

# Frailty: Thy Name is Women

## Outline

### 1. Introduction

Attention grabber

Background

Thesis statement: The word frailty bounded with women is a misconception. Women are equally strong, capable, and intellectual as men.

### 2. Factors contributing to the misconception "frail women"

#### 2.1 Historically subjective role of women

2.1.1 cooking, cleaning, nursing

2.1.2 cultural norms and patriarchy

2.1.3 Feudalism and oppression of women

#### 2.2 Illiteracy emboldens the misconception

#### 2.3 Religious misinterpretation to undermine rights of women

### 3. Frailty: A misconception about women

#### 3.1 Pivotal role of women in politics

#### 3.2 women's significant contribution in science and technology

#### 3.3 Economic participation of women

#### 3.4 Monumental role of women in sports

#### 3.5 Women's prominent contribution in medicine

3. How this misconception can be countered?
- 3-1 strengthening women's position through legal means
  - 3-2 Increasing literacy rate and awareness about women rights
  - 3-3 Taking stringent measures against the clergy who spread misconceptions about women rights
  - 3-4 Breaking stereotypical patriarchal cultural norms

#### 4. Conclusion

### ESSAY

She is strong enough to give birth, brave enough to break stereotypes, and smart enough to lead revolutions - yet society still romanticizes her as "frail". Frailty thy name is women is a famous line from William Shakespeare's play Hamlet.

Prince Hamlet says this line when his father, king of Denmark, dies, and his mother marries his Hamlet's uncle. The prince considers his mother as emotionally and morally weak. However, women are neither ~~frail~~ frail in reality nor Shakespeare calls them weak. Women are equally capable as men. They have even surpassed men in various fields. Women have played pivotal role in politics, economy, sports, science and technology, and medicine. Certain cultural norms and religious stereotypes emboldened this misconception. Besides this, religious illiteracy<sup>also</sup> contributes to this fabricated norm. However, this misconception

can be countered through global awareness about women rights. Hence, women are not frail. They are equally strong, capable, and intellectual as men.

Firstly, there are various factors in history and contemporary times that blend together and fabricate the concept of women as weaker as compared to men. Historically, women have played subjective role like cooking, cleaning, caring, nursing and obeying <sup>the men</sup>. The patriarchy and cultural norms place women as lesser creation of god. They were devoid of right ~~of~~ <sup>to</sup> vote, right to education, and even right to lead in any decision-making. Along with patriarchy, feudalism also suppressed women's rights and freedom. Women have faced these oppressions and challenges, and they have fought against patriarchal dominance. But still certain factors persist that subjugate women in the society. These traditional norms that are socially-constructed contribute to women's frailty.

Another reason that emboldens the misconception of frailty and women is illiteracy. Lack of awareness and illiteracy push the nations far behind as compared to that of ~~education~~ educated ones. Today, developed countries with high literacy rates ensure women's rights and empowers them. But illiterate nations lag behind. Along with illiteracy, religious scholars and clergyman misinterpret the religion and declare women as weak. ~~and~~ they exploit ~~the~~ religious teachings and

use them for their personal polarized interests against women. One such example is recent statement from Jamat-i-Islami leader who said that women either belongs to home or grave. These kinds of extremist statements oppress women's freedom and contribution for the betterment of any nation.

The contributions of women in politics and global leadership is widely apparent. Myriad of examples exists in the world where women's role is substantial in politics.

Some examples include: Angela Merkel (former chancellor of Germany), Sonia Gandhi (served as president of Indian National Congress with longest tenure), Margaret Thatcher (former Prime Minister of United Kingdom), Hillary Clinton (United States Secretary of State). These are worldwide examples that counter the misconception of women as weaker creatures than men. Women have also served in Pakistan<sup>in politics</sup> and broke stereotypes of male-dominated society.

These include Fatima Jinnah who stood side by side with Quaid-i-Azam, and she showed political activism when she stood against Ayub Khan during presidential elections. Another monumental personality is Begum Rana Liaquat Ali Khan who worked for women rights, and participated in Pakistan movement as well. Benazir Bhutto became first women Prime Minister of

democratic states. Recent example of Maryam Nawaz is also a prominent ~~argument~~ personality. She is the first female chief minister of <sup>the</sup> province. She leads hearts of the nation with her efforts for public welfare and her charismatic personality. Hence, women are fabricated as frail but in reality they are not.

Alongwith politics, women <sup>surpassed</sup> ~~lead~~ men in science and technology. They bring inclusivity, innovations, and significant inventions. If women are educated and empowered, they can dominate ~~lead~~ the world of technology. Despite hindrances of male-dominated society, several examples of power-<sup>ful women</sup> exist. For instance, the names of Marie Curie and Peire Curie are unforgettable. They discovered radioactivity that gave a new age to physics and Chemistry. Another example is Dr Sara Qureshi, the first female aerospace engineer in Pakistan. She is formally working on a plan to reduce negative impacts of air carriers on stratosphere to reduce global warming. Similarly, Aqsa Karim became a sensation and youngest Microsoft certified professional in 2004. <sup>Also</sup> Caroline Herschel, a famous astronomist who discovered several comets. These prominent examples reject the notion of frailty as women. In history, almost seventeen women have received nobel prize in physics, Chemistry, medicine and Philosophy. Hence, women have equal intellectual capability as men and frailty is not name of women.

Additionally, women participate in economic progress and resilience. They play different roles <sup>for</sup> behind economic development of a nation. As the great leader Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah said, "No nation can rise the height of glory unless their women are side by side with them". Even in patriarchal society, women support their husbands emotionally and do household work ~~for them~~ <sup>for them</sup> to ~~prep~~ make them focus entirely on their work. Women contribute in economy as entrepreneurs, doctors, nurses, teachers, laborers in rural areas and even in business <sup>women</sup> ~~sector~~. They are also leading beauty industry. One such example is Mariq.B who has several outlets in Pakistan. ~~and~~ Hence, women's contribution is of immense importance for economic development. Case study of Bangladesh is a momentous example where women participated in garment factory. ~~and~~ Therefore, ~~the~~ women are strong and resilient in every sphere of life.

Furthermore, women, who were considered weak, are now leading in sports as well. Breaking stereotypes, women participated in sports and proved their capabilities. Various examples are present such as; Saina Nehwal (the Indian professional Badminton player also called "Queen of Badminton"), Sania Mirza (table tennis player), Sana Mir (became the first Pakistani woman to be inducted into ICC Hall of fame). Their performances at national and international

level proved that they can outdo man. These achievements highlighted that women are not weak psychologically or physically. Wrestling, which is considered a game of men but Ronda Rousey, is an American professional wrestler who created history in wrestling and she gave a clear message to the world that women are not frail in any perspective of life.

Similarly, role of women in medicine is also prominent. Women lead this profession with grace and confidence. Currently, there are more women in medical colleges than men. They serve as gynaecologist, nurses, dermatologist, physicians and lead these specialities. One historical example is of Dr Ruth Pfau who worked diligently and served Pakistan. She established almost 157 clinics across Pakistan and worked against Leprosy. Due to her immense dedication, WHO declared Pakistan as Leprosy-controlled in 1996. Women are serving across the country as residents, consultants, and heads of departments. This reflects their dedication, strength and resilience. It proves their intellectual capacity and counter the fabrication of women as frail beings.

The above contributions of women prove their strength and capabilities. However, the misconception of women as frail part of society can be countered through some steps. Firstly, the states should pass certain laws to

1) Ensure women's rights and freedom. Those who violate these laws should be persecuted strictly. In this way, women will feel safer. Along with legal safety, the government should provide education to the public. Education is an important factor for widespread awareness of women's rights. Many uneducated men consider women as lower creations and treat them unjustly. Women are also unaware of their rights of freedom and speech, and they consider oppressed men as their fate. Along with education, religious awareness is extremely important. Many religious scholars and clergymen misinterpret religion and spread false information. They should be treated strictly, and the government should hold them accountable for their misinformation. Every religion gives women the right to education and ensures their safety. Hence, these patriarchal norms should be challenged to empower women so that they can prosper nations themselves as well as their nations.

To conclude, patriarchy is not the name of women. It is a fabricated norm in the society to suppress women. These cultural norms ~~are~~ <sup>are</sup> due to historical factors, patriarchy, religious misinterpretations and feudalism. Despite these hindrances, women have proved themselves in major spheres

of life. From political leadership, economic ~~resilient~~ resilience to science, technology, sports and medicine, women earned their names and positions. Their contributions remain worldwide recognizable and reflect their strength. Hence, women should be empowered through <sup>their</sup> legal rights and breaking stereotypical norms. ~~the~~ Misconceptions about women should be wiped out. It is high time for the modern world to acknowledge strength of women and let them lead the world unprecedently.