

# Inclusion of Women in the Bangladesh Police Service: Institutional Concurrence or Professional Compromise?

Shehreen Amin Bhuiyan, Md. Mansur Hossen

## Abstract

*Only a couple of years back, we hailed the propitious news of 21 gallant female officers being awarded with 'Bangladesh Police Women Award 2017'. How wonderful it felt to witness women accomplish and triumph in a profession which was and still is considered the male domain. People were awestruck and were left to discuss the marvelous success they had achieved. The satisfaction of patting their backs and chanting the mantra of women employment and empowerment nevertheless draws a sigh, if we once look at the numerous challenges and the bumpy road these women had to tread on their journey to success. Even though women were encouraged and advised to take up careers that were considered "female-friendly", for instance, teaching, nursing and medicine. However, with time, women have come out from that defined character, stood beside them in times of dire need and proved otherwise. They proved that, given the opportunity and platform, women can excel in areas that are thought to be inappropriate and improper for them. This paper therefore is an attempt to explore the challenges faced by the female police officers in Bangladesh Police, a profession very new to Bangladeshi women and a road less taken by them. The study is based on rigorous content analysis. The available primary and secondary sources were analyzed and few mid-level female police officers were interviewed through the snowball method. The paper finds that the female officers face many challenges like social barriers, cultural dilemma, and male domination, politicization and lack of basic workplace facilities.*

**Keywords:** *Inclusion, Women, Bangladesh Police, Institution, Professionalism.*

## 1. Introduction

The inclusion of women police officers is quite a recent phenomenon in Bangladesh. The first female officers to be appointed in the Bangladesh Police was in 1974 when 14 female officers were appointed to the Special Branch in the

non-cadre rank. In recent years, this number has gone up showing promising careers of women in police, although studies suggest that the number is still not enough. As of March 2018, the number of women employed in the Bangladesh police force was 11,767. Out of them 80% i.e., 9247 female officers were recruited in the last nine and a half years (BSS, Dhaka 2018). Yet, it is upsetting that the female police, however, still represent only 6.66 per cent of the total police force that consists of 198, 653 police (BSS, Dhaka 2018).

Twenty-one gallant female officers were awarded with the ‘Bangladesh Policewomen Award’ in 2017, and it was surreal to witness such accomplishment and triumph in a profession which was and still is considered the male domain. People were awestruck and were left to discuss their marvelous success. The satisfaction of patting their backs and chanting the mantra of women employment and empowerment nevertheless draws a sigh, if we once look at the numerous challenges and the bumpy road these women had to tread on their journey to success.

This paper therefore is an attempt to explore the challenges faced by the female police officers in Bangladesh Police, a profession still quite new to Bangladeshi women and a road less taken by them. The paper sought to understand whether and how the police as an institution has adapted and accommodated the female officers not only theoretically but also practically. The paper looks into the various aspects of policing as a profession and as an institution and how women are thriving, with or without institutional compliance and cooperation.

## **2. Methodology**

This article attempts to use the concept of decoupling to understand the discrepancies between policies and practices in the Police and where the policies that are apparently non-discriminative for all the officers apply to the newer addition of female officers to a rather male-centered profession.

The study is based on rigorous content analysis. The available primary and secondary sources were analyzed, and few mid-level female police officers were interviewed through the snowball method and the findings were analyzed and used to understand the policy stand regarding the women police personnel in the Bangladesh Police.

## **3. Objective of the Study**

This study intends to look at the changes brought about, and the changes required to institutionalize the paradigm shift of the police profession in a country like Bangladesh, with the inclusion of female officers. The study investigates the

different steps and initiatives taken by the institution ever since female officers joined the service, so as to analyze if the problems that are stated by the female officers are addressed and if so, to what extent. The paper also looks into the process of this incorporation and also the adjustments and amendments in the practice of the institution as well as to find out if and how inclusion has changed the character of the Bangladesh Police (in rank and file), organization (organization culture, quota for women in top positions, non-discrimination in terms of placements in key positions), challenges and tensions (from women's perspective, and service delivery).

#### **4. Policing Profession for Bangladeshi Women: An Overview**

Because of the pre-conceived notion on the fragile, delicate and tender nature, the ancient society gave women the role of a caregiver, comforter and companion. Even though women were encouraged and advised to take up careers that were considered “female-friendly”, for instance, teaching, nursing and medicine, they have come out from that defined character, stood beside men in times of dire need and proved otherwise. They proved that, given the opportunity and platform, women can excel in areas that are thought to be inappropriate and improper for them. Police service is undoubtedly a tough profession and it's only natural for a society like ours to prevent its women from joining such a force. Surprisingly, they are doing well and gaining reputation. Certainly, the recruitment of women was crucial for the institution, in various ways such as role concerning law enforcement, patrolling, attending women detainees, conducting body search of women, investigations etc. Nevertheless, an institution such as the police force must have undergone normative, cultural and functional alterations to combine and cope with the recruitment of women or so we can only assume.

Administered directly under the Ministry of Home Affairs, the Bangladesh police is the key law enforcement institution of the country, which is entailed with the grave responsibility of maintaining peace, order and stability in the country. The head of the Bangladesh Police is the Inspector General of Police (IGP), under whose command Bangladesh Police is divided into as many as 25 different branches. The recruitment in the Bangladesh Police Service can differ based on what designation one is applying for. There is also a provision for direct entry. Recruitment is conducted in the following three tiers:

- In the rank of Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP)
- In the rank of Sub-Inspector (SI) or Sergeant
- In the rank of Constable

For the rank of the Assistant Superintendent of Police (ASP) applicants who qualify in the extremely challenging and competitive Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS) examination and opt for Police cadre are appointed. After the appointment, they must undergo a year long training at the Bangladesh Police Academy as Probationary ASPs. Next, they have to undergo a six month orientation as a probationer at the district level, after which they are finally receive appointment as full-fledged ASPs in different units.

For the rest of the two ranks, namely Sub-Inspectors and Sergeants, candidates are selected and appointment made centrally by the Police headquarters. Sub-inspectors have to pass through a rigorous one-year-long training in the Bangladesh Police Academy as Outside Cadet Sub-Inspectors, while Sergeants undergo a six-month-long training course with the rank of Probationary Sergeant. The lowest tier of the service is Constable, who are recruited at the district level. Before joining the service and working in the field level, they are given a six-month-long training in the Police Training Center.

Considering how the South Asian culture and society works, the rather late entry of women in the police service is understandable. Women first joined Bangladesh Police in 1974, when fourteen women police officers were appointed to the Special Branch, of whom, seven were at the rank of Sub-Inspector, and the rest were constables (Ahmed, 2019). It took another two years for female uniformed police officers to be recruited and it was in 1976 that fifteen women officers joined the Dhaka Metropolitan Police. And after ten years, in 1988, it was not a surprise to see only one serving woman officer as Assistant Superintendent of Police who made it through 6<sup>th</sup> Bangladesh Civil Service (BCS) examination (Ahmed, 2019). It was in 1988, when four women joined the service through the 7<sup>th</sup> Bangladesh Civil Service Examination, and the number rose to a simple 8 in 1999 and they were appointed through the 18<sup>th</sup> Bangladesh Civil Service examination (Ahmed, 2019). A breakthrough was achieved on 18<sup>th</sup> May, 2009 when Hosne Ara Begum was appointed as chief officer of a police division in the capital Dhaka, for the first time in the history of Bangladesh (Gomes, 2009). Another milestone was achieved when on 21<sup>st</sup> of June in the year 2011, an all women Armed Police Battalion (APB) was created as the 11<sup>th</sup> battalion of this force (Ahmed, 2019).

## 5. Theoretical Framework

The first and foremost condition of change is to accept it. Change is inevitable and hence, to cope with change, it is imperative to take measures and steps that assist in amplifying the positives and the potentials that change has to offer. Institutions are diverse and therefore, Institutionalism comes in different

facets as discussed by authors and researchers. New institutionalism goes much beyond the formal structure and highlights developing views and ideas from a sociological view of institutions, how they interact and how they affect the other institutions in the society. The institutional theory delves into the more resilient aspects of social structure and taking into account the structures, including schemes; rules, norms, and routines that become recognized as authoritative guidelines for social behavior (Scott, 2005).

Organizations often adopt policies or adhere to policies that are well beyond their implementable capacities. In any organization, the structural elements are bridged together even though there remain institutional flaws where violation of rules, lack of implementable decisions, uncertainty and problematic efficiency and lack of coordination co exists (Meyer and Rowan, 1977:343). Institutions often adopt policies as a pretense to reach up to the external expectations or requirements, but hardly implement those within the organization and the practice is otherwise called Decoupling. (Meyer and Rowan, 1977) Such policies are mostly symbolic ones to show that the expectations or requirements regarding the organization are met (MacLean, Behnam, 2010). Decoupling allows institutions to please those who they are answerable and accountable to, it allows organizations to content stakeholders and all of that without jeopardizing internal dynamics.

In a world where change is inevitable, institutions are expected to change their structures, renovate their practices and promulgate new policies in order to adjust and accommodate the change. However, this is when decoupling becomes most relevant as to understand where those policies undertaken in order to address the global changing environment and adapt to the competition are actually implemented or just kept limited to the boundaries of the hard-bound policy books.

## **6. Bound by the Badge but Bend by the Barriers: Women Police and their plight**

The initiative of creating employment opportunities for women in different sectors regardless of existing taboos is laudable. The Government of Bangladesh deserves praise for its sincere efforts to empower women and open the doors that were so far closed. Having said that, it is also important to create an environment where working in such professions is comfortable. For basic humanitarian causes, a congenial environment is significant.

In our interview with some of the promising young female police officers of the country, we were enlightened by their experience and their journey. They shared

their problems, which are either untold or unheard of. Some of these problems were similar to the ones that were derived from the excellent survey work on female police officers by the Commonwealth Human Rights Commission. Some basic problems faced by the women police are:

### ***6.1 Training and Learning***

Bangladesh Police has a six-month-long training which is conducted at the Bangladesh Police Academy, at Sarda in Rajshahi, where male and female police officers go through rigorous physical and tactical training. The training has been modeled as the same for both genders ensuring no discrimination on any ground. While we can look into this in a positive perspective of treating a female officer on equal and similar grounds as that of her counterpart men, there is also no denial of the fact that her biological construct demands some exemptions. The training at Sarda is indeed a very competitive and physically challenging which the girls are passing out with flying colors. Having said this, it is undeniable that menstruation can be very uncomfortable and unavoidable.

One of the respondents noted that- *“During menstruation women feel comfortable with cotton dark color cloth but during training, we have to wear a uniform that makes me hesitant”*

It has come to be known that female officers are given a 3-day exemption from training for the menstruation cycle. But respondents opined that, female bodies do not act on mathematical terms and hence often times 3 days is not enough. According to respondents, the level of physical strain and pressure that one has to undergo during the training might cause health hazards. Then comes the other aspects of training. It was pointed out that, the institution fails to provide other necessary training which is as much important for the police career as physical and tactical training. Lack of training on computer, driving and English language which are considered basics of learning keeps most female officers in a major disadvantage. Most of the junior level women officers cannot operate the computer due to the lack of computer training. To be selected for the United Nations mission an officer must be proficient in English. But, unfortunately, most of the junior lady police do not speak English which becomes a hurdle for better posting and training and UN missions.

### ***6.2 Less Trust on Women Police***

Trust is an important issue of governance, especially in Bangladesh Police. There is a crisis of trust on the women police. Most of the senior officers are not confident on the capacity and intelligence of the women police. Male senior officers suspect that the lady officers are unable to handle any heinous crime.

As a result, they are given duty on handling women criminals, escorting VIPs, writing a general diary. But the scenario is different for women cadre offices because they are given field duty without gender biases. One of the respondents ranking ASP said: “We have to prove our capacity to be trusted.” There is another aspect that women are not given training on crime management and investigation due to the lack of confidence on them.

While visiting one of our respondents for the interview, we came across an interesting fact that our respondent was the first-ever posted female officer in the post that she currently held. That post is the security in charge of the Secretariat which is a very critical and crucial one. On the one hand, this is inspiring and on the other, it is alarming! In a survey by the Police Reforms Program (PRP) in 2011, 55% of male police officers said that women police officers were not as effective as their male counterparts in preventing crime, and almost 40% felt they were not as effective at investigating the crime. About 70% of the women police officers claimed that the junior male officers are not loyal to them even they do not respect senior women officers.

### *6.3 Denying Leadership Positions, Promotions and Critical Postings*

This problem was identified by the Commonwealth Survey as well as shared by our respondents. The female police officers have come to believe that, it is because of some inherent physical traits and limitations that women officers are not promoted duly. The female officers are avoided when it comes to leadership and strategic positions and postings. Only a handful of female officers make it to the top and to postings that are lucrative in the service. Our respondents opined that less deserving male colleagues and even juniors are handed over position instead of considering equally qualified and serving females officials. Posting of women officer in a backward place makes the female police officer more vulnerable. Most of the time women officers are not posted in Dhaka Metropolitan Police (DMP) because the pressure of duty in DMP is more than in any other police station. A respondent stated that it was because there was scope of corruption in DMP, so male officers didn't want to miss the opportunity of posting in the DMP.

And for the sake of better postings, political connections, networking and liaison are common amongst the male police officers. Female officers who are not apt in such skills are deprived and denied of rightful postings and promotions. The problem of separate barracks is another notable one. Most of the police stations have no separate barracks, which is why the postings of female police are restricted to certain areas and posts. Despite qualifying, they are often deprived of posts that fit their skills and career goals because of the accommodation

problem. For women who seek postings in locations without women's barracks, they often have to rent their accommodation, which is greatly burdensome on a small salary. (Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative 2015).

#### **6.4 Shocking Cases of Sexual Harassment**

Sexual harassment is a malice of a male-dominated society. As opined by a respondent of the police service, cases of sexual harassment occur mostly in the lower tier of the service, amongst the constables. More than 10% of constables faced sexual harassment. A common form of harassment is that male police personnel spreading rumors to defame the women police. Even some Officers-in-Charge of police stations indulge in spreading rumors. There are malpractices of male police personnel sending inappropriate messages to female colleagues repeatedly and passing comments on the uniform of the female officers. It strikes a major question of how poorly police as an institution is failing to institutionalize the inclusion of female officers. One cadre officer quoted "*Sexual harassment is less in the cadres. Senior cadres are respected. Only cadre level officers command respect*". She added that uniform gives her more security. She never does any duty without wearing the uniform because uniform makes her more secure when she is in the office or field duty. While the entire country looks up to the police to bring to justice sexual offenders, it is indeed shocking that female constables are themselves victims of it.

### **7. Pressure of Balancing Family and Work: Challenge of Balancing Family Obligation and Work**

A women's role as a mother wife and daughter is paramount but not particularly limited to these, However, in a tough profession like the police, the women are prepared as officers from the very first day of their training. They are indoctrinated with the belief that they are officers serving the nation and in charge of its law and order and there is no gender to this profession. Having said that, it is fruitless to deny that women have other gender roles as well, which leads to expectations and obligations towards family and friends. These often create conflicting situations for female personnel while maintaining professional requirements and family responsibilities.

Different postings from time to time compel police officers to move around with family, which in the case of female officers is challenging as husbands seldom want to leave their job and follow the wives to her posting. It is not just a conjugal issue but also a social stigma. which is why policies related to similar postings with spouses and other government service has made co-location of the spouse as relevant and required.

### *7.1 Over Duty (more than 8 hours)*

According to Section 22 of the Police Act of 1861, it states that every police officer shall be considered to be always on duty. But the majority of Inspectors (83.3%) and Sub-Inspectors (59.5%) said they felt it was hard to be on duty all the time. In Dhaka, 100% of the Inspectors, 84.6% of Sub-Inspectors and 66.7% of Assistant Sub-Inspectors felt it was hard to be on duty all the time (Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative 2015). Most of women police from all ranks work more than 12 hours per shift. The difficulties of working long hours and often being uncertain about the length of shifts create problems for balancing life for women police. Hardships increase with limited infrastructural facilities like lack of toilets/rest and prayer space, vehicles and transport.

### *7.2 Inadequacy of Basic Facilities*

Most police stations lack the basics of separate washrooms, restrooms, prayer rooms, transport and accommodation. In the police force, respondents opined that problems regarding these basic facilities are acute in the lower tier of the service. A female officer is provided with separate washroom, prayer room, and transport for her duty. But unfortunately, the lower tier female police, such as constables cannot avail such facilities. They are rarely seen to have separate transport facilities and have to share with male police constables in crowded vehicles like a minibus or Leguna\*.

Discrimination is seen in the issue of motorbikes for female police to perform her duty whereas a similarly ranked male officer is allocated motorbike. Female constables and personnel of similar ranks fail to find proper bathroom, restrooms and prayer rooms in their duty areas, and at many times, share barracks with male police. The separate prayer rooms which is religiously mandatory is absent in most of the police stations.

In addition, another crying need of the female police officers is the absence of day care facilities. The provision of day care not only allows an officer to provide care for her child while working but also boosts the level and sincerity towards work, because then she can solely be involved in her work and not have worries about her babies. At present, in Bangladesh, many government and private institutions have day care facilities.

It should be noted that, while Bangladesh Secretariat has a Day Care Centre, the headquarters of Bangladesh police surprisingly has no Day Care Centre - one of the senior women police officer regrets.

---

\*Local term for a public transport converted form a small pickup

### *7.3 Lack of Gender and Anti-discrimination Policy*

So far, the Bangladesh police force has not developed any comprehensive gender policy for the female officers. Though the various problems associated with female officers and those that are faced by them in service had surfaced long before, the authority turned a blind eye to those for quite a long time. It is now that gender policy is in the drafting phase.

## **8. Initiatives taken by the Bangladesh Police at the Institutional Level**

One of the striking aspects that came out from the study is the unavailability of any particular policy paper for institutionalizing female police officers into the system. There is no separate policy guideline as to how the Bangladesh Police should attend to the rather new and different problems and issues should there be any, with regard to women officers on duty. A hard and fast policy guide at an institutional level is required to motivate the female officers and make them aware of their duties, as well as the benefits and privileges they can avail due to their gender role and how the Bangladesh Police should ensure equal participation and involvement of female police officers in the professional arena. However, even though a defined and designated guideline and policy stand is missing in pen and paper, instances and examples showed that the police as an institution is very much eager and sincere in institutionalizing this recently developed paradigm shift of recruiting female police officers into the system. Some of those points have been discussed in this paper. Formation of the Bangladesh Police Women's Network (BPWN) and International Association of Women Police (IAWP) are commendable steps towards giving female police officers a proper network. Many of the institutional level commitments are being materialized through the active involvement of these organizations. The support and motivation of the Bangladesh Police towards these networks show how it is involved in the change process.

The BPWN helpline network has opened a new platform for the female police officers. This helpline is active to coordinate and strengthen the network among women field level police. The BPWN, in association and support of the Bangladesh Police, arrange different seminars and training sessions on the gender issue, computer, driving, English speaking in order to develop the professional skills of Bangladesh female police force. The recent initiatives of organizing the women police award 2016 and 2017 are also commendable steps to motivate more women to join the force. The Bangladesh Police, in order to make its female officers prepared to compete with their male colleagues, have recently sent few of them to India for commando training. This shows the institution's sincerity and initiative to make its female police officers more competent and capable.

Whereas previously, the female officers were only posted in the cities and mostly for desk jobs, the practice is gradually diminishing.

The Bangladesh Police initially restrained from giving tough and risky assignments to its female officers. But to make them more efficient officers and to treat them equally, two contingents of women police were sent to UN Peacekeeping Mission. Day care facilities being one of the biggest concerns of female officers, the government had tried to incorporate this facility at the Rajarbagh Police Line. DIG Fatema Begum in her interview to one of the national newspapers, opined that even though the existing infrastructure was not favorable for women to a great extent, despite the hurdles, female officers are working efficiently alongside their male colleagues (Mizan, 2017).

Despite the anarchic situation in the country, women police were deployed in containing violence on streets side by side with males, and they were performing their duties with competence. This on the one hand upholds the courage of our female officers and on the other shows the institution's growing trust on female police officers to tackle and face emergency situations. However, several high female police officials said though now over 5,000 women police were working in the force, most of them were being posted in metropolitan areas as infrastructures in police stations outside the metropolitans were hardly suitable for women police (Rahman. M.,2013).

## 9. Analysis and Discussion

The above-mentioned problems or obstacles are the daily occurrences for a female police officer in our country. Female police officers are facing and fighting these hurdles every day and even so, they seldom speak about it. Or, there is very little discussion or noise heard in the outside world. But why is it so? Women have strived and fought hard to make their places in professions which were previously closed to them. Therefore, they often are not vocal about their problems and challenges lest they are labeled unfit and incompetent. Whether or not, these hurdles are spoken about, these are very much existent and calls for proper attention and action.

Now, the first and foremost question that comes to mind is, whether the institution is concurrent on this issue, whether Bangladesh Police is actively trying to address and mitigate these problems? Or, it is the female police officers who are rather heading towards a professional compromise? The major formula for an institution to function efficiently is to make its personnel, regardless of gender, feel comfortable with their position and stand in the institution itself. Decoupling as defined earlier should not be a superficial solution, however, in

many cases it is evident that the police as an institution is decoupling to create an image of non-discriminative and progressive one, whereas there remain several discrepancies between the policies and practices. It falls on the institution to create a platform so that those who belong to it feel the sense of belongingness and are confident about the role they play. The police as an institution should undertake policies that address the problems of its female officers and practice those policies sincerely.

The lack of institutional concurrence and cooperation is making the female officers feel insecure, and hence, there arises a concern of professional compromise amongst many female officers. The uncomfortable yet unavoidable realization of “since this has been a man’s job for quite a while, I should also perform equally and exactly the same so as not to give away my weakness” is getting embedded in the minds of many promising female officers. Because a man is doing it, hence I must do it. This is what drives the motivation of a female officer to undertake risks and avoid debacle, to face inconvenience yet not be called unprofessional, is it yet another step extra that women in every profession take to prove himself deserving and competent? However, there is indeed a significant role that the institution must play to better the working conditions and to avoid discrimination for these young officers. In this regard, the institution has to go through a tussling process. It should reform its practices and add value to the institution itself. Whatever or however gender-sensitive policies are formulated for its personnel, if the institution fails to implement those or keep those as just ornamental pages in a book, the female officers would continue to suffer. Many a times it is seen that institutions undertake policies which are overachieving, overbearing, impractical and over-ambitious, by doing so, such institutions create a facade of ideal scenario whereas, in actual practice, they hardly implement or practice their own constructed policies. This is called decoupling and is one of the glitches of the theory of institutionalism. Now, if we question whether Bangladesh Police service is experiencing the same phenomenon, the answer is quite arbitrary. Bangladesh being a very male-dominated nation because of its traditional norms and culture is still quite liberal about the female participation in few fields like journalism, police, policing and so on. Taking orders and lead from a female superior still bothers Bengali men especially in the rural areas, hence the institution’s policy of recruiting women is a big challenge in itself, to add to that, making the institution of police ready for such a massive changes and making it work-friendly and habitable for the female officers also would be a brave doing. While women in our country are still not education-wise and health-wise tough enough, there also remains existing taboos in the society which resist such image of women altogether. Such taboos and stigmas lead to many offences, insolence and indecency against

female officers. These can only be addressed if the police as an institution deal with such situations in a stern manner spreading the word that a police officer is a police officer be it male or female. It falls completely on the institution to infuse the idea amongst the male officers that female officers are their colleagues who stand on equal grounds as them. Moreover, it is also the responsibility of the institution to give female officers enough discretion and power so that they are respected and feared throughout the country and even in the remotest of areas.

Though a complete policy guideline for female officers is still in the drafting phase, the institution is seen to taken various steps like posting women in important positions, posting women in challenging and risky zones and assigning them with significant terms. These show that women in the country are gradually becoming more of a part of a system, which is after all that is deserved from the institution. The provision of sending female officers to the mission is also a sign that the institution is being supportive and trusts their leadership. As far as providing facilities is concerned, the institution has made separate washrooms and restrooms with provision for women officers' *namaz*. But it is also true that these are not sufficient especially in the remote duty areas.

Now the above-mentioned problems are very vivid ones in the life of a female police officer and these problems have cropped up ever since the first day females have been recruited in the service. Nonetheless, the institution is seen to be very casual about meeting these dire needs and necessities of the female officers. Despite these problems being an obstacle to a female officers competency and capabilities, the institution is found to decouple the issue. The police as an institution is found to show its sensitivity towards the female officers, but the question arises as to whether that is only a show. When it comes to taking measures and steps to decrease the hurdles these officers are facing, the institution seems to be reluctant and heedless. This is resulting in a huge compromise on the part of the female officers, a professional compromise that is thereafter limiting their potential. The institution is not concurring to the growing needs and requirements which are becoming even more acute and visible with the increase of female officers and other ranks recruited each year. The number of female police officers is increasing but the institution is not taking sufficient steps to actually accommodate them, assist them and acknowledge them, as a result, professionally the female officers are settling in for however they are treated professionally, which is in fact a matter of deep concern.

## 10. Concluding Remarks

Twenty years into the new millennium, we are still hung up on the issues of gender bias, gender equality and gender discrimination! Female police officers were very much the need of time, the recruitment of girls into the service, therefore, was not just another fad or “gender equality” agenda, but it was very much a requirement and a necessity for the institution itself. Therefore, the fact that female officers are a part of the system now and they should be treated justly and their perspective and problems are very much the system’s own, should be realized at the earliest. Bangladesh Police as an institution therefore should concur and cooperate with the officers and help them thrive. Undoubtedly, there will be new issues and perspectives that will crop up while a progressive change is underway, and the institution should do its best to address and accommodate them in order to enjoy the benefits of change. Otherwise, with an increasing number of female officers entering the service but having to undergo professional compromise because of the institution’s lack of empathy and efficiency, the worst sufferer will be the system itself. In order to make the Bangladesh Police function more efficiently and uphold its previous glory and valor, co-existence and cooperation of both male and female officers is the only possible equation.

## References

- Ahmed, D., 2019. Participation of women in policing. *The New Nation*, [online] Available at: <<http://m.thedailynewnation.com/news/213499/participation-of-women-in-policing>> [Accessed 4 August 2020].
- Alshehhi, O. R. S. (2014). *Enhancing Successful Organizational Change through Institutionalization: The Case of the Abu Dhabi Police* (Doctoral dissertation, The University of Manchester (United Kingdom)).
- Austen, A. (2016). Decoupling between policy and practice through the lens of sensemaking and sensegiving. *Management*, 20(1):225-238.
- Armenakis, A. A., and Bedeian, A. G. (1999). Organizational change: A review of theory and research in the 1990s. *Journal of Management*, 25(3):293-315.?
- Bangladesh Police. (n.d.). In Wikipedia Retrieved from [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bangladesh\\_Police](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bangladesh_Police)

- Brown, J., Gouseti, I., and Fife-Schaw, C. (2018). Sexual harassment experienced by police staff serving in England, Wales and Scotland: A descriptive exploration of incidence, antecedents and harm. *The Police Journal*, 91(4):356-374.
- Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative. (2015). *Rough Roads To Equality: Women Police in Bangladesh*. Retrieved from [http://www.nipsa.in/uploads/country\\_resources\\_file/1255\\_Rough\\_Road\\_to\\_Equality\\_Bangladesh\\_Police\\_7-12-15-Final.pdf](http://www.nipsa.in/uploads/country_resources_file/1255_Rough_Road_to_Equality_Bangladesh_Police_7-12-15-Final.pdf)
- Dhaka, B., 2018. '11,767 women currently in police service.' *Prothom Alo*, [online] Available at: <<https://en.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/%E2%80%9811-767-women-currently-in-police-service%E2%80%99>> [Accessed 4 August 2020].
- Gomes, W., 2009. The first time in history: a woman is chief officer of police. *The Independent*, [online] Available at: <<http://www.asianews.it/news-en/The-first-time-in-history:-a-woman-is-chief-officer-of-police-15319.html>> [Accessed 4 August 2020].
- Gregory, B. T., Harris, S. G., Armenakis, A. A., and Shook, C. L. (2009). Organizational culture and effectiveness: A study of values, attitudes, and organizational outcomes. *Journal of business research*, 62(7):673-679.
- MacLean, T. L., and Behnam, M. (2010). The dangers of decoupling: The relationship between compliance programs, legitimacy perceptions, and institutionalized misconduct. *Academy of Management Journal*, 53(6):1499-1520.
- Meyer, J. W., and Rowan, B. (1977). Institutionalized organizations: Formal structure as myth and ceremony. *American Journal of Sociology*, 83(2):340-363.
- Mizan, H., 2017. Fatema Begum, pathfinder of women policing. *The Independent*, [online] Available at: <<http://www.theindependentbd.com/printversion/details/84294>> [Accessed 4 August 2020].
- Police Reforms Programme (2011), "Baseline Survey on Personal Security and Police Performance in Bangladesh", <http://prp.org.bd/downloads/> [Accessed 2 December 2015].
- Rahman. M.(2013). Number of women rising in the police force. *The Daily Star*. Retrieved from <http://www.dailystar.com>, March 2019.
- Self, D. R., and Schraeder, M. (2009). Enhancing the success of organizational change: Matching readiness strategies with sources of resistance. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, 30(2):167-182.
- Scott, W. R. (2005). Institutional theory: Contributing to a theoretical research program. *Great minds in management: The process of theory development*, 37:460-484.

- Todnem By, R. (2005). Organisational change management: A critical review. *Journal of Change Management*, 5(4):369-380.
- “21 female cops get Bangladesh Police Women Award’17”. (2017. April 21). *The Daily Star*. Retrieved from <http://www.dailystar.com>, March 2019.
- “11,767 women currently in police service”. (2018, March 10). *The Prothom Alo* Retrieved from <https://en.prothomalo.com/bangladesh/news/172189/%E2%80%9811-767-women-currently-in-police-service%E2%80%99>
- Worley, C. G., and Lawler III, E. E. (2006). Designing organizations that are built to change. *MIT Sloan Management Review*, 48(1):19-23.