



Research on Women in Law Enforcement: Challenges Encountered by Female Police Officers, specifically within the Gujarat Police

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ABSTRACT

Women policing is always been a debatable topic. In the current era, women are enlarging their role into various fields. Now government of India has also declared that 33 % women workforce should be there in all government organizations. So to study why women workforce is less in the police and to know about the mental and health issues women policing facing now a days. We also want to suggest remedies on how to overcome issues faced by women police.

Our study was focusing on women police from Gujarat state. To reach maximum women police from Gujarat state we have used cluster sampling process where we have collected data city wise. We have collected responses through questionnaire to identify the issues faced by women police.

We have majorly focused on women police profiling and challenges faced by them.

This study will enable us to identify the root cause of the problems facing by women police and also help us to suggest remedies to overcome not all but some of the issues.

Key word: Women, Police, Mental health, Physical health, Challenges

Introduction

Over the past few decades, the police and policemen have changed. Police used to be heavily influenced by physical attributes such as height, weight and brute strength. Over time, the attributes that were considered a good policeman changed. Work still requires a high level of physical fitness; now, however, more important are good ethical character and excellent interpersonal, problem-solving and conflict-solving skills. The job of women in the criminal equity framework and military has been immaterial until the late twentieth century in pretty much every country. The arrangement of females in a customarily male-ruled field has prompted different struggles in the public eye just as in the police office. It is the explanation for the legends encompassing ladies in the police labor force. Their capacities are frequently sabotaged. They are additionally compelled to demonstrate their value and work better compared to their male associates to get regard. In addition, a police individual doesn't regard or approach senior female cops in a serious way, who is driving them for a situation or examination. Society's doubt towards female police people makes it significantly harder for them to work in a generally threatening workplace. Females are relied upon to adjust every one of their jobs and perform them flawlessly, that is, alongside working in a male-ruled region, they can't be driven off track from their conventional ladylike obligations, like cooking, dealing with the youngsters, and finding some kind of harmony between all relatives.

Status of Women Police in India³

1. In 2009, the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) laid down the 33% benchmark for women's representation in the police. Moreover, the Union Territories and nine states have adopted the 33% reservation, Bihar 38%, five states 30%, and the other five states have less than 30% reservation. Nine states have not set a target yet.
2. In 2013, the MHA recommended each police station to have at least three female Sub-Inspectors and ten female police Constables.

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3. In 2015, the Ministry proposed creating Investigative Units for Crimes against Women (IUCAW) at crime-prone districts across states, which must have 15 specialized investigators, one-third of which required to be women. Further, all the investigations regarding women related issues are to be conducted by female police persons in all the states.
4. According to 2020 statistics, the total 20, 91,488 personnel in the police force, the strength of women is 215,504, constituting 10.3% of the uniformed service.
5. The number of women officials in the central armed police force, widely known as the paramilitary force, is 29,249, accounting for just 2.98% of the total number of 9, 82,391 personnel.

Gujarat Police	
Gender	Percentage of Police
Men	88.51
Women	11.49
11.49% Women in Police	

Literature review

Shubhash Joshi, IPS & Team (1999), The study was related to Gender issues and the police in India and the major findings of the study suggests that policing is Masculine job. Although it is good career option for women, according to the survey people perceive that policing is not the suitable job for women because of antagonistic environment of police station and women police get low social acceptance.

John M. Violanti (2008), The study conducted on Impact of Stress on Police Officers' Physical and Mental Health and Results suggests that policing generates some mental and health issues like depression and PTSD, diabetes and cardiovascular disease in future.

Cassandra deans (Deans, 2013), A study was on Gender inequality: the struggle female police officers face in the masculine culture of policing and they actually got an evidence that women police officers are facing issues related to Gender-Specific Inequality, discrimination, promotion and male resistance

Adnan Jamil (Politics, 2015), A study was on General problems faced by the women police and following are the problems faced by women policing identified by the researcher.

Lack of facilities, Improper Patrolling Schedule, Higher Authorities' Pressure, Improper Physical and Military Training, Disturbed Personal and Social Life.

Arlether Wilson (Wilson, 2016), A study was on female police officers "perceptions and experiences with marginalization": a phenomenological study and findings of the study suggests that generally women policing have experienced two major issues, first is Barriers to promotions, and second is related to factors impacting job satisfaction.

Idowu Oluwafemi Amos (Amos, 2016) .A study was conducted in Ondo state, Nigeria on Factors affecting female police officers performance and factors identified in the study were Gender discrimination, strength, marriage and sexual harassment.

Kadee lynn brinser (2016), A study conducted on an examination of perceptual challenges faced by female police officers and study reveled these factors: gender inequality, changes are improving, promotion process, other discrimination.

Dr. joy Prakash chowdhuri (2018) conducted study on women police, crime against women and its challenges in India and result suggests that Domestic violence, mental stress and corruption are the major issues faced by the women police.

OSW group (Safety et al., n.d.)(2018), A study on Officers' Physical and Mental Health and Safety was conducted and the study revealed that Law enforcement officer mental health and suicide, PTSD are the common issues facing by the police officers.

R. Jayasathya & K. Swathi (Swathi, 2019), Research was on problems and challenges faced by women police constables in Coimbatore was conducted. According to the findings of the study following major issues were identified

Late Working Hours, working environment, Inadequate income, Health issues, Increased stress and burn out, sexual harassment.

USA department of justice (Muhlhausen & Ph, 2019), A study was conducted on Women in policing: breaking barriers and blazing a path and the study revealed that this profession depends on Culture, performance and promotion.

Research Gap

Literature suggests that women policing is facing some issues which are having impact on their mental and physical health. Some of the issues they are facing only because they have chosen to be police as profession. So, to know about the factors behind their issues and challenges as women police, we are conducting this study. We also want to show that some problems can be overcome by working strategically. So, we will work on how to improve work life of the women policing and how to encourage other women also to join this profession as career option. We are also planning to suggest changes in their work timing, their work environment and others perception about women police.

This study enables the past research on women policing shows that their journey as police officers is very difficult and they need to face challenges like sexual harassment at job place, domestic violence at home, gender inequality in payment and promotions. So now we want to consider large sample of around 1000 women police and want to check how many other problems they are facing and also want to know that they are facing these problems because they have chosen to be police as a career option or all working women are facing this issues and challenges in their lives. Second thing is to help women police to make their lives more comfortable by implementing suggestions given by themselves.

Research Objectives

1. To study the demographic profile of women police officers in Gujarat
2. To understand the issues faced by women police officers and its impact on the mental and physical health of the women police officers.

Methodology

We have prepared structured questionnaire and contacted 500 women police officers from various cities and towns of Gujarat.

We have used non probability convenience sampling for the collection of above responses.

Age, Marital Status, Number of Family Members and Marital Status are the major demographic factors using which we have tried to identify the type of issues women police officers facing and also its impact on their physical and mental health.

Frequency table, One Way ANOVA, and Spearman's Rank correlation are the statistical techniques adopted to understand and interpret the data. Frequency and percentage are the techniques of descriptive statistics, and it is employed in the data to understand the responses of the women police. The purpose of using One Way ANOVA is to examine the mean difference between the selected variables. In this test, 0.05 is the value against which the hypothesis is tested. Test values above or below 0.05 will lead to acceptance or rejection of the hypothesis. Spearman's Rank correlation test is applied exclusively to the variables that are measured on the rank scale. This test assesses a relation between the selected variables.

Major Findings

Demographic Profile of the women police officers in Gujarat:

It has been observed from the above table that the age of the majority of the women working in the police force is less than 30 years. Again, this data indicated that the education level among women in the police force is very good. There are also some females working in the police force that have more than 10 members in the family.

To understand the issues faced by women police officers:

Age-wise there is no difference in the issues faced by the women police.

H2: No. of children does not influence the issues faced by the women police.

H3: No. of family members do not influence the issues faced by the women police.

H4: Marital Status does not influence the issues faced by the women police.

Sr. No	Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	Significance Value	Hypothesis Result
1	Age	Issues faced by women police	0.014	Accepted
2	No. of children		0.103	Not accepted
3	No. of family members		0.935	Not accepted
4	Marital Status		0.046	Accepted

There have been many issues on which opinions of women police are studied. Age, no of children, no of family members, and marital status have been chosen as independent variables. These variables are studied in the context of issues faced by women police. One Way ANOVA test is employed on the data set as all the variables have more than two categories and the mean difference is intended to study. The test result depicted in the above table indicates that age and marital status wise women police have different issues that they place on the workplace. No. children and No. of family members have no influence on the issues faced by women police. Therefore, the first and fourth hypotheses are accepted, and the remaining hypotheses are not accepted.

Post Hoc Test - AGE

Sr. No	Age	Dependent Variable	Significance Value
1	Less than 30 years	Issues faced by women police	0.004
2	30 – 40 years		0.004
3	More than 45 years		0.288

Post Hoc Test – MARITAL STATUS

Sr. No	Marital Status	Dependent Variable	Significance Value
1	Unmarried	Issues faced by women police	0.021
2	Married		0.021
3	Divorced		0.221
4	Widow		0.290

To investigate further, the Post Hoc test (LSD technique) is applied to the data set. Women belong to the age group of 30 – 40 years and women aged less than 30 years faced different issues in the workplace as their test values are less than 0.05. Married and unmarried females also have different workplace-related issues.

To understand the factors affecting the mental health of women police

H1: There is an influence of age on the mental health of women police.

H2: There is an influence of no. of children on the mental health of women police.

H3: There is an influence of no. of family members on the mental health of women police.

H4: There is an influence of marital status on the mental health of women police.

Sr. No	Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	Significance Value	Hypothesis Result
1	Age	The mental health of women police.	0.004	Accepted
2	No. of children		0.974	Not accepted
3	No. of family members		0.443	Not accepted
4	Marital Status		0.013	Accepted

The purpose of the research is to understand the mental health of women police and it is studied in the context of age, no. of children, no. of family members, and marital status. Above hypotheses are formed in this regard. One Way ANOVA test is applied to the data set and test results are depicted in the above table. Age and marital status are the two variables that affect the mental health of the women police. Family members and children have no impact on the mental health of the women police. Considering this, the first and fourth hypotheses are accepted and the remaining hypotheses are not accepted.

Post Hoc Test - AGE

Sr. No	Age	Dependent Variable	Significance Value
1	Less than 30 years	The mental health of women police.	0.003
2	30 – 40 years		0.003
3	More than 45 years		0.038

Post Hoc Test – MARITAL STATUS

Sr. No	Marital Status	Dependent Variable	Significance Value
1	Unmarried	The mental health of women police.	0.039
2	Married		0.039
3	Divorced		0.068
4	Widow		0.077

As age and marital status have an influence on the mental health of women police so, further analysis is carried out via the LSD technique of the post hoc test. Mental health is different among females aged less than 30 years, females between 30 – 40 years, and females aged more than 45 years. Similarly, marital status also affects mental health. The test results infer that married and unmarried females have different status of mental health in comparison with widowed and divorced females.

Future Scope

Further analysis can be carried out on mental and physical health regimes of women police by focusing on identified issues with the women police officers from the various categories like age, marital status, etc

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