Chapter 3

Intake Process of Officer Cadre in Indian Army

Rank structure of Officers in Indian Army
CHAPTER-3

INTAKE PROCESS OF OFFICER CADRE IN INDIAN ARMY

General

The Armed Forces epitomise the ideals of service, sacrifice, patriotism and our country's composite culture. The recruitment to the Armed Forces is voluntary and every citizen of India, irrespective of his caste, class, religion and community is eligible for recruitment into the Armed Forces, provided he meets the laid down professional, educational, physical and medical criteria. However, there are certain exceptions for female candidates.

The youth of today are well-informed gentry. Mentally mobile, analytically aware, surgically sharp and clinically precise - the Indian teenager is rarely ingenuous or naive. He is inquisitively thorough, exhaustive in examination of his options and intensive in the depth of his research. With myriad technological tools at his back and call, he need look no further for evaluation. His vast horizon encompasses the entire ocean of opportunities, dreaming in his own Utopia of opulence, filled with all the luxuriant splendour at his imaginative best. Everything seems achievable, as easily as it is to see them in virtual space.

Yet, an adolescent's mind in high school is a constantly vacillating bundle of contradictions. It is swayed by perceptions formed over day-to-day experiences, media reports, stories of hearsay, myths of "success", examples of "rags-to-riches" and many other such biographical narratives. Bombarded increasingly by the electronic media - both through TV as well as the Net, opinions are initially formulated at a very nascent stage. These early views then get bedded-in with the passage of time, till it comes to the career cross roads. The way forward gets chosen based on his underlying aspirations, his conceived value system and eventually his individual capability. It can be expected of any teenaged lad to aspire for 'success'- but what constitutes 'success' is important to be constructed in the correct perspective. Parents, teachers and the company he keeps play a vital role in instilling the correct values as a strong foundation in a child. Beliefs, ethics, morals and principles
inculcated, besides the importance accorded by the visible society to these values, norms-traditions-culture - all add up to the ultimate outlook of every high school pass-out.

Different societies accord varying degrees of importance to the uniformed class. Often, this is judged by the simple privileges and immunities enjoyed by this warrior clan vis-à-vis the common man. In a war-torn country or a state brutalised by martial law, 'power' does appear to flow from the barrel of a gun. Where battle wounds are fresh, there is overwhelming concern for things military. Nations that have conscription in vogue, have all walks of life and all arms of the Government being dealt with by people who have been in uniform. Not surprisingly, countries such as Israel accord prime status to their defence forces, the IDF, in their society.

On the other hand, the streaks of lethargy that pervade the society at large prevent the couch-potatoes and the chicken-hearted from even contemplating on options such as the Armed Forces. The electronic media today beams graphic and gory images of bloodshed on the borders into our bedrooms... not just reminding the public of the need to respect the one risking his life, but also amplifying the rigours and dangers of the profession. Various adverse aspects of the Services, highlighted repeatedly to garner additional sops from the Government - such as the recent pay commission - also reinforce such convictions and deter sections of the youth.

![COMMON ATTRIBUTES OF "SUCCESS"]

Can these detrimental influences be themselves turned into strengths, in some way? The "threat" is itself a form of a thrill, akin to that experienced while undertaking adventure. The 'exotic' tenures that a soldier occupies are simply beyond replication anywhere else. Besides, the bedrock of the services is in its fierce spirit of camaraderie. It is essential to emphasise upon that selfless and extraordinary brotherhood, something very different from the civilian mainstream.
While there are these impairing factors that deter some considering the option to the olive greens, there is also a concurrent phenomenon that weans away the young brigade with its ocean - full of opportunities. For the vast multitudes of fence-sitters, the temptations of enriching soft placements, or the challenges of unexplored vocations, form obvious first-choices in their perceived easy road to 'stardom'.

The pride in the warrior clan of the medieval yester-years has slowly regressed in the modern era, leaving it no more amongst the so-called elitist options.

What course correction is the need of the hour to get back the status quo ante of the forces? The old position of pride, that erstwhile warrant of precedence, the honour, respect and dignity?¹⁰⁹

RECRUITMENT PROCESS

The Defence Institute of Psychological Research (DIPR)¹¹⁰ conducts Research on desired parameters for Personnel Selection for recruitment in Defence Services.

Personnel Selection Research involves development of Personality, Intelligence and Aptitude Test. It also provides specialised intensive training in personality assessment of candidates through various psychological techniques using interview, group testing and projective techniques. A summary of these activities involve:-

- Design, development and evaluation of a comprehensive personnel election system.
- Construction, standardisation and validation of Intelligence, Aptitude and Personality assessment tools and techniques based on psychometric principles.
- Training of assessors in personnel selection using the above mentioned techniques/tools.
- Validation and evaluation of the selection system and modification there upon.

¹⁰⁹ Journal of Defence Studies, H Dharmarajan, winter 2008Vol:2 Issue:2 Debate
Also, to conduct research in the areas of organisational behaviour including psychological operations, motivation, attitude, morale, leadership of the Armed Forces. A summary of research pursuits in this area involves:-

- Training modules for enhancement of leadership effectiveness, motivation and morale.
- Behavioural training modules for training academies.
- Psycho biosocial assessment of combat stress and its management in field formations.
- Profiling of new age military leadership and study of small group dynamics.
- Psychological preparedness of the soldiers for LIC environment.
- Study of mob behaviour and operational effectiveness of soldiers.

In addition it also carries out research in the field of Human Factor. The primary aim of this area is to carry out research on human factors in man-machine systems and to study the effects of extreme hostile environmental conditions on the psychological adjustment, efficiency and well being of the troops. The Human Factors Research Laboratory (HFRL) is equipped with unique electro-mechanical equipments pertaining to experimental psychology. Some of the instruments being used are:

- Driver Aptitude Test,
- Both Hand Coordination,
- Choice Reaction Test,
- Action Judgment Test,
- Speed Anticipation Test,
- Depth Perception Test,
- Visual Space Perception Test,
- Orthorater,
- Pursuit meter,
- Manual Dexterity Test, and
- Multi-choice RT apparatus, etc.

Based on the above discussed research, the selection procedure developed consists of the following elements:-
• Checking the legal conditions.
• Assessment of Morality traits.
• Assessment of Personality traits.
• Assessment of Intellectual potential.
• Medical selection.
• Physical fitness evaluation.
• Examination of the understanding language.
• Examination of mathematics.

The physical conduct of the selection process is carried in the following phases.

On the first day, a Screening Test is conducted, after the individual has filled in certain Forms including the Bio Data forms known as "Personal Information Questionnaire" (PIQ), in which the candidates have to undergo two types of tests:-

• Verbal and non-verbal tests.
• Picture story writing followed by discussion of the stories.

• On the second day Psychological Test consisting of the following four tests is conducted:-
  • Thematic Apperception Test (TAT) - Commonly known as Picture Story writing.
  • Word Association Test (WAT).
  • Situation Reaction Test (SRT).
  • Self Description Test (SD).

• On the third and fourth days, Group Testing Officers (GTO) tests are conducted, consisting of the following tests in this category:-

  • Group discussion (GD).
  • Group Planning Exercise (sometimes known as Military Planning Exercise).
  • Progressive Group Tasks.
  • Half Group Tasks.
• Individual Obstacles.
• Group Obstacles Race.
• Command Task.
• Lecturette.
• Final Group Task.

Finally the selection process is concluded with conduct of Interview by the President or Vice President of the Service Selection Board.

Recruitment of Commissioned Officers in the Armed Forces is mainly through the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC). For Technical Branches, Women Special Entry scheme, NCC Special Entry scheme and service entries are made directly through the respective Recruiting Directorates for the Army, the Navy and the Air Force. The details of commission, types of entries and the details of academics are discussed below\(^1\). The modes of entry are given at Appendix A\(^2\).

Permanent Regular Commission (PRC) and Short Service Commission (SSC)

PRC. A PRC means a career in the Army till one retires. For this, a candidate has to join the NDA and then the IMA or the IMA directly.

SSC. Under this, a candidate has the option of joining the Army and serving as a Commissioned Officer for five years. At the end of this period, there are two options - either to volunteer for a PRC or opt out. Those not selected for PRC, have the option of a nine-year extension. They can resign at any time during this extension period.

Recruitment through the UPSC

Recruitment for NDA and IMA is mainly through the UPSC. For Technical Branches, Women Special Entry Scheme, NCC Special Entry Scheme and Service Entries, the recruitment is made directly through Recruiting Directorate of the Army. The UPSC holds,

\(^1\)www.mod.nic.in/rec&training accessed on 30 Jul 12.

\(^2\)indianarmy.nic.in accessed on 30 Jul 2012.
twice a year, an examination for entry into the NDA. Candidates, on completion of the 10+2 Examination or while in the 12th standard are eligible to compete in this examination. Successful candidates thereafter join the NDA. On completion of the NDA course, they are sent to IMA for their pre-commission training. The UPSC also holds an all-India competitive examination, known as the Combined Defence Services (CDS) Examination, twice a year. University graduates are eligible to appear in the examination. Successful candidates join the IMA.

OTHER EXISTING SCHEMES FOR JOINING AS AN OFFICER

Technical Graduate Scheme (TGC). Under this scheme, candidates with engineering degree qualification, after selection through Services Selection Board (SSB), are sent to IMA for pre-commission training. They primarily join the corps based on their specialisation in their engineering degree qualification.

University Entry Scheme (UES). Final/pre-final year students in engineering disciplines are eligible for induction into the technical branches/services of the Army, as Commissioned Officers under the University Entry Scheme.

NCC Special Entry Scheme. University graduates possessing NCC ‘C’ Certificate with minimum ‘B’ grading and 50% marks in graduation are inducted as Short Service Commission Officers in the Army. These graduates are exempted from appearing in the CDS Examination and are selected through the SSBs.

10 + 2 Technical Entry Scheme. Under this scheme, candidates with 10+2 qualification, after selection through SSB, are sent for military and training at IMA and for engineering training to College of Military Engineering, Pune. Initial six months military training is followed by Degree Engineering training of 4 years. The objective of this scheme is to help in bringing down the deficiency of officers in technical Arms/Services.

SSC (Technical) Entry Scheme. The SSC (T) Entry Scheme envisages recruitment of qualified technical graduates through the SSBs, to attend the Officers Training Academy (OTA), Chennai, after medical tests, for a 10 months course. On completion of training at
the OTA, successful candidates are inducted as Short Service Commissioned Officers in the technical branches of the Army.

SSC (Non Technical) Entry Scheme. The SSC (NT) Entry Scheme covers recruitment of graduates through the SSBs, to attend the training at OTA, Chennai/Gaya. On completion of training at the OTA, the successful candidates are inducted as Short Service Commission officers in the Army.

Army Cadet College (ACC). The Army Cadet College (ACC) Wing trains soldiers from the regular army for commission as Officers in the Indian Army. The ACC feeds into the Indian Military Academy, Dehradun. The nature of training at ACC is similar to NDA; it runs a three-year degree course in science and humanities. The added advantage the ACC cadets bring to the Army as officers is a deep understanding of the soldier’s life and consequently a better appreciation of the tasking of the men.

ACC has now been rebranded as the Siachen Battalion at the IMA. The selection for admission to ACC is based on a written test and subsequent selection via Services Selection Board.

Induction under Special Commissioned Officers (SCOs) Scheme. Government has approved the creation of a 6,000 strong support cadre of Special Commissioned Officers. These posts will be filled up by eligible JCOs and OR. Under this entry, serving JCOs/NCOs/OR in the age group of 30-35 years, with an Army Senior School Certificate Pass (Class XI CBSE Pattern) qualification, are eligible for commission after screening/selection through Service Selection Board and a Medical Board. They have to undergo a pre-commission training of six months duration. The officers so commissioned earn promotion upto the rank of Colonel. The rules for promotion are the same as for regular officers. They retire at the age of 57 years after serving about 20-25 years as officers. The scheme not only improves the career prospects of the serving JCOs/NCOs/OR but also help in making up the deficiency of officers in the Army to a considerable extent.

Permanent Commission (Special List) (PC SL). Under this entry, JCOs/NCOs/OR up to 42 years of age and minimum 10 years of service, with a Senior Schools Certificate Pass (Class 10+2 CBSE pattern) qualification are eligible for commission after screening by SSB
and Medical Board. They are granted PC (SL) after successful completion of four weeks orientation training at the IMA.

**Recruitment of Women Officers.** Eligible women are recruited as officers on Short Service Commission basis in the following branches of Army: EME, Signals, Engineers, Army Education Corps, Army Ordnance Corps, Army Service Corps, Intelligence and Judge Advocate General’s Branch.

**Intake of candidates for pre commission training as officers during the year (till December 1, 2011)**

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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Navy</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<td>SSCW(NT)</td>
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<td></td>
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113 Ministry of Defence, Annual Report 2011-12, Page 136
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<th>Tech Entries</th>
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<td></td>
<td>SSC(T)</td>
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<td>10+2 TES</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>816</strong></td>
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</table>
year in the case of Technical Graduates Entry Scheme and NDA cadets and one and a half years for Direct Entry Scheme. It also has a wing for training Service cadets selected for commission in the Army. The various modes of entry into IMA are as under:-

- On graduation from NDA.
- On graduation from Army Cadet College (Now Siachen Battalion).
- Direct Entry Graduate Scheme.
- Technical Graduate Entry Scheme.
- University Entry Scheme.
- 10+2 Technical Entry Scheme.

OTA, Chennai. Aim of the OTA is to train Gentlemen/Lady Cadets for a SSC in the Army. The selection process starts with a written exam followed by the SSB interview and the medical examination. However, for Technical (Engineering) graduates, after the initial screening of applications by Army Headquarters, the short-listed candidates are directly called for SSB interview.

The OTA imparts pre-commission training for the following courses:-

- Short Service Commission (Non-Technical).
- Short Service Commission (Technical).
- Women’s Special Entry Scheme.
- NCC Special Entry Scheme.

The officer cadets are ranked according to their aptitude and results in the different subjects, and are able to choose/allotted military specialties according to their ranking. Direct appointments are available to professionally qualified personnel such as civil, electronics, mechanical and computer engineers.

OTA, Gaya. To augment the capacity to train officers for short service commission a new 800 acre academy, with a planned training capacity of 750 cadets has been setup at Gaya in 2011. The first batch of 149 trainee-officers joined the academy in July 2011 and the second
batch reported in January 2012. The academy currently has the capacity to train 350 cadets. This academy will have the same training setup as OTA, Chennai.

**Feeder Institutions into the Academies.** 24 Sainik Schools, five Rashtriya Military Schools and Rashtriya Indian Military College are the feeder institutions into the academies.