

WOMEN IN THE INDIAN ARMY: SHOULD THEIR RECRUITMENT BE EXPANDED?

MAJOR GAURISHTHA (RETIRED)¹ & SHRUTI SINGH²

¹Served in the Corps of Electronics and Mechanical Engineers of the Indian Army; Presently an Executive Engineer in Ministry of Defence, Government of India; Pursuing Ph.D. from Noida International University, U.P., India.

²Assistant Professor, School of Business Management, Noida International University, Gautam Budh Nagar, U.P., India

ABSTRACT

In 1992, an important landmark in the history of Indian Army was the induction of women into the officer cadre. So far, more than 3000 Women Officers have already been commissioned into the various Arms and Services of the Indian Army. But their roles as of now remain that of non-combat, technical support, logistics and administration. The women in the Indian Army have yet to make inroads into the direct combat role which remains an all-male domain till date. Though the Indian Army proudly claims of being the third largest in the world, but women form only 7.5% of the officers' strength of the Indian Army. The doors to ranks below officers are yet closed for the Indian women. Although Indian police force and paramilitary forces including the Border Security Force (BSF) and Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) have women in their ranks as well as officers and bear testimonies to the laurels these women have brought to their organizations. But the Indian Army has yet to draw inspiration from these sister organizations for breaking the ice and give wider employability to women.

The women officers in the Army Medical Corps and the Military Nursing Services of the Indian Army are kept beyond the purview of this paper. They have different terms and conditions of service and are governed by different policies. In the Indian Army, as in many other Armies, the role of women in specialist, non-combatant medical roles, is long established and well proven.

KEYWORDS: Women Officers, Indian Army, Induction, Qualitative Requirements, Increased Intake, Wider Employability, Direct Combat Role, Permanent Commission, All Ranks, Command of Troops