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BATCH: DB-59 (ISL)

ASSIGNMENT: ESSAY

TOPIC: Women Empowerment — a Myth or Reality

OUTLINE:

I Introduction

1.1 Hook

1.2 General Information

1.3 Thesis statement: The reality or the falsehood of women empowerment is a dubious phenomenon. At one point of the weighing machine, it would appear equal whereas on the other, either the myths of women empowerment weighs heavier or the truth of it weighs more. However, the women empowerment as a myth weighs heavier and as a result the weighing machine loses its equilibrium.

II MAIN BODY

2.1 Thesis: Sectors where women empowerment is seen as a reality.

2.1.1 Education Sector: opportunities for basic education. Jobs in schools, colleges and universities.

2.1.2 Health Sector: Jobs for females as doctors, nurses at hospitals and clinics.

2.1.3 Law Sector: Jobs and representation of females on legal grounds. Lawyers and judges in high courts and supreme court.

2.1.4 Business Sector: Women lead the fashion industry as well as the cosmetic industry. Renowned names include; Nabeela, Musarat Misbah and fashion industry has Marie B and Sana Safinaz as leading female designers.

2.1.5 Sports: Women are now seen in play grounds. Greatest examples include Pakistan Women Cricket team.

2.1.6 Politics: Women have been active in politics for decades now. Renowned names are Miss Fatima Ali Jinnah, Benazir Bhutto and Maryam Nawaz.

2.1.7 Media and Literature: Famous women anchors, journalists and writers, dramatists are seen in this field.

2.2 Antithesis: Rebuttal to the grounds where women empowerment is considered a reality.

2.2.1 Education Sector: Female education is worse in rural areas of Pakistan (which comprise 70% of the country). Early marriages is one of the many issues. No teaching facility as transfers to far away places happen. Conventional mindset prevails where male child is preferred.

2.2.2 ~~Ed~~ Medical / Health Sector: Female doctors find it hard to keep their jobs after marriage due to domestic responsibilities. Most females end up studying medicine so that they get a good marriage proposal.

2.2.3 Legal Sector: ~~At~~ Female lawyers and judges face a hard time in courts as many are bullied by their male counterparts. Less empowered female employment is also seen in this sector.

2.2.4 Business Sector: This sector too is male dominated. A handful of women CEOs are seen. Fashion industry and cosmetic industries also pose tough competition for women.

2.2.5 Sports: The conventional patriarchal psyche is seen here. Mention of a women sportsperson is met with weird expressions. Social conventions like tanning etc are also a hurdle for women in this field.

2.2.6 Politics: Women are discouraged to join such heavily male-dominated sector.

2.2.7 Media and Literary sector: Limited female anchors and journalists are seen. The rest are male. e.g. In PM's press conference, a women reporter asking questions, is a rare sight. Similarly, male writers are preferred.

III Conclusion:

- Concluding the essay with myths as the heavier side of the weighing machine.

THE ESSAY

Women empowerment being a myth or reality can be judged by looking at the empowered population of a country. If 100% of the population is working and empowered, then women empowerment is a reality as all the male and female citizens would contribute to the nation's progress. If the statistics say something alarming then the dream of women empowerment is indeed a dream. A country cannot prosper if both the genders do not contribute to the economy. Women have to be empowered if a successful, developed country is the goal. As M.A. Jinnah says, "No nation can rise to the height of glory unless your women are side by side with you."

The scale where the reality and falseness is measured seems to be out of balance because our present world and especially Pakistan has pushed women empowerment to the corner making everyone believe it is a myth.

No doubt, steps have been taken towards empowering women but these steps are synonymous to that of a tortoise. The education sector seems to be taking steps towards women

empowerment by making sure to maintain handsome statistics in female students' enrollment in various educational institutions. Education sector also provides job opportunities for females within the educational institutions. In Pakistan, teaching is considered a noble and safe profession for females as it does not, at most of the times, allow mix-gendered gatherings and the working hours are also feasible to most of the women. This sector has worked on women empowerment regarding the issues faced by females.

The Health sector, like the education sector, is also considered a safe working place for women. Medicine is seen as a noble profession for women by many. Women are respected and honoured when told that they are doctors. It provides better job opportunities as many people with conventional mindsets refuses to get their women checked by male doctors, so their recruitment in hospitals is highly encouraged. Women, both as doctors and nurses are employed in hospitals for the service of humankind.

The controversial sector for female employees i.e. the legal sector, is also seen doing well in women empowerment. In Pakistan women are seen playing

an active role in judiciary. High courts appoint female lawyers and judges to legally tackle issues. Supreme Court of Pakistan also have stepped forward in taking women as judges and layers, The with Judge Ayesha A. Malik as the first female judge of Supreme Court in Pakistan's history. This is a laudable step taken by the country's judiciary system.

Likewise in Business sector women entrepreneurs are encouraged. The cosmetic and fashion industry of Pakistan have notable personalities such as Nabeela, Musarat Mishal and Maria B, Sana Safinaz respectively. Women in business sector provides a soft image of Pakistan to the world and plays a vital part in boosting the country's economy.

Pakistan is witnessing a surge in seeing women in playing fields. Women, today, have joined multiple games where they represent Pakistan. The Pakistan Women Cricket team is worth mentioning here as it has gained fame on both national and international level. The team plays and carries with itself a softer image of the country. This shows women participation in sports sector and it also shows people accepting it.

Counting on sectors where women's active participation is seen, brings to mind women's role in the politics

of the country. Since the start of the struggle for a separate homeland, women are seen in politics. Notable female politicians include Fatima Jinnah who played a notable role in the Pakistan Movement. Benazir Bhutto is another noteworthy example securing the place of first female PM of Pakistan. In today's Pakistan, Maryam Nawaz is an active politician who is now serving as the first female Chief Minister of Punjab. Women are also seen taking active part in election process by being nominated as candidates for different constituencies across Pakistan.

Media and literary arena also houses a considerable number of women employees. Print media has notable names such as Mehr Hussain. Electronic media has many renowned anchors and analysts like Maria Memon, Asma Shiraqi, & Jasmeeen Manzoor and to name a few. In the field of literature, Pakistan has quite a big number of female representatives. Notable female writers include Umera Ahmad, Nimra Ahmad, Parveen Shakir and many more. Coming to screen literature, the Oscar Award winner Sharmeen Obaid Chinoy is worth mentioning. Pakistan's literary sector is quite rich

with female names.

The sectors claiming women empowerment is just one side of the picture. A graver and bleak picture is what makes the whole scenario shift to a different side. Since Pakistan has a patriarchal society with people possessing conventional mindsets, it poses a hurdle in the way of empowering women. This male-dominance and centuries old mindsets make women empowerment a myth in nations like Pakistan.

The education sector of Pakistan is seen a victim of this patriarchal system. The literacy rate of females is second low in rural areas of the country. 70% of the total population of Pakistan is sub-rural which makes the low literacy rate fold ten times. Female education is given less importance than male education. Male child is preferred over female while getting admission in schools. One of the many hindrances in female education is the early marriages. In addition to this, female teachers cannot fulfill their duties due to transfers to far away places. This affects their work-home balance and as a result quit the job. This leaves an impact on the overall employment of women.

which in turn effects women empowerment.

The hectic jobs of hospitals make female doctors and nurses to think twice before entering into the sector. Work and domestic life balance is again seen shaking. This leads to women not practicing medicine after they get married. This was mentioned in a BBC report of 2015 and 2017 that women leave their professional lives after getting married. Another horrible side of this scenario is that many women study medicine for the sole purpose of getting a proposal for marriage. As everyone is running after the material gains, they look for a potentially apt wife in all aspects. So, as a result, women empowerment is not up to the mark in health sector as well.

The legal arena for female employees is called considered controversial for a reason. Many young women are discouraged to join judiciary as it is one of the heavily male-dominated sectors of Pakistan. The employment ratio is considerably less in this sector. Female lawyers are bullied by their male counterparts. Female judges are forced to give a decision favoured

by the dominated party. By weighing all the statistics and scenarios, women do not opt for a job in this sector.

The business sector is also a male-dominated sector. A handful of female CEOs are seen running their businesses. The rest is completely male dominated. Fashion industry has renowned names of male fashion designers such as HSY, Deepak Parwani, Fahad Hussain and much more. In the same manner, fashion industry is also seen run by men. Famous names of male beauty artists include Wajaz Hussain, Wajid Khan, Kashif Aslam (Kashee's). Hence, the seemingly women-dominated sector is also run by men. This poses a picture of how women empowerment is limited to just books where in reality it possess its minor image.

The notorious sports sector - dominated by men for centuries is infact still dominated by men. The conventional gaze shatters women's confidence in the playing field. A scornful eye is set on every sportswomen by the patriarch's of the society. The conventional and baseless concepts make women think twice before choosing sports as their career. Mediocre reason such as tanning in the hot

often are given to discourage women from joining the sports sector. This speaks in length about the reality of women empowerment. Adding on to the reasons that make women empowerment a myth is their participation in politics and elections. Politics have long been a field of men. It is heavily dominated by men and chances of female politicians are flourishing in this field are none. The few names that are seen are those supported by strong male politicians e.g. Benazir Bhutto found place in this field due to the support of her father Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. The same goes for Maryam Nawaz; who is backed by the three-time prime minister of Pakistan - Nawaz Sharif. ~~So, this~~ The female candidates in election are taken lightly and the opponent who is a male is made to win without weighing their contributions for the development of the constituency. This discourages women from taking part in politics.

Moving further, comes the media and literary sector. Limited female anchors, journalists, writers, portesses are seen on the mainstream media. This sector is also a victim of

male dominance. Male writers are hailed and appreciated for instance, Khalil-ul-Qamar. Women writers, if any, are not given such exposure which discourages them. Female reporters are also few in numbers as in PM or other influential person's press conference, women reporters are hardly seen.

Concluding the thorough discussion in a single sentence that "Women empowerment is, indeed, a myth". Sects which claim women empowerment are in fact hollow claims. The reality of women empowerment is just that it is not put into practice. It is just taken as a celebratory phenomenon whereas if dug deep a bleak image comes to front.
