

Gender Equality Is A Myth

Outline:

1- Introduction

Thesis Statement: Gender equality is usually considered a myth due to persistent disparities that women face in a society. However, the changing perception of people overtime about women's rights advocates that gender equality is achievable if the core issues are addressed properly.

2- Understanding the term "Gender Equality."

3- Why gender equality is considered a myth? (Thesis)

(a) Inequality in the social domain

- (i) The prevailing patriarchal system in society.
- (ii) Lack of education and health facilities
- (iii) Constant abuse, harassment and violence against women

(b) Inequality in political domain

- (i) Underrepresentation of women in political arena.
- (ii) Systematic challenges for women in politics.

(c) Inequality in economic domain

- (i) Less employment opportunities for women.
- (ii) Women are underpaid compared to their male counterparts
- (iii) Women representation in the field of technology and innovation is less compared to men.

4: Why gender equality is not a myth? (Antithesis)

- (i) Increase in the recognition of women rights has reduced the male dominance in society.
- (ii) The improved status of women in west indicates that gender equality is achievable.
- (iii) Women are now exploring the fields of technology and innovation.

5: How gender equality is still achievable? (Synthesis)

- (i) Equal representation of women in politics and policy making.
- (ii) Equal employment opportunities and wages as that of men.
- (iii) Access to health and education facilities.

(iv) Women participation in
STEM education should be
increased.

(v) Violence and abuse
against women must be
eradicated by all means.

6- Conclusion

The world that boasts about the progress and development it has achieved, that one from the medieval age had never imagined, when asked about the gender equality, it turns silent upon this bitter reality of the restless oppression of women prevailing in the world to this very day. Today gender equality is considered a myth. This is mainly because of the persistent disparities that women have to face in social, political and economic domain. In order to ensure equality, equal opportunities must be ensured in every aspect of life. Gender equality calls for the equal rights and opportunities for

women as that of men. However, this equality is considered a myth due to various reasons. When considering the social domain the patriarchal society and the lack of access of women to resources have resulted in the oppression of women. On the other hand the constant abuse, violence and harassment also played its role. From the lens of political and economic domain, women have also been underrepresented and is given less opportunities to play their role in politics. They are not given equal employment opportunities as that of men and are underpaid. However, the notion of gender inequality as a myth is now changing with time as more women are

coming to the forefront and are playing leading roles, empowering women around the world. This proves that gender equality is achievable if the challenges are addressed. By providing them with equal opportunities and access to fundamental rights, women can play their role effectively, which spurs productivity and economic growth.

Gender equality refers to equal rights, access to resources and opportunities for both men and women. However, the rights of one of the party i.e., women are violated the most.

Worldwide women face discrimination in access to basic rights like education, health, inheritance, employment opportunities and decision making etc.

Date: _____

Day: _____

Considering the case of Pakistan, the patriarchal system has played a major role in suppression of women rights. Pakistan ranks 148 out of 146 countries in the Global Gender Index Report of 2023, highlighting the need for the substantial improvement in women's rights and opportunities. According to the UN Secretary general, Antonio Guterres, the goal of gender equality will take 300 years to be achieved. Hence, the disparities need to be addressed to prevent this never ending suffering of women. Gender equality is perceived as a myth. This is because women have faced oppression for the centuries and even the most developed countries

of the world have failed to achieve equality and the provision of fundamental rights for all. This issue is multifaceted and can be seen in every domain of the society. If one considers the social domain, women are oppressed either because of the patriarchal system or because of lack of access to basic resources. Women are abused and constantly subjected to violence. In the political domain, again women is not given equal representation. In the economic domain, women do not get equal employment opportunities and incentives as that of men. This gives an insight to how women rights are being subordinated in nearly every aspect of life and

Date: _____

Day: _____

calls for equal rights for women as that of men. To begin with; equal rights and opportunities for women in the social domain seems elusive. The old traditions, norms and patriarchal system of society have restricted women to play their role in the society. Also, the lack of access of women to basic facilities has worsen the situation. This is more prominent in the third world countries where women face discrimination in education, health, and food etc. These gender disparities are not limited only to resources, women is also subjected to abuse, harassment and violence. A society can

can never thrive and prosper unless women can play their role equally as that of men. But this is only possible if this notion is accepted by men as well, as they are the main reason behind this imbalance in society and let women to play their role effectively. This will also reduce the economic burden from their shoulders too.

The major perpetrator of the idea that gender equality is a myth is the prevailing patriarchal system of the society. The male dominance in society have restricted the role of women. This dominance is mostly backed by the pre-existing norms, traditions

and religious ideologies. Women is mostly kept confined within the walls and is told to play the role defined by men. Though with time, the essential strands of gender equality has shown some progress specially in the west, but still in many parts of the world patriarchal system is dominating. Considering the cases of India and Pakistan, this male dominance have oppressed a big chunk of the society. Practices like Sati in India and the honor killing in Pakistan that can be seen in the case of gang rape of Mukhtara Mai from Punjab and many other similar cases says alot about the position of women

in society. Hence, these sufferings show how gender equality appears to be an elusive dream.

Another societal factor playing a dominant role in oppression of women is their lack of access to basic resources and facilities. Globally, women have a limited access to health and education facilities. This is because women are financially weak and largely depends on men to provide them with such facilities. Also, in the educational institutions, it can be seen that the number of male enrollments more than that of female. In Pakistan, large number of girls have never been to schools.

The World Bank report of 2018 reveals that nearly 26% girls and 19% of in Pakistan have never been to schools. Though the ratio of boys not attending school is alarming too, but in disparities can be seen in the difference of both without health and education facilities for women, a society can never grow to its true potential.

Among all other societal factors that hinders the role of women, the most alarming factor is consistency of violence, harassment and abuse against women all over the world. Unfortunately, in Pakistani society, the

gender based violence have become common. This include physical, emotional, psychological and verbal abuse of women. The rape and murder of 7 year old girl Rainab Ansari in 2018 is the outcome of this malice. According to the UN report in 2006, one out of every three women is abused in her lifetime. Also, the cases of women harassment specially in workplace, educational institutes or public facilities are on the rise. All these highlight the never ending sufferings of women in the society.

In the political domain, women have struggled for long to get equal representation, but this too seems elusive. Although

there are many women in political arena, but most of them had to struggle more than their male counterparts to be in that position. This trend can be seen worldwide where there are only few female head of the states as compared to men. USA that acts as champion of democracy and human rights never had a female President in its history. Those who calls for equal representation and rights end up facing character assassination just like in the case of Mrs. Fatima Jinnah ^{in Pakistan} and Hillary Clinton in US. Similarly women is restricted to participate in the electoral process too. Thus, if women is being held

back constantly society will not be able to function. The gender inequality in the political domain is evident from the underrepresentation of women in politics. Because of the norms and customs women are being told not to be a part of politics. Also, they are not given positions in the legislative and governing bodies. The societal stereotypes have often linked leadership with the masculinity, which discourage women to be into politics. Those who still take part into politics by going against the odds have to face character assassination and scrutiny. As per the Pakistan Institute of Development

and transparency, there is only 20% representation of women in national Assembly and zero representation of the third gender. Thus gender equality remains as an aspiration for many than as a reality.

Furthermore, the systematic challenges for women in the political domain further makes the equality elusive. Some electoral systems do not favor women's representation and vary's from country to country. Women in parts of the world is also restricted from even participating in the electoral process. Also, in many cases, the party politics further limits women's chance of winning the

office. Additionally, the negative portrayal of image by media play its role too. The introduction of gender quota in Pakistan was a positive step indeed. However, it often led to a form of proxy representation, where women elected on reserved seat is influenced by male party members and family. This further narrow down the role of women in politics.

Thirdly, in the economic domain, women are further deprived of their rights. Globally, women are financially weak compared to men. The gender specific social responsibilities assigned to both men and women plays a significant role.

In some indigenous societies women responsible for the domestic responsibilities like childcare and food. While men are the sole breadwinners. This leads to women dependency on men to fulfill their needs and also increase the burden upon the shoulders of men. However, the work sector offer very few employment opportunities to women, and those already working in different fields are underpaid. Also, in the area of technology and innovation, there is a consistent underrepresentation of women compared to men. Such economic disparities also prevent the women to contribute in society.

The first factor in the economic domain that highlights the gender inequality is the less employment opportunities for the women in a society. A society can only flourish if men and women are given equal opportunities. Giving equal employment opportunities will not only empower women but will also reduce the financial burden from men. However, the gender based stereotypes of women being physically weak or being less productive in work due to domestic responsibilities compared to men, results into less number of jobs being offered. Considering the case of Pakistan,

Afghanistan and Algeria, that rank at the bottom, with less than 5% professionals in senior positions being women. (World Economic Forum, 2023). The economic disparities further weaken the standing of women in society.

Another, alarming factor that put the economic disparities in the spotlight is woman being paid less compared to their male counterparts for the same amount of work and position. Equal amount of pay and the incentives are the basic rights. However, such rights of women are being undermined by the male faction of the society for their own interests.

This leads to the creation of the elements of hate and anger in women for men, abusing their rights of economic equality. A UN report of 2023, pointed out that women only make 77 cents per dollar compared to men. Such inequalities make the gender equality hard to achieve.

Moreover, the representation of women in the field of technology and innovation is less compared to men. The technology and innovation sector is considered as the major contributor to the economy of the state. Keeping women from contributing in this sector exacerbate the economic disparities.

Date: _____

Day: _____

From a very early age girls are being told to either to be a part of medical field or some other professions specified from women. In some parts of the world women are being told not to opt fields like engineering and technology as they are highly male dominated. Such limitations prevent women from opting to play role in such domains. According to the WIPO Development Studies, Women participation in international patent applications between 1999-2000 was only 23%. Hence, economic empowerment of women is not possible as long as they are restricted from playing role in such sectors.

Gender equality is no longer considered a myth as it was the case in past. Women are now playing an active role in various walks of life. Though discrimination and societal disparities still exist and in many parts of the world women is still oppressed. However, with the increase in awareness and campaigns on national and international forums women rights are now being recognized worldwide. The positive outcomes of such campaigns and movements can be seen in the western world. The notion of superiority of men has greatly reduced, and women are now

playing leading roles in the socio-economic and the political domain. This supports the idea that gender equality is achievable.

The changing social norms and culture and the increasing feminist movements have played a key role to change the overall perspective in the society. Though this acceptance is not worldwide but efforts are being made in this regard. Many societies have implemented legal reforms protecting women rights by giving access to basic resources. Such measures have reduced the male dominancy to

society to a great extent. Recognition of the fact that women can play as effectively as that of man is now making the man's superiority a tale of the older times. For instance, in sports, women have shattered the stereotypes of its strong connection with musculality.

Serena Williams, one of the greatest tennis players, has proved it with her exceptional skills that women can excel in any field, if given opportunity. Hence, the increasing recognition of women's rights and its positive outcomes supports the idea that gender equality is achievable.

Secondly, the improved status of women

in the west overtime, negates the very idea of gender equality as a myth. Many legal reforms have been introduced to prohibit the gender discrimination in every domain of society. Women's health care have improved and access to education is greatly expanded. Also, many women are now outperforming men in academics. Western world have seen an increase in the political participation of women also. In recent years, countries like Germany, New Zealand and Denmark have had female heads of state or government. However, achieving full gender equality is an on going process.

that requires continued efforts and commitment.

Lastly, the exploration of male dominant fields like technology and innovation advocates for the increasing recognition of women rights and the importance of achieving gender equality. Women are not only playing their role in socio-economic and political domain but are also excelling in the field of technology. by breaking all the stereotypes. Some of the most prominent examples include; Marie Curie, with her remarkable contributions in the area of radioactivity, is one out five people in the history who received Nobel Prize twice for her contributions

in both Physics and chemistry. The Pakistani computer prodigy, Anfa Karim, became the youngest Microsoft Certified Professional only at the age of 9. Therefore, the increasing role of women in technology is a testament to the fact that gender equality is achievable.

Gender equality is achievable, however, the process is long and requires concerted efforts at multiple levels. The deeply rooted norms and traditions must be addressed and the equalities in various domains of the society must be uprooted. Gender based reforms and policies must be introduced, women should

be given equal employment opportunities, women's access to the basic resources must be encouraged, women participation in STEM programmes must be encouraged and most importantly, the violence and abuse against women must be eradicated by all means. Thus, addressing the challenges above can ensure gender equality in society.

Firstly, to achieve gender equality, there is a need for the effective policies and legislation to protect the rights of the women. The law should include all the multifaceted challenges women face throughout their lives. Rwanda's

post genocide transformation included constitutional mandate for 30% women's representation in politics. This policy led to increased female participation and a significant socio-economic development in the country. This highlights the importance of women empowerment through effective policy making, while making the gender equality achievable.

Secondly, gender equality can be achieved by giving equal employment opportunities to women as that of men. Also, - the wage gap between the men and women should be removed by recognizing and acknowledging the work and efforts of women. Removing such

economic disparities can lead the society towards the path of progress. According to the UN Women report of 2023, increasing female employment rate in OECD countries to match that of Sweden, could boost GDP by over USD 6 trillion. This ensures that to achieve gender equality women must be given equal opportunities.

Thirdly, by providing access to basic facilities like health and education, gender disparities can be greatly reduced. Ensuring women's access to quality healthcare, including the reproductive health services, contributes to their well-being and empowerment.

Similarly, by providing equal opportunities of education can further enhance the role of women in society. She will not only contribute to society on herself, but will also enlighten the minds of young generations raised by her. The Scandinavian countries serves the best examples that when women is given access to basic resources and rights, gender equality is no more considered a myth.

Moreover, in order to ensure gender equality, increased participation of women must be ensured in STEM education. To play their role effectively as men and to

be recognized by the society, more and more women must be introduced to the field of technology and innovation. Though there are many women playing very exceptional role but women's representation compared to men is still very less. Initiatives like "Girls Who Code" or "ASME Women" have inspired many girls to pursue STEM education, challenging gender stereotypes. Hence, encouraging women to join STEM not only empowers them but also reduce the gender gap to a great extent.

However, one of the most challenging task in achieving gender equality is the elimination of

of violence, abuse and the harassment of women. A society can never flourish in which a big chunk of society that represents women are being constantly subjected to violence by men. The "Protection of Women Against Violence Act" in Pakistan is a notable example of legislative efforts to address this issue. However, more strict measures are required as well for the effective enforcement of such laws. Therefore, eradicating gender based violence is imperative to achieve gender equality.

Hence, it can be concluded that for centuries women rights have been subordinated by the

male faction of the society. They are oppressed in nearly every domain in the society either it is social, political or economic. The persistence of such miseries ^{have} generated a notion that gender equality is nothing more than a myth. However, with increasing role of organizations and movements have contributed a lot to negate this perception. The acceptance of women's rights in some parts of the world and the improvement in the status of women indicate that gender equality is indeed very much achievable and is not just a myth. Women can out-perform men in many

fields only if they are
given rights and resources.
If the core challenges
and issues are addressed
properly, women can play
a significant role in
upgrading the society.
