

Women in Khaki & Prison Administration - The Challenges

What is the issue?

\n\n

\n

- Percentage of women in police service in general & prison management in particular has steadily been raising over the years.

\n

- While this is a healthy trend, there are also numerous challenges.

\n

\n\n

What are the wider implications of more women in policing?

\n\n

\n

- A larger percentage of women will increase the accessibility of the police to women.

\n

- Women police are being involved almost all kinds of policing duties like regulating traffic, managing control rooms, PCR vans.

\n

- In some cases they also conduct night rounds and investigating serious crimes and supervise large bandobasts.

\n

- All this would have a large psychological impact that potentially would push the debate on women empowerment to a higher track.

\n

\n\n

How have women police personals been placed with prisons?

\n\n

\n

- **Numbers** - Their presence in prisons is gradually increasing.

\n

- From being wardens to jailers and deputies, women handle sensitive duties from managing prison gates, barracks, peripheral and internal security to

sending inmates to courts.

\n

- Many states like Maharashtra now have 33% reservation for women in prison administration.

\n

- Their increased number means that they are assigned duties in male prisons too.

\n

- **Their Assimilation** - Most prison superintendents are however apprehensive of having women staff.

\n

- Prison staff are steeped in a male-dominated culture that has developed over time.

\n

- The security of prisons and counting of prisoners is thought to be their main occupation.

\n

- All this, compounded by the belief that prisons are places for criminals that pose an inherent threat to the society makes it an uphill task for women to assimilate into.

\n

\n\n

What has been the status of training programs?

\n\n

\n

- **Overall Issue** - The Bureau of Police Research and Development has been tasked to revise the existing syllabi for the training of prison officers/staff - an area that has been long overdue.

\n

- After basic training during induction, there is hardly any in-service training currently.

\n

- Training at regular intervals, linking it with promotions and updating technical knowledge deserve the attention of all state.

\n

- **Prision Administration** - There is a strong need for their reorientational training towards correctional administration.

\n

- Prison staff need to veer towards an attitude of reformation and rehabilitation shifting focus from the current punitive attitude.

\n

\n\n

What are other issues concerning prison administration?

\n\n

- \n
 - Prisons in most metros and district headquarters are over crowded.
 - \n
 - This is bound to have an adverse effects on the hygiene and health of prisoners and the staff on duty, that is visible now.
 - \n
 - As security risks in such cases is also enormous, relieving even one staff member for in-service training appears to be a luxury.
 - \n
 - Thus, besides regular training, filling the around 34% vacancies in prisons currently needs immediate attention.
 - \n

\n\n

How can women specific issues be addressed?

\n\n

- \n
 - Prison administration needs to get its officers and staff in sync with the culture of gender equality, respect and cooperation.
 - \n
 - Women come with their certain specific strengths that is usually found to be lacking in men and this needs to be harnessed.
 - \n
 - Notably, they are intuitively found to herald a shift in favour of a correctional administration instead of the traditional punitive mindset which is a big plus with regard to prisons.
 - \n
 - Women officers working in the pathetic prison conditions have the extra burden of traditional family responsibilities their problems need to be studied further and acted upon.
 - \n
 - A continued dialogue about problems and possible solutions can greatly help women in prison administration reach their potential.
 - \n

\n\n

\n\n

Source: Indian Express

\n

