover, women entrepreneurship has been affected by the socio-economic and cultural aspects that sometimes impede the process of entrepreneurship and determine the behavioral factors of women entrepreneurs. Conflict of work-life balance is another crucial fac-

tor to choose entrepreneurship as a career. Meanwhile, preference theory (Hakim, 2000) explains the lifestyle and work preferences of women that also indicate their behavioral patterns.

Despite of available opportunities, entrepreneurship in developing countries lags due to scarcity of financial resources and skilled manpower. Besides, women entrepreneurship in developing countries is appallingly marginalized because of different social and cultural values. Gender disparity and social echelon play important role in women motivation to succeed in a business venture. Since, the social system in developing countries requires women to combine home and work, the career choice of women is significantly dependent upon it. Therefore, it is highly required to be aspired by entrepreneurial motivation for women in developing countries to prove their actions despite of miscellaneous barriers. Different barriers may pose lack of enthusiasm for women to reflect on their behavior as an entrepreneur, but the intention and motivation can overcome the challenges to drive them to intended projects.

As a woman from a developing country, I intend to look into the matter that why women are left behind in entrepreneurship. According to previous research, motivational factors can contribute to achieving the entrepreneurial goals; notwithstanding various social, cultural and familial issues. Therefore, I picked out this phenomenon to learn more about the real challenges against women entrepreneurship, whether they are material barriers or women's motivation.

### 3 RESEARCH METHOD

This chapter entails an elaborate description of the research process that I follow throughout the research. Here, I encapsulated the overall research design by narrating the research approach, sources of data, and data collection method. Moreover, data analysis method of this study has also been added in this chapter. My research design encompassed an empirical and descriptive approach.

#### 3.1 Research approach

##### 3.1.1 Quantitative research and qualitative research

In my study, I implemented qualitative research approach to examine the data and assess the answers to the research questions.

Qualitative research is based on preliminary data collected by the researcher that helps comprehend the occurrences of a particular context. In qualitative research, data are mostly collected through interviews, questionnaires, observations or any conversational communication that articulates the personal opinion of the interviewee constructed on their experiences about the topic. The results derived from qualitative research formulate theory (Creswell & Clark, 2017). According to Eriksson and Kovalainen (2008), qualitative approach helps establish theories and produce new information effectively from the data that have been obtained from different sources. Draper (2004) argued that, qualitative research embodies a critical and integrated representation of analyzed data and interprets extensive assessment of informants by conducting the study in a “natural setting” (p. 642). The basic strategies used in qualitative research are narrative research, phenomenological research, grounded theory, ethnography, and case studies (Creswell, 2017). I used case study strategy for my research. To scrutinize collected data in an ingeniously, qualitative approach is effective and functional since it elaborates the context of any occurrence in a holistic manner. Therefore, qualitative research helps apprehend the phenomenon and analyze data to establish theories.

In contrast, quantitative approach is basically establishing hypotheses and testing them with theories. Goertzen (2017) referred that, quantitative research approach is collecting structured data and analyzing numerical data. Quantitative approach tends to analyze data statistically to form a consistent and rigorous measurement. It is also argued that quantitative research illuminates the trends of data set but the “motivation behind observed behaviors” are not focused (Goertzen, 2017, p. 12). Qualitative method complements these gaps through interviews, surveys, observations, and so on.

### **3.1.2 Inductive research and deductive research**

There are two significant approaches for theory development in research: inductive reasoning and deductive reasoning. In case of inductive approach, the researcher draws conclusions based on collected empirical data signifying facts or observations (Bhattacharjee, 2012, p. 15). These observations develop the theories. As there are no theories established at the beginning of the research process, the research can be reformed according to the course of the study. It is convenient to adopt because the researcher does not have to start anything from the scratch and there is some prior knowledge about the context (Bell et al., 2018, p. 22). On the contrary, deduction is more concise approach that creates conclusions based on logical reasons or the theoretical context of any phenomenon which have a customary premise (Bhattacharjee, 2012, p. 15). Thus, deductive approach starts with some hypotheses and continues toward true conclusions if the premises are accurate. This study has an inductive research approach and I gather knowledge from literature review for this topic.

### **3.1.3 Case studies**

Case studies is a comprehensive method to study any fact by observing the typical situation in single or several sites. This is a widely used method in business research that can provide holistic perspective on the phenomenon. According to Bhattacharjee (2012), case study enables obtaining substantial, systematized, and reliable explication of a phenomenon by acquiring a reasonable assembling of contextual data (p. 93). Moreover, the phenomenon can be evaluated from different viewpoints of many participants as well as analyzed from different levels (Bhattacharjee, 2012, p. 93). Case study entails data collected from both primary and secondary sources, e.g., archives, interviews, observations etc. to construct a unified observation (Eisenhardt, 1989). When data are collected from multiple individuals, case study seems to be more suitable to analyze precisely and compare the findings (Creswell, 2017). In this study, I organized a multiple case study of ten Bangladeshi women entrepreneurs to summarize the answers derived from my research questions.

## **3.2 Sources of data and data collection method**

For my research, I utilized primary data. The source of primary data was virtual interviews of female entrepreneurs, observations, and case studies of ten entrepreneurs to apprehend the factual event for empirical data. Also, I studied relevant previous research articles and papers, textbooks and some news articles on women entrepreneurship pertinent to developing countries as secondary sources of data. Therefore, I collected data through interviews, respondent observations, and archival documents.

### 3.2.1 Interviews

Interview is a substantial source of collecting research data regarding gaining knowledge about the phenomenon and procuring practical experiences of the participants. It has been claimed by Eriksson and Kovalainen (2008) that, interview is the primary data source concerning business research. This method of data collection is more individualized because a researcher can directly observe the participants and their reactions.

For my research, I employed my personal network to find and take interviews of some Bangladeshi women entrepreneurs. At first, I communicated with them through emails and WhatsApp messages. The primary correspondence was to notify them about the research topic and the key area of my research. I tried to take appointments for the interviews as per their convenience and time that fit their availability. I interviewed ten entrepreneurs from different business types to get acquainted with their reality and the hurdles they overcame and still been encountering.

The entrepreneurs whom I interviewed are highly motivated women who have been operating businesses with great endeavors and enthusiasm. Most of them are from middle-class families and have been striving their best to carry on the enterprise they started from their small savings beyond various challenges, especially family discord. All of the entrepreneurs belong to the SME sector which is very flourishing in Bangladesh. These entrepreneurs represent the conventional picture of women entrepreneurship in Bangladesh that how many obstacles the women go through to be self-independent by their own attempts. I intended to interview such women whose stories will portray the realities so that the answers to my research questions can easily discourse. It is relevant to mention here that, all entrepreneurs were working women, except one who was a stay-at-home mother.

All the interviews took place via zoom meeting due to the location of the entrepreneurs and I recorded all the interviews with the permission of them. Moreover, I noted down some significant details while interviewing them. The beginning of the interview was quite formal, I introduced myself along with the topic of the thesis and my purpose for doing the thesis. It is pertinent to mention here that, before starting the data collection I applied pilot testing with a friend who is an entrepreneur also. Pilot testing is a highly recommended part of research procedure which is usually disregarded but helps a lot to identify the possible problems in designing the research (Bhattacharjee, 2012, p. 23). Accordingly, I was greatly facilitated by applying pilot testing to my research. I could amend the strategy of the interview and some context of the entire process. It was anticipated that one hour per interview would be allotted but can be modified later. I outlined the time frame for questions, discussion and exchanging interpretations relevant to the topic. I collected the data through semi-structured interviews con-

sisting of open-ended questions. The number of respondents was ten from different business types who have been operating business for several years, or a couple of years. Two of the participants have postponed their business for the time being. I invested about half a month to finish taking all the interviews. The average duration of the interviews was 39.7 minutes.

The area of the discussion was about the personal and business background of the entrepreneurs, the motivational factors of starting and continuing a business, the challenges they are still fronting, and the reasons for women marginalization in entrepreneurship in Bangladesh.

### **3.2.2 Sampling**

Bhattacharjee (2012) stated that, sampling is a statistical procedure of selecting the sample from a population for establishing observations regarding the population (p. 65). I conducted snowball sampling in my study. According to snowball sampling, a small number of respondents are selected first who match the criteria of the study and they are requested later to refer others whom they know and meet the selection criteria (Bhattacharjee, 2012, p. 70).

### **3.3 Interview guide**

To collect data from the interviews, I set up a questionnaire consisting of 16 open-ended questions. The questionnaire was divided into four sections: personal background of the entrepreneurs, background of their business, their motivational factors, and lastly challenges they have encountered and/or encountering (see Appendix). It was quite necessary to know about the personal background of the entrepreneurs because age, academic qualification, marital status, motherhood status, and religious activeness of a woman play a very crucial role in deciding upon her career and carrying it out efficaciously. The information regarding business background illuminated the overall anecdote of the venture, e.g., how and when it was started, how was the capital funded, what is the product etc. Questions about motivational factors and challenge factors revealed their whole journey to be an entrepreneur, why they thought of being an owner of their start-ups, the source of business ideas, the main barriers they experienced or still been experiencing, way of combining household and business, and so forth. The answers to the questions steadily depicted a culture of developing countries where women entrepreneurship has been soaring gradually day by day, notwithstanding, lagging behind for some age-old traditions.

Table 5 Details of participants

Identification number of entrepreneurs	Product type	Age of business	Number of employees	Current status	Full time /part-time business	Type of entrepreneur	Children	Religious status of family	Date of interview	Duration of interview
1	Women wear	5 years	No	Running	Full time	Chance/dualist	Yes	Active	23.02.2022	51 minutes
2	Home décor	2 years	4	Running	Full time	Forced/dualist	Yes	Moderate	26.02.2022	41 minutes
3	Ladies bag	5 months	No	Postponed	Part-time	Forced/aimless	Expecting	Moderate	28.02.2022	33 minutes
4	Women modest wear	10 years	11	Running	Part-time	Pulled/strongly success-oriented	Yes	Moderate	28.02.2022	40 minutes
5	Apparel retailing	3 years	6	Running	Full time	Chance/return worker	Yes	Moderate	07.03.2022	50 minutes
6	Skincare goods	4 years	8	Running	Full time	Forced/return worker	No	Active	08.03.2022	52 minutes
7	Women wear	6 years	No	Running	Full time	Forced/dualist	Yes	Active	02.03.2022	34 minutes
8	Coconut oil	2 years	No	Running	Full time	Forced/aimless	No	Moderate	01.03.2022	30 minutes
9	Apparel retailing	2 years	No	Postponed	Full time	Forced/dualist	Yes	Moderate	05.03.2022	41 minutes
10	Female wear and accessories	4 years	No	Running	Full time	Pulled/success-oriented	Yes	Active	11.03.2022	25 minutes

*Note.* All the entrepreneurs are the sole proprietors of their business and started business by investing personal savings. All of them have master's degrees and are married (entrepreneur 4 is widowed). They are either in their 30s or 40s by age.

### 3.4 Data analysis

A very significant part of any study is the analysis of the data. Merriam (1998) stated that, data analysis is a process of combining, summarizing, and elucidating the data that the researcher obtains through the interviews. This study embodies an inductive qualitative approach. In case of qualitative approach, the analysis is mainly about making sense of or understanding a phenomenon instead of predicting and explaining (Bhattacharjee, 2012, p. 113). I applied within-case analysis to analyze the cases of the entrepreneur to apprehend the full details of their motivations and challenges. Within-case analysis is detailed description of each case to produce important insights about the case ((Eisenhardt, 1989). To obtain an elucidated idea about the research topic, I studied and focused on relevant literatures on entrepreneurial motivation, entrepreneurial intentions and their determinants, women entrepreneurship in developing countries, and motivational factors for women in developing countries in the beginning. I set questionnaire for the interviews and the data that are collected, are basically answers to the questions. As the interviews were conducted via zoom meeting, I recorded them with the prior permission of the respondents and noted down the important information during the interview as much as I could. I started the data analysis procedure by transcribing each interview in my formal research diary. Later on, I organized and encapsulated the data according to the research questions to portray a clear interpretation of each entrepreneur's experience and their opinion. For coherent analysis, I designated the data under two significant topics: motivational factors and challenge factors of women entrepreneurs and maintained the theme alike.



## 4 RESEARCH FINDINGS

The findings part is the most significant part of my studies as I presented the real-life scenario of women entrepreneurs here. This part has been written based on narrative analysis. The main narratives from the interviews have been grasped to examine the structure and establish the thematic connections (Burck, 2005). I divided the motivational factors and the challenge factors according to their type and mostly focused on the motivational factors by identifying them as founding decision factors and continuing decision factors. Moreover, I attempted to depict the connection among different motivational factors to articulate them easily. Later, after describing the factors, I concluded them with some remarks to elucidate the real scenario of women entrepreneurship patronized and challenged by varied aspects representing the prospects and problems vis-à-vis it.

### 4.1 Motivational factors of the entrepreneurs

Interviewing the entrepreneurs disclosed different types of motivational factors that encouraged them to be an owner of their own businesses. These factors have been encapsulated below (Table 6) representing the experience of the entrepreneurs:

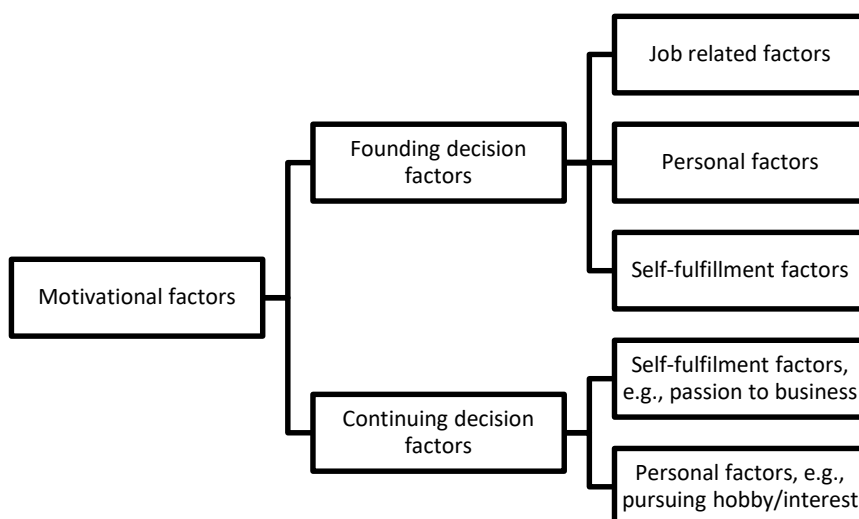
Table 6 Motivational factors of the entrepreneurs

Category of motivational factors ↓	Entrepreneurs →	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total
	Motivation ↓											
Factors related to job	Earning money		×	×			×	×	×	×		6
	Flexible working hours	×	×			×	×	×		×		6
	Dissatisfaction with paid job	×	×	×	×			×				5
	Failure at finding job			×					×			2
	Freedom/independence			×				×			×	3
Self-fulfillment factors	Self-identity/self-independence	×	×		×		×				×	5
	Passion to business	×	×		×	×			×		×	6
	Employment and empowerment for others				×	×	×					3
	Innovative/creative mindset				×		×					2
	Support from family		×	×			×	×	×	×		6

Category of motivational factors ↓	Entrepreneurs →	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total
	Motivation ↓											
Personal factors	Academic background								×	×	×	3
	Orientation to entrepreneurs		×							×		2
	Previous experience	×	×					×	×	×	×	6
	Hobby/special interest			×		×		×				3
Other	Easy access to products						×		×			2

According to the statement of the entrepreneurs, these motivational factors signify two different segments (Figure 2) of their decision related to entrepreneurship: factors of founding decision and factors of continuing decision. Thus, the factors can also be exhibited and explained in the following order:

Figure 2 Category of motivational factors of the entrepreneurs



#### 4.1.1 Factors related to founding decision

The motivational factors identified by the entrepreneurs reveal that there are some factors by which they were encouraged to establish their own business. Therefore, these factors have been categorized as motivational factors related to their founding decision. All the factors can again be sub-categorized into job related factors, self-fulfillment factors, and personal factors. These factors are basically interconnected with each other to drive the women to start a business.

**Job related factors:** most of the entrepreneurs were driven to entrepreneurship due to the factors related to their previous jobs. Since the key purpose of a job is

securing an income source, they were enthused to find a better income source other than a white-collar job. Thus, earning money or ensuring financial benefit is the predominant factor for the entrepreneurs. However, these entrepreneurs are 'forced' entrepreneurs as they spoke that they started the business because they needed to earn money.

Entrepreneur 3 highly mentioned an alternative income source, *"I was extremely afraid of losing my job when the pandemic broke out. It was such a distressing time when lots of staff were sacked and I had been waiting anxiously when my turn would come. I was badly in need to arrange another income source. At that moment, I decided to start an online business that can be managed from home and will be helpful both for me and the customers because of the pandemic."*

As the entrepreneurs were struggling to maintain work-life balance in their paid job, they were looking for an occupation where they would have more flexible time so that they can coordinate their household and profession. Six of the entrepreneurs denoted that their job was quite demanding and they were stressed by compact work schedule. Three entrepreneurs pointed out that they were motivated to entrepreneurship due to having more freedom at work.

Entrepreneur 7 expressed her disappointment with her previous job as she intended to start her business, *"my job was very demanding and stressful. I had two small kids then and there was no one to look after them. I could not spend enough time with my kids. So I decided to quit my job but needed to be ensured of another income source as I have to contribute to the family income. I thought establishing my own business can meet up both of my needs, money and pass more time with children."*

Entrepreneur 5 referred to flexible working hours by which she has been motivated also to be an entrepreneur. She stated, *"I was employed at a paid job earlier and found the work schedule very compact. I left the job after marriage to concentrate more on household work. Thereafter, I assumed that starting a business would be easier to maintain the time along with household chores and initiate an income source. Besides, as an owner I can control the working hours according to my family responsibilities."*

Entrepreneur 1 said, *"business is more flexible than a paid job, though entrepreneurship is such type of work that sometimes requires 24 hours' engagement during the festive season but generally I can modify the working hours when needed. I had a job where I had to maintain rigorous working hours whereas my own business gave me a certain time of flexibility."*

Entrepreneur 10 discoursed her nature as a freedom seeker in her professional life. She also mentioned that business is the best option for her to be independent.

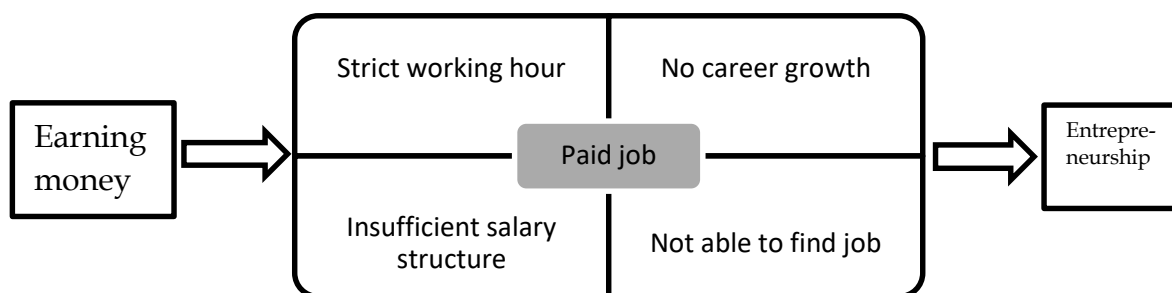
Half of the entrepreneurs mentioned job dissatisfaction as a significant motivational factor. Some also told that they did not see any future prospects or no opportunity for career advancement with the job whereas some mentioned that they were not satisfied with the remuneration package. Thus, they started thinking of switching their career and got motivated to be an entrepreneur.

Entrepreneur 2 was also drained by her job, *“I am not very much career-oriented but had a job where I found that the salary is not sufficient. Moreover, the fixed working hour brought monotony in my life and I wanted to get rid of it.”*

Entrepreneur 3, owner of ladies bags, spoke about her job disappointment since she did not find any prospect with the job and was afraid of getting sacked, *“although my job is prestigious with a better salary, but I was not satisfied with the work. I did not get promoted although my promotion was due and felt a bit exploited. I was completely exhausted mentally.”*

Though some entrepreneurs had jobs and were fully dissatisfied, some of them did not manage a suitable job according to their qualifications. This failure worked as a motivational factor for them to establish a business enterprise rather than find another job.

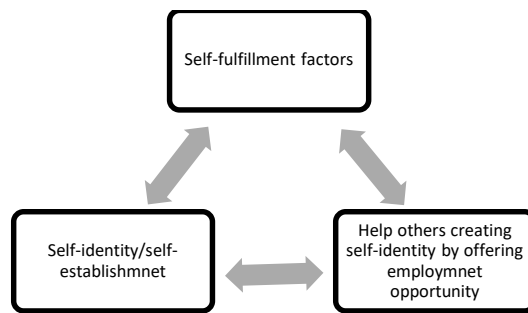
Figure 3 Job related motivational factors



The factors that are associated with the job situation of the entrepreneurs turned them to entrepreneurship as all the factors were relatively intertwined and influenced them to quit the job. For instance, all of them needed to earn money so they started a job but the employment was quite stressful because of the rigid working hours, less opportunity for career growth, or unsatisfactory reward policy. On the other hand, some could not find jobs so chose entrepreneurship as their income source.

**Self-fulfillment factors:** many of the entrepreneurs got motivated by some self-fulfillment factors to establish their own business. Those who were motivated by self-fulfillment factors are mostly the ‘pulled’ entrepreneurs like entrepreneur 4 and entrepreneur 10. Others were also inspired by these factors besides their earning money purpose.

Figure 4 Self-fulfillment factors



Creating self-identity or being self-independent is a key driver for the entrepreneurs. They told that starting their own business would provide them the opportunity to create their own identity and help them in self-establishment.

Entrepreneur 4 who is an absolute opportunity-driven entrepreneur referred that her key motivation was to be self-independent by establishing her business. She said, *“my family is solvent enough, I did not need to work but I was always enthused to do something advanced. I have entrepreneurial ambition, I have skills, qualities, and such type of mindset that helped me being an entrepreneur.”*

Entrepreneur 10 denoted that she was highly enthused for being self-sufficient. She highlighted mostly on being independent. She stated, *“I had great intention from my childhood that I want to be self-established and work independently. I never preferred paid job where I have to execute the commands of someone else or work under any superior authority. So, I thought setting up a business would be perfect for me and it will enable me to create my own identity instead of a housewife.”*

Entrepreneur 2 stated, *“my husband has his own job but after paying house rent, utilities and car maintenance we have nothing to save. That’s why I thought of starting something productive that will bring me money as well as I can prove my capabilities through the work.”*

Entrepreneur 6, owner of skincare goods business, talked about self-establishment as her motivational factor, *“I was forced by my in-laws to leave my job. The financial status of my family is quite good but I needed my own money because I don’t prefer requesting pocket money. Thus, I pondered launching my business.”* She also added, *“I always wanted to do something for my self-establishment instead of staying home. I left the job for my in-laws, but I was determined that I would obviously start something else to establish myself.”*

Besides creating self-identity, some entrepreneurs wanted to help other women making them established by creating employment for them. Entrepreneur 4, 5, and 6 are good examples of it.

Entrepreneur 5 said, *“I learned needlework for making artifacts from my mum. When I was a high school student, I trained some underprivileged girls. Later they managed their livelihood with the training. This incident influenced me greatly getting inspired to create employment for women. Presently, I have eight women artisans work for me and earn their livelihood.”*

**Personal factors:** there are some personal motivational factors as said by the entrepreneurs. These are not common to all women but these entrepreneurs availed advantages from these factors and got inspired to be an entrepreneur.

Support from parents, in-law's family members, or husband is the most crucial factor as opined by all the entrepreneurs. Most of the entrepreneurs got support & help either from husbands or parents. In some cases, in-law's members also assisted them to accomplish preliminary activities of the business or other major responsibilities. Those who are supported by their families also experienced opposition from family members in some respects occasionally. Thus, these entrepreneurs believe that, support and consent from family are highly important for a woman to be entrepreneur. Otherwise, it would be completely difficult to think about establishing one's own start-up.

Owner of bag business, entrepreneur 3, strongly spoke about family assistance. Her words are: *"I consider family support as the most important motivational factor for a woman to run a business. Women in developing countries like Bangladesh need family support at a higher level otherwise it is not possible to carry on the whole process. Additionally, a male companion is notably important for corresponding the supplier, visiting warehouse area and selecting the source of the products. The contribution and role of my husband in setting up the business are inexplicable. It was relatively easy for me to find the sources of products, communicate with suppliers and visit the wholesale markets since my husband always accompanied me. Moreover, I definitely believe that many challenges were eased, and barriers were alleviated because my family fully assisted my endeavor."*

Entrepreneur 6 mentioned her husband's role as a key factor in her entrepreneurial journey. Though she was not allowed by her in-laws to operate business but her husband played lead role to make her move forward. She stated, *"I was motivated to be an entrepreneur for the immense support and inspiration from my husband. My in-laws opposed me but he told me not to give up, he is always by my side to cherish my dream. He looks after the inventory management, correspondence with suppliers, product shipment and other tasks. Due to his support, I really did not confront many other problems that usually other women experience."*

Entrepreneur 8 said, *"I launched the business before my marriage. After getting married, I was considerably inspired and got supported by my husband. My brother-in-law is also very helpful. Both assist me outstandingly in different operational activities of the business, especially my husband fully controls the delivery works of the business."*

Some personal motivational factors were common to the entrepreneurs. Most of them talked about their prior experience in conducting business either in an extended or limited manner. Moreover, some of them mentioned that their academic degree in business motivated them to be an entrepreneur. Besides, two entrepreneurs recalled the orientation to other entrepreneurs as their inspiration to be an entrepreneur like them.

Entrepreneur 9 said, *"I was used to working in a friend's start-up some years before. My duty was to monitor the operational activities of the business. She is the owner of a costume jewelry shop and I helped her. I observed the daily activities there and learned many things about sole proprietor business."*

Entrepreneur 10, the boutique owner, highly emphasized her previous online business which helped her get motivated. She referred, *"I operated an online business earlier under the supervision of an owner, it helped me gather ample knowledge and achieve vast experience in business. But you know, I never liked to work under someone. Additionally, the commission I received was not satisfactory."*

**Other factors:** those who have an innovative or creative mindset, invested in the skill to set up a business. These persons have the quality to seek opportunities and employ them to yield more.

Entrepreneur 4 and entrepreneur 6 are the best examples of this skill. Both utilized their habitual daily life incidents and turned them into business opportunities. For instance, entrepreneur 4 said, *"I usually wear unique modest clothing designed by myself for many years. Some of my acquaintances admired my attire. Many of them asked me where I bought this type of dress from. These queries suddenly gave me the idea that I can attempt to a business with these unique dresses as people are admiring. And I realized that females fancy the outfit and there is an extensive potential market that can be served with these exclusively designed dresses."*

Easy access to products turned two women into entrepreneurs. For example, entrepreneur 8 said, *"my family has the vast property of coconut orchard. We were used to extracting oil from the coconuts for household use. This usual household chore was engrossed in my mind. Later, I thought that I have availability of raw materials which I can invest into my own business."*

#### 4.1.2 Factors related to continuing decision

There are also some motivational factors that inspired the women entrepreneurs to carry on the business albeit there are some significant challenges. These motivational factors have been derived from self-fulfillment factors and personal factors.

**Self-fulfillment factors:** when the entrepreneurs were asked why they have been continuing the business irrespective of lots of barriers, most of them referred that, they are passionate about this task and this passion for the enterprise keeps them active to prolong operation. They expressed their love for the business and claimed themselves as success-oriented person. They indicated that, through this task they feel self-esteem. So, they pursue their desired job. Entrepreneur 1 denoted that the great motivation to continue the business is love and passion for the business. She told that, the business seems like a child to her which she had gradually reared up from the very beginning.

Entrepreneur 8 pointed out that her success motivates her to carry on the start-up. When she realized that people are appreciating her for delivering quality products, she got more energized. She said, *“I deliver good quality products. I believe this has made it possible to achieve trust and the enormous response from consumers which has brought me success and popularity. This achievement and success stimulate me to go ahead with my business.”*

Entrepreneur 10 said, *“I wanted to be self-independent, always. I am quite enthusiast to employ my free time, education, skill, and knowledge so that I can feel self-esteemed. My prime intention was not to earn money, I just wanted to invest my capabilities and make them more enriching.”*

**Personal factors:** there are some entrepreneurs who mentioned that pursuing their special interests or hobbies made them untiring entrepreneurs. They think that through their hobbies they found the dream job where they can prove their capabilities. Entrepreneur 7 had a great fascination for female attire, mostly the traditional Bangladeshi dresses. She said that she conceived a dream in her mind to launch her own boutique. The dream urged her to choose entrepreneurship and continue as a businesswoman.

Entrepreneur 5 was greatly motivated to run the business by pursuing her hobby of needlework, *“my hobby is needlework. My relatives praised me for my artwork. Through my business, I explored the opportunity to develop my hobby. I love to do it. I am very zealous about my work and prefer to balance all the tasks systematically.”*

#### 4.1.3 Summary

The motivational factors the entrepreneurs talked about disclosed the key stimulus toward entrepreneurship in developing countries. Due to society's perception, women want to be independent of their own work. After growing up, they want to contribute to the family income. Being financially independent and creating self-identity lead the women to an occupation where they can work independently keeping in mind that it would facilitate their dual responsibility both at home and work. Accordingly, all the entrepreneurs spoke about their motivational factors from two perspectives: motivations before launching the business (founding decision) and motivations after launching the business (continuing decision) that keep them rejuvenated to continue with greater effort and determination.

Each case of ten different entrepreneurs was distinct but in some points there are similarities as well. All the entrepreneurs were somehow frustrated with their prior employment or could not manage expected jobs according to their qualifications. The case of entrepreneur 10 was quite different as she never wanted to be employed under someone's supervision. But all the cases indicated that the entrepreneurs wanted transition in their careers and chose a divergent path. Except for one entrepreneur, entrepreneurship was not the first choice for all the entrepreneurs though they have different motivational factors like previous experience in business, academic background, and easy access to products.



Therefore, the case studies of the entrepreneurs stipulate that in spite of tight work schedule, rigid organizational environment or unsatisfactory remuneration, white-collar job seems to be more attractive to women.

Although earning money is a basic motivation to be an entrepreneur, their experiences reveal that most of their motivational factors are somehow associated with job dissatisfaction. The drawbacks of paid jobs mostly motivated them to choose entrepreneurship as business offers flexibility and freedom which are the most expected work advantages for a woman to coordinate between household and work. Other motivational factors functioned later when they already decided to go for their own start-ups or already started business, e. g., pursuing a hobby or passion for business etc.

## 4.2 Challenge factors of the entrepreneurs

Besides the motivational factors, the entrepreneurs talked about some significant challenges they encountered throughout their entrepreneurial journey. They think that most of the women have been confronting these challenges in developing countries like Bangladesh and these barriers are mainly responsible for the marginalization of women entrepreneurship.

The challenges that are confronted by the entrepreneurs are abridged in Table 7:

Table 7 Challenge factors of the entrepreneurs

Category of challenge factors ↓	Entrepreneurs →	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total
	Challenges ↓											
Personal factors	Family objection	×			×	×	×		×		×	6
	Imbalance of work-life	×			×					×		3
Factors related to business	Capital requirement							×		×	×	3
	Lack of knowledge about market/product			×						×		2
	High marketing cost			×			×			×		3
	High competition			×	×							2
Factors related to social system	Religious restrictions	×					×	×				3
	Gender discrimination	×						×				2

Category of challenge factors ↓	Entrepreneurs →	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Total
	Challenges ↓											
	Negative social attitude	×	×		×	×	×	×				6
Others	Impact of pandemic							×		×	×	3

#### 4.2.1 Personal factors

Majority of the entrepreneurs contemplate that family objection or family opposition is the primary barrier for a woman to be an entrepreneur. They pointed out that, married women experience much opposition from their in-laws' family members. Lack of balance between personal life and work is greatly associated with family objection. Some entrepreneurs consider that when family does not compromise or cooperate, there will be an imbalance in work-life. However, it is not always the fact that family opposition is responsible for such imbalance. Entrepreneur 9 is the model example in this case. She talked about her challenge of an imbalanced life. Though the family members were extremely helpful, sometimes the entrepreneur had to undergo some misconduct when she was unable to look after her child due to the business operation. She also mentioned that; one of the reasons she was bound to postpone business activities is, that she has none to look after her child.

Entrepreneur 1, owner of women wear business, stated that, *“though I availed enormous family support during the initial stage of business but as the business grew up, I got more engaged with the business, and I could not spend enough time for household and looking after of child. Thus, family dispute arises and I was sometimes scolded, I was asked to stop my business activities so that I can look after the home.”*

Entrepreneur 4 expressed her disappointment regarding the family objection. She said, *“as a widowed woman, I encountered boundless family objection at the primary stage of my business operation. Other members of my family were used to looking after my twin kids. I was scolded a lot by them as I was busy with my entrepreneurial tasks.”*

Entrepreneur 6 emphasized family objection as her foremost challenge. She stated, *“I confronted family disagreement extensively. After getting married, I was forced to resign from my job. But I was pretty enthusiastic to join the workforce. At the very beginning, I concealed the business operation from my in-law's family. My husband and I collectively planned to hide it because we were afraid of the potential threat of getting the business closed.”*

#### 4.2.2 Factors related to business

Some of the entrepreneurs were obstructed by business related challenges while starting and continuing the start-ups. Constant requirement of capital is one of them. Three of them told that, arranging funds and proper investment is a continuous process which might be very difficult to maintain sometimes. It is not so easy to arrange additional funding. Moreover, the pandemic has worsened the whole operation and sales have fallen drastically. Consequently, they do not have enough cash inflow available which can readily be invested anytime.

Entrepreneur 9 postponed her business for some reasons, of which, she pointed out that the requirement of immediate capital investment is mainly responsible for the discontinuation. Conducting the business for one year, the entrepreneur realized the requirement of investing more capital to increase the volume and operation of the business. She said, *"I could not arrange extra funding immediately as the sales collapsed due to the pandemic."*

Two entrepreneurs emphasized having proper knowledge of the product and the market condition. These two entrepreneurs postponed their business due to encountering the same problem. They told that they could not cope with the dynamic condition of the market and ever-changing product trends. Both recommended analyzing the market at least for one year to have an overview of the competitive market and study accurately about the product.

Entrepreneur 9 said, *"an entrepreneur needs to be very well-informed and conversant about recent fashion, fabrics, accessories, and other raw materials of the products to deliver exclusive and quality goods to customers. I could not address this issue before and I failed to survive in the competition."*

To survive in the highly competitive market along with bearing high marketing and promotional costs are significant barriers to some entrepreneurs. They think that the marketing costs should be lessened to promote women entrepreneurship. Besides, two entrepreneurs mentioned high competition as a big challenge.

Entrepreneur 3 spoke of some distinct features of online business which is highly competitive. She opined that, *"in case of online business the products should be something unique and novel to survive in the competitive market or to attract customers. Competition gets high when others offer relatively low-quality products with lower prices that could capture customers because there is no way to verify the products physically."* She also mentioned the high marketing cost regarding online business. The entrepreneur said, *"the key advertising area is the social media platform which needed to boost up by investing a big amount of money. This large investment is not easy to redeem by selling the products. Likewise, high marketing cost leads to higher selling price which makes it difficult to attract customers."*

Entrepreneur 6 also talked about the same regarding marketing costs as entrepreneur 3 did. The present challenge for the entrepreneur is managing the higher costs associated with marketing and promotion of the products.

### 4.2.3 Factors related to social system

Since the social system in developing countries entails some adverse attitude toward women and impose various illogical regulations upon them, women undergo lots of barriers in terms of study, job, and other different sides. The entrepreneurs mostly encountered negative social attitudes while starting the business. Due to the patriarchal social system, gender discrimination was also experienced by some of them. Apart from gender discrimination, the attitude of people in their surroundings was negative in some cases. The entrepreneurs did not point out as one of the biggest barriers as it can be managed in some way but consider that negative reactions from people affect the motivation discouragingly.

Entrepreneur 2, the home décor business owner referred that, *“when I started the business, people around me including my relatives and acquaintances mocked my attempts. They basically demotivated me by showing such attitudes that I would not succeed with such type of jobs where I need to correspond with rural artisans.”*

Like other woman, entrepreneur 5 was also obstructed by the negative impressions of society people that enfeebled her motivation. She said that, *“even these days, people are not liberal enough to accept a woman doing business on her own.”*

Entrepreneur 1 said that, *“while conducting meetings with suppliers, male entrepreneurs are prioritized over their female counterparts. In most cases, males are allowed first to talk, and their preferences are listed first regarding the products and the remaining products are allotted to women entrepreneurs.”* She added that, *“some relatives and acquaintances commented badly. They denoted that women start a business only when they do not have any other capabilities or educational qualifications. It was quite demotivating for me. This type of social perspective is still prevailing and I have been tolerating it.”*

While designing and planning the research, it was assumed that religion can also be a key factor that plays a significant role in affecting the entrepreneurship decision for women. But based on the interviews, it has been found that there is less impact of religious values on the entrepreneurs. A few number of entrepreneurs encountered religious restrictions in some cases so they pointed out it as a challenge to their business. The entrepreneurs stated that they were somehow obstructed mostly by their in-laws to follow some religious guidelines that may lead to stopping their business. In this regard, entrepreneur 6 expressed her experience. Her in-laws imposed some religious regulations on her. She was asked to stop the business on the assumption that, it is not allowed in religious belief to show women’s faces to other people and talk with unknown men. Unlike her, the other two entrepreneurs experienced slight difficulties which appeared as a barrier to them.

### 4.2.4 Summary

The challenge factors told by the entrepreneurs basically unfolded the main reasons for women marginalization in entrepreneurship in developing countries.

According to the opinion of the entrepreneurs, opposition from family, either from parents or in-laws, is the main barrier to overcome first to approach for entrepreneurship. They believe that, all other barriers can be minimized or handled when the family is with them. The family structure and social system in developing countries constructed such a strong custom where women are bound to oblige the conventional rules and regulations. These customs cannot be liberated easily, and thus, women are to undergo some fallacy and embargo when they will attempt self-establishment and financial independence.

Moreover, the opinions of the entrepreneurs manifested that, this social system is still very conservative to allow a woman to earn her livelihood by her own business instead of a typical job. The culture in developing countries accepts a woman joining the workforce when she goes for a paid job but women's own business is still unappreciated in some respects. Even some families do not allow women to join the workforce after getting married. That is why, the challenges come both from family and society. Society people including relatives, neighbors, acquaintances, friends in some cases, people who are associated directly with business activities like suppliers, distributors, officials from financial institutions and so on exhibit utmost non-cooperation, as said by the entrepreneurs. Gender discrimination is a part of this non-cooperative attitude. On the other hand, entrepreneur 8 and 10 told that they received appreciation from society people for their endeavors. So there are exceptions as well.

Therefore, it will take a longer time to bring change to such chauvinism. Additionally, the other barriers the entrepreneurs experienced after starting business are common to all, e.g., high competition and high marketing cost, capital requirements, lack of knowledge about product and market. The sudden worldwide pandemic is partially responsible for these problems. Except for the two major challenges from family and society, it is quite manageable with hard work and delivering quality products, as opined by the entrepreneurs. They said that always there will be uncertainty in operating business and they are fully adaptable to face the challenges.

## 5 DISCUSSION

In this chapter, I conferred the key motivational factors and challenges that have come out of the conversation with the entrepreneurs. Moreover, the concepts have been discussed with the help of previous literatures that have been discussed in the literature review chapter. Since I tried to find out whether women of developing countries are reluctant to join entrepreneurship due to social or familial problems or it is their lack of motivation, this chapter will answer the question. The data that is collected from interviews have been compared with the related literatures to reach the conclusions and to have a basic idea about women entrepreneurship marginalization in developing countries. The reliability and validity of the study, implications, limitations and recommendations are added at the end of the chapter.

### 5.1 Motivation, intentions, and behavior

Entrepreneurial motivation is the most important factor for a person to be an entrepreneur. In case of women, the significance of motivation is extremely higher to join the stream as women are supposed to deal with more difficulties and barriers because of their traditional role in household and child-rearing. Therefore, they need to demonstrate their entrepreneurial intentions through their actions and behavior. The respondents of this study are highly motivated entrepreneurs who experienced many barriers but have been going through the process to achieve success. Among the entrepreneurs, two persons have deferred their business for financial and personal problems and expressed their utmost inclination to resume with greater initiative and resources. The TPB (Ajzen, 1991) suggests that the chance of a person who is engaged in a certain behavior, is correlated with the extent of the person's intention to be involved in the particular behavior. Entrepreneurship is very associated with this theory as the entrepreneur's intention needs to be manifested through the behavior. Additionally, the preference of an individual gets changed with his or her circumstances (e.g., personal or professional) and the primary choice regarding entrepreneurship may also get changed which has been found realistic while interviewing the entrepreneurs.

### 5.2 Types and nature of the entrepreneurs

The entrepreneurs of this study are mostly forced entrepreneurs who took entrepreneurship as profession when they were desperately in need to switch career.

Although they had jobs, they thought of starting the business as an alternative income source. According to previous literature, women from developing countries are more inclined to entrepreneurship by necessity rather than opportunity (Anderson & Ojediran, 2021). Accordingly, the majority of the entrepreneurs chose entrepreneurship mostly for financial purposes. These forced entrepreneurs experienced the situation of either long-term unemployment or the threat of losing jobs or getting exploited in the workplace. However, their start-ups do not have high growth potential or innovation, but they managed to find an income source and create employment for others. Another significant issue is, sixty percent of the respondents chose entrepreneurship for flexible working hours, and fifty percent of the respondents opted for business as a career to mitigating their dissatisfaction with job. These two factors were identified earlier by Orhan and Scott (2021) as key factors.

The entrepreneurs are typically 'dualists' who have considerable work experience and have been synchronizing the business activities and household responsibilities simultaneously. Entrepreneurship seems to be a solution for them because they are fond of flexibility. Some of the entrepreneurs are 'return workers' who quit their employment for the sake of family but now tend to contribute to the family income or pursue their special interest or self-accomplishment. Very few of the entrepreneurs are 'success-oriented' and consider this occupation as an effective career strategy rather than any random career choice.

### **5.3 Work-life balance and entrepreneurship**

The size of the business run by these women are small in terms of capital and human resource, specifically, all the firms belong to the SME category. Besides, most of the respondents talked about their dual responsibility for home and work, for which they were willing to start a home-based business. It has also been found from the interview that, majority of the entrepreneurs chose entrepreneurship for maintaining a balance between household and work demands but occasionally they are supposed to work longer and are unable to maintain the balance.

According to the preference theory (Hakim, 2000), majority of these women entrepreneurs are adaptive. They combine work and family at the same time and started business without any prior planning. Very few of them are fully committed to work, or employment is the central preference for very few women, but they are not childless.

## 5.4 Context in developing countries

Women entrepreneurs in developing countries have been categorized into three: chance, forced, and pulled entrepreneurs (Tambunan, 2009). The respondents of this study have also been categorized into these three and it has been ascertained that 60% of the total respondents are forced entrepreneurs, while 20% of them are chance entrepreneurs and remaining 20% are pulled entrepreneurs. Among this 20% of pulled entrepreneurs, one entrepreneur is from the upper class of the society who herself claimed that she did not confront religious problems due to her belongingness in the upper echelon. Moreover, her higher educational background facilitated her entrepreneurial task in some respects.

The previous studies regarding motivational factors of women in developing countries summarized that, there are three motivating factors that drive women for career transition: organizational culture, personal circumstances, and need for independence (Patterson and Mavin, 2009). Out of these three factors, two factors motivated most of the respondents because they left their paid job due to compact work schedules and a lower chance of career growth. Freedom & independence was minor choice for the respondents in terms of switching their career. But according to Das (2000), financial purpose is the core motive for women which has been identified in this study as most of the entrepreneurs talked about their monetary requirements and income source.

## 5.5 Motives and barriers to be entrepreneurs

The women entrepreneurs of this study specified their intention behind choosing this profession in various ways. Sixty percent of the entrepreneurs talked about financial purposes as their foremost motivational factor. These sixty percent entrepreneurs are forced entrepreneurs who also mentioned some other reasons to be entrepreneurs, but their core purpose was to earn money or arrange an alternative source of their livelihood. The remaining ones are chance entrepreneurs and pulled entrepreneurs who said that they do not need money but to do something on their own and be self-established or invest their time in something fruitful.

The key reasons for these entrepreneurs to choose entrepreneurship are being self-independent, having a flexible working hour, previous experience, passion for business, patronization from family, and frustration with their previous job. Major portion of the entrepreneurs talked about these factors as their motivational factors to establish a business. A few of the entrepreneurs mentioned that failure at finding job, freedom at work, hobbies or special interests, creating employment for others as their motivational factors.



The main challenges approached by the entrepreneurs were family objections and society's judgemental attitude toward them. Sixty percent of the entrepreneurs confronted these problems while starting a business. It is relevant to mention here that; the concept of family is quite broad in developing countries (Jaim, 2021). After getting married, the in-laws and their relatives also play vital role in different decision making of a woman's life. Most of the entrepreneurs got hostility from their in-laws' parents and relatives. Some of the entrepreneurs who were challenged by family objections were somehow assisted either by their husbands or parents. These persons mentioned that, it would be quite difficult for them to proceed if anyone of the family members stand against them. They also stated that the roles of the husbands are substantially important in this regard. Except for these issues, entrepreneurs experienced insufficiency of funds, imbalance of work-life, high marketing costs, decline in sales due to the pandemic but these were not encountered by many of them. A few numbers of the entrepreneurs specified religious obligations, gender discrimination, and high competition as their challenges. But the major challenges are not responsible for two of the entrepreneurs who have stopped their operations for the time being. One entrepreneur referred to insufficiency of capital and lack of business knowledge as the reason for the interruption and another entrepreneur stated her maternity period as the key reason to suspend the start-up. But both entrepreneurs are extremely motivated to restart the enterprise.

## **5.6 Self- motivation: tool to overcome challenges**

My study on this topic started with the discussion of entrepreneurial motivation where I discovered that motivation is the key aspect that determines the drive to start and continue a business. Later, I discoursed entrepreneurial intention where I found that the willpower of an entrepreneur can overcome the challenges to pursue his or her goal. Likewise, all the entrepreneurs whom I talked with had faced greater barriers in their entrepreneurial journey but did not get demotivated to give up. All they said that it may appear difficult or challenging initially but one's own willpower and enthusiasm can defeat each barrier to move forward. Most of the entrepreneurs stated that, family objection is the key barrier for a woman toward this occupation. Women are lagging in entrepreneurship despite having motivation and perseverance. Those who were not challenged by family dissatisfaction also pointed out that they have noticed several cases where a woman is fronting extreme barriers from family to start her venture. Thus, women entrepreneurship is getting marginalized in developing countries like Bangladesh. But beyond these challenges, many women are coming forward nowadays to participate in the workforce and the percentage of women participating in entrepreneurship is getting higher currently in Bangladesh. Nine of the

entrepreneurs also pointed out that, irrespective of the social problems and negative attitudes, there are immense opportunities in Bangladesh to conduct business and there is a very promising market to serve. Therefore, it is highly required for women to break the taboos and join the labor force to contribute to promoting the country's economy.

## **5.7 Reliability and validity of the study**

In qualitative research, reliability and validity should be maintained for making an outline of the study, analyzing the outcomes, and evaluating the quality of the study (Patton, 2001, as cited in Golafshani, 2003, p. 601). Golafshani (2003) argued that; in a qualitative study, reliability and validity are referred to as “trustworthiness, rigor and quality” (p. 604). The data I collected from primary sources were retained undistorted and factual, there were no changes or manipulation in the research data to obtain any distinct research answer. Accordingly, the answers from the interviewees were never influenced and it was kept the same in my thesis writing. I attempted to represent the real scenario in my writing. While collecting primary data, I paid utmost careful attention to every detail so that the accuracy of the data can be preserved and it does not get fabricated by any misconduct. The findings were noted down cautiously throughout the whole data collection process. The collection method of secondary data was quite similar; the research principles were fully sustained. All the pieces of literature were cited appropriately which was pertinent to my study. The thematic part was correlated with different articles, research papers, and textbooks and was mentioned the name of the authors properly. The ideas and arguments proposed by the authors were retained genuinely so that it does not mislead or signify anything inversely. To conserve legitimacy, the interview questions were verified earlier by a pilot testing that helped upgrade the questions and their priority to ask.

## **5.8 Implications**

This study has two important insights for future researchers and policymakers. Although there are numerous studies on women entrepreneurship in developing countries based on micro factors and few on macro factors, this study proceeds a significant understanding of macro factors, e.g., socio-cultural factors that can highly impact the incorporation of female-owned businesses in developing countries. There are a number of studies carried out in Bangladesh but very few of them illuminated the fundamental barriers that generate within the home. This thesis attempts to address the pitfall by explaining that even the role of a woman's family or society within which she lives can create extreme barriers.

Moreover, this study is based on exploratory multiple case studies that specifically denoted the real-life circumstances of women entrepreneurs. The contribution of this thesis exists in the within-case analysis of comprehensive multiple case studies. Therefore, this study is a promising avenue for researchers to carry forward the issue further advancing potential solutions in this regard. Besides, there are considerable implications for policymakers. This study can pose insights for the local community and policy practitioners to outline and implement policies to make entrepreneurship supporting for women by the ease of regulations, providing subsidies, tax rebates, reducing marketing costs, lowering the rate of interest, and so forth. Since the influence of socio-cultural factors is remarkably important, creating social awareness by policy practitioners can minimize the barrier, e.g., by establishing network of women entrepreneurs which will promote women entrepreneurship and develop various skills among women entrepreneurs.

## 5.9 Limitations and recommendations

This study is based on only Bangladeshi women entrepreneurs to apprehend the trend of women entrepreneurship in developing countries. But it is not insightful to conclude the motivation and challenges of women entrepreneurship in a single country context. A big limitation of the study is; no non-entrepreneur woman is interviewed. Consequently, the barrier that could completely prevent a woman from being an entrepreneur has not been recognized in this study.

Moreover, I interviewed only ten women entrepreneurs because of time and resource constraints. Though the interviews were semi-structured but I could not meet them in person due to my location. Therefore, direct observation of the entrepreneurs was not possible which is a crucial part of the interview.

The interviews were conducted in Bengali so the transcripts were later translated into English.

Some of the entrepreneurs were corresponded by my network and then I implemented snowball sampling but the selection was not based on any segmentation, i. e., industry, location (rural or urban), or social class of the entrepreneurs. All the entrepreneurs are city-based except one entrepreneur who started rurally but presently conducting business from the city.

Additionally, nine of the entrepreneurs are working mothers and one is a stay-at-home mother. The motivation of working women and housewives differ a lot which cannot be scrutinized in this study as most of them are working women.

Since the study is qualitative, it was quite challenging to deduce the collected data accurately as the data were vast. Besides, the data regarding women entrepreneurship in Bangladesh was not accessible in many cases and some source database was not updated. Additionally, there are no prior studies specif-

ically on this topic, all the studies covered mostly the challenges after inaugurating the business and institutional barriers, e.g., financial problems. It was overlooked in the earlier studies that the challenges may originate from household and social values.

The sample size was small in this study. Future research can be conducted on large samples so that they can be compared and more precise results can be derived. Furthermore, the selection of the entrepreneurs can be based upon urban & rural, or on a particular industry so that the comparison can be made effectively. Because it is common in Bangladesh that social and family values differ a bit in the city and countryside. Focusing on a particular industry may reveal some insightful information regarding the withering scenario or how women's participation can improve the situation. Future research can be concentrated on initiating a solution to such conflicting value systems as the core problem is identified.

## 6 CONCLUSIONS

The participation of women in entrepreneurship has been increasing gradually, especially, since when the pandemic outbreaked. Many people including women lost their employment and thought of alternative livelihood. By this time, many women started home-based online businesses where physical interaction can be avoided and no need to go outside as there were countrywide restrictions. Not only the sacked employees but also other jobless women who were simply entitled to maintain a household exploited this opportunity of being an entrepreneur. Therefore, the last two years were the time when women entrepreneurship witnessed a significant change in terms of growing participation of females. The usage of social media, e.g., Facebook, intensified a lot as women tend to employ these to operate their businesses (Islam, 2016).

The purpose of the study was to identify the motivational factors of Bangladeshi women to be entrepreneurs and what are the basic challenges they have been facing to set up and continue a start-up. These factors manifested different issues involving personal factors, self-fulfillment factors, or factors that are closely associated with the dissatisfaction with the white-collar job the entrepreneurs were used to doing. There are about fifteen different factors derived from the interviews with the entrepreneurs which can be categorized into founding decision factors and continuing decision factors. This categorization makes the interpretation of the collected data easier. Besides, the challenge factors highlighted that; albeit there is financial scarcity or lack of entrepreneurial knowledge, the initial step toward entrepreneurship is substantially thwarted by family non-cooperation and social acceptance toward women. Family disputes are more complex in the case of married women.

The findings of the study are moderately congruous with previous studies though earlier studies focused on the institutional challenges after launching a business. I aimed to look forward to finding the fundamental barriers women confront at the very beginning of the entrepreneurial process. My study concluded that family opposition is the root-level barrier a woman experiences when she decides to launch her business. The following challenge was to convince society as the social system is still rigid to accept a woman as an entrepreneur. These key factors found in this study were not highlighted in the prior literature. Therefore, more research can be conducted on this to explore the fundamental factors regarding motivation for entrepreneurship and the rudimentary challenges women go through initially before establishing a start-up.

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## APPENDIX 1 Questionnaire

### Personal background

1. Please tell about yourself
2. Other occupation besides business (if any)

### Business background

1. Please tell me about your business
  - Type of business: service rendering or selling goods
  - What kind of products or services you are delivering?
  - Type of ownership: solo or partnership
  - Age of the business
  - Capital: self-funding or loan

### Motivational factors

1. What motivates/inspires you to be an entrepreneur? /why did you start a business instead of staying home?
2. Are you driven to entrepreneurship by necessity or opportunity?
3. Do you have any prior experience? / background
4. Did you do any paid job earlier?
5. At what point did you think of starting a business?
6. Where did you get the idea of the business from?
7. What are the drives that stimulate you to run your business after facing different barriers?
8. Is Bangladesh a supportive place to be an entrepreneur?

### Challenges

1. Are there barriers? Did you find any difficulties to start the business?
2. Can you give some examples of a particular barrier?
3. Are you ever obstructed by patriarchy (gender discrimination), social perspective, family objection, or religious values? /Please describe your family's role in starting the business
4. Is somehow work-life balance disrupting your business operation? / Do you ever consider it difficult to carry on both duties simultaneously?
5. Do you think that the problems you mentioned are common to most women?