

28/11/23

Essay: Women remain on the losing side in professional life.

Outline:

## 1. Introduction

Thesis statement: Gender disparity is a pressing issue worldwide. Although efforts are made to provide women with equal opportunities, but still women remain on the losing side in the professional life.

## 2. Correlation between gender disparity and professional life.

## 3. Why women remain on the losing side in professional roles (thesis)

- a) Financial constraints: low income as compared to men.
- b) Societal expectations and gender stereotypes.
- c) Permission to adopt few selected professions.
- d) Balancing work and family responsibilities.
- e) Underrepresentation in the executive roles.
- f) Work place discrimination.

## 4. How women are not on the losing side in professional life. (anti-thesis)

- a) Government policies and legal protections favour individual choices.

b) Shift in cultural perceptions: advocacy for diversity.

c) Women excelling in executive roles.

5. Despite efforts for gender parity, women still remain on the pressing side in the professional life. (Synthesis).

a) Patriarchal barriers: impeding women's advancement in professional arenas.

b) Cultural pressure and social stigma hinder women presence in professional roles.

c) Religious stereotypes promote gender biasness.

d) Low educational opportunities: low chances of employment.

e) Fear of losing social acceptance is a great obstacle in joining certain professions.

f) Gender oriented work environment refrains women from excelling in their professional life.

6. Conclusion.

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Women constitute half of the sky. According to Swami Vivekananda, "there is no chance for welfare of the world unless the condition of women ~~is~~ <sup>is</sup> improved. It is not possible for the bird to fly only on one wing." Women biasness is a burning issue worldwide. Women are underrepresented in almost all the stratas of life, including: education, decision making right, right to freedom, health opportunities, financial rights and <sup>the</sup> right of making individual choices. Of all the fields/spheres of life, women ~~are~~ remain on the losing side. But this discrimination is more prevalent when it comes the professional life. Women are not allowed to adopt the profession of their own choice. They are subjugated by ~~women~~ men in all the spheres of their lives. There are many reasons that hinder women to excel in their career. These include: financial constraints, social stigma of what others think, work place discrimination, and the responsibility of balancing work along with family. Although there are ~~to~~ <sup>women</sup>

who excel in their professional life besides household works and other responsibilities and enjoy freedom of choosing profession, but they ~~are~~ are few in numbers, as compared to those who are deprived of such liberty. Although Government policies and legal framework are designed to increase women advancement in professional roles, but ~~the~~ it is difficult to change the mindset. As a result, women remain on the losing side in professional life.

There is direct relationship between gender <sup>dis</sup>parity and the career opportunities for women. The more the discrimination on the basis of gender, the more pressing side of the women in their professional life. According to Chinese proverb, "women hold half of the sky". So, there is a dire need of making and implementing suitable measures to empower that half.

Although there are many reasons that refrain women from advancing in their careers, the chief among them is financial constraints.

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Women often earn less than their male counterparts for the same work. There are many causes of low income like discriminatory attitude, male dominated work environment and many more.

According to ILO, "In every country in the world, women continue to be paid less for comparable work than men." The wage gap narrowed only slightly over the past decade. Besides this, female financial inclusion rate is very low as compared to males. According to World Bank, "only 16% of women are employed in Orissa".

Societal expectation and gender stereotypes are the major constraints behind women success in their professional roles. Societal expectations and traditional gender stereotypes influence career choices. Women usually face prejudice or resistance while entering male-dominated fields. This discrimination is clearly seen in rural areas where most of the women are not even educated, as a result they are not allowed to even think of doing employment. It is believed that there are only few jobs for women. (5)

Women are accepted only as a teachers, nurse, doctor etc. They are not considered to be suitable for joining army, sports, politics etc.

This lead to giving permission of joining a few selected professions, which is another reason behind losing side of women in their career. Across the universities (both public/private), women are a significant minority in leadership positions. For example, only 15% of (VCs) and Rectors of Pakistani universities are women and they predominantly lead <sup>women's</sup> universities as VCs. (Women in higher education leadership, Dr. Hazir Ullah, 2023).

The responsibility of balancing household chores and work often impede women advancement in their professional life.

Women often bear disproportionate share of care taking responsibilities, which impacts their ability to commit fully to their career.

This challenge is often compounded by a lack of family friendly policies in the work place.

due to these reasons Pakistan scores 142/146 according to global gender gap index.

Moreover, underrepresentation in the executive roles often hinders women success and excellence in their careers. Women are often underrepresented in top leadership position across various sectors. The existence of "glass ceiling" indicates that women face hindrance preventing them from ascending to high level executive roles. Mostly women are not considered suitable for joining politics and becoming presidents, prime ministers etc. Their involvement in decision making bodies like parliament, senate, ASRB, Academic Council, Board of faculty, finance and planning is very low. They are a significant minority in such high/top positions. In Pakistan, women's presence in syndicates/Boqs is 17%, and their membership in senate is 15%. (Dr. Harisullah).

Moreover, workplace environment also undermines women's condition in their professional life. If there would be

discriminatory working environment, then it would have direct effect on declining opportunities for women in excelling their career.

Work place discrimination can include prejudice attitude while hiring women professionals, unequal opportunities for career advancement, and gender based harassment. These factors lead to a hostile work environment for women.

There are certain people who oppose this school of thought that there are fewer professional opportunities for women. They believe that government policies and legal protections allow women to excel in their professional life. They consider no example of developed countries ~~is~~ <sup>as</sup> evident that women are not <sup>on</sup> losing side in their professional life. They argue that significant progress has been made in recent years, with increased awareness and efforts to address gender inequalities in the workplace. They mention the examples of Scandinavian countries i.e. Iceland, Norway, and Finland that are at the top position according to



to Global Gender Gap report 2023.

The advocates of the women empowerment in the professional roles are of the view that there is shift in the cultural norms. They argue that evolving societal views are contributing to a more level playing field for both the genders in the workforce.

They gave the examples of countries like Singapore, India, which were previously on the verge of failure but emerged as the great successful countries.

The supporters of the anti-measures of women remain on the losing side in their career are of the view that there are numerous women who excelled in leadership role and made their countries proud. For example,

~~female~~ According to Kwok's research, "Hong Kong ranks first for enabling environment."

Female labor force participation rate in

Hong Kong is 53.82%. Hong Kong's first

female executive Carrie Lam tabled a

5 billion Hong Kong dollar education funding plan.

This shows women's success in their professional roles.

Although there are examples where women excel in their professional life, but their ratio is considered very low as compared to those remained on the losing side in their career. Women still remain on the pressing side. Patriarchal societies impede women's advancement in professional arenas. Especially male dominated societies do not permit women to join offices. Males are considered to earn and females to take care. Males are preferred to do outside job/work.

Moreover, cultural pressure also hinders women advancement in their professions. Due to social stigma, women can't get their dream jobs. They are not allowed to become an officer, pilot, politicians, singer, dancer etc. Their choices are marginalized just because of considering what others think. Lao Tzu said, "Care about what other people think and you will always be their prisoner."

Religious stereotypes is another obstacle in the advancement of women's professions. Religious extremism and stereotypes

~~the~~ refrain women to succeed in their career.

For example, in Afghanistan women are subjugated in the name of religion. According to Rafiq Zakria, "A new generation of Afghan women living under Taliban oppression is starved of hope for a better future."

Furthermore, fear of losing social acceptance is a great obstacle in career advancement especially for women. For example, if a woman wants to become a dancer or a singer or an actor, she has to face the consequences of going against the will of their culture and society. She has to be answerable to everyone for making individual choices. As a result, she preferred to console herself instead of answering to others. People ~~can~~ associate different titles with her, if she does follow her own choice of job. Thus, this fear prevents her to excel in her professional life.

~~Consequen~~ In sum, women have to face various challenges worldwide

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especially in developing countries to excel in their careers because of ~~many~~ social stigmas, patriarchal societies, low income, poor education, and household responsibility. As a result they are subjugated and are on the losing side in their professional roles.