

**WOMEN AT WORK: A CASE STUDY IN THE  
POLICE FORCE OF ASSAM**

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LAKHEEMI DEVEE  
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## CHAPTER VI

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

#### **6.1: SUMMARY**

Curiosity concerning women profession that too in policing makes the way of this present study on women who have influentially penetrated a men bastion and survive in the competition. Over the last hundred years, women in police have transformed policing throughout the globe. These considerate incorporated findings of the previous chapters of the study are illustrated as follows:

The **chapter I** deals with various issues cope up for the sustainable approaches of increasing the numbers of women police in Assam. Steadily but surely there shall be significant numbers of women police in a community all around the world to make police more humane. Assam is also trying and increasing the quantum of women police in its feather. So the researcher selects an imperial study on women police in Assam and has endeavoured into it by sharing its objectives, research questions, literary studies encompassing the study area and methodology that are applied in the study.

Objectives are to study about the evolvement of women police in Assam with general reference to its chronological growth worldwide. It is also to study the opportunities and preferences, facilities and benefits given to women police in Assam. Their status in their profession and home, attitude and perception towards them in the working arena is also looked upon.

As the numbers of women police have been increased through various governmental policies and schemes in Assam, so the questions that arise are whether the scenarios are encouraging? Whether the working environment is affable? Whether they

get equal benefits and facilities? What are the perceptions and attitude about their presence and proficiency in their profession and status at their home and society?

Review of literature is in **chapter II** to increase the knowledge in getting to a denouement of this study with vivid ideas, available work of literature from across the global relevant to the study are deliberated and incorporated briefly over here. Gendered segregation for a job amounts to inequality and in practice, it is a silent hinder to women employment. Government of India has acknowledged all women as workers as they are always engaged in producing for the society's progress. It is found and pronounced in the World Conference on Women that only four percent of women populations worldwide are engaged in the organised sector, implying that 0.005 percent of Indian women have a job in this sector. Scholars utter that the first thoughtful and insightful research was undertaken in India was "Towards Equality" done by the CSWI in 1975. When the main occupation was cultivation, the employment of women was more than fifty percent, but with time as other sectors coped up, percentage of women employment diminished to meagre proportion. Women are also subjected to pre-entry discrimination meaning their all-round developments are compromised since birth in comparison to other gender. These make them an incompetent contender for a job allowing gender-based employment discrimination to flourish. It is said that pre-entry discrimination helped all types of post-entry discriminations for women. Sectors that are dominated by men, women, never became the ideal worker, creating hurdles for their progress and success. On becoming a mother, many women have to scarify their careers. As women are entering all the arena of economic activities, intra- occupational sex segregation or resegregation have developed meaning a man doctor become a surgeon and the woman doctor a paediatric. Due to the meagre appointment of women into police in all the

countries, ample literature is not available presently. Women are engaged in the police for women work since 1840 and only from early ninety's numbers of women police are steadily increased. Indian states started recruiting women into their state police after the independence of India and now every state has varied numbers of women police. So far no researchers have found any meaningful differences in performance of a woman and man police. Today's police require intellectuality, the one smarter than tougher. It is transforming to COP and POP. Constitution of India guarantees equality among its citizens and have special provisions for women empowerment. The centre is in the process of reforming the police in India but police being a state subject, an adequate corporation is required from each and every states. Assam is trying to do the same. It has enacted the Assam Police Act 2007 and to increase women employment brought The Assam Women (Reservation of Vacancies in Services and Posts) act, 2005. News briefings and political parties' agenda on women police are also browsed.

The fifth report of NPC asks for a change in philosophy culture and attitude so as to make a police station ready for relief to a person in distress and that report says that an increase in women police for deployment in the police station may help in achieving this objective. It advocates investigation assignments for women police and their increase in the ranks of ASI and SI.

Scholars find that women police bring in a different set of skills and their ability helps in developing trust, confidence between police and common populous. They are very handy in cases where victims are either women or child. Four theoretical reasons why the police force with more women in it is aggressive to a sexual assault case are firstly the victim may feel more confident on seeing large numbers of women police and form an opinion that her accusations shall be taken up more seriously. Secondly,

victims may believe that the police officer is in her side and shall impose strict charges on the offender based on solid evidence. Thirdly women police can sensitise men colleagues on sexual assaults, making it easier for a victim to depend upon. And finally, woman police may share common gender-specific issues. Studies have shown women police are exceptionally good in defusing the potentially violent situation with minimal or no force.

A paper presented in the Australian Institute of Criminology Conference says that if women police need to play a greater role, a supportive environment has to be created beforehand. It further says gender biases hinder attracting and retaining women in the police since nearly all policewomen have experienced gender-based bias at her work. It asserts women are as capable as men in police duties.

Warren, I. and James S., Women and Police Culture in Victoria, Paper presented at the Australian Institute of Criminology Conference, 1996 India's Police Act is silent on women police role, it is the other laws and court directives that made women an integral part of policing in India. Now only woman police can search a woman accused and arrest her. Statements of women and child victims are also recorded by women police preferably. It is expected that a woman complainant finds a woman police to express her grievances. All newer laws and amendments for the welfare of women and child have necessitated the role of woman police.

Women police conferences are always suggesting the creation of women-centric infrastructures to enhance and to achieve full potentials of woman police. They ask for creating a gender-sensitive workplace, adjacent quarters, portable washrooms, crèches, allowing adequate maternity and child care leave, promoting sufficient stress-relieving mechanisms and orienting them in problem-solving tactics. They recommend attitude or

perception change towards women police, management of personal and professional dichotomy of women police and significant control on hostile workplace including prevention and redressal of sexual harassment at the workplace.

The present environment of work exhausts women police both physically and mentally and are sometimes become more jittery and irritated than their men counterparts. Studies say they experience more head, back, stomach aches and develop a sleep disorder. Government is urged to take a pilot project for identifying the root causes of mental stress among police with special focus on women police so that they can be eliminated effectively. The urging committee identifies strenuous duty hours and rejection of leave application as common stress-inducing reasons among police, which can be easily removed with meticulous planning and implantation.

The government have acknowledged the need of encouraging more women into police, their flexible postings and transfers, mainstreaming women police, impact studies of gender sensitisation programmes, orientation workshops, effectual sexual harassment redressal mechanisms, stress managements and adoption of UN resolutions. Girl child may be encouraged in formative years to join NCC (National Cadet Corps) and thereafter due weightage can be given to such candidates who are associated with NCC.

**Chapter III** has the sequential of the events of evolving of police. In ancient times China has started some form of policing with the creation of prefects. Similarly, in the 12th century, Spain formed Hermandades to protect pilgrims. In between 5<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> century, France had two Great Officers of the Crown of France with Police responsibilities. British after the Norman Conquest created tithing under a constable to maintain public order. Napoléon, I reorganised police in France with the induction of

5000 inhabitants and was called Prefecture of Police. 1797 saw the start of planning of today's modern police. On the initiatives of Patrick Colquhoun and others, a private security force for a year was created to prevent theft of cargo from the Pool of London on River Thames. It was the beginning of modern police system. Creations of police or initiations of policing in different countries are documented in this chapter. Britain's act, The Metropolitan Police Act, 1829 of England, was considered to be the first modern Police Act but is silent on women's role in policing. Canada in 19th century unofficially appointed a woman as its first woman police officer. Germany started appointing women from 1903. 1908 saw three women in the Swedish Police Authority. Slowly but surely, women entered into policing. Britain appointed its first woman police in 1915.

Policing in India can be traced from ancient times during the Mauryan Period (C.324 BC-183BC). Mughals introduced military instead of police. In 1774, Warren Hastings brought police reforms in India under Company Rule. After Sepoy Mutiny, governance of India was transferred to the British Throne and thereafter British rulers appointed police commission in August 1860. First, it was the Indian Councils act 1861 and then came the Indian Police Act 1861. After independence, India took police reforms through various commissions, committees and workgroups. Women entered the IPS with the selection and appointment of Ms. Kiran Bedi into it in the year 1972. Since then, the numbers of women police have increased modestly.

Assam does not have an organised police force until the start of colonial rule in 1826. With the start of British rule in Assam, they initially introduced military but subsequently developed police to minimise expenditures. In 1835 a new police organisation called Cachar Levy was created by British in the Nowgong district of Assam. British Administration in the year 1862 introduced The Police Act of 1861 and

the Criminal Procedure Code in Assam and created eleven police districts. With the independence of India, Assam police had some major consequential changes as a part of it went to East Pakistan. Assam Rifles was also separated from Assam Police. As per the recommendation of 1952's Police Reorganisation Committee, Assam police was revamped to some extent. Assam Police Battalions were designed in 1956. Assam Police Headquarters was shifted to Guwahati with the creation of the state of Meghalaya in the year 1972. Today's Assam police as a disciplined force with a set of rules and regulations are based on the solid foundation created by the British. It is now a sixty-five thousand strong force. First woman police in Assam was Ms. Renu Dutta Borphukan and Ms Sanjukta Parashar was the first woman police in IPS from Assam cadre. This chapter has the details about the women police posted in different ranks over the years in Assam so as to get a clear picture of their placements.

The case studies, as stated in **Chapter IV**, try to reflect the issues relating to the scenarios of women police from the field studies for this research and the concomitants experiences at their workplace. It tries to reconnoitre the condition of their situation in their personnel domain too.

In initial years when women enter into the police department, they do not have the knowledge about their would be responsibilities. They are then into desk jobs rather than being deployed for field duties. They have to face the social stigma attached to a police job. When women start entering police, their families objected about wearing pant-shirt to duties.

With passing the time, more women are appointed into police as many decision-makers have a favourable opinion for that to occur. They believe women police are more capable of handling sensitive situation more expediently. The police image

becomes friendlier with the entering of women into policing, corruption levels have decreased considerably. Special public – the woman and the children find police more approachable for the presence of women police. Reporting has increased for this. High-ranked women police official have desired for more women in mid-level rather than in constable ranks meaning more women as SI and in its contemporary ranks. These are the starting rank for a decision making position in the police. Prevailing social process discourage women into the police so tangible benefits need to be promoted to facilitate the entry of more women into the police department.

To some extent, there are discriminations on the basis of gender in the context of recommendation, favouritism, recognition of hard work and efforts given towards duty. Women police are treated as a second class citizen, even not appreciated of completing a task successfully through hard work and credit generally goes to man police personnel associated with that task. It is experienced by the women police that their capabilities are underestimated and is not considered in general circumstances. No doubt as women, due to socialisation, everyone from seniors, colleagues, juniors in the department including public test and gauge their capabilities, but it is not the gender which creates the image, it is the performance and attitude which works for it. Task and responsibilities are given to others underestimating the capabilities of concerned women police. The women police personnel are given very feeble opportunity to contribute to their job. They have to do double hard work to prove their efficiency and competency. Gender is pulled to validate the fault. On the other hand, mistakes of men police are ignored. Women police are dominated by their men colleagues and criticised for their style of work. The credit of good job accomplishment always goes to seniors, who are generally a man official. As respect, recognition for the hard work, the sincerity of

women police are ignored just to give an image that these policewomen are not fit for the job assigned. Younger and unmarried women police get preferences for their lesser family obligations. Married ones in lower ranks are sidelined and are commented that they should not be in service of the police. Occasionally women are held back from exercising their thought process, suggestions. For a similar task men police are more appreciated than women police. Women's achievements are overlooked, hard works are ignored, potentials are underestimated and gender-based criticism for works done are always there. The responsibilities that should have been given to women police as per the rank are given to others, making to presume that women police are unimportant in the department. Due to the stereotype perception, men made mistakes are ignored, but not so for women, their mistakes are glorified with multiplicity. Men are given important and commanding roles, opportunities to develop themselves in the department. Respondents sight the experience that preferences to the men folks are very much in rampant.

Infrastructure and logistic support are very insufficient, especially at 'All Women Police Station'. From experience shared by the women police who have thirty-one years of services in the different police station, spell out that 'All Women Police Station' is not considered as the mainstream police station. It lacks lots in infrastructural amenities, including washrooms. The station has confined conversation room where women police cannot interact freely and cordially with a woman victim, who always remain in distress. In the prevailing setup, both victim and accused have to take a seat in the same room. So asking questions become difficult and it creates an inconvenient situation for the victim. Proper investigations get derailed for these inadequacies of All Women Police Station's building. In this context, it should be listed that other general police

stations do not have separate washrooms for women police and the common ones are in depleting conditions.

The women who join the service have high expectation due to its associated power and uniform. Somehow it is established that satisfaction level for the profession sinks due to monotonous work culture without any oriented initiatives. Due to non-availability of facilities and add-on benefits, women police hesitate to do field job, night duties and request for office job which in other words create hindrance in their development, show their incapabilities and restrains their potentials in making a place in their department. These attitudes help the men police to develop their capabilities and efficiency, which ultimately results in faster promotion and better posting compared to women police in lower ranks. The policewomen who are in field duty find it very difficult for basic services such as refreshment break, drinking water and washrooms. During day time the women police use the nearer police station, residents, hotel or restaurants, schools or colleges or fuel refilling depot. But at night duties, women police finds it difficult to manage even their nature's call. As an emergency service, there is no fix working hours and has to be ready for 24 hours service because of the nature of duty. Workloads are ever-increasing and no such facilities to complete the task quickly. Non-availability of plenty of women police is adding more work on women police. Women police have to manage their works with minimal facilities sometimes without or unhygienic washroom. Due to overburdened, inadequate salary, slow promotion, non-autonomous and not at all easy to do something worthwhile, if the policewomen are given a choice, they express their desire to change the job. Constable duties are strenuous, requiring significant physical endurance. Being from the weaker economic section of the society, WPCs face lots of burden from duties and from their homes.

Assam Police do not have crèche or daycare centres, so the women police find it difficult to manage both their child and unregulated duty hours. After a child is born, women police of mid and lower rank prefer a transfer to the unarmed branch or to a deskjob from field duties. Women police in lower ranks enter with high enthusiasm and desire to perform but with time children, family hindered their professional growth. Due to lacked conveniences for working mothers, most of them get demoralised.

For the Veerangana unit, the selection criteria are tougher than for other WPC. The women, who enter this unit, have high expectations from their professional life. They are led by a man police officer for lack of sufficient mid-level women police officer. Moreover, this unit is engaged for night duties, mainly patrolling, so woman supervisor is hard to be found to do odd hour duties. They have undergone commando training, have ample capacities, strength and ability but are under-utilised, so there is a feeling that if a woman officer is deputed as their superior, they can do justice to their stature. They are used just to instigate a fear factor among the public so that women in streets feel that they are within a safety net woven through this unit.

There is a concept of inducting women into police with a muscular outlook in them. But femininity plays a bigger role in resolving sensitive cases than masculinity. Women perceive the supremacy of men counterparts. The cool and calm natures of women police can be promoted to make the police service more humane. The strength of women police is not in becoming manlike but is developing their womanly attitude in which victims find comfort and solace. Practising what they are born with, women police have the ability to transform police, making it more public friendly. With this, they can create an independent identity for them too.

For the societal teaching, women police like to practice womanliness but department's austere rule, regulations and protocols do not permit such behaviour of women police. It is obvious as the general public have to fear police to some extent. But a combination of femininity and masculinity can revamp policing. It shall be beneficial in police reforms if policies are rectified to promote such a culture within the department. This can be simply achieved by increasing the numbers of women police within its fold.

Sexual Harassment at the Workplace is common and the high ranking women officials find it convenient to file a complaint than the lower rank ones. Women in high ranks feel that their contemporary women police have to be tricky in dealing with the colleagues and superiors of another gender to offset sexual harassment. Lower ranked women police lacks the power to deal with it and are in some sort of stigma to speak about it. It is conveyed that upon receiving such complaints, the action shall be taken as all the police districts have redressal cell. But experiences shared by respondents speak about a different fact. Complaints though acknowledged but decisions are delayed or favoured due to power equation and influence of existing practised system. Few are just not aware of the existence of sexual harassment redressal cell in their respective police districts. A researcher is able to acquire one side of the whole picture as most of them are afraid to talk on these issues and tries to avoid this matter by giving subtle or by remaining nonresponsive on it. There are general perceptions that complaints of sexual harassments at the workplace are taken lightly.

Recurrent gender-based harassments occur in traffic duties. They have to face double entendres, inappropriate physical touch and disrespect from the general public. These create the necessities of taking the help of men colleagues resulting in demeaning

women traffic polices' efforts. Therefore the respondents favour more women police in traffic duties so that they can feel empowered on roads and need not take help from men co- colleagues or seniors.

Decision-makers are purposely slowing the reforms that are expected and every development is in snail speed within the police administration. It is revealed that lower ranked women police are feared mainly by men seniors with a very common saying that she shall be transferred to an interior place as disciplinary action.

Case studies also reveal that some women police think that they are inferior to their men counterparts and are not at all interested in endeavouring in handling critical and hazardous circumstances. They consider themselves in a submissive category and suppress their expectations and aims. This results in creating opportunities for their men colleagues in getting respect, recognition and promotion. Due to this outlook, women are devaluing her. The high ranked women officials of the department are highly positive towards policing and also encourages mid and lower rank women.

For the high ranking women official due to the support system from the department and from parents or spouse, have an advantageous position to maintain their dual responsibilities- professional and personnel. No doubt, they miss their passion and family life for duty. On the other hand, social and personnel life of mid-level and lower ranked women police are very apprehensive, as they have to manage both the responsibilities in equal footing. They have limited or no support from their respective families, have to maintain all the societal norms, take care of children, in-laws, aged parents and at the same time cannot afford supporting staff for home due to financial constraints. As these mid-level women officials are fewer in numbers, they are always overburdened with duties affecting their performances. In spite of desiring to do the

duty with utmost sincerity and dedication, women police are unable to do so because of the dual pressure of professional duty and family and societal obligations.

To boost up the performance of women police, stimulation of the said workforce is required in each and every rank. The workload can be evenly distributed and it is required to promote mutual understandings for interchanging of duties as practised by their men counterparts.

Due to the shortage of police personals, most of women police are overburdened. Every three years and generally after an election, police personnel, both men and women are transferred, which ultimately creating troubles in family lives of women police especially the ones with children, face lots of problems.

With all these odds, every respondent acknowledged job securities. Gender-neutral supports are given to any officials with health issues, they are allotted easygoingness duties and responsibilities and are allowed to continue in their job.

Those police women having domestic issues are also taken care of by the department so that they can continue working and give a satisfying performance. In other words, job security is available, support from the department is accessible.

Some urgent requirements that need to be addressed by the department are:

- Require recreation avenues to reduce anxiety and stress to overcome exhaustion for overloaded responsibilities, especially for women who are in field and traffic job.
- Vehicles particularly for women police to increase their mobility, performance, speediness in handling the cases of women and children. It is also required for enhancing their night patrolling.
- Training on new laws and acts, skills, cyber- crimes, economic offence investigation, newest weaponry, newer crime possibilities, urban terrorism, human

trafficking, traffic management and computers. There are very limited scopes and time for self- development, so training are required to deal with challenging assignments. The present working environment has to be restructured, making them more affable for women police.

- Lower rank meaning basically constables have to be more oriented and trained like the Veerangana unit for greater strength and positive attitude towards duties.
- Medical facilities and regular check-up of women police are required as a physical fitness tool.
- Last but not the least with the presence of women, the behavioural attitude of police has changed, the cordial working environment has developed and police-public relationship become friendlier. But gender stereotyping and requirement of physical fitness for the job, discourage women from becoming a part of the police department. Due to limited facilities and non- supportive environment at home, women police desires discontinuation of the present job if the opportunity arrives for a change in job.

The national conferences on women police give a platform to resolve the problems of women police at their workplace, it emphasizes on training, stress release measures, advocate increase engagement of women police, develop the condition of the workplace by providing basic facilities and by trying to make police gender-neutral.

**Chapter V** has the analysis of the primary and secondary data related to women police in Assam collected through field survey. From the survey, it becomes clear that women police are given the subordinate positions in police hierarchy and this stereotyped token status gives less opportunity for them in their workplace and are anti-patronage for their advancement.

Since 2002, National conferences for ‘Women in Police’, conducted in two years

interval, organised by BPR&D, a wing of the Ministry of Home affairs, repeatedly stress on the need for women in police and recommend 33% reservation, in spite of that presently the number of women in Assam Police is very negligible. Undeniably, empirical evidence makes it clear that women are underrepresented in different ranks. Despite reservation, there is very less number of women in different ranks. This may be for the masculinity insignia that discourage women in joining the police and at the same time the policymakers, police leadership may be in an excuse of not welcoming women into policing by giving lesser efforts in creating an encouraging environment so that women come forward to join police in large numbers.

The respondents that belong to armed branch have entered police in much younger age than compared to the ones in unarmed branch, for the nature of work and new policies to recruit women in the armed branch. Since 1969, Assam Police started inducting women into police service in Assam. Then a woman ASI along with four WPCs are engaged and subsequently numbers of women are increased but are in constable rank and for soft jobs such as duties in a police station, documentation and allied works. Women appointed in armed branch get the opportunities of getting involved in challenging circumstances and encompassing themselves in complex situations. Comparison of the marital status of women constables engage in armed and unarmed branch reveals that younger unmarried ones are very much preferred in armed branch but nothing so in the unarmed branch. In other words, there is a clear connection between the younger age, unmarried status and engagement in the police department. Informally the Police headquarter inform that their department is looking for the younger age group for the constable rank especially for engagement in the armed branch. The younger women constable can devote much more time in the profession

than for family.

There is more lenience for a married woman to enter an unarmed branch of Assam Police. In other words, marriage and maintaining social life are much easier for women who are engaged in the unarmed branch. There are possibilities of getting a police job under compensatory ground in the unarmed branch but not so in the armed branch.

Armed branch women police are much more educated than those engaged in the unarmed branch. Highest numbers of respondents are from OBC/ MOBC and ST (Plains) compared to another caste. The data on family details of the two groups - armed and unarmed branch's WPCs, spell out that most of the respondents are from joint family rather than from a nuclear one.

The nature of the job of most of the respondents is permanent and the entry of women into the armed branch is very new in comparison to the unarmed branch. The working hours for women police is officially documented as 8 hours, but practically they are engaged more than that due to the emergency nature of the work and for small representation as police.

The respondents who have high qualification expect high ranks like Sub-Inspector, Inspector after qualifying competitive examination. The respondents who are engaged in compensatory ground consider the job for livelihood only and have no further expectation. Highly educated women feel much more demoralising than the one with lower educational qualification as they expect greater freedom, autonomy and appreciation for their work. Also, they are dissatisfied with the promotion system existing in their department. It comes into focus that respondents from the armed branch are much more confident of getting promoted than those from an unarmed branch, as many respondents from unarmed branch reveal that they are stagnant in their post since

last 20 years. The selection process is much tougher in armed branch compared to unarmed one and more educationally qualified candidates are recruited here, so such respondents have higher confidence of getting promoted sooner or later.

Generally, women police are from the fringe areas of their posting except for Guwahati city. The personnel who are engaged at Guwahati city are given quarters and generally, those are nearer to their workplace, so that they can be called in during urgencies. But some respondents said that there are no transport facilities after long hours of field duty to their residence. The respondents who reside in their own home take more time than the respondents who reside at quarter to reach respective workplaces.

Majority respondents state that police service is their first choice as an occupation. But some also say that they opt for police service because no other government jobs are available at that time. Few of them also state that their family members encourage them to do so. Some of them show a willingness to leave the police job for another profession if they get equal or enhanced perks and salaries.

A majority of them acknowledge that they are self-motivated to join police service. The respondents who join on the compensatory ground consider their job as livelihood only, nothing motivation, inspiration is found among them.

The data on passion, the necessity of the job, job security, satisfaction level, fringe benefits and other working conditions, two groups show some significant differences. The armed group is less satisfied in comparison to the unarmed group and some of them like to shift from armed branch to unarmed branch so that some kind of regularities can be availed and can maintain time between professional and personnel responsibilities. Both groups show their passion for the job and consider their job as inevitable.

Regarding working hours, the majority of the armed branch is not so satisfied whereas unarmed branch is very satisfied.

Near about 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of respondents of an armed branch and majority of the unarmed branch are ready to do late-night duties. Fifty percent of armed branch said that overtime duty is an integral part of their job profile. They are oriented and instructed to be always readied as they may be called upon any time for duty. Most of the respondents consider that as an emergency service, there are no provisions for extra payment or remuneration for overtime work. The statistical computation shows that most of the respondents have considered their duties as an emergency service and are readied to do their work for people when and how required.

About promotion, the respondents of unarmed branch said that it is held as per rules and regulations, whereas some of the armed branch respondents consider gender-based discrimination prevails in the promotion.

Regarding transfer, the majority of respondents of both groups have no problem and consider transfer as a better opportunity option for their career. But some among them show unwillingness in getting transferred for health issues, family liabilities and so on.

About the special benefits and policies, maximum respondents acknowledge nonexistence of such special benefits and policies for them. Being in the lowest rank in the structure of police department, constables are bound to follow the order, do odd hour duties during emergencies making it a stressful job. Some state that they do have relief from duty and have light duties during menstruation, pregnancy, but all are dependent on the attitude of in-charge. Some of the benefits ask for are crèche or daycare centre, renovated quarters, clean and hygiene washroom at the workplace, monthly off or light

duty during menstruation. Few from armed branch respondents choose non-requirement of special benefits as they are engaged for emergency services. Some also spell out that they believe in equality and feel at par with their men police personnel, only they require are equal treatment, respect, recognition just like men police gets for the same work.

When the researcher tries to evaluate through the respondents about other basic facilities available at their workplace, like provision of the separate restroom, drinking water facility, condition of toilet, provision of hygienic and safe meals, most of the armed branch respondents deny its existence, whereas most of the unarmed branch say yes to the availability of those basic amenities. The traffic police and the women, who are deployed in field jobs, face a lot of hurdles for drinking water, having their meal and toilet facilities. These respondents ask for these basic facilities which can maintain their dignity at their workplace. Absence of these facilities impact on their motivation towards their duty, in their performance and efficiency cumulatively.

Most of the respondents are unaware of the existence of committee for Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace Act of 2013. Most of them also negate of the existence of sexual harassment at their workplace. At the same time, some respondent is unresponsive towards the query related to sexual harassment at the workplace. Most of them report that they even do not know about Vishkha guidelines. During the training, they have a syllabus on laws related to women. The traffic police do face some kind of harassment during their duty time. Some of them hear double meaning comments, gets deplorable looks creating uneasiness in them, also faced ignorance of their instruction by the public, especially commercial vehicles and all these are for their gender – they felt.

Most of the respondents of the armed branch say that their family suffers when they take their career seriously, whereas respondents of unarmed branch negate this belief. But interestingly, majority of both the group agree that they cannot spend quality time with their family due to the nature of their service, though they get family support but complains there about noninvolvement in family matters.

When the researcher tries to bring into focus the pressure of responsibilities of dual tasks- professional and personal, it is revealed that such pressure does exist among the married or on those who stayed in their own residence. Respondents staying in governmental arrangements and unmarried have lesser obligations towards their families. All the respondents are supported by other women of their families. It implies that respondents or other women members of the family attend the daily household chores.

On trying to figure out about the individual spaces exclusive for the respondents in their respective homes, it is stated by the respondents that men members may have spaces, but they have to share with other women of their families. Married are to stay with their spouse as per the prevailing customs.

When the researcher asks about taking leave for their family members when the need arises, the majority says yes and some do the expenses required then. Respondents from well-to-do families borrow money from their families and vice versa. Economic compulsion pushes other respondents to spend on their families. It does imply all the respondents take good care of their respective families apart from being into around the clock service for the community.

Regarding physical and mental torture at home, all most all respondents negate its

happening though fewer faced it. Among the tortured respondents, half have singly protested others keep silent legitimating social custom of absorbing injustice though being associated with law enforcement. It is found during an interaction that many respondents are reluctant in answering questions related to sexual harassments and family issues.

Power is associated with policing, its work, appearance have attracted the respondents to it. They are proud of their service. All armed and unarmed women police respondents spell out that the strength of the police department is that they have inducted women into it. Because of this changing phenomenon, it has become easier for the police department to be an integral part of the society, the public now considers them as their own as the fears for police have diminished significantly.

All the respondents asked for some minimal improvement in their logistic support, be it drinking water, refurbished quarters, transportation, frequent training, women-friendly uniforms. The respondents desire that the image of police may be changed from rudeness, corrupt to a clean people-friendly look so that respect and their acceptance among the general mass increases and are admired by common people. Positive works, achievements, revamping of police should be in media instead of some bullying news.

Nearly all the respondents assert that with the entry of women into policing, women and children victims find some solace.

With the increase in numbers of women police a drastic change have taken place, women police now do not prefer deskjobs, they want to be in equal footing with their men counterparts, increasing their acceptance into police with respect and recognition of their capabilities. The administrators and the policymakers are forced to change their mindset of perceiving that only men can do policing.

Regarding training, all the respondents said that occurred after their selection and no more training happen thereafter. They desire frequent or periodic training on computers, driving, laws and weapons.

Factual evidence brings the attention that women respondents from the armed branch are more ambitious in comparison to unarmed branch, educate and have a higher expectation than the ones in the unarmed branch. The respondents seek for sports and study leave for all-round development. They desire faster promotions in their ranks.

Lastly, the findings, summarisation of the study are not to be conclusive and further research on the study required for a deeper understanding of the practising system of the police force, the status of inclusion on women police in different categories.

## **6.2: OBSERVATION OF THE RESEARCHER**

As the study focuses on the status of women police in their professional and personnel, so some of the observations made by the researcher during interaction and otherwise are summarised below:

1. Most of the high and mid-ranked women police officers have requested non-disclosure of their names. Lower ranked ones are briefed by their seniors beforehand to answer diplomatically to the schedule method.
2. Just one woman is appointed as a driver in constable rank till date, but she does not drive on the instruction from the headquarters of the police department. No other women have been appointed as a driver since then.
3. Respondents are more in cautious during the interaction when recording

systems like audio-video or photography are deactivated.

4. One of the major challenges for women police is that they have to struggle hard to prove their worth.

5. When women police take a tough stand on women subordinate, they are labelled as insensitive and commented of not being able to understand a woman being a woman.

6. It emerges that some men police are not comfortable and are unsatisfied with the induction of women police into the force, though they are in limited in numbers. Women police also do not prefer strenuous duty hours for their additional family responsibilities. Few men police have the typical stereotype views that women police lure seniors for undue favours in allotting duties. According to those mindsets, women police is a burden on their department.

7. High ranked women official gets sufficient support, be it from the family and department. It seems the lower ranked one suffers from the dual pressure, field duties and home.

8. Even high-rank women officials cite busyness when interaction turns delicate with time though proper prior appointments have been taken.

9. Data collection is just not hurdle free.

10. As prior permissions have to be taken for interaction with mid-level and low-ranked women police, so low-ranked respondents are selected purposefully by the permitting authority. They are just not willing for a conversation with mid-level women police officials with the researcher.

11. Though maximum women police are recruited in constable rank, all do not get the same facilities and recognitions. Veerangana is relished most being a prominent unit.

Others just languish with inadequate women-centric facilities and inopportune workplace.

12. Most WPCs are just reluctant to disclose actual facts about the prevailing circumstances. They remain uncommented on crucial queries.

13. Transformation of women cell to a restroom for men police located in the Office of SP, Tezpur.

14. Few respondents are allowed to interact in the presence of a man senior police officer.

15. Respondents are oriented on the schedule before allowed to interact.

16. Women police respond diplomatically as the queries are regarding their workplace, performance and hindrances. They do disclose responsive facts but with a disclaimer and request for non-disclosure of names.

17. Some women police are trying to get transferred to a desk job from field duties.

18. Veerangana – the women commando group is really tough and robust but is led by a senior man official.

19. Some women police prefer men in this job as it requires significant physical fitness.

### **6.3: RECOMMENDATIONS**

The concept of women police delegate is a debatable issue for the country as well as for state, it is a state subject. There is tussle on increasing the number of women police, modification to a gender-friendly working environment and many more. Some of the recommendations that the researcher like to bring forward are:

1. Need to create some more ‘All Women Police Station’ in the state to provide

dedicate service to women and children sufferers.

2. Undeniably the research study on the basis of empirical evidence recommends that more recruitment of women police at a different level is an utmost necessity for better performance of women police, to achieve targeted planning process or policies, for a healthy environment as well as to enhance competition within the police.

3. Promotion policies may be based on performance, qualifications and experiences instead of vacancy filling basis.

4. Special effort and awareness drive from the concerned department may be undertaken to encourage women to join police service.

5. Training and awareness programmes on gender sensitisation, sexual harassment redressal mechanism and career up-gradation are to be held for all ranks, from time to time to cultivate a work-friendly, gender-sensitive culture within the police department.

6. Logistic support has to be developed, well equipped modernised facilities are to be provided and movable lavatories with drinking water arrangements are to be introduced.

7. Implementation of recommendation that is referred by the conferences organised by BPR&D in collaboration with the state police department.

8. Adoption of family- friendly strategies like having crèche and daycare facilities, shift basis duties allocation and maternity, paternity and child care leave.

9. Policewomen are still considered as women rather than human being, police or law enforcer in the society or by the public, dissimilar to acknowledging man police. Men police are considered as a law enforcer, police and not as a man. The department may take some kind of special effort to change this kind of socialised thought process so

that gender justice can prevail.

10. Many women do not want to join the police job due to round the clock duty, risk involvement. Encouragement or motivational drive can be embarked into school, college curriculum to revoke this mindset.

11. More study on women police requires for modification in the system, to have a clear picture of the status of women police at their workplaces beyond these.

#### **6.4: LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

Any studies have an inherent component called limitation, so do this study also has its own share of constraints. A researcher cannot ever complete any research and there is always a possibility of further study into a subject. Research is a continuous process of creating and accumulation knowledge and subsequent researchers carry forward it to enhance the knowledge of the human race. It is a continuous learning process and a researcher tries to prove many conceptual and methodological issues pertaining to the research work.

Therefore, the present researcher has given the following limitations:

1. The size of the sample of the present investigation is limited in its nature. The sample comprises of 5% of total women police engaged in unarmed and armed branches at constable cadre. This sample size might be a small representation of the entire population. This put the study into a limitation on the generalisation of results for the present study.

2. The study has to be confined to seven out of twenty-eight police districts in Assam, which brings limitation.

3. The superiors' ascendancy over subordinates is observed during data collection, which might have prohibited some respondents in giving an actual reaction.

4. Time is a factor for the women police respondents in answering to the schedule and in attending an interview with the researcher, for their insufficient numbers compared to the workload they have to accomplish during their unregulated working hours. Time constraints sometimes make them quick responder or a lengthy one with multiple breaks of many days.

5. Assam police have many branches for its smooth functioning, but few of them cannot be included in this study which may give the reflection of one side of the whole picture.

6. The study has been unable to address the status of women police on the basis of urban-rural division due to limited numbers or no deployment of women police in rural areas.

7. Researcher finds difficulties in documenting and reproducing some sensitive personal disclosures of respondents' feelings about their personal and family life, which may hinder in giving a clear picture of the status at their home. Respondents too request non-disclosure of such sensitive issues.

## **6.5: CONCLUSION**

This research study appreciates the women law enforcers or women in police service for their endeavour into an arena where mental stability and physical mighty is a prerequisite. But at the same time, the researcher has been compelled to understand the delicacy, hostility and differentiation embedded in the professional life of woman police. In one way they are fewer in numbers to articulate their apprehension within their organisation and on the other hand, meagre numbers of women are recruited and deployed in higher ranks within the police in Assam, so they are unable to acquire decision making positions, voice their concerns endangering their status in the police,

leaving a question blank about their tangible stature in law enforcement. In other words, being fewer in numbers, they are unable to control all the parameters related to their profession.

Women police have its history of its own, but indispensable infrastructural supports are eroding the prospect of attracting more women talents into policing. Inadequate basic amenities are acting as a deterrent to furthermore recruitment of women into policing. Robust mechanisms have to be incorporated into the development of adequate support structures either through the transformation of existing arrangements or developing a new one on need-based priority. As women are prepared to work alongside men counterpart, concern authority should eliminate the prevailing stereotype nomenclature of their organisation and recruit more women through all the entry levels into their organisational hierarchy to attain the structure boosted by gender equality. Though women have been able to acquire jobs where men have a stronghold, studies suggest they can be subjected to the masculine nature of work culture and may be marginalised.

It can be drawn from the research that though society is changing and are accepting women police, gender favouritism exists in the police force, in spite of all the effort and policies to increase women participation and promotion into policing. With limited numbers, women police face tremendous obstacles to attain total equity that is yet to be achieved even when it is mandated by law. Sufficient works have to be done to undo all the inequalities and create policies to foster greater diversity among women and men in the police. It may be expected through educating and enlightening present police force about the existing cultural and structural inequalities within it. There are necessities of more awareness among all people, mainly from policymakers, welfarist

departments regarding working conditions of women police. Women workforces in police are happy with their achievements and are serving in full capacity without any hesitation. If more women are engaged in this service, then the police can definitely serve the country more efficiently.

Through this discussion, the researcher has attempted to arrive at the conclusion that women are required in police force, that their increase in numbers is justified from all angles and have to become an integral part of the police system to increase gender sensitiveness and equalities among themselves and for the general public.