

Example of gender inequality in the military research paper

[Sociology](#), [Women](#)



The military is one of the most crucial departments of a government. It is charged with the responsibilities of protecting the sovereign integrity of a country, by defending it against external aggression. Therefore, it is vital that the composition of the military reflects the diversity and the face of a nation. By virtue of being a public institution, admission to the military should be an inclusive affair that is based on merit. However, it is not a debatable fact that military composition of most countries is male dominated. Feminists have argued that it is critical that women be admitted to the military as they can also execute these responsibilities with the same capabilities like men. However, the increase of women in the military to 1: 1 ratio with men has also been vehemently opposed in some quarters. Proponents of this view argue that such a move will weaken the military, which is contrary to public policy. This line of argument appreciates the contribution of women in corporates jobs where ideas and skills matter. However, they argue that when it comes to combat women should play a less significant role. This is premised on scientific facts that there is a huge disparity between the strength of men and women. This paper will grapple with underlying issues that cause inequality in the military. The paper will seek to find out the causes of the inequality and the impact of the inequality. Moreover, the paper will also provide few recommendations on how to ameliorate the situation in order to ensure that the military becomes inclusive, while at the same time not compromising on its strengths or abilities to defend a country.

The inclusion of women into the military has been a thorny issue for a long time. Feminists who advocate for this policy have argued that it will send a

strong signal about the competency and capabilities of women to serve to in various positions in the society. They posit that this will aid in ending discrimination policies against women not only in the western world, but across the globe. Women have for a long time been sidelined especially in the military. Experts argue that the more diverse a group is the richer it becomes in ideas and also better in making decisions than a mere male dominated group. Therefore, women will enrich the quality of decisions made in the military because they will have a perspective that may elude their male counterparts. It is vital that the military engages the best personnel from around the country, irrespective of their gender. Moreover, women who have been admitted to the military have proved that they can be worthy assets both to the military and to the nation. It is extremely unjust, unfair and unconstitutional to deny women who can comfortably compete with their male counterparts an opportunity to further their career and serve their country.

In order to realize the significance of having women in the military, it vital, both philosophically and practically, to examine the significance of including women in previously male dominated professions. The fire departments and police units were once a predominantly male profession. However, these government agencies decided to recruit more women to join their ranks. These two form the ideal paradigm in which to base our subject matter. Nowadays, the two departments not only offer quality services to the public, but have also significantly served to eliminate stereotypes against the women gender. They have created millions of jobs for women around the country and in the world at large. Women, like any other human beings,

should be treated with regard to their abilities and capabilities. Before joining the military, one will be subjected to multiple tests that will determine their capabilities. This is because physical engagements are a cardinal requirement in the military. It is worth noting that there are numerous women who are both physically and emotionally stronger than some men. In the last decade, however, the military has attempted to reduce the gap between its male and women population. This is partly due to pressure from feminists and interest groups to give women equal opportunities to serve their countries, and partly due to the need to ensure that gender equality gets attained in all sectors of public life. Moreover, there have been numerous concerns of maltreatment of the few women who have enlisted in the military. Most of them are treated by their colleagues as sex objects. In order to protect these officers, the military has been progressively increasing the numbers of women soldiers admitted into the military every year. Currently, the United States of America has the largest number of women soldiers in the world. These soldiers have been deployed in Iraq and Afghanistan among other areas. Women soldiers have been instrumental in many ways including combat despite an express policy stipulating that they should not be involved in combat. For example in 1991, during the Operation Desert Storm approximately 35, 300 women soldiers were involved in the operation. Most of them participated fully, including rescue missions that had a lot of combat. Such experiences among others illustrated by American women soldiers, and others around the globe, prove that women have the requisite capabilities and potential to serve effectively in the military. Since 1948, after the end of the Second World War, the U. S military has

maintained a permanent portion for women. This follows the enactment of the Integration of Women in the Armed Forces Act. Nowadays, women in the United States military form approximately 11% of the whole military. Women are also being promoted to senior position within the military ranks. A few military departments have also allowed women to engage in combat. In order to ensure total integration, the Department of Defense had opted for joint training sessions since 1974. However, there have been increasing cases of sexual harassment and assault that has forced the military to change tact. Other countries in the world including the United Kingdom, Israel and South Africa have also increased the numbers of their women soldiers considerably during the last decade. For example, in the United Kingdom, the Royal navy is among the top public sector organizations that have been listed as the ones having the highest intake of females. Moreover, the Royal Air Force has been determined as the most diverse and inclusive public employer in the United Kingdom. This illustrates the significance of increasing women in a country military. They not only assist in ameliorating the quality of the work, but also improve the reputation of the institution in the eyes of the public, and the world at large.

Nevertheless, since 1948, the 1: 1 ratio between men and women has never been realized in the United States military. This is despite intensive campaigns by feminist and other lobby groups about the need for total equality. These campaigns have further been enhanced by social trends and adoption of such policies by other public, corporate and or private institutions. However, despite increase in promotion and intake rates for women in the military attaining total equality is still a mirage. This is because

of the inherent nature of the military. Increase of women in the military is giving the military a co-operate image, which is totally a paradox of what it is supposed to be. Moreover, increased presence of women in combat is proving to be detrimental to combat units. Those who are against equality in the military argue that it is only appropriate when it comes to running corporations. They posit that when people are working with ideas, products, minds and computers, women should not be discriminated. This is because they will not only blend in perfectly, but they will also contribute immensely to the realization of the company's objectives. On the other hand, when it comes to conduction military operation, it is vital that we acknowledge the huge disparity between men and women. A country deserves the best military service it can get from its people. It is a reflection of the people's might. Therefore, all measures and policies should be put in place to ensure merit and competence is not diluted at the expense of diversity and gender equality.

When the military sets the criteria for selection of people who will join the force, a specific threshold is always expected. These standards indicate the ability of an army to defend its country. In theory because women are equal to men, the standards should be the same for determining admission for both genders. However, what happens in practice is totally different. The standards for women to join the army are usually lower in order to accommodate a desirable number. The reverse is true with regard to men. This is an indirect admission that most women allowed to join the army are not of the same ' quality' as men. Moreover, the policy to have women conduct operations that do not involve combat is an admission that they are

not suitable for the job. For example, in case of a fire fight will a woman of who weighs about 120 pounds manage to carry her fellow injured soldier who weighs about 200 pounds? Such are questions that should be candidly asked and answered before admission of more women to the military is done than it is desirable. It is said that sometimes the greatest harm is committed by people with the best intentions.

However, this is not to summarily conclude that women should not have a place or role in the military. Actually, it is not only desirable that the military should have women officers, but rather mandatory. This is because women professionals possess many traits that are unique to their gender. There are various administrative positions that can be competently filled by women officers. The distinction between positions of service should be about a person's capability and not his or her gender. Moreover, researches conducted during the training of soldiers indicate that women are three times more likely to suffer from spinal injuries than men. Their strength levels do not also significantly ameliorate after physical training. It is also worth noting that noting women have also their own unique weaknesses. They tend to have a non-violent nature while embracing a caring tendency. This is regarded as a weakness in combat. However, it can be harnessed and utilized to serve the military in a different capacity. In addition, pregnancy cases are other significant challenges. This is a phenomenon that cannot just be wished away. For example, the navy has a pregnancy policy that regards it as an 'acceptable problem'. While this might be acceptable in administrative duties, it cannot and should not be acceptable in combat. If an officer was to get pregnant during a mission, she would have to be given

a pregnancy leave. This would jeopardize a combat unit. It would be immaterial that such an officer can be replaced by another from another unit. Soldiers usually maintain subcultures within the military. These are people that a soldier has worked together with for years and earned both their respect and trust.

In order to end the inequality in the military while still maintaining its quality of service delivery, it is vital for gender desks to be created within the military. This will monitor the intake of women while at the same time ensuring they are posted to areas within their capacity. Women have performed exceptionally well in administrative and office work and should be encouraged to enroll for such roles. However, as a society and a country, we should be aware of the dangers we can expose ourselves to by letting women become equal in numbers to the men in the military all in the name of equality.

References

Wrobel, J. (2011). *Mission Accomplished? Gender Equality in the Military: An Analysis and Comparison of the Institutionalization of Gender Equality in the German Bundeswehr and the United States Armed Forces*. New York: GRIN Verlag.

Carreiras, H. (2006). *Gender and the Military: Women in the Armed Forces of Western Democracies*. New York: Routledge.

Jervis, S. (2011). *Relocation, Gender, and Emotion: A Psycho-Social Perspective on the Experiences of Military Wives*. New York: Karnac Books.

Thio, A., & Taylor, J. (2011). *Social Problems*. New York: Jones & Bartlett Publishers.

<https://assignbuster.com/example-of-gender-inequality-in-the-military-research-paper/>