

# **7. TRAINING AND RELATED ASPECTS**

## **7.1 Training Requirements**

The future illiterates will not be those who do not know how to read or write but those who cannot train, un-train and re-train on technologies and needs of the future, according to Alvin Toffler as stated in Future Shock. If our vision is eternity, focusing on human training is the only remedy. This is possible by constant restructuring of the training hierarchy, catering to paradigm shifts and un-diverted focus to our single point vision of imparting quality training.

The need of the hour is a comprehensive and wide-ranging examination of all aspects of individual training and education. Though the individual training and education in the Indian Army is of a high quality as testified by its successful operations in the recent years, improvements are required, however, to catch up with best practice in every aspect involved, and to meet the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

There is a need to introduce more joint, multinational and inter-agency training and improved leadership and management training, as well as much needed improvements to training at the basic level, which has tended to be under-resourced and under-valued. The technological change needs to be embraced. By exploiting new technology and improving basic Information Age skills, the Army needs to make its individual training and education even better and more accessible, in particular, through the expansion of e-learning.

As we limit our scope to training of women in the Army, we need to consider various parameters linked to designing the training programmes for them. Training should be designed in such a fashion so as to impress upon the entire strength to behave more like an officer than a woman. Although most feminist activists oppose physical standards as a barrier to women's opportunities, most military men and women who support opening the combat arms to everyone believe such standards are necessary. A new set of standards could be fair

and effective and aim to ensure the military operational effectiveness of the Army, keeping the physical limitations of women also in mind.

The training requirements should be considered in the light of the function and role assigned to them. It should be realized that training is an investment in human resources. The results cannot be easily quantified as they relate to the quality of the product. The image of women depends on their performance which in turn depends on the way they are equipped to deal with their jobs. And therein lays the importance of training. We do not have a clear cut policy with regard to the functions that should be assigned to women. A comprehensive and realistic account of the functions need to be drawn.

The value of gender-parity should be internalized by series of achievements of women officers in the forces in other countries and also in India. The attitudes or biases of the male officers should be clearly debated and the myths may be busted. Joint teams of male and female officers may be formed in different training exercises, in order to form better rapport among the trainees. All women groups of lady officers may also be formed to go into certain carefully designed theoretical and practical exercises. Their strengths and weaknesses may be analyzed closely.

Not only the cadets but also the officers of the forces at all levels should be sensitized regarding the values of gender parity and gender contribution. Every workplace relies heavily on the quotient of job satisfaction. Any gender exclusion policy is leaving a major slice of women officers unhappy. No organization can afford to carry a baggage of discontent out of discrimination.

## **7.2 The Drivers for a change**

There are some key drivers which underpin the need for change in the women's training and education in the Indian Army:

**7.2.1 Shifting Social Trends :** There have been rapid social and economic changes in our country over the last generation. The composition of the Indian Army needs to reflect better the current socio-economic, ethnic and gender mixes of the country's workforce at large. The lifestyle and expectations of today's youth has changed dramatically. They are better educated, more informed and have acquired better life skills. There is a need to meet the aspirations of women from a new generation. The best women for the job need to be recruited and retained from a diverse society. Then they need to be suitably trained, motivated and properly equipped for the assigned jobs. And then, their career progression and development of life skills has to be ensured. This will ensure their suitability for retention in the organization, once given an option of the Permanent Commission.

**7.2.2 The Challenge of Technology:** By 2025, there will be a single battle space in which maritime, land and air forces will be directed, targeted and supported by a new generation of platforms, weapons and systems incorporating advanced information and communication technology, offering a step change in military capability. The Indian Army is also moving towards an increasingly digitized workspace. There will be a need to train and retain suitably skilled and adaptable personnel to meet these new challenges, exploiting the opportunities offered by new technology. Suitably qualified women, presently forming a segment of the officers in the Indian Army, will definitely be an asset to the organization especially in the fields of Electronics, Communication and Information Technology.

**7.2.3 Enhanced Importance of Specialisation:** As high end technology is inducted into the Services, need for specialists in various fields, and the requirement to give them continuity in key positions, will increase. Imperatives of career progression, particularly for officers, are already putting increased pressure on both training and personnel management. One solution can be to induct specialist women officers and suitably train them for futuristic technology battlespace.

**7.2.4 Physiological Limitations of Women:** There can be no denying the fact that women are physiologically weaker than the men. The women have traditionally been absent from the battlefield due to their relative physical weakness. From antiquity males have been

considerably larger and stronger than females; indeed some biologists believe that nature has made them stronger in order that they might fight. Over the last twenty years, studies found that the average female is 12 centimeters shorter, 14.3 kilograms lighter, had 6.9 fewer kilograms of muscle, and 2.6 more kilograms of fat than the average male. She had only 55% of the upper body strength and 72% of the lower body strength of the average male. Since fat mass is inversely related to aerobic capacity and heat tolerance, women are also at a significant disadvantage when performing aerobic activities such as marching with heavy loads and working in heat. Even when the experiments were controlled for height, women only had 80 percent of the strength of men. Overall, only the upper 20 percent of women can do as well, physically, as the lower 20 percent of men.

Morphologically, too, women are less well adapted to war. Thinner skulls, lighter bone ridges and weaker jaw bones provide them with less protection against blows. Many women develop large, pendulous breasts that impede movement and require special protection. Shorter arms make it harder for women to draw weapons from their scabbards, stab with them, and throw them; to say nothing of the possibility that a different brain structure renders them less adept at guiding or intercepting projectiles. Women's legs are also shorter and, being set at a different angle, less suitable both for sprinting and for running long distances. The only relevant physical advantage that women possess is that they are apparently less subject to altitude sickness. Since they have proportionally more body fat, they also endure cold better.

**7.2.5 Continuity in Service:** The policy makers need to take a decision for grant of Permanent Commission to women officers being inducted in all Services of the Indian Army. The amount and quality of the in-service training will depend largely on this. If women officers have to serve the organization only as the Short Service Commissioned officers, then the organization would not prefer to invest much in their training.

**7.2.6 Induction of Women in Ranks Below Officers:** As and when the Indian Army opens its doors to the women in ranks below officers, its training centres will have to design the curriculum for their training. The aspects to be borne in mind will include their physical

limitations, the roles they will be assigned, the eqpt they will handle, and the environment in which they will serve. They will be required to be trained in a manner so that they make comparable, if not less, colleagues to their male counterparts and get smoothly accepted and integrated in the mainstream of the Indian Army.

**7.2.7 Combat Inclusions:** As and when the much awaited decision to assign combat roles to the women is undertaken by the Indian Army, the training regime for them will follow suit of a massive change. The women for the combat roles will have to be selected based on a different set of qualitative requirements with intense physical stamina and mental agility criteriae. Their further training will also have to be based on their employability, role definition and equipment handling.

### **7.3 Looking out to 2020**

The Indian Army needs to look out to 2020 and beyond to identify trends most likely to influence its future training requirements. The focus needs to be on the training and education required to develop appropriate competence in women rather than on team or collective training, while recognizing the linkages between them to optimize the overall military effectiveness.

Knowledge management is becoming more important. Future operational success will depend on the ability to exploit and integrate the new digital systems. Studies into future military skill requirements consistently show a growing need for cognitive skills. Information and communication technology also offers exciting opportunities to improve training and is becoming a major learning medium. However, learning via such technology is mainly individual activity which may impair some inter-personal skills. Women, while confident about working in the Information Age, are less physically strong and robust. These challenges must be responded to in the recruiting methods and training them for the organization.

Less emphasis must be given to formal classroom instruction and more responsibility placed on on-the-job training and development. Women in the Army need to continue their education and learning to prove their worth and growing efficiency.

Recruiting and retaining high quality women will continue to be a major challenge. Social trends show less emphasis on group identity and responsibility, including family, national and other groupings. Some potential women recruits may find Army life incompatible with their individual expectations, but others may be attracted to its ethos and values. Training and education will continue to play a major role in helping to instill the core values that provide the moral framework for them to meet the physical and mental challenges of the future battlespace.

#### **7.4 Appraisal and Recommended Changes in the Training System**

The operational success in Kargil has shown that by and large the training standards are adequate. But to meet the challenges being thrown up by the emerging Revolution in Military Affairs, the Army needs to modernise their training system as a whole. Training should also lead to innovation in doctrine, operational concepts and battle drills (Saini, 2008)<sup>22</sup>. This includes the training policies for women, keeping in view their employability, role, equipment handling, areas of operation and specialist tasks as assigned to them.

The training must be a conscious effort to impart, improve or increase knowledge and skills and to develop the attitudes and values of an individual in a desired direction. It is a process of developing a person's effectiveness through carefully selected methods by competent trainers in a suitable learning climate. Training should attempt to develop the right aptitude for the job among the women. There should be a correlation between the training and the nature of job to be performed by them after the completion of training. This shows that it is necessary, first, to lay down a clear policy with regard to the functions and role which

---

<sup>22</sup> Saini,S. Revamping the Military Training System.2008

women are expected to play. On it will depend the kind of training that should be imparted to them. While working out training programmes, the level of absorption should also be kept in mind. Certain modifications may have to be made in the physical training programme for the women. Instead of only emphasizing the aspects of toughening up and building up physical strength, the training should also instill a sense of physical strength and self- confidence.

#### **7.4.1 Pre- Commissioning Training**

Presently, women in the Indian Army are inducted only in the Officer rank. They are imparted pre- Commissioning training by the Officers Training Academy. This training is for 49 weeks, at par with the gentlemen cadets opting for a Short Service Commission. However, the physical standards for the women cadets during this training are milder, keeping in view their physiological limitations. The curriculum of pre-commissioning training for women officers need to address the following aspects:

7.4.1.1 Physical Standards: A four-step task related method should be adopted for the development of physical fitness standards:

- (a) Identify tasks based on operational requirements.
- (b) Identify the physical capability required to complete the tasks.
- (c) Develop appropriate tests which predict the capability to complete the tasks.
- (d) Set minimum standards based on the tests

7.4.1.2 Future edge weapon technologies: All soldiers of the Army need to be well conversant with the modern weapon technologies of the future battlespace. The Officers Training Academy must acquaint its officers with these technologies and instill in them the confidence and desire to handle them effectively and to always keep themselves abreast of the upcoming technologies. Women officers should not be left behind in this endeavor. The present day technologies undergo changes and updation at a fast pace. The curriculum of the Training Academy needs to keep pace with these updates and at the same time make

their officers well conversant of the equipments and weapons already inducted and being handled by the Army.

7.4.1.3 Information Technology: Present age is the age of Information Technology. Although all educational institutions, including schools and colleges in the country, introduce the students to information technology and when educated women are inducted in the Army, they are expected to be conversant with the computers. But the Training Academy should introduce them to the systems, procedures and applications being followed in the Army. When these women officers get posted to units after Commissioning, they would be expected to supervise and handle these systems and procedures without faltering.

7.4.1.4 Military Law: The women officers should be made well aware of the provisions of the Military Law. They should clearly know that as Commissioned Officers of the Indian Army how they are expected to conduct themselves and how they are covered under various clauses of the Military Law as amended from time to time. At the same time, they should also be made aware of provisions of the law covering the entire chain of command in the Army.

7.4.1.5 Organisational Aspects: An insight into the day to day functioning of the organization holds an important place in the training of women officers. As Commissioned officers of the Indian Army, they are expected to perform supervisory role in this functional ladder and also maintain the checks and balances at various levels for smooth functioning. As officers they can't afford to let their subordinates take advantage of their unawareness. This may lead to a functional crisis. The Training Academy should prepare the women officers to efficiently lead their subordinates, handle all their apprehensions and perform their role of functional heads without faltering.

7.4.1.6 Officer Leader Development: The Officers Training Academy develops officers leaders. Over past two decades, this Academy has developed and given women leaders to the organization. While developing these leaders, the training regime needs to ensure that it produces agile and expeditionary leaders who are knowledgeable and able to frame and

analyse their environment across a multitude of operational variables- political, military, economic, social, information, infrastructure, physical environment, and time. These leaders must be able to defeat an enemy who presents asymmetric threats, who is a fleeting target and embedded in the populace, who is adaptive and unpredictable, who has the capability to shift between irregular and conventional warfare, and who is near peer enemy capable of conventional offence and defence operations as well. The officer leader development is, however, a continuous process and continues post Commissioning of the officers as well, till the time they remain in Service.

#### **7.4.2 Post Commissioning Training**

The purpose of post Commissioning training of women officers is to develop their functional and operational effectiveness. It is the key to their efficiency and needs to be task/ mission/ job specific. Training also has to be so structured that it is progressive in nature and does not stagnate.

A detailed environment scan will lead to realistic training requirements which can achieve organizational needs along with providing individual motivation and satisfaction. Environmental feedback and holistic introspection by the training institutions will lead to requisite course content as per the job profile for which training is to be imparted. The course content must cater for the existing threshold levels of qualification and on the job expertise acquired over the years. Training institutions need to weed out repetitive, redundant and obsolete content based on expected skill levels, utility and prevalent self-learning ethos including pre-course training. Individual satisfaction and motivation can be sustained by correct post-course utilization and providing greater responsibilities to the enabled and empowered individual.

##### 7.4.2.1 Understanding the Training System: A generalized model

A broad layout of the training system and interaction within the system, as per the analytical approach is depicted below:

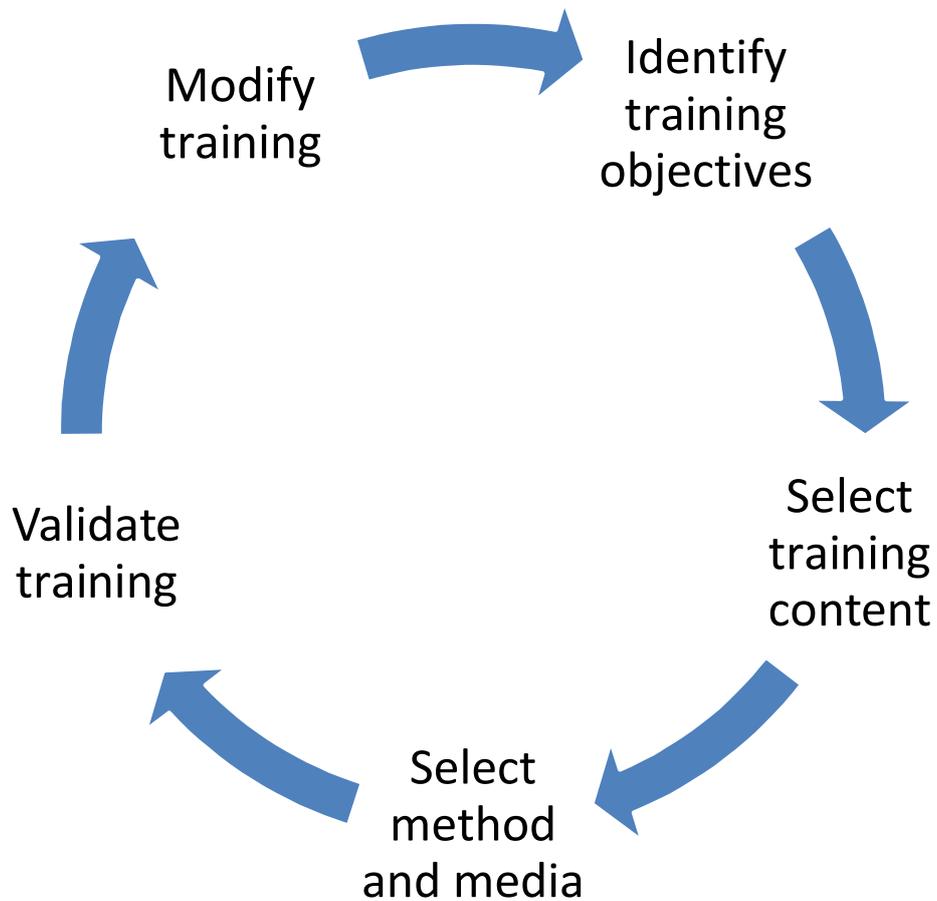


Figure 7.4.2.1 Training System: A generalized model

#### 7.4.2.2 Establishing the Training Needs

Presently, the training needs are being fulfilled through institutionalized or formal training, on the job training, formation exercises and cadres being run in the unit. The acquisition of new equipment necessitates job analysis which matches the job content and specifications and in turn leads to establishment of training needs.



Figure 7.4.2.2 Establishing the Training Needs

Establishing training needs for women officers takes into account factors such as job analysis and content, requisite knowledge threshold and need for organizational effectiveness to attain optimal performance. The infrastructure of training institutions needs to be modified for improved training by overcoming the knowledge gap. As the need for training is well established, requirement for overall growth has to be met by distance learning and e-learning in a conducive environment which promotes self-learning ethos.

## **7.5 Systems Approach**

Thrust of systems approach is to achieve Organisational Effectiveness and promote individual satisfaction and motivation by institutionalized training. The focus areas are as enumerated below:

- (a) Just in Time(JIT) training to achieve training on a need/ requirement basis which facilitates better post course employment.
- (b) Outsourcing of subjects where adequate expertise exists in the civil sector as IT and electronics communication.
- (c) Philosophy to graduate to train the individual, not only the trainer, to enable attainment of objective of empowering the personnel.
- (d) Formal training for officers to be restricted to basic courses and specialization be monitored. Officers to do courses in initial years of service with monitoring at 'two up' level.
- (e) Specialisation vs Generalisation. Officers who specialize to continue in the same discipline for viable duration will achieve organizational benefit by better post course employment and achievement of personal satisfaction. Career protection to be given to such specialists.
- (f) Distance learning and e-learning. The contact and non-contact portion should be in the ratio of 2:1 to promote self-learning ethos and individual responsibility towards training.
- (g) Allocation of courses. Course allotment by one agency only as against the present system of allocation by multifarious agencies. Allocation amongst the units must be strictly on pro-rata basis, availability of officers and organizational commitments.
- (h) Overcoming mediocrity. Responsibility for training to shift to individual also, more so in case of officers, to promote self-learning ethos and overcome mediocrity.
- (i) Audit of training by external agency be affected to assess the institutionalized training.
- (j) Refinement and reinforcement loop to be put in place for introduction, modification and updation of courses and course content.

## **7.6 Leader development process**

Pursuit of the strategy outlined above employs the three domains of leader development — institutional training, operational assignments, and self-development. These domains define

and engage a continuous cycle of education, training, selection, experience, assessment, feedback, reinforcement, and evaluation. Learning, experience, and feedback provide the basis for professional growth. Overall, the leader development process enhances leader capabilities so leaders can assume positions of greater responsibility. The over-arching priority of the leader development process is to develop agile and adaptive leaders of character and competence who act to achieve decisive results and who understand and are able to exploit the full potential of current and future Army doctrine.

## **7.7 Summary**

The Indian Army needs to have a more responsive training and education system. Training for women officers needs to be more flexible, mobile and capable of meeting new requirements rapidly. More modular training courses should be developed to enable them to satisfy specific requirements. Training also needs to be able to rapidly absorb lessons from the environment and best outside practices. The Army needs to respond to changes in educational priorities and expand its education provision to meet the increasing complexity of operations and service processes. It needs to be ensured that all its women have the necessary skills and confidence to exploit new information and communication technologies. E-learning offers the opportunity to increase flexibility in training and shorten residential training time.

Rapid changes in technology, the operational and services environment and society at large present both a challenge and an opportunity for the way the Army provides individual training and education to its women. Improvements are required to ensure that its training and education system best meets the fast changing needs of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and at the same time satisfactorily meet the aspirations of the inducted women workforce.