Chapter 6

Findings, Summary and Conclusion
CHAPTER VI

FINDINGS, SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The study is an attempt to describe the functioning of All Women Police Stations. AWPS emerge as a combination of family counseling center and law enforcement agency. Though the first such station was introduced in the state of Kerala in 1973, there has been very little effort to document the organisations functioning.

Worldwide, recommendations have focused encouraging the police force to be more service oriented than being an agency enforcing law alone. AWPS is oriented more to service delivery.

Being sensitive to the socio-cultural needs of the state of Tamil Nadu, the honourable chief minister – Dr. J Jayalalitha introduced the concept of AWPS on a massive scale in Tamil Nadu. The first AWPS was piloted in Chennai and its success subsequently led to the establishment of 57 AWPS.

In this study, three groups of respondents (functionaries, beneficiaries, support groups) were interviewed and data collected was analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively. The results were discussed in the previous chapter and findings from different respondent groups are being dealt with in this chapter.

The study verified the following hypotheses and indicates that AWPS is functioning well, reaching women and redressing grievances.
1) **Caste has less influence on the functioning of All Women Police Station than class**

Caste does not have any direct bearing on the functioning of AWPS. At the AWPS all the respondents confirmed that caste of the petitioner is not noted down or asked for at the police station. Only in cases where caste perspective has to be looked into as in inter-caste marriage or when the petitioner belongs to a tribe or community that has other rules or norms that govern them, then knowledge of the caste of the individual is sought. In the cases of particular communities or tribes this knowledge helps them conduct the counseling in an appropriate manner.

Among the beneficiaries of AWPS none of the respondents reported any partiality on the basis of their caste but 80% of the respondents feel that their economic status affects the interaction and the way they are treated. 20% of the study participants refrained from responding to this question, despite assurances of complete confidentiality. Class bias is evident in the functioning of AWPS.

This seems in keeping with the highly disturbing finding of the study done by Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI). Lack of public faith in police fairness or Police Partiality emerged prominently in the CHRI study through responses to questions in different parts of the survey.

The three most prominent features of the ugly face of the policemen in this country are his brutality, corruption and partiality. We learnt to our surprise that the
number of public respondents who regarded the police as partial was larger than the number who considered them either brutal or corrupt.

In the CHRI survey on human rights awareness and attitudes, police officers were asked to list out the common malpractice's in which police indulge and prioritize three considered as most important by them. 'Showing partiality towards rich or influential people in cases involving them or reported by them' and 'Discriminatory treatment towards weaker sections of community' emerged as the two most common malpractices in which police indulged.

The entire philosophy of policing relies on the objectivity and impartiality of the police personnel. Even a suspicion of partiality, is a cause for distress. It belies the very fundamentals of policing, which requires the police to function impartially as an agent of law, unaffected by caste or communal considerations or the status and riches of parties concerned. The philosophy of police neutrality is embedded in the concept of rule of law. If the police are not neutral, the rule of law gets devalued.

It is, therefore, extremely important for the police to design strategies which would help in winning public faith in police neutrality.

Both the functionaries and the beneficiaries at AWPS, confirmed that caste did not influence the disposal of cases. However a majority of the beneficiaries-petitioners and counter-petitioners stated that their economic status definitely
influenced the redressal of their petition at AWPS. Thus it is inferred that caste
has less influence on the functioning of All Women Police Station than class

2) *The disposal of such petitions are faster than before the introduction of AWPS.*

Newspapers, articles, studies often mention that there has been a
lackadaisical approach of police personnel to petitions that were related to
problems considered 'domestic' in nature. It took woman several visits to the
police station before their complaint was taken seriously and registered. The
YWCA website mentions, “After several years of consistent work with police
personnel from the top level down to the local police, the realization that violence
against a woman in the family is a crime is gaining acceptance only now. Even
so, it may still take woman several visits to the police station before her complaint
is taken seriously and registered”.

It was in response to women’s complaints that they could not report
violations because they were treated with disrespect and disbelief that the first
Women Police Stations was set up in Sao Paolo, Brazil. These stations are
staffed with multi-disciplinary female teams equipped to respond to the different
needs of victims.

The beneficiaries of the AWPS report that within a couple of days of their
giving the petition, there is an inquiry by the women police. The promptness of
action gives petitioners a reassurance that women who approach the AWPS for
help that there is concern and consideration for their problems. 89% of the petitioners inform that there was an immediate inquiry (3 days) into their complaint and the quick action taken at this station made them feel confident that the policewomen would really help. The petitioners verify that the quick response of AWPS, gives AWPS an edge over other police stations.

40% of the petitioners had approached other police stations for redressal of their grievances but a lack of concern, referral to other stations led to unnecessary delays. This caused the petitioners to feel frustrated as well as cost them in terms of money and time in travelling etc to the various stations. At AWPS these respondents were not only heard but also an inquiry by the women police was conducted within three days of their complaint being given.

There is a stipulation laid down for AWPS personnel that within three days of receiving a complaint, an inquiry must be conducted and the study confirms that this is being practiced also. Thus it is inferred that the disposals of petitions are faster than before the introduction of AWPS and the hypothesis is proved.

3) The functioning of AWPS is oriented more towards social service than being only an agency of law enforcement.

The nature of service provided at AWPS makes the functionaries feel satisfied that they are able to help people who require it. At AWPS women police are often taking on the dual role of social workers too. They try to locate jobs for
women who need it, they try to get children of women petitioner into schools, they locate safe homes for lost children, sort out problems between mothers and daughters in law - in all these cases it is not laws that are being violated or safeguarded but a service that is being provided, giving a human face to the police force. 98% of the women police respondents are of the opinion that police should assume a service-oriented role of which law enforcement will only be a part. Women police state that even within the general police stations not all crimes that came in were dealing with violent crimes, they feel that a lot of cases actually dealt with areas considered to be within the purview of social work, like taking lost children to orphanages, guiding elderly to homes, trying to get employment for women who lack economic support. Within the community, police must create and maintain a feeling of security. The women police agree that the quicker disposal of cases has instilled faith in the minds of the petitioners and the increasing numbers of direct petitions are reflective of this.

The dual nature of work - counseling and intervening in cases where there are legal violations comes through clearly in the study and confirms that the functioning of AWPS is oriented more towards social service than being an agency of law enforcement alone. As such, the hypothesis is proved by the supportive findings.
4) **All Women Police Stations fulfills the objectives it has been established for by the Government of Tamil Nadu.**

98% of the beneficiaries (petitioners) felt that the AWPS aided in resolving their problems. The Functionaries too feel that AWPS is good for the petitioner as well as the service providers. Nearly all (98%) of the petitioners say that being women it is easier for the petitioner to state her problems to a woman-police. Women police too feel that they have really had a chance to be useful and feel good about the fact that they are able to help out women.

On the other hand the opportunity of being at the AWPS also provides them a chance to do work other than secretarial or escort. For many of the womenpolice, being posted to AWPS provides job satisfaction, as they are able to actively participate in providing service instead of being relegated to performing gender-specific work-roles as is the practice in most of the police stations.

One of the primary objectives for setting up of the AWPS was to provide a place for women to comfortably approach and be confident of redressal of their petition. The beneficiaries of AWPS interviewed for this study confirmed that AWPS had helped them positively. Their confidence is reflected in increasing number of women seeking help from AWPS too. The satisfaction of the beneficiaries for whom the AWPS is functioning is indicative that All Women Police Stations fulfills the objectives it was established for by the government of Tamil Nadu and the hypothesis is thus proved.
Suggestions

The Indian society has witnessed far-reaching changes since independence. The old traditional institutions and values of Indian society have been subjected to intense pressures, generated by developments in various fields. There have been remarkable advances in science and technology. The old institutions of family, school and religion, which used to play an extremely important role in bringing about a high level of consensus over fundamental dominant values within the society and in generating healthy attitude of respect towards all forms of authority, are gradually losing their hold. All these changes have posed problems for civil society. All Women Police Stations are a response to the changing needs and forms of social control.

However for an effective and efficient functioning of the AWPS, some sectoral / sub-sectoral improvements are suggested. Strengthening of these areas will help build the capacities of the organisation. The researcher proposes to discuss these under the following sub-headings:

a) At AWPS
b) Functionaries – functional and social
c) Beneficiaries
At AWPS:

- **COUNSELING** – Women police offer counseling even though not trained specifically to deal with counseling. No counselor visits AWPS except at AWPS Chennai.

AWPS is a rare meeting ground of formal social control and counseling. There is provision by the government vide that till such time that a counselor is appointed exclusively for AWPS, the Social Welfare department would send on a counselor to AWPS. On observation it was found that except for the AWPS in Chennai, the other AWPS and the women police posted to these stations were not even aware of such provision in the districts.

AWPS relies on the policewomen to don the role of counselors. However the functionaries in their redressal of grievances are not able to disassociate their learnt values. At AWPS often the nature of redressal is one of compromise and the functionaries seek for reconciliation between couples. The compromise spoken of here is one where the couple gets back to living together with few modifications. These manifestations are an outcome of the ‘counseling’ by women police. It could be a warning the husband to give money to his wife and children.... to requesting the women to accept the presence of another woman in her husband’s life due to her and her children's economic status.

In her article ‘Changing Attitudes in India’ Susan Mathai mentions “Reconciliation without any change in the power relations sends the woman back
to the same environment with an expectation that she will adjust or conform or "behave" so that the "family" can remain intact. If the aim of counseling is to empower the woman to take charge of her life, it must free her from a "victim" mentality and a sense of guilt and enable her to see her situation not just as her own personal problem but as a social issue arising from an age-old patriarchal system. Thus, the underlying objective of any counseling should be to change the patriarchal and undemocratic culture in the family that does not recognize or grant freedom or equal rights to the woman within the family, be her role wife, daughter, sister, daughter-in-law, or mother.

During counseling it is expected that the counselor is able to objectively offer counsel to those requiring it. At AWPS the women police offer counseling but this is something that needs some amount of formal training and orientation, else one tends to delve into personal experiences and let subjective situations and individual socialisation influence advice.

"We also want to call to your attention that domestic violence in police families appears to occur at a higher rate than in the general population. Some estimates are that as many as 40% of police families experience domestic violence. Where do those families turn for help when their batterer is a police officer? And, what service will be provided to a woman who is a victim of domestic violence when her call for help is answered by an officer who is a batterer?"
The same situation in reverse can be subtly functioning in the way women police counsel the petitioners. A number of women go through the similar situations in their personal life as the petitioner they see in their station, their counsel is reflective of socialisation patterns based on their life experiences.

Training module should include a component on counseling specifically for women police as the practice remains in Tamil Nadu that only women police are posted to AWPS. Another recommendation is for gender sensitization programs to be introduced in the training programmes for policemen and women. Assuming that a policewoman is a woman hence will be able to empathize with a situation is erroneous contemplation. We need to acknowledge that unlearning internalized responses to situations is difficult. Socialized patterns and values are accumulated over a long time and attachment of values to right/wrong behavior remains entrenched in life-experiences of people. Women police are no different. Though in a profession that calls for them to give objective counseling, they do delve into their situations to respond. Inherent gender imbalances are reflected in their functioning.

It would also make sense if new incumbents posted to AWPS in decision-making positions (Inspectors/Sub-Inspectors) were made to go through an orientation module familiarizing them with AWPS related stipulations and jurisdictions, so that the situation found in this study with regard to the GO that provides AWPS with family counselors are avoided.
Coordination between Non-Government and Government Organisations

There are voluntary agencies that are working for the welfare of women and children in almost all areas within Tamil Nadu. A point that the NGOs interacting with the AWPS have consistently maintained is the one-direction flow of activity, i.e. whenever the NGOs come across cases which they feel that the AWPS is equipped to deal with – they bring them or refer them on to AWPS but a vice versa flow does not happen.

Government welfare agencies are present in moffusil areas too but there is no awareness among the policewomen about the support programs offered by them for women and children. The government runs both the social welfare department and the AWPS but the high level of segmentalisation leads to a lacuna in information sharing. Though both intend to benefit the public, there is a conspicuous lack of coordination.

It would help if AWPS were to maintain or be apprised of all the voluntary agencies and government programs that are functioning within the jurisdiction of their policestations. There needs to be recognition of the fact that it is the welfare of the petitioner that is the ultimate goal of the AWPS. In order to facilitate services for the petitioner at AWPS, a closer co-ordination between AWPS, Government agencies and Voluntary organisations is imperative.
Mobile Units – discontinued due to non clarity of concept and no co-ordination between departments

Initially when AWPS started there were Mobile units were set up for spot redressal of grievances in remote areas. The team comprised of eight persons from different departments – a lawyer, a Revenue Inspector, a social worker, a teacher among others. Currently this unit has been discontinued. The concept behind the multi-specialty team is reflective of a holistic approach to problem solving. Multi-party teams also call for a great deal of co-ordination and teamwork. As members of the team were required to travel on the same day to the spot, problems appeared in day co-ordination. Furthermore there appears to have been a lack of discernment among the key functionaries of the significance of involvement of different perspectives and to the roles of different partners involved, which generated a lack of appreciation and appropriate effort to seek co-operation from the various members involved. Hence the mobile units were gradually discontinued.

‘Less threatening’– Suggestion of field enquiries in ‘mufti’ (plain clothes).

After any petition is received at the AWPS, a policewoman is sent within the first three days to conduct an on the spot verification of facts. It has been requested by petitioners and counterpetitioners that during such visits the women police go in ‘mufti’ or plain clothes. Though women come into the police station requesting help with domestic issues, most of them are conscious of the
fact that even as they approach AWPS 'taking home matters to police' still has a negative connotation in the community. The nature of 'crime' being dealt with at AWPS is one of a sensitive nature. The redressal pattern reveals that there is a conscious attempt to reconcile the couples who approach the AWPS for assistance. In such situations it is recommended that during home visit the policewomen dress up in plainclothes, making them less conspicuous.

**Beneficiaries:**

- Redressal of grievances but need to address the inherent structural inequalities

The principal of gender equality is enshrined in the Indian Constitution in its preamble, Fundamental Rights, Fundamental Duties and Directive Principles. Our laws, development policies, Plans and programmers have aimed at women's advancement in different spheres. From the Fifth Five Year Plan (1974-78) onwards has been a marked shift in the approach to women's issues from welfare to development. In recent years, the empowerment of women has been recognized as the central issue in determining the status of women. The women's movement and a wide-spread network of non-Government Organisations which have strong grass-roots presence and deep insight into women's concerns have contributed in inspiring initiatives for the empowerment of women.

However, there still exists a wide gap between the goal enunciated in the Constitution, legislation, policies, plans, programmes, and related mechanisms on
the one hand and the situational reality of the status of women in India, on the other. Gender disparity manifests itself in various forms, the most obvious being the trend of continuously declining female ratio in the population in the last few decades. Social stereotyping and violence at the domestic and societal levels are some of the other manifestations. The underlying causes of gender inequality are related to social and economic structure, which is based on informal and formal norms, and practices.

AWPS is structured to deal with problems related to women with specific focus on dowry cases and marital problems. The role of the womenpolice is one of the conciliator. Nature of the problems being dealt with at AWPS has its root in our structural and cultural patterns. Petitions given by women at the AWPS deal consistently with problems of extra marital relation of spouse or to seek maintenance from spouses. The gender imbalances and power relations inside families are reflected in the problems that are petitioned at the AWPS. Integrated approaches and involvement from many sections of civil society including community and religious leaders, as well as fostering "security" for women and girls' through literacy, education and employment opportunities is what is called for. Empowering women is one of the first steps towards redressal of grievances that are being dealt with at AWPS. Creating public opinion against social norms that legitimize violence against women or deny them their rights in the family should be focussed upon.
India has a "NATIONAL POLICY FOR THE EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN (2000) and the goal of this Policy is to bring about the advancement, development and empowerment of women. Specifically, the objectives of this Policy include

(i) Creating an environment through positive economic and social policies for full development of women to enable them to realize their full potential

(ii) The de-jure and de-facto enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedom by women on equal basis with men in all spheres - political, economic, social, cultural and civil

(iii) Equal access to participation and decision making of women in social, political and economic life of the nation

(iv) Equal access to women to health care, quality education at all levels, career and vocational guidance, employment, equal remuneration, occupation health and safety, social security and public office etc.

(v) Strengthening legal systems aimed at elimination of all forms of discrimination against women

(vi) Changing societal attitudes and community practices by active participation and involvement of both men and women

(vii) Mainstreaming a gender perspective in the development process.

(viii) Elimination of discrimination and all forms of violence against women and the girl child; and

(ix) Building and strengthening partnerships with civil society, particularly women's organization.
Within the broader umbrella of Human Rights

The grievances dealt with at AWPS are reflective of the power relations and gender imbalances in society. The issues should be dealt with under the umbrella of human rights, which will provide protection and dignity of life for women.

Functionaries

The success of any organisation depends on the functionaries’ interpretation of their organization’s objective. It is their willingness and cooperation that translate these into action.

Sometimes lack of flexibility on part of the organisation also affects the motivation of its workers. At AWPS in this study we found that though the beneficiaries were highly satisfied with the services of the AWPS, the functionaries felt that with modifications their work output would benefit greatly.

It is the functionaries at the AWPS who are the end point of policies framed to benefit the common person –the citizen of this country. Therefore it becomes of utmost importance that provisions that facilitate the functioning of policewomen in interpreting and translating their prescribed duties, should be given priority.

Issues that emerge through interviews and surveys with the policewomen can be summed up under two headings functional problems and social problems. The term social here encompasses a broader range of personal, family and social group interaction.
Functional

The functional restraints that women police face and suggestions to deal with them are summed up as under:

i) work environment

ii) inhibitors in efficiency

iii) support from public

Work Environment

In this study some of the expectations that women police seem to have from their place of work are in the areas of their interaction with their seniors, promotion, growth, job description and career planning.

In their interaction with their superiors, women police firmly believe that subordinate culture is integral to the police system, and that the relationships at the workplace should be based on the person’s rank or level. However a structured system for promotions, equivalent to all, irrespective of their gender is recommended. The growth opportunities for men and women in the police force should remain the same.

Another emerging concern is about there being a clarity of job description wherein they desire to have a complete set of rules clearly stated than to have to decide things for one self. Standardizing work procedures would encourage adherence to rules and regulations chartered out. Women police also feel that if
there were more transparency and guidance/career growth counseling within the
services, it'd help in planning their future career. Career mobility is becoming
increasingly characteristic of modern employment, with employees viewing a
position as an opportunity to gain new skills to enhance their positions.
Consequently, organisations must understand the needs of their employees and
implement strategies to provide motivation and required skills and training for staff.
Appropriate measures to meet individuals’ needs and aspirations would optimize
organizational performance.

Inhibitors to efficiency

Just as the study done by Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative (CHRI)
stated that:

“The three most important reasons for their ineffectiveness in controlling crime, as intimated by police personnel themselves, are lack of resources, inadequate strength and political interference.”

In this study too with regard to the police perception of problems that hinder their response to public distress, similar findings emerge:

i) Grossly inadequate manpower, equipment and facilities for performance of work

ii) inhibiting and discriminatory instructions and directions from political leadership

iii) Scientific and mechanical aids and equipments should be practically provided at the operational level at police stations and circles
Grossly inadequate manpower, equipment and facilities for performance of work

Women police are of the opinion that one of the major factors that impede the competent discharge of duties of the women police has its basis in the grossly inadequate manpower, equipment and facilities for performance of work. This conditions the police response to public. Low staffing leads to over work and enormous stress and strain in day-to-day performance of duties by the police and contributes to the way police respond to their work.

During the study women police often mentioned the extra pressure on them due to their low strength. They reported an inadequacy of time to attend to their routine duties because of the demands put on their time by emergency duties like VIP bandobust or during tourist seasons deputing women police to parks and public areas to provide security. In Coimbatore, after the bomb blasts, since the number of women in the force was small, women police from AWPS were often involved in house-searches as it is mandatory to take women police during raids in houses where women reside.

Increasing the strength of women in the police force will address underlying imbalances. Currently the low strength of women police increases workload and stress. Recruiting more women into the force will regulate the timings of the women police and allow planning for more flexible timings and promote family friendly policies for women in the police force.
It is desirable to increase the representation of women as police officers in police services across jobs in police services, especially the representation of women officers at management and supervisory levels. It needs to be recognised that the under representation of women police at management levels is inextricably linked to women's general under representation, job segregation and that these impact on the capacity of police to deliver services which are responsive to community diversity. The absence of women managers as role models acts as a subconscious reinforcement to women of their "unsuitability" for particular roles in police services. The presence of more women in police management would therefore give women police permission to regard this as a realistic career option rather than conforming to the stereotypical roles generally expected of them. Until police services, at all levels, are more representative of the community they serve, they run the risk of alienating themselves from the community.

Inhibiting and discriminatory instructions and directions from political leadership

Another constraint in their efficient execution of service has its foundation in inhibiting and discriminatory instructions and directions, emanating from political leadership in the state, which restrict their ability to function effectively. Fairness and impartiality of police work are frequently impaired by considerations of the status and wealth of the parties concerned/or by extraneous pulls and pressures from politicians, executives in Government and other influential groups and individuals.
Scientific and mechanical aids and equipment should be practically provided at the operational level at police stations and circles.

Though advancement of technology impinges into every aspect of the world, within police stations, systems are still archaic. It would make women police enthusiastic about their work if their skills were updated periodically to keep pace with change occurring all over the world. Scientific and mechanical aids and equipment should be practically provided at the operational level at police stations and circles and orientation programs ensuring optimum use of the same should be organised for the staff.

Besides the above mentioned other factors that weigh on improvement of work method among the functionaries are:

- training and efficiency improvement
- teamwork and co-operation
- openness in relationship
- reward for ability and leadership
- activities for employee welfare
- emphasis on quality performance
- clear rules and procedures
- freedom and personal responsibility
- flexibility in decision-making
Reasons for lack of support from public as perceived by the women police are attributed to the social censure, with which anyone who goes to a police station is viewed, especially if it is a woman. Then again for women the costs are high both monetarily and socio-psychologically. Another reason for people to hesitate helping police out is in the strong negative portrayal of the image of the police by the media. In cases of acute physical abuse, like rape, people still hesitate in reporting to the police stations. For this womenpolice feel it is the subsequent court proceedings where petitioners are harassed by protracted procedures and humiliating cross-examination that deter them from offering overt support. Women police feel that this is one of the major reasons that hinder public participation. Lack of facilities in courts for reasonable comfort and compensation for their absence from their normal work and centralized location of courts, which involves long journeys for the parties concerned - also limits the public cooperation.

Considering that police activities to a large extent are performed in close contact with the public and that police efficiency is dependent on public support; There needs to be a concentrated effort in Image building of the police in the community. One way to achieve this can be through increased association of police with the running of youth clubs to promote games and sports among the youngsters and helping them generally with facilities and advice for improving their sports talents. Womenpolice too report that the presence of women to deal with the public does present the 'gentle touch' and feel that recruitment of women police should be substantially increased which would increase their visibility in public
areas. Their increased numbers will also enable the policewomen to take on more of crimes involving women as victims.

With regard to their role in the future, women police give credence to increased community and service oriented roles. They conclude that there will always be a need for the civil police. They will be required to interact with the public in a helpful and friendly manner, to provide relief in a distress situation. However the emphasis has to be on the role of police not only to intervene when there is a violation of law but to build such a situation that womenpolice are identified by the community that they serve, as a friend to turn to in times of need without hesitation or fear. It needs to be recognized that most police organisations – in addition to upholding the law – are performing social as well as service functions in society. AWPS is a beginning in the right direction. The people who access services from AWPS appreciate the fact that the personnel posted to these stations promptly attend to the grievances brought to their notice. A new beginning, a new image, which should be further, developed and enhanced.
Summing up

The recommendations in this study for ensuring better functioning of AWPS are focused on introducing structural changes like increasing number of personnel, regulate work timings or ensure shift-duties, timely promotion, allocation of funds for meeting several items of legitimate expenditure, training updates, active postings or equal work opportunities for both men and women and gender sensitization training for men and women police.

SOCIAL

Just as structural reforms discussed above would strengthen the functioning of AWPS, some support in the social aspects too would enhance and sustain the quality of services at AWPS.

♦ Role Conflict and Role Stress

Stress is the uneasy feeling one experiences when faced by overwhelming demands. On a personal basis women are expected to deal with the complex, and sometimes compelling roles, of workers, mothers, wives and heads of family. Faced with a job, which has irregular work-hours and non-flexible work timings, they have to deal with conflicting roles. The mixed responsibilities of fulfilling their obligations both at work and at home create stress for the women police. The conflicting roles of a wife, mother, daughter-in-law and daughter contribute to the way in which they perceive their job. Most female officers become ‘Superwomen’ and fall under
immense strain to optimally satisfy all their perceived responsibilities. Another factor that adds to the stress is the constant pressure to prove that they are as capable as their male colleagues are. On the other hand, to alleviate this stress, studies point out that it is career opportunities and success in police work that could ease stress.

♦ Attitude to change

Women police accepted that change in structure and function, which generally require them to be prepared to adapt to newer norms, or workplace reorganizations raise in them a fear of disorder. This fear stems from the insecurity of the unknown. Yet the women police were quick to acknowledge that it is such changes alone that will provide them with freedom to grow.

♦ Sexual Harassment

MacKinnon defined sexual harassment as a term that encompasses sexist remarks, degrading comments, undesired fondling, and requests for sexual favour, rape and sexual blackmail. MacKinnon stressed that males dominate females by exercising sexual harassment. The result is the intimidation of women. Sexual harassment leaves indelible psychological scars, which negatively affect the work-performance of victims. In turn, sexual harassment may be the cause for the victims’ loss of jobs or promotions and personal reputations. MacKinnon reiterated that sexual harassment is
suffered by women of all calibre and may be induced by juniors, equals and superiors. The Police Force is certainly no exception.

Sexual harassment humiliates and marginalises women. Studies point out that in cases of sexual abuse, it is the victim who most frequently gets blamed and consequently, they are the ones who are most frequently penalized by getting transferred. As a result, the majority of sexual harassment cases remain unknown and victims suffer in silence. Several respondents implied that sexual molestation came with the job and those who resisted it suffered.

The nature of this abuse makes it very embarrassing for the policewomen interviewed to report - even to a researcher. In this study too, it was the younger respondents who opened up and talked of sexual harassment. It is suggested that individuals from a different department should handle inquiry into complaints of sexual harassment or any harassment. Women police feel that during a departmental inquiry, solidarity of the reporting authority with the accused often influences decisions.

♦ Health Concerns

Other areas that women police draw attention to in this study is with regard to their housing and neighborhoods. Adequate houses have not been constructed for the police personnel. Often the women police have to take up private housing which costs them heavier in rent. Though the women police
do get house rent allowance, this does not completely cover the expense incurred. Another concern is the neighborhood. If allocated a house within the police quarters, the neighbors are all from the same service thereby a greater social homogeneity is found. There is great reliance on neighbors to keep an eye on the children and colleagues step in to help without considering the 'mother' and 'eccentric skipping her duties' at home.

Health care is another area to be highlighted. Womenpolice report health related problems as they approach their forties for which as per provisions they have to go to government hospitals for their health check ups. Most of the womenpolice prefer to seek treatment from private practitioners for which they have to pay from their pockets. Personnel would be satisfied if networks of private hospitals were linked to provide services for them. Other minor areas to be looked into are provision of comfortable uniform. It stand to reason to provide the women police their uniform material or reimbursement for buying shoes and uniform material, instead of giving them a standardized stitched uniform and shoes.

It would make sense to establish colonies with provisions of crèche and child care centers where the working parents should be confidently able to leave their dependent children. Creating a more conducive environment for the womenpolice should be given utmost priority. The feeling that there is concern and care for their needs will definitely act as motivators for better output in the professional sphere.
Further recommendations of the study with respect to the functioning of the AWPS is that the AWPS can function as a nodal centre for not only redressing grievances but also linking women with welfare programs, appraising them of it and guiding them to other NGOs and voluntary agencies where they can acquire skills and use them for survival. A link with the various support services for women, like those of childcare facilities; schemes like DWCRA, educational institutions, and homes for the aged and short stay homes for women and children should be maintained by the AWPS.