Chapter VI

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

An institution like the Indian Armed Forces cannot stand still, it changes with the times. As technology, perceived threats and socio-cultural factors change, the Armed Forces evolve and adapt to these changes. The latest trend seen in militaries all over the world is the induction of women. A few countries such as India have started cautiously, only inducting women into the officer cadre and non combat roles, other countries, have full and equal participation, most countries are in between the two extremes.

Feminists have argued for women in the services as a matter of equal rights, recognizing the importance and the influence of the military, particularly the issue of military service as related to citizenship. Feminists have also argued against it in terms of militarism.

The question now, is not so much for and against women’s participation in the Armed Forces, but in India certainly it is a question of the nature and extent of participation. Such decisions are made by the military and civilian elite as well as by the government. What would impact these decisions? Hopefully, it would be a need for qualified personnel, performance of women and research findings based on empirical data.

Women have entered an environment that has been aggressively masculine. Fourteen years down the line, it is time to take stock of the contribution and changes women have made to this institution and also the impact of the Armed Forces on women. The
ambivalence towards women in the Armed Forces is seen in how they are constantly referred to as “lady officer” never just “officer”.

All these factors point out to the need of an exploratory study to investigate the psychosocial correlates of work related attitudes, gender equality attitudes and attitudes towards the Navy and women Naval officers. The results revealed in this research study are summarized in this chapter.

In the text of this thesis, Chapter I has given an introduction to the problem under study and has highlighted the rationale and need for this study. Chapter II has given an insight into the status of women in India, their work participation, employment discrimination and representation in non traditional occupations. The chapter concludes with a history of women in the Armed Forces, reasons for their induction and issues regarding women in combat.

Chapter III has reviewed literature related to the study. This Chapter has examined the gender debate in terms of women in combat and gender bias in the Armed Forces, as well as attitudes of feminists, military men and the public towards service women. It includes research: on women in combat, sexual harassment, role stress, as well as motivation, self-actualization and the Five Factor Model of personality, work related attitudes and women combining employment and family responsibilities.
Chapter IV has described the research methodology applied to the study for execution of the research plan, data collection and data analysis. It includes the objectives and operational definition of terms as well as thirteen broad hypotheses based on various dimensions investigated i.e. work related and gender equality attitudes, motivation, role stress, self-actualization, personality and gender role identity. The three tools designed specifically for the study and the four standardized tests have been explained as has the procedure used for the pilot study and the main study. The sample selection and description has also been presented.

Chapter V has presented an account of data analysis, interpretation of results and a discussion of these, with special emphasis on inferences and probable deductions based on data analysis.

6.1 MAIN FINDINGS OF THE STUDY.

WNOs and MNOs are a homogenous group on many variables. There are no gender differences on work related attitudes. In terms of overall job satisfaction WNOs are as satisfied with their jobs as MNOs, however WNOs, are more satisfied with the physical conditions of work and pay while MNOs are more satisfied with job security and social relations at work. On overall satisfaction with Naval Lifestyle, WNOs are as satisfied as MNOs. In fact, on individual items, WNOs are more satisfied with the job variety and transfers as well as regimented life than MNOs. Morale of Naval Officers is very high and shows no gender differences.
There are differences between WNOs and MNOs on gender equality attitudes. In terms of general attitudes towards women in the Navy, WNOs as compared to MNOs perceive women as more competent, able to do what men can do and disagree with the contention that women should be given soft jobs. When WNOs and MNOs evaluated male colleagues and male subordinates’ attitudes towards women in the Navy, MNOs consistently evaluated these attitudes as more favourable than did WNOs. Regarding attitudes of senior males towards women Officers, MNOs were less likely to agree that seniors treated women as an unwanted liability while WNOs were less likely to agree that Senior Officers found it difficult to discipline women. All participants agreed that senior male officers value competent WNOs.

Regarding combat for WNOs 98.57% of women participants felt it should be voluntary, 65% of men participants felt it should be voluntary, 26.67% of men said it should not be permitted while 8.33% said it should be compulsory. When WNOs were asked whether they were willing to volunteer for combat 68.12% said ‘yes’.

Participants were asked to state the extent to which they agreed with various reasons for excluding women from combat. Pregnancy, motherhood and sexual abuse met with the highest agreement with no significant gender differences. Next highest agreement was with issues such as, segregated accommodation on ships, separate amenities, and men being biologically more suited to combat. On all these reasons WNOs were less in agreement than MNOs. The least agreement was obtained for reasons such as, women reduce team spirit, and that they are emotionally and physically unable to handle combat.
Reasons for joining the Navy were analyzed into three main motivating factors i.e. Core, Economic and Lifestyle factors. Core factors included a desire to serve the country, discipline, prestige and uniform, this was the highest among participants with WNOs scoring higher than MNOs. The next important motivator was the Lifestyle factor, which included a desire to do something different; live an active life, a desire for adventure and challenging activities. WNOs scored higher than men on the Lifestyle motive. Least important was the Economic motivation which included security of job, need satisfaction, better prospects and economic independence, there is no gender difference on Economic motivation.

On Organizational Role Stress, MNOs tend to score higher than WNOs, they also tend to score higher on dimensions of Role expectation conflict, Role erosion and Resource Inadequacy. When comparing Naval Officers with Police Officers, Principals and Heads of educational institutions, Naval Officers experience least Organizational role stress. This is probably a reflection of the high degree of organizational structure and control in the Armed Forces. Taking each dimension of role stress Naval Officers are close to the median value for managers except for Role overload on which they are above the median for managers and Role isolation and Role erosion on which they are below the median for managers.

In terms of total self-actualization, WNOs tend to score higher than MNOs. Self-actualization is a combination of Time Competence and Inner Directedness; WNOs
scored higher on Time competence than MNOs. On the five domains of the NEO PI-R, there were no gender differences in personality traits. The only facet score to show a gender difference was straightforwardness on which WNOs scored higher than MNOs. Scores on gender role identity reveal that WNOs are more frequently androgynous and gender reversed while MNOs are more frequently gender typed.

When comparing WNOs who are willing to volunteer for combat with those who are not willing to volunteer, the former scored higher on satisfaction with Naval lifestyle, higher on Lifestyle motivation, higher on the Spontaneity scale of the POI as well as on the Extraversion domain of the NEO PI – R and the following facets: excitement-seeking, positive emotions, action, values. Women Officers not willing to volunteer for combat however were more straightforward than those willing to volunteer, they were also higher on Organizational role stress and the following dimensions of ORS: Inter-role distance, Role stagnation, Role overload, Role isolation, Self-role distance.

When comparing the weightage given to various reasons for excluding women from combat it was interesting to note that there was no difference between willing and unwilling WNOs on reasons of privacy, sexual abuse, team spirit, and problems of accommodation on ships. However, willing WNOs gave less weightage to the following reasons than, unwilling WNOs: pregnancy and motherhood, family separation, physical strength, women being more nurturing and emotionally unsuitable for combat.
Married women employed outside the home combine the dual role of home and career. Some women have high social support from family and household help, while others are low on social support. It was found that married WNOs high and low on social support did not differ on Job Satisfaction, Morale or satisfaction with Naval Lifestyle, nor did they differ on Organizational role stress, Role Overload or Inter-role distance. They did not differ on Core motives, however, WNOs with high social support were higher on the Economic and Lifestyle motives. It is possible that high motivation for Naval Lifestyle as well as the economic benefits may have spurred WNOs to get more social support or to perceive greater support from family and household help. Vice versa high social support may be leading to higher enjoyment of Naval Lifestyle and the economic benefits which as a consequence are rated higher as motivating factors.

The preferred age for marriage was 26 years for WNOs and 28 years for MNOs. Most preferred a love marriage. The majority of MNOs preferred a civilian spouse while the majority of WNOs preferred a service spouse. This is in keeping with the general trend that women are more likely to find partners at the work place. Marriage and motherhood had no effect on Job Satisfaction, Morale and Organizational role stress of WNOs. Marriage however reduced satisfaction with Naval Lifestyle for WNOs but having children had no effect on satisfaction with Naval lifestyle of married WNOs.

Length of service interacted with gender to affect job satisfaction and Organizational Role Stress. WNOs with longer service had lower job satisfaction and higher Organizational Role stress while MNOs with longer service had higher job satisfaction.
and lower Organizational role stress. Thus, serving in the Navy for five years and more had a negative effect on women in terms of Job satisfaction and ORS while for men Job satisfaction increased and ORS decreased with longer service. Since marriage and children are not factors affecting Job satisfaction and ORS for women, it could only be the Naval environment, male attitudes, and the nature of jobs that reduce the initial euphoria for women. Also interesting is that Core motivations for all Naval Officers increase with length of service.

Regarding extension of service the break up was as follows: the majority of Naval Officers wanted an extension of service, more WNOs wanted an extension (most WNOs wanted permanent commission while a few wanted an extension for four years) than MNOs (all MNOs who wanted extension desired Permanent Commission and no other extension).

Naval Officers who wanted an extension of service were higher on Job Satisfaction, Morale and satisfaction with Naval Lifestyle, as well as on all motives, Core, Economic and Lifestyle. Gender interacted with a desire for an extension to affect ORS. WNOs desiring an extension had lower ORS than those not desiring an extension. MNOs desiring an extension had higher ORS than those not desiring an extension.

Having an Armed Forces background had no effect on work related attitudes, ORS or motives, except that Economic motivation was higher among Naval Officers with an Armed Forces background.
There was a tendency for Naval Officers classified as masculine in gender role identity to have higher work related attitudes and lower organizational role stress. However, only the data for Morale were significant.

Job satisfaction of Naval Officers was positively correlated with Agreeableness and Conscientiousness and negatively correlated with Neuroticism on the NEO-PI-R. Regression analysis showed that Job satisfaction increased with an increase in Conscientiousness and a decrease in Openness.

Naval lifestyle satisfaction of Naval Officers was positively related to both Masculinity and Femininity; to both Time competence and Inner Directedness measures of self-actualization; as well as to Extraversion and Conscientiousness on the NEO PI-R and satisfaction with Naval life was negatively related to Neuroticism. Regression analysis showed that Naval Lifestyle satisfaction increased with an increase in Time Competence and an increase in Extraversion and Naval lifestyle satisfaction decreased with an increase in Femininity.

Morale of Naval Officers was positively correlated with Masculinity and negatively correlated with Neuroticism. Regression analysis showed Morale increased with a decrease in Neuroticism.
Core motivation of Naval Officers was positively correlated with Masculinity and Femininity as well as Conscientiousness. Core motivation was negatively related to Neuroticism. Regression analysis showed that Core motivation increased with an increase in Masculinity.

Economic motivation of Naval Officers was positively correlated with Femininity. Regression analysis showed that economic motivation increased with an increase in Femininity. Lifestyle motivation of Naval Officers was positively correlated with Masculinity, Time competence, Inner directedness, Extraversion, Openness and was negatively correlated with Neuroticism. Regression analysis showed that Lifestyle motivation increased with an increase in Extraversion.

ORS of Naval Officers was negatively related to Masculinity, Self-actualization, Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness and was positively related to Neuroticism. Regression analysis showed that ORS increased with a decrease in Time Competence and Conscientiousness. ORS and its dimensions were negatively correlated with Job Satisfaction, Naval Lifestyle Satisfaction and Morale.

6.2 CONCLUSION

Though not an exhaustive analysis of women in the Navy, this research has generated empirical evidence regarding various parameters of their successful adjustment to the Navy i.e. work attitudes, gender equality attitudes, motivation, and organizational role stress. It has also demonstrated the contribution of gender and psychosocial variables
such as self-actualization, personality traits, gender role identity and social support for married women to successful adjustment to the Navy.

The study has established that WNOS and MNOs are a homogenous sample on many variables such as Job Satisfaction, Morale, Navy lifestyle satisfaction and Personality traits. There are gender differences in attitudes towards women naval officers and reasons for combat exclusion of women, as well as on motivation, organizational role stress and self-actualization. Length of service has interacted with gender to affect job satisfaction and Organizational role stress.

Finally the study has established certain personality factors, self actualization variables and masculinity, femininity scores that are correlated with work related attitudes, motivation and organizational role stress. Motivation does not appear to play a major role in work related attitudes and ORS, however, dimensions of ORS are negatively correlated with work related attitudes.

6.3 LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

In India Women have been inducted in the Navy for more than a decade with no systematic investigation as to how they are situated. There had been no public debate on this issue, until tragedy struck in the form of a women officer committing suicide. This opened a Pandora’s Box, and issues of gender bias, tokenism and combat roles were briefly discussed in the media. Therefore, an exploratory study to discover psychosocial
and gender correlates of various parameters of successful adjustment to Naval service was undertaken by the researcher.

The results of the study show clear trends which will prove useful in terms of future research in this field. However there are certain limitations which need to be addressed.

- The sample could easily have been a population. At the time permission for the study was granted, there were 93 women officers in the Navy and approximately 84 men short service commissioned officers as per the data provided by Principal Director Naval Training. Of these 73% responded. Though each officer was approached either personally or through the Command Administrative Personnel Officer, with a personal communication from the researcher informing the sample and requesting participation, 27% of the population did not respond. It would be relevant to know why and whether they would have added another dimension to the study.

- The participants were caught up with their duties and found the tools quite lengthy to respond to. However, some participants particularly the women officers were enthusiastic about responding.

- Women in the Army and Air force were not studied, as this would increase the scope of the study beyond the time constraints of the researcher.
• Performance appraisal was not possible because this is classified as confidential information.

• Social support for married WNOs was measured, however, a detailed study of job versus family demands was not done, nor did the participants bring up this issue in their responses to open ended questions.

• Analysis of cognitive abilities and health parameters as well as physical capacities was left out as being beyond the scope of this study.

Certain recommendations based on the results of the research are as follows:

The present research has shown that women are suitable candidates for selection to the Armed Forces since they are the same as men on personality variables and work related attitudes, in fact they are more motivated and self-actualized than men.

Pre entry fitness and training programmes are recommended even before college level to encourage women to join the Armed Forces.

Combat roles are recommended for women who volunteer. Selection and training for combat should be the same as for men.

Role stress is not very high in the present sample. If stress manifests itself then stress inoculation programmes i.e. yoga, cognitive restructuring, are recommended.
Attitudes of men in the Armed Forces need to change. Men must be sensitized to the potential of women in the Armed Forces.

Professionally managed family welfare programmes will go a long way to ensure that women work to their full potential in the Armed Forces.

The Navy should give due weightage to the fact that job satisfaction of women decreases after 5 years service and role stress increases. Some intervention programmes would enhance their job satisfaction. Job security should be ensured and women should be given permanent commission.

6.4 **SCOPE FOR FUTURE RESEARCH:**

In spite of these limitations, the results of this study have highlighted some areas for future research.

- Without a doubt this study shows high morale of naval officers; however the responses to open ended questions reveal some problems peculiar to women, others mentioned only by men and still others that are common to both. These should be investigated further.

- Results of this study on gender equality attitudes and qualitative analysis of open ended questions show that further research needs to be done on:
1) Attitudinal and perceptual enablers and barriers to inclusion of women in combat.

2) Attitudinal survey as well as qualitative analysis regarding integration of women in the Armed Forces of

- Senior and Top level officers.
- Middle and Junior level officers.
- Other Ranks
- New Recruits
- Spouses of serving personnel

Differences to be analyzed by gender, by branch and service (all three services to be included in the study)

This research shows that the Naval officer's valuation of women in the Navy is derived from the organizational (military) culture (which is largely masculine) and the larger (Indian) culture, which promotes certain stereotypes and status of women. This is reflected in public opinion regarding women in the military and combat. In this connection the researcher has examined three newspapers, The Times of India, The Economic Times and The Navhind Times from June 2003 to June 2006. Findings have been cross referenced with discussions with serving and retired military officers, spouses of service officers, civilians and television programmes. This analysis as well as responses of participants in the present study show that women in the Armed Forces have been valued as tokens in the pursuit of gender equality, with the perception that women should be given soft jobs, this perception needs to be examined.
For full integration of women into the Armed Forces, research needs to be done on how this is to be achieved without alienating men, with a long term, rational, plan instead of short term policies such as relaxing standards, sensitivity training and micro managing individual behaviour. The military provides a unique opportunity for piloting interventions such as mentoring programmes, increasing representation of women and pre entry fitness programmes for women as a beginning to full and equal training, to facilitate genuine integration of women.

The present study shows that a majority of women naval officers wants full participation in terms of combat roles and permanent commission. When this evolution takes place research needs to be done to improve the health and effectiveness of women in the military who will face circumstances and challenges rarely seen by civilian women. Clothing, equipment, protective gear and even rations will need to be designed and tested for women. Service women restrict caloric intake to achieve weight standards, research needs to be done as to whether this results in nutritional deficiencies. Further research will be necessary on proper diagnosis and treatment of gynaecological problems, pregnancy, and post – partum return to duty in order to protect women soldiers and foetuses from military hazards such as exposure to toxins, injuries, environmental and psychological stresses.

- From this study one perceives a trend towards dual career military spouses. Further research needs to be done on dual roles of women in terms of pregnancy, childcare facilities and transfers. A detailed study of
job and family demands needs to be carried out particularly for dual military spouses and particularly in case of deployment during war.

- This study has revealed certain personality traits and self-actualization measures as predictors for work related attitudes. This may be further investigated by finding the relationship of personality and self-actualization with performance appraisal measures in the Armed Forces. One performance measure is available in terms of annual reports. However, analysis of individual performance, as well as unit performance, such as training success, supervisor ratings can be undertaken in different settings and situations to examine differences by gender, branch, service, and interactions if they occur.

From this study, it is clear that men and women in the Navy are the same on many variables, though women who join are more motivated and time competent. There are "miles to go" before women are totally accepted and integrated into the Indian Navy. This study has merely touched the tip of the iceberg, in investigating, the psychosocial and gender aspects of successful adjustment of women in the Indian Navy.