

# **STRATEGIC ANALYSIS OF INDUCTING WOMEN FOR COMBAT ROLE IN THE INDIAN ARMED FORCES**

**A**

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**CHAPTER 6**

**CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, LIMITATIONS  
AND SCOPE FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

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### **CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, LIMITATIONS AND SCOPE FOR FURTHER RESEARCH**

#### **6.1 Conclusion**

- The current research circles around the induction of women in combat role in the Indian armed forces. The entire research has revealed that the women can be inducted in to the forces for all roles including combat. During the research the Indian armed forces officers which includes men and women were approached with structured questionnaire. The officers who responded for the questionnaire were of the opinion that women can be commissioned in to the armed forces for combat role except the respondents of 18-25 years of age group were found to be in disagreement to it. There was no difference of opinion between the three wings of the forces and the genders for inducting women for combat role.
- The perception of the respondents was such that women officers has got the physical capability to work in combat roles as their male counterparts. They also opined that women have the mental ability to carry out all combat roles. They also responded that the women also have a strong emotional capability to perform like male officers in the combat role except the respondents of 18-25 years of age group were found to be in disagreement to it. There was no difference of opinion between the three wings of the forces and the genders for inducting women for combat role.

The Indian forces have a shortage of officers in their respective cadres, especially in Army then Navy and Indian Air Force. The percentage of women officers is also very negligible in the armed forces. The research revealed that the increment in the strength of women officers in the armed forces will not only increase the strength of officers but will also bridge the gap of inequality between genders.

The research also opens the path for women in combat role in the armed forces by comparing its status with other nations of the world who already have women in their combat arms. Various nations have already started women in the combat positions and these women also fought the Iraq and Afghan wars. The research will help the Indian armed forces to decide the induction of women officers in combat role as the other nations have done to match with world forces.

## **6.2 Recommendations**

Worldwide Armed Forces have taken different routes before deploying women in to the combat role. The Israeli Armed Force made it compulsory for everyone to work for in the armed forces for minimum specified period and also given all the roles to women in forces. “The Armed Forces of United States” “United Kingdom, Norway,” Australia and Pakistan have first inducted women to Medical fields and slowly in the eighties deployed women in to their combat forces. Indian Armed Forces although inducted women in all the fields of forces except in combat in the year 1992. Recently in 2018 Indian Air Force took the lead in deploying women in to the combat role by providing wings of fighter pilot to three women officers *Sen* (2017).

Even though Indian Army Chief has recently given statement that Indian Army will also induct women in the combat role shortly but in steps, first being the induction in Military Police and also women soldiers in other ranks *Banerjee* (2019). Indian Navy Chief Admiral S Lamba has also said that women will be inducted in Submarines shortly.

There may be various ways to deploy females in the combat roles. There are few steps of innovation to make them combat ready and also to fill the gap of gender inequality are the following:

- (a) The first and foremost step to increase the strength of officers and the bridging the gap of gender inequality (without any relief to physical fitness and other required capabilities) in the “Indian Armed Forces” by inducting of more women officers in forces. The present percentage of women officers is hovering between 3.3 to 12.8 % in the Indian Army, “Navy and Air Force”,

which highly low. The employability percentage of women is 28.5% and is highly lower than 72% of men in India which is causing huge gap of inequality even though the percentage of women population is 48% and men is 52% Dubey (2018).

- (b) The second importance must be to start induction of women soldiers in other ranks as the maximum employability can be in soldiers as the officer's strength is very less in the armed forces. Females are working in all ranks of world military forces and even participated in Iraq war Smith (2015).
- (c) The third most important step should be the induction in steps and not directly in to the combat stream. The selected officers and soldiers must be trained vigorously and the lot of women from them can be shortlisted looking at their performance in physical strength, mental and emotional strength *Banerjee* (2019).
- (d) To match with world forces the induction of women in combat role will have crucial advantage. Israel has made the military service compulsory for all its citizens including women without restricting any role as revealed by *WSIDF* (2010). First women fighter pilots batch joined in Pakistan in 2006 for combat aerial missions, airborne and infantry warfare. In 1998, Australian Government allowed the women to work in the submarines and become the fourth nation across the globe to achieve this fete. In 1995 Norway country has allowed its women in the military submarines. "Indian Armed Forces" being the fourth largest in the world and second highest in the population need positive and equal participation of women in all the roles includes combat.
- (e) Another step can be slower upward movement from the easier role to difficult role of combat in steps of yearly performance and training on potential development.
- (f) Indian geographical locations include borders with mountains as high as Himalayas, costal as Bay of Bengal, Indian Pacific and Run of Kush. Also, India being the democratic nation, various religions and castes and societies

are in prevalence. India is facing war opponents from two sides' i.e. Pakistan & China from outside and internal threats of insurgencies from Maoists, J&K and North Eastern States. The internal insurgencies normally are fought on different ideologies and sometime women and children are being made the shields of terrorists during operations. During these difficult and peculiar conditions women becomes essential and important part of the contingents with combat role qualified.

### **6.2.1 Suitable Recommendations for Including Women for Combat Role in Indian Armed Forces**

India has not inducted women for combat role in Indian armed forces till date, but the countries in Asia and rest of world nations have already women for the same.

- The results of this study indicate that the women participation, inducted for combat role of in France is 19% since 1983, Norway is 12% since 1988, Denmark is 5% since 1988, Canada is 13% since 1989, Russia is 10% since 1990, Israel is 34% since 1998.
- Further the findings of the study represented women participation inducted for combat role in Nepal is 30% since 2004, China is 5% since 2009, Germany is 6% since 2001, USA is 16% since 2013, Britain is 9% since 2016, Bulgaria is 20% since 2019
- Also, the study highlighted that with the inception of Army Nursing Service during 1899 Australian defense forces were the pioneer in including female.
- At present female strength is up to 12.8 % in Australia with respect to defense where in Royal Australian Air Force has 15.1 %, Navy has 14.6 & Army has 10.5%, additionally 14.6% as reserved portion.

Modern conventional warfare is non-selective. The nuclear, biological and chemical weapon has no understanding of know international or territorial boundaries. Weapons can't differentiate among race, nationality, and sex. War and weapons make

men, women and children actual targets. Thousands of lady agents were trained in disrupt and murder techniques.

**Women Participation in Iraq War:** The study also discussed the performance of females in the Iraq war. Global overview of the women in armed forces in the study: shows that the owing to hygiene & security female were not included in surface finishing as well as for electroplating activities in Air Force as here embryo-toxic elements were utilized. “Armed conflict, war and peace have been ever present since the dawn of human society. Since time immemorial, the myths, works of art, literature, imagination and fantasies of society have almost always associated the masculine figure with war and the feminine figure with peace.”

“Although men have always been in the majority in wars, women have been in militias in many cultures dating back at least four thousand years into antiquity, whether wielding weapons, helping the soldiers, or just throwing stones.”

### **6.3 Limitations and Scope for further research**

Research has proved that females have an important role to play in the Indian armed forces. There were some limitations associated to the study which include the gathering data for data collection. This was mainly due to the secrecy and others bars on the Indian defense officers who are coming under the Army, Air Force and Navy Act. It was also little difficult because the women are new to the forces and have fear factor to disclose their views. It was also because of Indian geographical area and the deployment of Indian Armed Forces officials on these locations. This location includes the Run of Kachh, Siachen glacier, J&K mountainous area, North Eastern area and vast coastal areas. Defense forces of India includes three highly skilled and professional wings namely Indian Army, Navy and Air Force consisting of 1129900, 58350 and 127200 respectively as active personnel on its role as per (Categories of Entry 2011). Indian armed forces include officer's strength as 42635 in Army, 9746 in Navy and 12392 in Air Force as on Jan 1, 2018 *Dubey* (2018). The women officers have strength of 1561, 639 and 1598 in the “Indian Army, Navy and Air Force” respectively which is approximately 3.6, 6.5 and 12.8 percent of the strength. India

opened doors for women in 1992 to serve in the field of aviation and other branches of the armed forces. However, somehow data has been gathered and managed as above. It has been assuming that data collected from Indian armed officers is authentic.

Another limitation was the secrecy in gathering the data from the defense sources because its confidentiality and secrecy tags. The availability of data through the secondary sources was also very limited because there is hardly any study done in the field. The combat role is still to be given to the women in India so the data availability was very critical. Another limitation to the gathering of data was due the non-availability of secondary data. Quantitative data analysis approach is being adopted followed by reliability check.

The wars are not fought regularly and are exceptional happenings. Hence the role of women in combat during the wars in past was very limited and was almost nil in case of India.

The study has a great possibility of further research because the regular changes in the global and Indian women role in the armed forces is increasing day by day. The further studies will get help from this study. There was no women officer except medical roles in the Indian armed forces before 1990. But the roles including administration, accounts, JAG, Engineering, Logistic and flying roles have been assigned to women after 1990. Recently the role of fighter pilot which is considered to be the combat role has also been assigned to women and three women have already worn the wings of fighter pilot. The Indian army and Navy are also considering and, on the way, to induct women in military police and submarines.

The study will help to boost the future studies in India which in future would be comparable to the studies done in the other world nations on Combat role for women.