

# **Women Archaeologists in India - Career Scope and Conflicts**

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## **Abstract**

India has a rich cultural heritage and therefore there is a demand for both male and female archaeologists. Archaeology is a study of human past with the help of material remains through multi-disciplinary approach. The archaeological research is an investigation of ancient records and remains in scientific way. The archaeologists reconstruct a complete picture of human past by exploring sites, objects, monuments, remains, records, etc. As archaeological research digs sites, excavates, analyzes and rebuilds the historical data, women from different educational backgrounds and aptitude can contribute their expertise to this field. This paper studies the career opportunities for women through archaeological research.

**Keywords:** Women, Empowerment, Career, Scope, Archaeology.

## **Introduction**

Archaeology is a compound term from two Greek words, *Archaios* meaning ancient or old, and *logia*, which means learning or study and when combined, the word archaeology takes on the meaning of studying or learning about old or ancient things. It can be considered both a science and a branch of the humanities. Today, archaeology is usually defined as 'the science of the treatment of the material remains of the human past' or as a 'systematic and descriptive study of antiquities' (Renfrew & Bahn, 1991). It is the scientific study of historic or prehistoric peoples and their cultures by analysis of their artifacts, inscriptions, monuments, and other such remains, especially those that have been excavated. Archaeology includes the study of artifacts, biofacts (eco-facts) and cultural landscapes. The sub-disciplines of archaeology are epigraphy (the study of inscriptions), numismatics (the study of coins), architecture, rock art, paintings, sculptures, iconography and paleography.

## **Review of Literature**

Claassen in 1994 documents and discusses attempts to exclude women from the discipline of archaeology and the resulting andro-centrism of archaeological knowledge. Díaz-Andreu and Sorensen in 1998 discusses about the careers of women archaeologists such as Dorothy Garrod, Hanna Rydh and Marija Gimbutas who against all odds became famous as well as the many lesser-known personalities who did important archaeological work. The collection spans the earliest days of archaeology as a discipline to the present, telling the stories of women from Scandinavia, Mediterranean Europe, Britain, France, Germany and Poland. It examines issues such as women's increased involvement in archaeological work during and after the two World Wars, and why so many women found it more acceptable to work outside of their native lands. This critical assessment of women in archaeology makes a major contribution to the history of archaeology. It reveals how selective the archaeological world has been in recognizing the contributions of those who have shaped its discipline, and how it has been particularly inclined to ignore the achievements of women archaeologists. Cohen and Joukowsky in 2004 presented twelve fascinating women whose contributions to the development and progress of Old-World archaeology- in an area ranging from Italy to Mesopotamia- have been immeasurable. Each essay in this collection examines the life of a pioneer archaeologist in the early days of the discipline, tracing her path from education in the classics to travel and exploration and eventual international recognition in the field of archaeology. The lives of these women may serve as models both for those interested in gender studies and the history of archaeology because in fact, they broke ground both as women and as archaeologists. Adams in 2010 explains the story of seven remarkable women, wherein it has narrated that they hack away at underbrush under a blazing sun, battle swarms of biting bugs, travel on camelback for weeks on end, and feel the excitement of unearthing history at an archaeological site.

Archaeologists are increasingly aware of issues of gender when studying past societies; women are becoming better represented within the discipline and are attaining top academic posts. However, until now there has been no study undertaken of the history of women in Indian archaeology and their contribution to the development of the discipline. There is no comprehensive work on women archaeologists in India.

## **Objectives**

- To study the career opportunities for women through archeological research
- To examine the problems and obstacles faced by them in pursuit of their careers
- To compare the experiences faced by women archaeologists in government and private organizations

## **Methodology**

Women archaeologists from ASI were chosen to obtain samples distributed across the country and to get the representation at the state level, women archaeologists from Tamil Nadu state Department of Archaeology has been selected. The empirical research has been conducted through questionnaire method sent to 60 female archaeologists comprising of 39 women archaeologists working in Archaeological survey of India (ASI) at Director level to the level of Assistant Archaeologist, 3 retired women epigraphists and a retired archaeologist (Commissioner-in-Charge) from Tamil Nadu State Department of Archaeology, 4 women archaeologists working in the private organizations and 14 female research scholars have been approached out of which only 50 have responded and included in the present study. The study adopted survey research design and descriptive research method to interpret the data. The data collection has been conducted through survey questionnaire, which included 15 questions, which included Experiences (Q5 to Q12), Opinions (Q1 & Q2), Feelings (Q3 & Q4) and Knowledge (Q13 to Q15) on 4 Point Scale as indicated in Table 1.

## **Archaeological Research in India**

Archaeological and historical pursuits in India started with the efforts of Sir William Jones, who put together a group of antiquarians to form the Asiatic Society on 15<sup>th</sup> January 1784 in Calcutta. The Archaeological Survey of India was founded in 1861 by Alexander Cunningham who also became its first Director-General. Under the Ministry of Culture, Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) is the principal body for archeological research and the preservation of the nation's cultural heritage. The ASI's prime concern is protecting ancient ruins and archeological sites and remains of national significance. In addition, all archeological activities in the country are governed in accordance with the provisions under the Ancient Monuments and Archeological Sites and Remains Act 1958 and the Treasure Act of Antiquities and Sculpture 1972. ASI is the foremost organization for archeological research, scientific study, excavation of archeological sites, conservation and preservation of protected monuments and areas of national significance, preservation of site museums and extensive regulation of legislations related to antiquities and art treasures. The organisation, through its Circles, Museums, Excavation Branches, Prehistory Branch, Epigraphy Branches, Science Branch, Horticulture Branch, Building Survey Project, Temple Survey Projects, and Underwater Archaeology Section, has a wide workforce of qualified archeologists, conservators, epigraphists, architects and scientists. This is an external office under Culture Department. Being an attached office, the ASI is appointed Director-General by its head. The Director-General is assisted by an Additional Director General, two Joint Directors-General and 17 Directors in carrying out his duties. The entire country is divided into 29 Circles, for administrative convenience, for the maintenance and preservation of ancient ruins, archeological sites, and remains of

national significance. The Circle is led by a Superintendent Archeologist (S.A.), who is further assisted by Deputy Superintendent Archeologist (Dy. S.A.), Deputy Superintendent Archeological Engineer (Dy. S.A.E.), Assistant Superintendent Archeologist (A.S.A.), Assistant Superintendent Archeological Engineer (A.S.A.E.), Assistant Archaeologists (A.A.) and Conservation Assistants (C.A.). There are also 6 Excavation Branches, 1 Prehistory Branch, 1 Building Survey Project, 2 Temple Survey Projects, 2 Epigraphy Branches, 1 Science Branch, and Underwater Archaeology Section in the Archeological Survey of India for the conduct of advanced archeological research. There are also 46 Archaeological museums spreading over the length and breadth of India.

The Tamil Nadu State Department of Archeology began in 1961 with the goals of conserving and preserving ancient monuments in Tamil Nadu and to carry out excavations at historical sites. Subsequently, its activities were expanded to include Epigraphy (copying and deciphering of stone inscriptions, printing and publishing them in book form), setting up of site museums, chemical preservation of art objects etc. The department's goal is to showcase Tamil Nadu's rich heritage and glorious traditions with its classical Tamil language, majestic monuments, beautiful temples, art and sculpture as well as vibrant traditions. This is primarily a research department for disseminating knowledge of Tamil Nadu's ancient cultural heritage through a combination of fieldwork, analysis, and publishing. The Department has 8 Field Offices, 14 site museums, a library at Head Office, the Government Oriental Manuscripts Library and Research Centre at Anna Centenary Library, Chemical Laboratories at Chennai and Madurai, Printing section, besides the Institute of Epigraphy which operates from the Head Office. Likewise, various states in India have established the departments of archaeology and the museums with similar objectives.

### **Educational Institutes and Funding Agencies for Research**

Several Universities, Colleges, Institute of Archaeology, New Delhi, Deccan College Deemed university, Pune are offering courses in archaeology and related subjects. They are also offering PhD programs to pursue research in this field. India is an archaeologically potential country, and there is no dearth for research material. There are Government funding agencies like UGC, Indian Council of Historical Research for archaeological research. There are also private organizations like Birla Archaeological and Cultural Research Institute, Secunderabad, French Institute of Indology, Pondicherry, American Institute of Indian Studies, Gurgaon, which provide fellowships to support research in various branches of archaeology. Organizations like INTACH (The Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage) are providing technical support, Reach Foundation, and the corporate companies and industries like Ford foundation are also coming forward to fund the conservation of heritage monuments.

## **Opportunities as Inter-disciplinary**

Archaeology is emerging as an inter-disciplinary and opens up new career opportunities. Archaeology is a study of human past through multi-disciplinary approach. The archaeological research is an investigation of ancient records and remains in scientific way. The archeologists reconstruct a complete picture of human past by exploring sites, objects, monuments, remains, records, etc. As archaeological research digs sites, excavates, analyses and rebuilds the historical data, women from different educational backgrounds and aptitude can contribute their expertise to this field. India has a rich cultural heritage and therefore there is a demand for both male and female archaeologists in India. The discipline involves surveying, excavation and eventually analysis of data collected to learn more about the past. In broad scope, archaeology relies on cross-disciplinary research. It draws upon anthropology, history, art history, classics, ethnology, geography, geology, literary history, linguistics, semiology, sociology, textual criticism, physics, metallurgy, earth sciences, information sciences, chemistry, statistics, paleoecology, paleontology, paleozoology, and paleobotany. The candidates with these background can opt for master's degree in archaeology and pursue their career in this field. Since its early development, various specific sub-disciplines of archaeology have developed, including maritime archaeology, feminist archaeology and archaeo-astronomy, and numerous different scientific techniques have been developed to aid archaeological investigation. Recently two branches of archaeology are given significance, namely, Underwater Archaeology (conducting research within water for submerged sites and townships) and Digital Archeology (conducting research with maps and sketches along with digital tool support.)

## **Career Scope & Prospects**

India has a rich cultural heritage and hence the demand for archaeologists is higher in India. The multidisciplinary aspect of archaeology attracts several researchers of different backgrounds. Qualified students can apply for various job profiles in government and private sectors. As an Archaeologist you can work in private or government-owned museums for the safe upkeep and management of museum artifacts.

In this profession of archaeology, the jobs are offered to those who have interest in knowing past of the humans, animals, or civilization that existed thousands of years ago. Aspirants can find job in government sectors through exam conducted by Union Public Service Commission or Staff Selection commission. A degree holder in Archaeology can also work as tourist guide, heritage mangers, interpreters' resource persons of trip organizers in tourism. Archaeology graduates have great scope in for jobs as well as research in various colleges and universities.

The Archeological Survey of India under the Union Government and the Department of Archaeology of the State governments are the major employers who provide job opportunities such as those of assistant archaeologists or archeologists. The selection to the Archaeological Survey of India is done by the Union Public Service Commission and to the State Departments by the Respective State Public Service Commissions. The National Museum in New Delhi, State Museums, National Trust of Art and Cultural Heritage and so on employ archeologists, museologists, curators and other specialists. Research and training are possible at the Indian Council of Historical Research. The work requires patience and involves travelling to remote areas for field work. Archaeology could be fascinating for those interested in the historical past. Recently women are showing interest to pursue higher education and research in the field of archaeology. There is an increase in women students opting for archaeology based educational qualifications in higher educational level.

### **Jobs You Can Get with a Post Graduate Degree and above in this Field**

The aspirants may opt for the jobs like Archaeologist, Historic buildings inspector/conservation officer, Museum/gallery curator, Heritage manager, Faculty Member, Documentation Specialist, Museum education officer, Archivist, Cartographer, Conservation officer, Exhibition manager, Heritage manager, Historical building inspector, Museum education trainer, Records manager, Social researcher, Tourism officer, Government archeology office assistant and Archaeologist in Globally funded research organizations.

### **Top Recruiters**

- Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)
- Archaeology Departments of State Governments
- Academic Institutions / Universities / Colleges
- National heritage agencies
- Indian Council of Historical Research (ICHR)
- Government and private Museums and cultural galleries
- Private research Organizations like Birla Archaeological and Cultural Research Institute, Secunderabad, French Institute of Indology, Pondicherry, American Institute of Indian Studies, Gurgaon

### **Duties of an Archaeologist**

- Exploring
- Mapping
- Excavating
- Preserve, restore and clean artifacts

- Collecting data about the archaeological site
- Collect artifacts made of stone, metal, bones and preserve them
- Create drawings and maps of unit profiles, stratum surfaces, features, and findings
- Safeguarding the cultural property

Tamil Nadu State Government sources say many posts in the department — including those of curators, archaeological officers, epigraphists and an archaeologist — have been vacant for many years now.

### **Women Archaeologists in India**

The ASI and the Archaeological Departments in the States have women archaeologists in various capacities and many of them reached the status of the Director and the Superintending Archaeologist. Debala Mitra (14 December 1925 – 2 December 2005) was the first woman archaeologist to head the ASI. She served as the Director General of the ASI from 1981 to 1983. She joined the ASI in the 1940s and served as Superintendent of Eastern Circle and Additional Director General of the ASI before succeeding B. K. Thapar as Director General in 1981. Interestingly, there are 39 women archaeologists working at Archaeological Survey of India in various capacities: 4 Women Directors, 2 Superintending Archaeologists, 5 Deputy Superintending Archaeologists, 5 Assistant Superintending Archaeologists and 23 Assistant Archaeologists. Surprisingly, there are no women archaeologists at the State Archaeology Department of Tamil Nadu at present. Moreover, there were only 3 women epigraphists and one women archaeologist whilst that time and after their retirement the aforesaid vacancies have been filled up with male candidates.

### **Pros & Cons of becoming an Archaeologist**

Archaeology is an ideal profession who want to make a career in unravelling mysteries of the ancient past. It is often true that a famous discovery in the field of archaeology brings the status and reputation of an archaeologist to iconic proportions. Archaeologists are not treasure hunters. Equally, this field is time consuming unlike other research fields, whereas at times, excavations may last for days and to confront several challenges in every step. At times, they keep digging for days without finding anything and a project takes several months to complete. This is one of the reasons why many women not opt for fieldwork. Moreover, in the pursuit of excavation to their research problems and sometimes they have to face dangerous reptiles like cobras. They would be deprived of their right to be documented for their proficiency.

Sometimes, women's expertises are not recognized by their male counterparts. In an article from New Indian Express, excavations, most of the time, happen in remote areas and often times no basic amenities like running water, electricity or even a bathroom will be available. The site may not be accessible by roads or vehicles. One may have to walk many kilometers to reach the site, but to truly like the job one has to treat it like an adventure. It is always exciting to dig up long buried artifacts. Furthermore, it is like discovering bits of a puzzle and then slotting them together to make a picture, but there are several women who overcome such hurdles and earn a reputation of being a force to reckon with.

In India there is no dearth for monuments, which are to be conserved and protected. The expertise of women archaeologist with best management enables these tasks with efficiency. There is a steady increase in number of tourists visiting these heritage centers. There is a necessity to plan several outreach programs including: i) organizing minor exhibitions in schools and colleges, ii) arranging for special / theme-based lectures, iii) organizing academic workshops, iv) creating digital websites and v) conducting training programs in preservation of monuments to aspirants.

## Results & Interpretation

**Table 1: Distribution of Responses**

Q. No.	Questions	Response*			
		Yes	May Be	No	No Response
1	Why do you think that archaeology is a fascinating subject?	-	-	-	-
2	Do you suggest archaeology as a career option for women?	45	5	-	-
3	Have you ever felt that being a woman is an advantage in this field?	-	20	-	30
4	Have you ever felt that being a woman is disadvantage in this field?	-	2	48	-
5	Did you face any problems at the field since you are a woman?	-	-	50	-
6	What do you think is a great achievement in your career?	-	-	-	-
7	Have you ever faced gender bias at work place?	2	38	10	-
8	As an archaeologist do you get support from your family?	50	-	-	-
9	Have you employed women labourers during excavations? (This question is only for the higher officials)	10	-	-	-
10	Do you pay the wages to the male and female labourers equally? (This question is only for the higher officials)	-	-	10	-
11	Have any of your employees/labourers intimidated you since you are a woman during excavations?	-	-	50	-
12	Did you face any bureaucratic hurdles as a woman? (This question is only for the archaeologists of private organizations)	2	-	2	-
13	Are you applying methods of modern technology in your excavations?	50	-	-	-
14	What are your future plans?	-	-	-	-
15	Any other information you would like to share?	-	-	-	-

N=50; \* - Responses Included Experiences (Q5 to Q12), Opinions (Q1 & Q2), Feelings (Q3 & Q4) & Knowledge (Q13 to Q15) on 4 Point Scale



The results inferred from Table 1 are indicted below:

- A vast majority (90 percent) of women archaeologists are willing to recommend archaeology as a career option for women. This may be because they find archaeology as a fascinating subject, which provides stable job, descent payment and has opportunity for career growth.
- Majority (96 percent) of the interviewed archaeologists felt that being a woman is not disadvantage in this field. An educated speculation would be that they never thought of gender as a drawback in their work place. However, when asked about gender bias at their work place, 76 percent responded negatively and only 20 percent did not respond and only 4 percent accepted that they experienced gender bias in this field.
- The budding archaeologists might appreciate knowing that all the interviewees felt that they were supported by their families for their choice to pursue archaeology. As in other fields modern technological developments are taking place in archaeology as well enabling exciting opportunities for youngsters.
- It is also very encouraging to know that they were not intimidated by the employees and manual workers during excavations.
- Only two women archaeologists from private organizations admitted to have faced bureaucratic hurdles.

## Discussion

Dr. Vimala Begley, Faculty member of South Asian studies, University of Pennsylvania, who conducted excavations at Arikamedu from 1989 to 1991 in collaboration with the University of Pennsylvania and the University of Madras, which yielded the remains of Indo-Roman trading centre (Begley & De Puma, 1991). Dr. Sathyabhama Badrinath, Joint Director General of ASI (Retd.), Dr. S. Vasanthi, Deputy Superintending Archeologist (Retd.) and Commissioner of Archaeology (in charge) of Tamil Nadu State Department of Archaeology, Dr. G. Maheswari, Regional Director of ASI (South), Dr. T. Sreelakshmi, Superintending Archaeologist (Excavation Branch), ASI, Bangalore, Dr. C.R.Gayathri, Assistant Archaeologist, Chennai Circle, ASI, Mrs. S. Veriselvi Assistant Archaeologist and Curator of Fort Museum, Chennai Circle, ASI, Dr. Shanthi Pappu, Founder Secretary Sharma Centre for Heritage Education, (Est.1999) are a few among them. As put forth by Dr. Satyabhama Badrinath, who joined the ASI in 1984 as an Assistant Archaeologist and retired as Joint Director General in 2020, initially she found it very difficult to establish her entity and she had to prove herself again and again to establish that she was equally good if not more, but women used to face these problems everywhere, not just only in this distinct field.

Dr. S. Vasanthi, who retired as the Commissioner of Archaeology (in charge) and Deputy Superintending Archeologist from Tamil Nadu State Department of Archaeology, was the only female archaeologist recruited so far in the State Department of Archaeology. She participated in the excavation at 15 archaeological sites which include Alagankulam, Tirukoilur, Poompuhar, Maligaimedu, Andipatti, Marakkanam, Sembiyankandiyur, Tarangampadi, Gangaikondacholapuram, Rajakkalmangalam, Talaichangkadu and Alambarai, Srirangam, Ukkirankottai, and Pattaraiperumpudur (Archaeological Excavations of India Volumes I & II, 2011) and authored about 8 books. There were three more women, Dr. A. Padmavathi, Dr. N. Marxiaganthi and Mrs. R. Vasanthakalyani, but they were in the capacity of Epigraphists.

For Dr. S. Vasanthi who joined the service as an Assistant Archaeologist, the path for her career was not smooth. She has to face several hurdles and challenges not only on the field but also in the work front. She has to fight with her authorities to include her name in the reports of archaeological excavations she has participated. Since they followed the hierarchy, they did not consider her participation and expertise and ignored to include her name. She asserted her rights and the authorities had to oblige. She was pregnant when she participated in the Azhagankulam excavations. She spent extended hours in the excavation camp and later she came back for the next season of excavations with her infant baby and actively participated in the excavations and found the Indo-Roman trading centre. She struggled for the recognition and finally succeeded. Later on, when she became the commissioner, she did not follow any hierarchy when it comes to recognize the efforts of her junior colleagues. She also raised an important issue regarding the female manual workers in the archaeological excavations. She said that the women labourers get lower pay than the male manual workers. The excavation agency pays all the labourers equally irrespective of the gender. But the male labourers and the village heads, object to this and demand to reduce the pay for the female labourers. The female labourers have to accept this as they may face with troubles from the villagers.

Although, the job avenues in archaeology are not as attractive as in other fields like Universities, IT or media, several women archaeologists are showing interest in this field, as mentioned by Dr. G. Maheswari, who has participated in numerous excavations, since 1997 and worked in Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Bhubaneshwar, Delhi, and west Bengal in various capacities and now the Regional Director of South zone of ASI. Her major contribution being the excavations at Kondapur (present Telangana) during 2009-2011, Telangana, which yielded an important evidence of the material culture of the early Satavahana period and the results are yet to publish. As she says, archaeologists should have thorough knowledge not only of the excavation and conservation techniques but also of antiquarian laws and the present-day latest digital technology. They should know how to maintain good public relations.

Dr. T. Sreelakshmi, Superintending Archaeologist (Excavation Branch), ASI, Bangalore, worked for the Conservation of Tenkailasanatha (Vadakkunatha) Temple, Thrissur, and for which UNESCO award has been given in December, 2015. She also played a major role in preventing the illicit trafficking of the objects wherein offenders were penalized to the tune of Rupees Seven Crores and subsequently initiated the shifting of the confiscated antiquities to National Museum, New Delhi, in 2016. Although, she faced challenges in her job, she felt triumphed when the work yielded good results and recognition. It is to be noted that the aforementioned archaeologists are from government agencies, whereas the experiences of the women archaeologists from private agencies are different. This is explained in the case of Dr. Shanti Pappu of Sharma Centre for Heritage Education. She highlights women archaeologists who are in private organizations did not felt that they are deprived of their rights, but they faced hitches in getting permission from government to conduct excavations. However, with a great determination they have to pursue and succeed in getting permission as well as funds from government and other private agencies. Dr. Shanti Pappu, who was the recipient of Prof. H. D. Sankalia Gold Medal from the Deccan College and Young Scientist award from the Earthwatch Institute, USA, expresses that just because it is tough, you cannot bypass field experience. She insists that 'you have to get your hands dirty and it is the only way'. The site Attirambakkam of Acheulian culture provides evidence of long-term occupation by people who lived more than 500,000 years ago. It was a challenging task to meticulously excavate, centimeter by centimeter, revealing traces of prehistoric occupation. The sediments were silty and clayey and were in danger of collapsing in one of our trenches, which was around 9m deep, but we were excited when we unearthed many valuable objects (Pappu, 2001; Pappu, 2003).

She opines that when conducting research, in the field, in the lab, or elsewhere, the question of gender does not arise. It is just a focus on research questions and the best ways to address them. She has never thought in terms of gender while working. She has been involved in fieldwork since her Master's Degree, and this has never been an issue. She always got the same respect and friendship that is given to others in the profession. They are maintaining excellent relationships with all the local communities. This enthusiastic archaeologist who authored three books, including one for children wants to continue to develop her Centre, improve and expand research projects and multiply the training programs for young archaeologists and public outreach for children and teachers. With regard to government agencies from whom she has to get the permission for excavations, she says that overall, they have been very cooperative and helpful though there are initial hiccups. Her centre developed thematic maps using satellite remote sensing, GIS applications and field investigations, in collaboration with ISRO (Indian Space Research Organization)-RRSC (Regional Centre for Remote Sensing)-South for research and heritage management planning of prehistoric sites in northern Tamil

Nadu. She is the professional consultant for the Government of Tamil Nadu to map the prehistoric sites in Tamil Nadu.

There are many instances in the past that female archaeologists feel like they are at a disadvantageous position. In addition to this, the job avenues in archaeology may also seem quite unattractive when compared to other fields like academia, IT or media. Yet, several women choose archaeology as a promising career. They forged ahead, overthrew hurdles and earned an exceptional reputation.

The women authorities of these organizations give preference to women candidates, since they show enthusiasm to learn and work sincerely. However, the male authorities hesitate to appoint women candidates under the pretext that they have to face inclement weather, hazardous and tough working conditions in the field of work, in spite of the fact many women archaeologists prefer to work in any working conditions to prove themselves and they excelled well in their duties than male candidates. The male authorities frequently take this as an excuse to deprive women candidates of their opportunities. The aforesaid discussion deciphers that many female archaeologists have proved their mettle and maintained excellence in this field. Hence, ASI as well as the State Archaeological Departments of Tamil Nadu has to take fresh post graduate budding archaeologists and research scholars to work for them temporarily on several projects. This might be a sort of encouragement to women and to constantly feed their curiosity to know more and extremely fulfilling in this field. Also, it will act like a driving force to all women in this field to prove their inquisitive caliber in archaeological research.

### **Suggestion**

- The centre and state governments have to motivate women researchers through adequate scholarships, grants and support funds for pursuing archaeological studies.
- The reservation policy with regard to filling up government positions in state and central governments have to encourage recruiting women archaeologists.
- The private organizations engaged in archaeological research have to embrace and foster women's potential in providing them with lucrative career opportunities for survival and growth.
- The families must support if the women are willing to take up professions like archaeology and never stop them in their careers.
- Women archeologists must assert their rights in the work place and prove their abilities through upbringing research and publications.

### **Conclusion**

Women with their proficiency in historical research methodology, scientific background, information technology and digital technology can be successful as

archaeologists. They can prove themselves in this field, which was ironically considered not suitable as their occupation and profession. The employers should realize that there are better equipped and enthusiastic women candidates who are prepared and preferred to take up tough jobs like archaeological field work and face challenges in the work front. Furthermore, there is nothing that a woman cannot do if she is determined to do so. The women with passion, fascination and enthusiasm to discover new things can excel in this field and their presence is very much required in this distinct field.

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