
THE ROLE OF WOMEN POLICE IN FOREIGN COUNTRIES

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**Abstract**

According to statistics available about women Police in foreign countries about 55 countries employ women as Police personnel and the proportion of women employed as Police officers in criminal investigation varies between 0.5 to 15 per cent. These women Police were recruited mainly to deal with women and juvenile offenders but today they are allowed to perform all types of Police work. They regulate traffic, engage in crime investigation, perform patrol duty, render social service, do clerical work, attend to telecommunication and related work, involve in immigration duty, perform finger printing work, do public relations work, impart Police training, take care of crime prevention, control crowds, prevent drug trafficking, perform technical duties and involve themselves in welfare activities. In some countries, women Police are employed even as drivers. Statistics regarding the role of women Police is available in select few countries. Let us briefly trace out the origin, growth and the role of women Police in the select foreign countries.

Keywords: drug trafficking, women police officer, Police enforcement, Police patrols, juveniles

The United States of America

Women Police have been employed for a quite long time in the United States of America. However, the practice of women Police to do certain types of Police work can be traced only from 1845. Six women Matrons were appointed in New York City and extended to most of the larger cities of the United States of America from 1877 in response to public demand. These women Matrons were employed to perform lock up duty, searching of women offenders, serving meals, water, etc., and accompanied the women prisoners to court or detention institutions. The Los Angeles Police Department appointed the Police women with the powers of regular Police in 1910. In 1916, 25 cities

in the U.S.A. appointed women Police with the powers of regular Police and by about 1950 women Police were appointed in almost all the States of the U.S.A. Women Police in the U.S.A. are treated in the same way as Police men are treated from 1963, on the basis of a court judgment given in favour of women Police. They are appointed and promoted in order of merit regardless of sex. Women Police are merged with the regular Police force with the unisex title "Police Officer". President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice appointed by the President Johnson recommended the following in respect of women Police. Qualified women should be utilized in such important staff service links as planning and research, training intelligence, inspection, public information, community relations and as legal advisors...and communications...(and) should also serve regularly in patrol, vice and investigating divisions...(and) as more and more qualified women enter the service, they could assume administrative responsibilities."

By 1971 there were about 3700 women Police in the U.S.A. which represented no more than 1.5 per cent of full time law enforcement officers. To conclude in the U.S.A. initially women Police were appointed to attend to the problems of women offenders. Later they were empowered to perform all manner of Police work. Until 1963 they were not treated in the same way as Policemen were treated particularly in promotional chances. On the basis of a judgment given by the New York court in 1963, women Police are not only assigned the same role, but also treated on par with Policemen in all aspects such as recruitment, training, promotion and conditions of service. Though, by 1971 there were 3700 women Police in the united States, they represented only about 1.5 percent of full time Police officers. Steps have been taken by the various Acts passed in the United States of America such as Civil Rights Act of 1964 to increase the strength of the Police women in the Police enforcement.

The United Kingdom

In the United Kingdom as in the U.S.A. Women Police were not introduced straight away into the Police force. During 1914 voluntary women patrols were created in London and extended to other provinces by the end of the year. These voluntary women patrol movement led to the creation of women Police. In 1916, 30 selected women patrols were employed for part time paid duties and were paid from Police funds, but they did not have the power of arrest. The Baird committee in 1920 and the Bridgman Committee in 1924 recommended the employment of women Police in the Police force. During 1926 the National Council of women urged the employment of sufficient number of suitable women as Police Matrons:

1. To improve the cells as regards sanitation, ventilation and reasonable comfort so as to enable prisoners to keep their self respect,
2. To exclude all Male Police from the direction or supervision of women prisoners and

3. To continue the inquiry in Districts where conditions were below the deserted standards.

In 1933 women Police patrols were sworn as Constables with the same standing and powers as Male members of the force. The strength of the women Police was increased from 20 to 50 in 1933 and 136 in 1946. The strength of women Police continued to increase and the total strength of women Police was 6000 as against the total Police strength of 106,000 in the year 1977. In the beginning women Police were utilized mainly to deal with women and juvenile offenders. Today women Police hold important positions in the Police department and perform different types of Police work.

Australia

Women Police were first introduced in the New South Wales State of Australia for the first time in 1915. The data is not available with regard to the introduction of women Police in other States of Australia. But women Police at present are found in all States of Australia and perform duties and functions, which are comparable to those in other countries.

Poland

Women Police were first recruited in Poland in 1925. Originally, their duties were to deal with problems relating to women and juvenile offenders. At present they carry guns and have full Police authority. Though their role is limited to deal with women functions, by 1939 over 300 Policewomen were operating in fifteen cities under the centralized command of female Chief Commander.

Japan

Women Police were first recruited in 1946 in the metropolitan Police department in Japan to tackle the problems of the women. The performance and the success of the women Police officers were so good that there has been a steady increase in the number of women Police officers. Their rank, conditions of recruitment, allowances, education, training, etc. are similar to those for male Police officers. They receive the same salary and exercise the same powers as the male Police officers. All ranks in the Police Department are open to the women Police, and there is no difference in the rank that can be reached by female officers though, initially the role of women Police was restricted to tackle women's problems. At present, they are allowed to perform the different kinds of Police work, which they could effectively perform.

Singapore

Women Police were first recruited in 1949 as special constabulary to check women offenders at one dollar per search. The need for women Police in the Police department became necessary because of the increasing crimes in respect of women and children. The number of women Police in the Police force continued to increase and today they constitute 12% of the total Police force. They are not only employed for checking, searching, escorting and guarding of the female accused, recording

statements of victims of sexual offences and also deal with women and juveniles, but also in traffic control and mob dispersal. At present they are employed in apprehending potentially dangerous individuals by playing the role of "decoy". There is a Police Pipe Band unit composed of 30 selected Policewomen. They do not function solely as a band, but in addition are utilized for general Police duties.

Indonesia

Women Police in Indonesia were initially appointed in 1951 to serve for purposes relating to the struggle for independence. At present the primary function of the women Police is to deal with all cases in which women and children are involved. In carrying out these functions, the women Police have law enforcement, investigation and patrol duties. Investigation of non-court cases and submission of such cases to the proper social agency are also included in their duties.

Nigeria

Women Police in Nigeria were first recruited in 1955. Towards the end of 1967, there were 463 women in the force, including 16 officers, 26 Inspectors, 63 Non-Commissioned Officers and 358 Constables. They are treated in the same way as Policemen are treated in respect of recruitment, training, promotion, and conditions of service. They perform a wide variety of duties ranging from helping in investigation of sexual and other offences against women and children, working as fingerprint specialists, helping in directing traffic and assisting the young, the aged, the infirm across busy streets and working as wireless operators and telephone operators. The greatest contribution of women police in Nigeria has been in the field of juvenile delinquency, dealing with destitute women and children and working against teenage crime gangs.

Israel

In Israel Police women were first recruited in 1960. They perform a variety of Police tasks, as well as providing security patrols for airports, hospitals, markets and schools. Women Police Officers comprise ninety percent of the excellent traffic Police force of the country. These traffic Police is not only give tickets to parking violators but also direct traffic and issue citations for moving violators.

Norway

Women Police mainly attend to the problems of women and children. Though women Police have the same Police powers in similar rank they, are not treated in the same way as Policemen are treated in respects of recruitment, training and promotion.

West Germany

Though Women Police in West Germany are mainly employed to deal with women accused and juvenile delinquents, their role at present is slowly changing and they are assigned detective work after proper training. Women Police undergo one year training to learn general educational subjects relating to women and juveniles.

The data available on the origin, development and the role of Women Police in select foreign countries have made clear that in majority of the countries though Women Police were initially recruited to deal with the problems of women and children, at present they are allowed to perform the different types of Police work in the Police department and that they are integrated with the total Police force.

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