

# ENGLISH ESSAY

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TOPIC:- Women remain on the losing side in professional life (from NOA Mock Exams (November, 2023))

## → OUTLINE:-

### 1. Introduction

Thesis statement: Women has been seen on both winning and losing sides in professional life. But, in contemporary world, the participation of women in different professions are challenging the man-dominated professional norms. There are certain problems that women face in their professional life but every problem comes with a solution.

2. How women started to participate in professional life and how

It is seen

3. In contemporary world, women participation is increasing and has achieved esteemed positions in professional life (Thesis)
- Women has right to earn, according to religion Islam and humanitarian laws of contemporary world
  - Increase in global representation of women in different professions
  - Increase in political participation of women in different countries
  - Women have also proved themselves in the world of technology
  - Women participation in professional life has been recognized in socially backward countries
4. Despite participation, women still remain on losing side in professional life (Antithesis)
- The notion "Men are the supporters of family" hinders the way of women towards professional life
  - Women face sexual harassment at work place which reduces their number in an office
  - Women face various challenges in politics leading to their participation less than men
  - Digitalization is famous for online harassment and women are its victims
  - Strict social norms of certain countries are still providing unfavourable conditions for working women
5. Modern problems has modern solutions (Synthesis)
- Women can support family either by contribution or full support at certain occasions
  - Women protection bill has been passed in many countries and women are unsafe even at home
  - Digital and international cooperation forums helps in minimizing the challenges faced by women in politics
  - Criminal investigation organizations at all levels are actively working on online harassment cases

e) Online home-based jobs serve as the best opportunity for women living in socially strict environments

## 6. Conclusion

## → ESSAY:-

"I have had an incredible journey full of unexpected surprises and daring-do, whether braving my own kitchen to produce a decent meal for my son or tracking down Egypt's Hosni Mubarak in the dying days of his regime." **Christiane Amanpour** (Chief International Correspondent, CNN). This statement by a working woman demonstrates the successful participation of women in both domestic and professional lives. Women are not subjected to only domestic life, they have the right to live their professional life as well. In professional life, women has been seen on both winning and losing sides. But, in contemporary world, the participation of women in different professions are challenging the man-dominated professional norms. There are certain problems that women face in their professional life but every problem comes with a solution. Increase in women participation in professional life is due to their earning right that has been either achieved by them after successive feminist movements or has been given to them by certain religions such as Islam. Therefore, they have the right to participate in any profession, including politics and technology to either support their <sup>families</sup> or spend on <sup>themselves</sup> ~~themselves~~. But due to the historical man-dominated professions and social norms, women still face difficulty to enjoy their rights. These difficulties include sexual harassment at work place and certain societal norms such as 'Men are supporters of family' or 'Women should remain at home' etc. But due to modernization and digitalization of the world, different laws and forums have been introduced to protect

and support women in professional life.

Historically, women and profession were placed at two opposite sides of the infinity loop. But after 19<sup>th</sup> century, these two terms got merge and 'a women' became 'a professional women'. It all started in 19<sup>th</sup> century when Seneca Falls Convention in 1848 took place and formally began the first wave of feminism. The Seneca Falls Declaration demanded for the participation of women in politics. After this movement, several other movements and waves of feminism took place which led to the participation of women in different professions. <sup>Today</sup> Now, as compared to the difficulties faced by women in getting these rights, the presence of women in nearly all professions of the world highlights their achievements. These achievements place them on winning side of professional life. But, the challenges faced by women today in professional life place them on a losing side, as argued by critics.

Women are constantly participating in professional life because "Women has the right to earn". This statement was unknown until the emergence of Islam and waves of feminism. Islam has given women the right to earn and own property when women itself were considered as a property by their male guardians before Islam. It is historically seen that Holy Prophet (PBUH), the founder of Islam, never denied or stopped any woman from doing business or job. For example, Hazrat Khadija (RA), wife of Holy Prophet (PBUH), was a business-woman and continued her business even after her marriage with Prophet (PBUH). Moreover, the various waves of feminism has also achieved the women's right to earn. So, women has the right to earn and to have a professional life.

Every year, there has been increase in the representation of women in professional life. globally. Women in almost every country are giving their services in almost every profession of

the world. Women are even engaged in industries and are participating in work-force and labour-force irrespective of the fact that men are considered physically stronger than women. According to World Economic Forum, among all LinkedIn users in 163 countries, women account for 41.9% of the workforce in 2023 and between 2022 and 2023, parity in the labourforce participation rate had increased from 63% to 64%. (WEF, Global Gender Gap Report 2023, June 2023). Therefore, women can participate in any field irrespective of physique.

Among different professions, women participation in politics is also increasing. It was one of the first demands that of first wave of feminism back in 19<sup>th</sup> century. And today women are being elected as the heads of the states. For instance, Katalin Novak, who was elected as first female President of Hungary in 2022. Moreover, the number of women in parliament is also expanding. According to UN Women report of 2023, women make up 26.5% of members of Parliament (UN Women, Women in politics: 2023, 2023). So, this is one of the major achievements of feminist movements that women are not only participating in higher number in politics but are also running the government and states.

In addition to politics, the another important field that was considered to be related to men only, is technology. But to their surprise, women of today are participating in technology too. There are certain technological innovations of the world that are invented by women. For example, the world's first green aircraft is invented by Pakistani Aerospace Engineer, Sarah Durrani, recently. Not only this, women are now considered as a preferable choice in technology. The statement "Women in Tech lead to better problem-solving"

from decades of research is the best manifestation of intelligence and problem-solving skills of women (Katherine W. Phillips, How Diversity Makes Us Smarter, October 2014). This shows the ability and intelligence of women that she can excel in any field.

The participation of women in professional life, has now been recognized in socially backward countries as well. Countries, that of Africa, Middle East and South Asia, that are known to be bound to strict traditional societal norms are now participating to promote women rights. With the trend, Pakistan has also supported and promoted women in professional life. For example, Tehmina Janjua became first woman to be appointed as foreign secretary in 2022 in history of Pakistan. Moreover, the Arabian countries have also started to promote women rights in professional life. For instance, in 2022, Radwa Helmi became first women judge to sit on the bench of Egypt's State Council, a top court in the Arab country. These are the winning sides of women empowerment in professional life supported<sup>and</sup> backed by their country.

However, many argue that due to the challenges faced by women and traditional societal norms, women still remain on the losing side of the professional life. Some argue that although women has been given the right to earn but the notion that "Men are the supporters of the family hinders the way of women towards professional life. While talking about Islam, Islam has also given men the responsibility to support their family and wife. As, in Quran, Allah says: "Men are in charge of women by [right of] what Allah has given one over the other and what they spend [for maintenance] from their wealth." (**Surah-An-Nisa (4):34**). So, according to this perspective, women should not earn by themselves as they should be supported by their husbands.

With the growing number of women representation in different professions globally, there is growing number of incidents of sexual harassment of women at workplace too. It is a common conception that if women is outside her home, she is definitely supposed to be harassed. Due to this fear, women remain subjected to their home which resultantly lead to lower number of women in all professions as compared to men. According to an International Labour Organization (ILO) report of 2022, 8.2% women expose to sexual violence and harassment at work. (ILO, Experiences of violence and harassment at work: A global first survey, 2022). So, sexual harassment is one of the challenges that is faced by women in professional life.

Despite the increase in participation of women in politics, the challenges faced by them in political life is far greater than any other profession. Women are subjected to harassment in ~~a~~ politics more than any other office because of their broader area of representation, such as 'the public'. Not only harassment, women in politics face other challenges as well. due to which there is still high number of men in politics than women. According to **Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU)**, "Women running for election face numerous challenges - including addressing discrimination or cultural beliefs that limit women's role in society, balancing private, family and political life, gaining support from political parties and securing campaign funding." That's why, it is considered as undivisable for women to go into politics.

As in traditional workplaces and institutions where women are the victims of harassment, the growth of women in technology is also hindered due to the modern type of harassment, the 'online harassment'. With many advantages of technology, one of the disadvantages is the online harassment.

and women, obviously, are its victim. This harassment not only impact the social and professional life of women, but also had psychological impacts. These psychological impacts include the fear of failure and feeling of inferiority from men that halted their way to pursue a career in technology. According to UN Women Executive Director **Sima Sami Bahous**, "Even when they (women) go into STEM, most of them will fail, not because of their aptitude, but because they have been conditioned to think this is not their space." (UN, UN Hears calls for governments, business and supervisors for Tech solutions to tackle violence against women, March 2023). So, due to any kind of harassment, the growth of women in any profession has been halted.

Although all countries, including the society backward countries, had empowered women to enjoy their professional freedom. But, there are still certain societies and their traditional social norms that provide unfavourable conditions for working women. In Pakistan, there is still the traditional concept in certain areas that women are responsible to look after their home and children even if they had to quit their professional carrier. **Dr. Khalid Masood Gondal** said, "Around 80% of medical graduation at present are women and only 20% of them serve as doctors after their marriage while the rest leave." This indicates that despite a professional degree, women still remain on the losing side of professional life.

The arguments given by the opponents that claim that women are on the losing side of professional life are baseless. Because the challenges that are discussed as a reason for lower representation of women in professional life are soluble. There are variety of solutions for a single problem in today's world. First of all, the first argument that Islam has given men the responsibility to support his family; therefore, there is no need for women to earn, is ~~base~~ mis-leading. Yes, men has the responsibility,



to support their family, but what about the family where there is no man? What about the family where man's earning is not enough to fulfill even the basic needs? And what about the family where man are unable to earn due to health or any other issue? So, in all these situations, women can either contribute or support her family as a whole through earning. This brings a woman again on a winning side when she takes the responsibility of her family through professional earning.

As far as the increasing number of women participation in professional life and their harassment at work place, as argued by critics, is concerned, it should be noted that beasts are everywhere. So, the concept that women are not safe outside their home is again mis-leading because the reality is that women are not even safe at home, too. According to SI41 2023 Global report, 1 in 3 women has experienced intimate-partner violence at least once in their lifetime (OECD, SI41 2023 Global Report: Gender Equality in times of Crisis, 2023). But this is not the end, there is a solution for this problem. Many countries, including Pakistan, have passed Women Protection Bill to protect women from any kind of harassment at any place. In Pakistan, the Ministry of Human Rights has passed "The Protection Against Harassment of Women at the Workplace (Amendment) Act, 2022" bill in 2022 to protect women at workplace. These kinds of protection bills not only protects women, but also encourage them to participate in professional life fearlessly.

While talking specifically about the increase in participation of women in politics, critics ~~are~~ raised the argument about lower participation of women in politics due to various challenges. But, as the modern and empowered women of modern world is backed by their countries & international laws, so the international forums have been established to help them out. Through these

Forums, political women from all around the world discuss various challenges and <sup>their</sup> possible solutions. One of the examples of such forums is "Forum for Women Parliamentarianism" established by Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) some ~~30~~ thirty years ago. This forum meets at every IPU assembly and discuss about the Women's political participation and gender imbalances in political representation. Through these forums, women minimize their challenges faced in political life.

The argument that the growth of women in technology is being halted by the misuse of technology, including online harassment is valid. But, that does not mean that women should stop thinking about career and future in technology. As the modern problem has modern solutions, so there are different investigation agencies that operates at state-level, regional-level and international-level to protect and register cases of online harassment against women. One of such agencies, in Pakistan, is Federal Investigation Agency (FIA). FIA has a special wing called "Cyber-crime Wing" that actively works on cases related to cybercrime. According to FIA record, the cybercrime has received 14,108 applications from January to August, 2021, of which 6,168 were complaints of sexual harassment (Talib Fareedi, Over 6k harassment complaints filed, August 2021). Although such organizations, specially in developing countries like Pakistan, needs some reforms to effectively counter such crimes, but the presence of these organizations is a proof to ensure women safety in digital world.

Among the disadvantages of technology, the most important advantage is online home-based jobs that empower women to pursue their professional carrier from the comfort of their home. This modern day solution has mostly benefitted the women that live in socially backward and developing countries with low carrier opportunity. For example, in developing countries of Latin America, the participation of women in online Gig platform / freelancing

is higher than the traditional jobs. Women participation in online jobs accounts for 52%, while traditional jobs accounts for 41% in Latin America (Jaffath Shareef et al., The Promise and Peril of Online Gig Work in Developing Countries, September 2023). So, due to social constraints and unavailability of jobs in developing countries, women are not sitting idle but are engaged in online work placing them on the winning side of professional life.

This discussion has proved that women are not on the losing side of the professional life. Although, there are certain challenges that are halting their way but every problem comes with its solution. ~~So,~~ <sup>And,</sup> by the effective implementation of these solutions eradicate the challenges from their roots. Moreover, in this contemporary world, finding a solution to a problem is not difficult. As **Constance Baker Motley** once said, "Something which we think is impossible now is not impossible in another ~~was~~ decade." Secondly, the increasing participation of women in different fields now, demonstrates the achievements of women rights' movements that were started in 19<sup>th</sup> century. Women would not have achieved that without the support from their family and governments. Therefore, in these achievements, the governments had also played an important role and are still working by giving/providing more opportunities to women. So, due to the courageous nature of women and with the support of their respective families and governments, women are on the winning side of professional life, not on the losing side.