

WOMEN POLICE IN TAMILNADU: PERSPECTIVES AND PROBLEMS

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ABSTRACT

Women Police in Tamil Nādu: Perspectives and Problems; is an overview of the functioning of Women Police in Tamil Nadu Police. It discusses policing and gender issues existing within the organisation and how women police are contributing to maintaining peace in society. The present paper examines many pioneering studies in other countries to understand the general problems the women police face in Tamil Nādu and worldwide. Although women police in Tamil Nādu constitute 19.1 per cent of the total force of women police in Tamil Nādu across the world, they face serious problems such as the balance between work and life, sexual harassment, hindrances to performance, lack of facilities provided to women vis-a-vis male police officers, etc. The present study posits its argument on Harrington's experiential knowledge and has attempted to study the current scenario in Tamil Nadu Police Force. The study has used the following methodological devices:

- Feminist ideologies insist on the recognition of feminine qualities.
- Stereotyping of women, especially in law enforcement careers, reflects a patriarchal culture.
- Evolving a questionnaire and a sample study of Policewomen's views about working conditions.

The women's police force in Tamil Nādu has to manage the dual lives of work and family. They face many problems related to stress, family bonding, time management, and worry. Several training programs are occasionally organised for women police personnel to promote their self-image and enhance performance. Mangai Natarajan's "Women Police in a Changing Society: Back Door Equality" has been used as the framework to understand the status of women in the Police force in Tamil Nadu. Ms Natarajan believed that a significant amount of Police work does not involve physical strength alone but also the officer's logical reasoning and problem-solving nature. Proper utilisation of interpersonal skills is an additional requirement.

Some studies have got conducted to evaluate the work-life balance among women police in Tamil Nadu by using a questionnaire. It contained questions regarding the dimensions of work-life balance, job satisfaction, personal profile, and organisational profile of women employees. As a result, various initiatives to address the concerns of women in the police force have since become operational.

The present study analyses the recruitment pattern and duty allotment for Women Police at various levels and establishes how discriminatory the practice is in certain areas. In the context of the slogan of the Radical Feminists, regarding 'Women Becoming', one can see that there is gender discrimination, stereotyping and oppression within the department/organisation. A serious feminist wants internal democracy and insists on an authentic style. The Gender-based work behaviour pattern within the organisation is corrosive because it affects the status of women police in general, which this article tries to illuminate.

KEYWORDS: Work-life Balance – women police - Quality of working life- benefits - working conditions - work environment - AWPS -

INTRODUCTION:

Before looking at the future of women policing, we must ask what the end is for the police if they are purely enforcement agents whose only qualifications are brute force and basic literacy. Then the future for women in the service looks bleak, certainly. As it does for some men. (106, Ghosh)

Police image in a society depends on the degree of stability it has with public expectations of policing and gender issues within the organisation recruitment and duties of women police in Tamil Nadu, and radical feminist views on the stereotyping of women's role in the organisation need investigation for any proper understanding of the police force. In most cases, the woman entered specialist policing roles as the rest of the mothers of women and children, although the rationales offered for their employment vary.

Universally, however, women were given restricted duties and were excluded from the routine street patrol. During World War II, the women police emerged as guardians of the nation's morals, a role from which they did not appear until the 1970s and 1980s. They continued to depict women as either masculinised or sex objects unfit for police work, although they got integrated due to equality legislation.

Women were a tiny minority of officers in England and the United States, confining themselves to particular roles. Both countries faced similar problems like policy issues concerning women on patrol, in public order, situations in handling violence and equal opportunities. In both countries, only in the 1970s was there an integration of women into policing. Civil rights and second-wave feminism shifted women's role in the police, which was the most conservative of control agencies, in surprising ways. In the 1970s, both nations enacted new laws or constitutional amendments which emphasised the rights of women and minorities more firmly than before. However, even in these countries, women concentrated on administrative duties rather than detective or traffic work.

V. Shantharam IPS, in his Profiles of Women's Problems and Challenges, gives a picture of the induction of women into police service across the world and records that the earliest appointment of women to police was in 1845, in New York City, where they appointed them as matrons. In Chicago, they got established in 1893. Shantharam states that they got officially classified as People's women. Alice Wells got selected as a civil servant in Los Angeles in 1910. Subsequently, more women in different capacities got inducted into the Police Force. By the year 1920, over 200 more cities had employed women in the Police organisation.

Legal discrimination got scrapped with the passage of the Equal Employment Opportunity Act in 1972. As a result, women were inducted into Police service in 1915 by Australia, in 1986 by Canada, in 1969 by France, in 1907 by Britain, 1938 by India.

As per the statistics obtained by V. Shantharam IPS., in his Profiles of Women's Problems and Challenges the International scenario, the representation, rules and opportunities for women officers vary across nations. Women range from 4% of the police in Portugal and Belgium to 15% in the U.S., Australia and the U.K. (with an average of 13%). They are subjected to discriminatory treatment, including sexual harassment, with limited opportunities to attain supervisory positions. Women entered India's force as early as Uttar Pradesh (Kanpur) in 1938. Even before independence, a few provinces and princely states had employed women in the Police force, as it was a period of endless misery, squalor and moral degradation. Kidnapping, abduction and sex offences showed a marked increase. Relief camps got started for unattached women, children and girls. Policewomen were required to check Muslim purdah at border check posts. All this required the appointment of Policewomen.

Why we need women in the police is often raised by people worldwide. Situations like demonstrations in the streets by women and children are increasing. Women act as carriers of

contraband, gold, and narcotic drugs and often smuggle goods concealed inside their private parts. If a woman gets arrested, she becomes hysterical. She does not hesitate to bring ill fame to the male Police officer who tried to stop her.

In the enforcement Of Law, women Police officers get recruited and accepted by society to deal with crimes against women and children. Women Police officers also find it easier to get lead offenders in cases where male officers have generally failed to get. Women relate instinctively with a person in distress, and they sense maternal sympathy; hence women police have proved successful in the enforcement of the Immoral Traffic (prevention act), the juvenile Justice Act, the child marriage restraint act, and in case of dowry deaths.

Many studies have been conducted as to why we need to recruit women. For example, Barbara Raffel Price, Dean of graduate studies and professor of criminal justice at John Jay College of criminal justice at the City University in New York, presented a paper in conjunction with Natalie J Sokoloff and IrkaKuleshnyk, with the theme "Is police work changing as a result of women's contributions." Raffel Price, in her research, has stated that while women are as competent as men at this time, it is the woman who is changing and adapting to establish police norms and modes but nothing research by Sokoloff she has stated that as more women proportionally patrol the streets one can end dissipate that more confrontations between the police the public will be handled through negotiation and verbal exchange rather than through the more traditional police style of coercion and arrest this can lead to greater public satisfaction.

Policing is being rethought all over the world according to the needs of contemporary society. Woman police have long found the monotonous nature of assignments to be reflective of traditional culture, and they have not hesitated to express their scorn for the same technology and communications that are replacing the need for physical strength and endurance; hence the existing patriarchal equations need to be discarded developing countries always try to aid or imitate the western models with the advent of technology the world is made so small, so both men and women are equal when it comes to the use of communication gadgets are improving interpersonal skills the negative attitude of men towards the women law enforcement officers is instrumental in hindering the advancement of the latter with the models in surveys already available Tamil Nadu police woman have already proved that they can handle the domestic violence and law and order problems. Hence, women officers are urgently needed in many other vital department tasks.

Concerning the Tamil Nadu police force, it has a 19.1 % percentage representation of women and ranks second in the country. As of 2015, The strength of women in the Tamil Nadu police force consists of 104 police officers from the rank of DSP to DGP, 221 Inspectors of police, 1548 and sub-inspectors of police, 14342 constable & other classes, thus a total of 16,215 in all 30% reservation for women in police. Tamil Nadu government accorded sanction for opening the first all-women police station in Chennai. There are now 224 all-women police stations (As of 2022) all over the state. In 2003 Tamil Nadu became the first state in India to have an exclusive all-women police battalion headed by a woman commandant.

Women commandos undergo the same training as their male counterparts. They are equally proficient in handling automatic and sophisticated weapons detection and disposal of bombs, driving, and riding unarmed combat under adventure sports. The all-women police stations in the state generally deal with crimes against women and marital disputes. They register and investigate cases and pursue trials. In addition, they handle issues with required counselling and legal resolutions such as dowry harassment, sexual harassment, assault bigamy and violations under the domestic violence prevention act.

Already an exhaustive study had been undertaken of Tamil Nadu women police through the pioneering attempt on women police in a changing society back door to equality conducted by Mangai Natarajan; it states that the police force in Tamil Nadu got organised on a paramilitary model and the first woman officers were employed directly in the police stations to support the men mainly in cases

with female offenders or victims. Ms Natarajan also says that a great deal of police work does not involve physical strength and relies primarily on how one is sensitive to the issues and adequately utilises interpersonal skills. Still, the police department may have different skills, abilities, and knowledge to work in a different style in various situations. It was a study on the recruitment pattern and duty allotment for women police at multiple levels and establishes how discriminatory practice is in insertion areas.

The percentage of policewomen is still relatively small, and the rate of increase of policewomen has grown at a snail space since 1972. Some significant barriers still exist in many police departments, like sexual harassment, poor maternity leave policies, lack of awareness among the public regarding the need for policewomen in the place of a policeman, attractive working conditions for middle and upper-middle-class educated women, and proper training and current technology as India firmly believes in the family system needs to take care of the maternal anxiety of women police as well

Although there are many women police stations in Tamil Nādu, some serious problems are associated with the functioning of women police. These include the balance between work and life, performance, facilities provided to women police officers, etc.

METHODOLOGY

The research study is partly descriptive and diagnostic in nature. The information was collected through both primary data and secondary data. Preliminary data was collected through a personal interview, observation and secondary data from the organisation's website and service rules of the police department.

Tamil Nadu is a pioneer in All women's police stations:

The State of Tamil Nadu pioneered the All Women Police Station (AWPS) concept. The State has 224 such stations. An AWPS is a system to deal with crimes against women. These include sexual harassment cases booked under the IPC and serious crimes against children. They also address issues that women face, such as dowry disputes. As per statistics, Tamil Nadu has the highest number of all-women police stations in the country. At least one all-women police station is present in every subdivision in the State. There are over 20,000 women in the police force of the State. This includes many senior IPS officers. Thirty per cent of police jobs are reserved for women at the entry level. In addition to AWPS, the State has a particular security group. It is also the home of the nation's first women's commando unit.

All these measures have helped the State maintain law and order. However, recent attacks on women have been shocking. Several incidents of rape attempts have been reported. One such case is of a 7th-class student, Punitha, returning from school in the Tuticorin district. When a local goon approached her, she resisted the attempt but was strangled with her dupatta. Her pursuer was arrested under the Goonda Act and detained for a year.

All women police stations in Tamil Nādu

An all-women police station may sound like a concept from a sci-fi movie, but Tamilnadu has 224 of them and is home to over 20,000 women police personnel. It also has the highest number of urban police stations, with over 544 in the State. While the concept has existed for some time, the first all-women police station opened only in 1992.

Although it has been a while since the Tamil Nādu Government set up the all-women establishments, the AWPS has played an essential part in the Tamil Nadu police's mission to prevent and solve crime related to women and children. Women police personnel are deployed for a variety of tasks, including bandobast. In addition, they are used to handle incidents of dowry deaths and sexual assault, among others. The all-women police station is one of the many facets of the Tamil Nādu police force, and it has been a boon to the department. For starters, it allows the State to have a well-trained, unbiased, and objective investigative unit to solve crimes and protect women and children. In addition, the

women's police have been trained in properly handling weapons, including firearms and hand grenades.

Work-life balance of women police in Tamil Nādu

The women's police force in Tamil Nādu must manage the dual lives of work and family. They face many problems related to stress, family bonding, time management, and worry. Several training programs are occasionally organised for women police personnel to promote their self-image and enhance performance.

Some studies were conducted to evaluate the work-life balance among women police in Tamil Nadu. This was done using a questionnaire. It contained questions regarding the dimensions of work-life balance, job satisfaction, personal profile, and organisational profile of women employees. As a result, various initiatives have been undertaken to address the concerns of women in the police force. However, the implementation of these initiatives remains a challenge. This is especially true in Tamil Nadu, where women police personnel number over 20,000.

Work-life balance is a hot topic in academia. The concept is not a definite science but is a vital concern for human resources practitioners. As a result, studies have been conducted to understand the complexities of the concept. To evaluate the work-life balance of women police in Tamil Nādu, we designed a questionnaire. We obtained the responses of over 500 women personnel of the Tamil Nadu Police before coming to the above conclusion. The study was carried out using a questionnaire. Primary data was collected from women police constables of Chennai city. Secondary data was gathered from published articles and journals. Finally, regression analysis was applied to test the relationship between variables.

Some factors included in the questionnaire are a sense of optimism, recognition, and reward. These factors helped build resilience, confidence, and coping abilities. Perceptions of justice were also linked to work-life balance. Optimism is crucial because it helps to tackle stress in the work roles. The study has revealed the existence of imbalances that rob the women police of productivity and efficiency in their day-to-day work.

Functioning of women police in Tamil Nādu

The function of women police in Tamil Nādu is to protect against crime against women and children. Women police officers are assigned to select posts in the police force. They also handle sexual harassment cases booked under the IPC. Women police personnel have to face challenges and problems such as fewer opportunities for promotions and long working hours. In addition, they need special training to address crimes against women. Moreover, they work under appalling conditions, such as a lack of toilets, frequent night duties, postings in remote locations, uncomfortable uniforms, poor living conditions due to low salaries, lack of gender parity in the force, absence of creches in some areas, terrible family life due to irregular working hours.

Problems of women police in Tamil Nādu

Women police officers in Tamil Nadu face various challenges. They must deal with women's problems in society and within their families. Moreover, they are required to be free from the stereotypical gender bias in the police force. While the role of women police has increased over the past few years, they have also faced some difficulties. These include a lack of proper infrastructure and hygiene facilities. In addition, a large percentage of women police officers are getting married. There are no creches available for them to leave their young children. Some women are forced to lock their children up when on duty. One of the most common complaints against the women police is that they are not sensitive towards their victims. Many women police have been dealt with under disciplinary rules by their superiors because of their 'insensitive' behaviour. The Tamil Nadu government has set up a particular cell to help women who have been abused. This cell will provide shelter, counselling, and legal aid to those who have been used.

Contribution of women police in Tamil Nādu

As a state, Tamil Nadu is the pioneer in setting up an all-women police station (AWPS) in the country. The AWPS was established in response to the rising crime against women in the 1980s. It

was meant to encourage women to report crimes. In addition, the AWPS was also designed to provide dowry services.

AWPS is an adjunct to regular police stations. These officers are responsible for handling severe crime cases against women and children. They also handle cases of dowry deaths and sexual harassment. The main intention behind setting up AWPS is to ensure the complainants are dealt with politely. AWPS personnel are also tasked with handling sexual harassment cases booked under the Tamil Nadu Prohibition of Women Harassment Act. They are trained to conduct an investigation and pursue prosecution in court. Most police officials in the State fall into the age group of fewer than 30 years. Most of them are married. Most women personnel have kids. Therefore, they face many problems in their work life.

Facilities for women police in Tamil Nādu

The Tamil Nadu Government is introducing facilities for women police. They have presented creches at several places to care for their children while working. They have also acquired mobile toilets so women performing bandobast duties in remote areas can access toilet facilities. Still, Women in the force face several challenges. They need to have a good balance between their work and family. This can be a challenge for women because of the demanding work hours.

Moreover, they have to deal with sensitive issues. In addition, women cops are required to commit to their jobs. A large percentage of them are married and have children. That means they have to spend much time at the station. Besides, they have to deal with sexual assaults and juvenile delinquents. However, women's safety is a priority for the Tamil Nadu Government. To ensure that women's complaints are dealt with efficiently, the State has a particular cell for women. It will help them with legal aid and counselling. Also, it will help them find shelter for victims.

Performance of women police in Tamil Nādu

One of the primary law enforcement agencies in Tamil Nādu is the Police Department. It is the fifth-largest state police force in the country and has existed for 150 years. There are over 200 women's police stations in the State. These all-women units mainly deal with issues related to women, such as crime, sexual assault, family disputes, etc. AWPS also handles cases involving serious crimes.

The State of Tamil Nadu is one of the pioneers in the field of AWPS. Approximately 40% of all AWPSs in India are in the southern states of Tamil Nadu, Kerala, and Karnataka. Generally, all-women police units consist of fifteen women constables, two female sub-inspectors, and a female Inspector.

A few years ago, the Indian government set the goal of having at least 33 per cent of women in the police department. Tamil Nādu police are trying to achieve the purpose of 33 per cent of women police personnel in the state. Soon they should complete it like all the firsts they have achieved concerning women police.

Conclusion:

The strength of women police in Tamil Nadu is likely to be lower than that of men, as is the case with many other states in India. According to a 2019 report, the percentage of women in the police force in India is around 6.5%, which is relatively low compared to developed countries.

There are several challenges that women police officers face in Tamil Nadu and across India, including discrimination and harassment, lack of access to training and career advancement opportunities, and inadequate facilities and equipment. In addition, many women police officers face challenges balancing their professional and personal responsibilities, including childcare and household management.

To address these challenges, the government can take several steps, such as increasing the recruitment and retention of women in the police force, improving training and career advancement opportunities for women police officers, and providing better facilities and equipment for them. The government can also work to create a more supportive and inclusive workplace culture that promotes gender

equality and helps to prevent discrimination and harassment. Providing more support services such as childcare centres and flexible working schedules is also a good solution.

It's important to note that changing the culture of an organisation or a society takes time, but setting policies and working towards the goal can bring change. It's also important to note that police reform is a complex issue, and there are no easy solutions to the challenges women police officers face in Tamil Nadu.

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