ABSTRACT

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to explore the career pathways of women administrators in Higher Education system of India. It is also an attempt to understand the barriers they encounter and the coping strategies devised by these women administrators to advance their career.

Design/Methodology/Approach

Case studies are conducted on the eleven Women Vice-Chancellors in the Higher Education system of India. Eleven women Vice-Chancellors were interviewed by the researcher to collect their details from the childhood till date. Apart from the case, the researcher also collected data from various other sources such as family, relatives, friends, colleague, employers etc. to have an in-depth understanding of the case.

Findings

A common career path has emerged in all these selected cases after they enter into the profession which is starting as a teaching faculty and slowly progressing within the system. Various barriers have emerged such as family related barriers, lack of support system, lack of networking and socialization, lack of role model. The strategies which were used by the women administrators were informal networking, personal qualities of being bold and determined.

Research limitations/Implications

This is a case study and includes a small sample size of eleven women administrators therefore the findings cannot be generalized to the larger group. This study has implications for aspiring women administrators as well as for policy making.