
THE NEED FOR POLICE REFORMS AND WOMEN POLICING IN INDIA

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*‘Accountability for police officers should be an expectation not an
aberration’*

ABSTRACT

There is a need for the reforms in the police system in India, especially the share of women in policing. Women are underrepresented in many fields and policing is no different. Upliftment of women in policing is the need of the hour. So, it turns out to be important to investigate the cause of low participation of women in India. This article focusses on the gender inequality, how women impacting the policing system and many different important purposes. This is doctrinal research where the scholar has analysed the provisions related to police and the authorities responsible for the recruitment. This paper is trying to look into the strategies create sustained cultural changes that lead to improvements in the representation and experiences in women in policing. How can law enforcement agencies- in partnership with other organization improve data collection and measures to better inform efforts to improve the representation and experiences of women in policing? How can we increase diversity in women policing? What is men perspective on women in policing? How are women impacting women organization? Number of women officers representation in different departments in different states. So, that the unerring procedure should be established to address the critical concerns of women’s safety and security and police reforms and women policing.

Keywords: Police Reforms, Upliftment of women, women policing, gender-inequality, diversity

INTRODUCTION

The origin of English word is devised from the Middle French word 'police', which is taken from the Latin word '**politia**', which itself originated from the Greek word '**politeia**', which means the internal organization of a community or a state through the exercise of the constitutional power of the government. The Rig and the Atharva Veda has the inclusion of the various forms of crimes which were present in the Vedic period. Even the Harappan period shows the existence of security forces. Kautilya's Arthshashtra (310BC) have the reference to

DANVARIKA, ANTEVANSIKA, PRADESIKAS, MAHAMATRAS, RAJJUKAS, and so on.

The modern day police system can be traced back to the 19th century and was not in consideration before the British period. Police reforms was firstly introduced by Warren Hastings and later it became the Police Act of 1861. The native police system was reorganised to tackle the crime ridden areas. The current police system in India was based on those principles and not even altered by the Police Commission of 1860.

The two principles of the system are:

1. The police must be completely separated from the military; they must act as an independent body,
2. Assisting the Collectors in the discharge of law-and-order responsibilities.

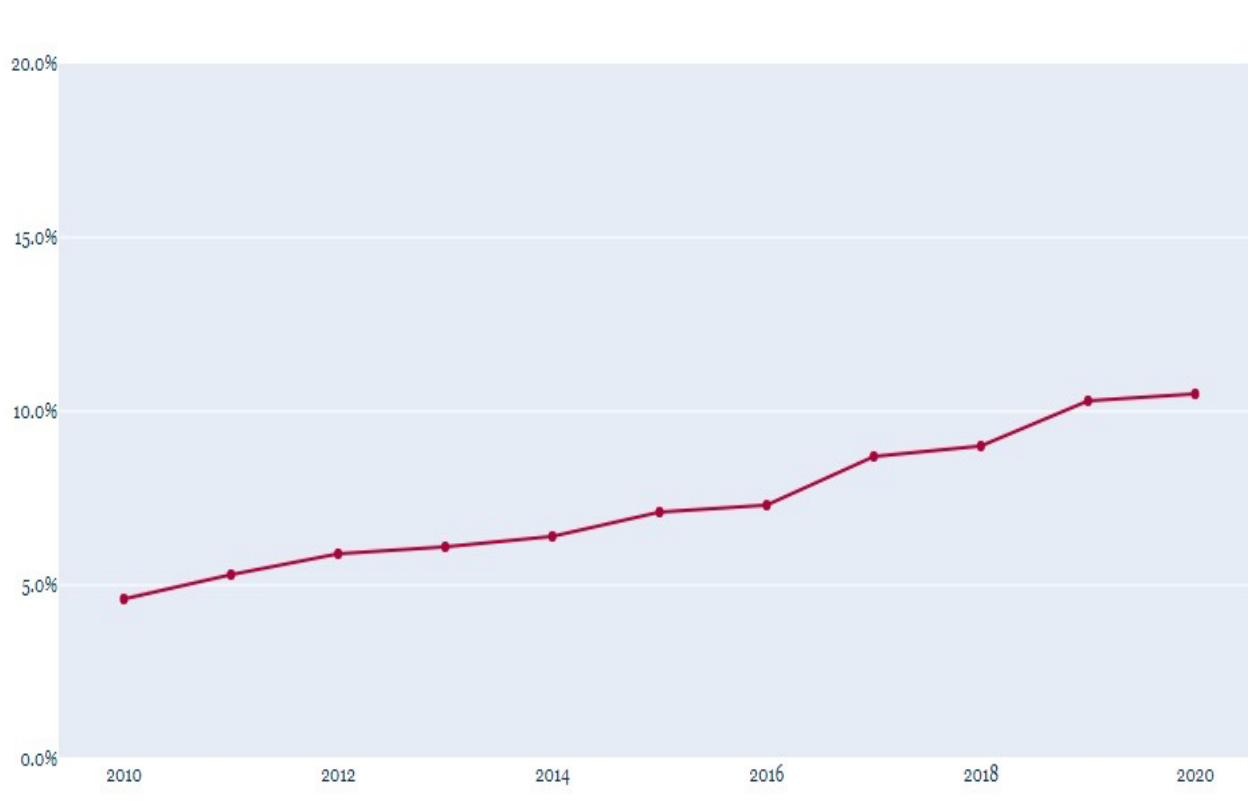
This system is further improved by the Police Commission of 1902-03.

Police officers' duties broadly relate to the areas of maintenance of public peace and order, crime prevention, investigation and detection, collection of intelligence, VIP security, counter-terrorism, border policing, railway policing, tackling smuggling etc., police officers have historically been male- dominated. Women police officers face various challenges in their working like direct criticism from male counterparts. Women policing have been stereotyped regarding their mental and physical state need to be changed. Some departments actively recruit women officers which not only creates diversity but better meet the need of the population.

Gender-inequality in policing

India currently ranks 135 out of 146 countries on Global Gender Gap (GGG) index of 2022.

And is the worst performer in the world in the 'health and survival' sub-index where it is ranked 146. The global gender report 2022, which includes the gender gap index, says it will now take 132 years to reach gender parity, with the gap reducing only 4 years since 2021 and the gender gap closed by 68.1%. But this does not compensate for the generational loss between 2020 and 2021. As the trend leading unto 2020 showed that the gender was set to close within 100 years¹. Share of women in police is very low in our country. There are a lot of challenges that women face in our country which result in the low participation in department of law and order. Growth of share of women in police is very low which can be seen in the plot below.



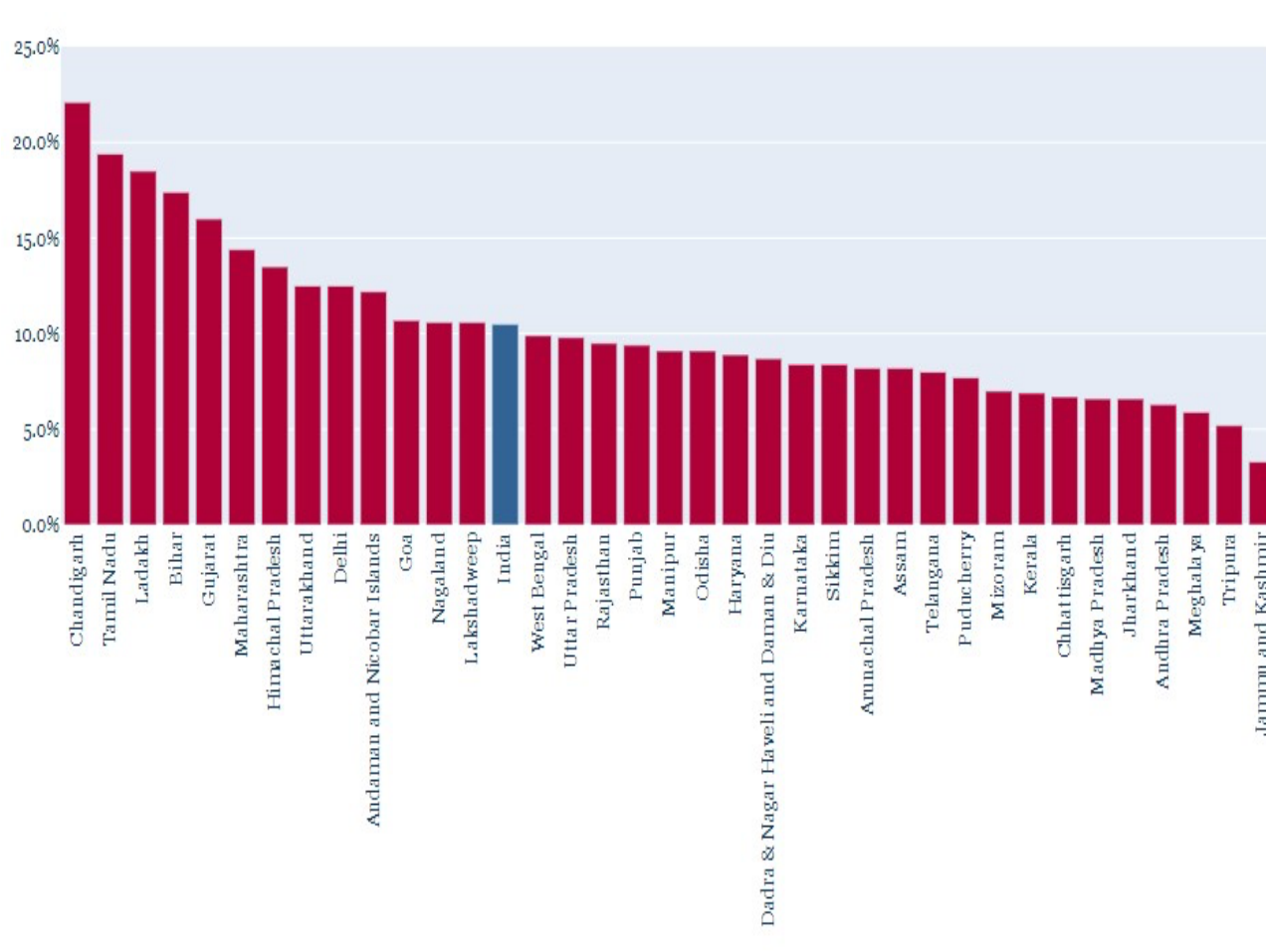
The share of women in the police has been rising, but the pace has been slow.

A complicated problem with many potential causes and effects is the underrepresentation of women in police forces in many states. Historical impediments to women working in law enforcement, gender prejudices and assumptions about women's roles and talents, and institutional cultures and practises that may be hostile to women are some probable causes of the lack of diversity.

¹ <https://hdr.undp.org/data-center/thematic-composite-indices/gender-inequality-index#/indicies/GII>

Reduced efficacy in policing may result from this lack of diversity, particularly in cases involving women and marginalised groups who might feel better at ease dealing with officers who are of their gender or cultural background. To address this issue, law enforcement agencies and policymakers may need to take a multifaceted approach that includes recruiting and hiring more women officers, creating more inclusive and supportive workplace cultures, and implementing policies and practices that ensure equal opportunities for women in all aspects of law enforcement. Additionally, education and awareness campaigns can help to combat gender biases and stereotypes and promote greater diversity and inclusion in the field.

Going through the situation of states, there is a lack of diversity in police organization across states in India. States have too few women police officers.



It is visible in the bar-graph pinned above that the average share of women in policing among all the states is just 11% and minimum participation is mere 3% in the state of Jammu and Kashmir, which shows the alarming condition in the nation and Appalling need of reforms in the country.

The interplay between gender and population demographics and dynamics is essential for formulating and implementing policies and programmes that aim to change a country's environmental, socio-political and economic demographics, dynamics and development prospects. Analysis of population composition from gender perspective is very central in understanding the nitty-gritty of social structure of a society².

In addition to it, throwing light on the population of women among men, number of women in the country are whopping 69 crores (approximately) and that of men is 73 crores (approximately)³.

It is clearly visible that women make up nearly half of the population, they are underrepresented in law enforcement. Adequate reforms can help increasing the number of women by recruitments by giving special reservations to women, coping with the stereotypes, awareness drill in the rural areas, etc.,

Women impacting women policing system

Women are bringing significant change in the field by taking along different perspectives, experiences and skills. They are playing significant role in the policing system. Female officers have been a significant medium in raising awareness about the need for gender sensitivity in policing which is the need of the hour. Major crimes against women such as, domestic violence, sexual assault, rape and other crime against women, are better handled by the female officers because they can better empathise with the victims and are more attuned to the nuances of these crimes.

Moreover, women in comparison to their male counterparts are often better communicators, which allows to still the situation and resolve conflicts more effectively. In addition, female officers are better equipped at building relationships with their community, which results to more trust and faith in the police and better coordination in solving crimes.

However, the impact of women in policing system is not limited to female officers only. Women are also better equipped in advocating for changes to the system to address the new challenges faced by the female victim of crime, for example, women advocacy groups has been active in

² <https://www.mospi.gov.in/publication/women-men-india-2022>

³ <https://www.mospi.gov.in/publication/women-men-india-2022>

pushing for more resources to be allocated to addressing domestic violence and sexual assault, as well as for changes to the way these crimes are investigated and prosecuted.

Overall, women are playing a big role on the policing system, both as officers and advocates. Because of their contribution which lead to a more gender sensitivity and responsive system, which is better equipped to face the unique problems which causes to women in the criminal justice system.

Given below are some measure taken by national conference of women in policing

NCWP has continuously worked on strengthening the police organisations or CAPFs by suggesting various active ways and working and regulating the mechanism for sexual harassment in all police organisations. Exclusive approach in infrastructural development for women police like rest rooms, toilets, creche, etc similar welfare measures for women in carrier building and other maternity measures like child care leave, police housing etc.

How women can be encouraged to be part of the police system

Joining the police force is an important step towards achieving gender equality and promoting community safety which can be done by encouraging more women to join the police force . here are some ways to encourage women to be part of the police system;

- Encouraging more women to join the police force is important to achieving gender equality and promoting community safety. Here are some ways to encourage women to be part of the police system:
- Increasing visibility: Law enforcement agencies can increase visibility of women police officers through targeted media campaigns, public events, and outreach programs. This will help showcase women officers as role models, demonstrating that women can have a successful and rewarding career in law enforcement.
- Creating an inclusive workplace culture: Police departments can create a welcoming and inclusive workplace culture that values diversity and recognizes the contributions of women. This can be achieved through initiatives such as mentoring programs, employee resource groups, and bias training.

- Providing flexible work arrangements: Many women face unique challenges that can make it difficult to pursue a career in law enforcement, such as childcare responsibilities. Offering flexible work arrangements such as part-time work, jobsharing, and telecommuting can help to address these challenges and make it easier for women to pursue a career in law enforcement.
- Addressing gender bias: Police departments can take steps to address gender bias by ensuring that women are treated fairly in the hiring process, promotions, and assignments. This can be achieved through the use of objective performance metrics, diversity training, and mentoring programs.
- Providing equal opportunities for advancement: Police departments can provide equal opportunities for advancement to all officers, regardless of gender. This can be achieved by creating clear pathways for career progression and providing equal access to training and development programs.

Above mentioned are some ways by which number of women can be increased to take part in the police system. In our country it is evident that there is an unequal distribution of women in the police organization so it is important to encourage women to have a share in the police system.

Measures taken by the different states to increase the participation of women in policing

Different states and countries are implementing various measures to encourage women to pursue a career in policing. Here are some examples:

Recruitment drives: Many police departments are actively recruiting women through targeted outreach efforts, job fairs, and other recruitment drives. Some states have launched dedicated campaigns to encourage women to join the police force.

Reserving vacancies for women: Some states have introduced reservation policies that reserve a certain percentage of vacancies for women in the police force. This ensures that women have equal opportunities to apply for police jobs and are not overlooked in the recruitment process.

Special incentives: Some states offer special incentives to women who join the police force, such as tuition reimbursement, student loan forgiveness, and housing assistance. These

incentives can make it easier for women to pursue a career in law enforcement.

Gender-sensitive training: Police departments are increasingly providing gender-sensitive training to their officers. This includes training on how to interact with victims of domestic violence and sexual assault, as well as training on how to avoid gender-based discrimination and bias.

Women-only recruitment drives: Some police departments have launched women-only recruitment drives, where women can apply for police jobs and receive training in a supportive and encouraging environment. This can help to overcome the barriers that some women face when trying to enter male-dominated fields.

Promoting women to leadership positions: Many states are actively promoting women to leadership positions within the police force. This sends a powerful message that women can succeed in law enforcement and helps to break down barriers to women's advancement within the field.

By implementing these measures, states and countries can help to encourage more women to pursue a career in policing and create a more diverse and inclusive police force.

Reservations given by the different states for women in policing

There are several states in India that have reservations for women in policing. The percentage of reservation may vary from state to state. Here are some of the states with their reservation policies:⁴

S. No.	States/U.T.s	Percentage Reservation (%)	Posts/Category
1.	Andhra Pradesh	33%	Police constable and Sub-Inspector
2.	Bihar	35%	Constable

⁴ <https://crpf.gov.in/ncwp.htm#:~:text=To%20date%2012%20states%2D%20Maharashtra,women%20in%20the%20police%20forces.>

3.	Chattisgarh	33%	All Posts
4.	Delhi	33%	Constable
5.	Gujarat	33%	All Posts
6.	Himachal Pradesh	33%	All Posts
7.	Jammu & Kashmir	33%	All Posts
8.	Kerala	30%	All Posts
9.	Madhya Pradesh	33%	Constable
10.	Maharashtra	33%	All Posts
11.	Orissa	33%	All Posts
12.	Punjab	33%	All Posts
13.	Rajasthan	30%	All Posts
14.	Tamil Nadu	30%	All Posts
15.	Telangana	33%	Sub-Inspector

It's worth nothing that the reservation policies may vary from time to time, and it's best to check with the respective states official website or the recruitment notification for the latest information.

Conclusion

It is to be concluded that the women plays a significant role in our society in various ways which has a major chunk in the police system, so it is sacrosanct to improve the women participation in policing. Our society has huge gender diversities and various cultures. In order to combat the problem of gender equality, sensitivity and neutrality in the society, the participation of women plays a very important role in any job whether it is nursing, policing, defence., etc. and we must implement certain elements in the minds of the people or in the policies of the state or central and state government like reservation.

Police reforms and women policing in India have been two of the most crucial topics of discussion in recent times. The need for police reforms has been felt for decades, with several reports and recommendations made over the years. Similarly, the issue of women's safety and security has been a major concern, and the inclusion of women in the police force has been seen as a positive step towards addressing this issue. In this essay, we will discuss the importance of police reforms and women policing in India and how they can help improve law and order in the country.

The Indian police system has been facing various challenges, including corruption, lack of accountability, inadequate infrastructure, and outdated laws. As a result, the police have been unable to perform their duties effectively, which has led to widespread dissatisfaction among the public. The need for police reforms has been felt for decades, and several committees have been formed over the years to make recommendations for reform.

In 2006, the Supreme Court of India issued a set of directives on police reforms in the Prakash Singh case. The directives included the establishment of a State Security Commission to ensure that the police functioned independently, the separation of the investigation and law and order wings of the police, the appointment of a Police Complaints Authority to investigate complaints against the police, and the establishment of a National Security Commission to oversee the functioning of the police at the national level. However, despite these directives, police reforms have been slow to materialize.

One of the major obstacles to police reforms has been the resistance from within the police force itself. The police have been resistant to change and have been unwilling to give up their power and authority. Another obstacle has been the lack of political will to implement reforms.

The political class has been reluctant to implement police reforms as they fear that it may lead to a loss of control over the police.

However, it is essential to understand that police reforms are necessary for the effective functioning of the police and the maintenance of law and order in the country. Police reforms can help improve the accountability of the police, reduce corruption, improve the quality of investigations, and enhance the professionalism of the police. These reforms can also help improve the relationship between the police and the public, leading to greater trust and cooperation between the two.

Women Policing in India

Women's safety and security have been a major concern in India, particularly in the wake of the Delhi gang-rape incident in 2012. In response to this incident, several measures were taken to improve women's safety and security, including the inclusion of women in the police force.

The inclusion of women in the police force has been seen as a positive step towards addressing the issue of women's safety and security. Women police officers can play a crucial role in addressing crimes against women, particularly in cases of sexual assault and domestic violence. Women police officers can also help in building trust and confidence among women victims, which can encourage them to report crimes.

However, the inclusion of women in the police force has also faced several challenges. Women police officers have had to deal with discrimination, harassment, and lack of support from their male colleagues. They have also had to face challenges in balancing their work and family responsibilities.

Despite these challenges, the inclusion of women in the police force is necessary for the effective functioning of the police and the maintenance of law and order in the country. Women police officers can bring a different perspective to policing, which can help improve the quality of policing. They can also serve as role models for other women and inspire them to take up careers in law enforcement.

In a nutshell, police reforms and women policing are two critical areas that require attention in India. Police reforms are necessary to improve the effectiveness and accountability of the police and to maintain law and order in the country.