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Essay

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Topic:

"The Evolving Role
of Women in Leadership
and Decision-Making."

Outline

A. Introduction

1. Introductory Statement
2. Thesis Statement: The evolving role of women in leadership and decision-making marks a transformative shift in societal structures, though challenges remain in achieving true gender parity.

B. Historical Evolution of Women in Leadership

1. Traditional exclusion of women from power structures

2. The rise of feminist movements

C. Current Global Landscape: Women in Leadership

1. Political leadership; women make 26% of national parliamentarians worldwide (IPU)

2. Civil society and grassroots activism; Malas Yeksaifan

3. Corporate leadership; Mary Barra, CEO of General Motors

D. Why Women in Leadership matters: The Impact;

1. Inclusive decision-making
"When women are at the table, the conversation changes." Sheryl

2. Economic productivity; advancing gender equality
3. Improved governance and transparency; countries with female leaders handled COVID-19 more effectively (Forbes, 2021)

E. Persistent Barriers to Women in Leadership

1. Socio-cultural and patriarchal norms—especially in South Asian and African countries
2. Institutional Barriers
3. Safety, harassment, and political violence

F. Women in Leadership in Pakistan

1. Historical example, Benazir Bhutto, Justice Ayesha Malik

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2. Currently 17.5% representation of National Assembly of Pakistan is under women leadership.

G The Way Forward: Strategies to Enhance Women's Leadership

1. Legislative reforms and affirmative actions
2. Capacity building and mentorship like UNDP
3. Media representation
4. Male allyship and gender-transformative policies

H. Counterarguments and Rebuttals

I. Conclusion

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"When women lead, we see positive outcomes - not just for women, but for entire communities." Antonio Guterres. The quotation of United Nations General Secretary shows the real essence of women, their role in society and positive contributions to world. There can be no real development and advancement without the inclusion of women, therefore, the advancements of past and of present are incomparable. Women have been marginalized in past because of patriarchal norms and societies, however, they are now emerging now as powerful agents of change.

in global leadership, politics, business and governance. Their role in modern era cannot be neglected. The evolving role of women in leadership and decision-making marks a transformative shift in societal structures, though challenges remain in achieving true gender parity. The role of women in leadership has been evolved positively, however, there is need of a dire attention to be given to address those problems which hinder ~~the~~ women from progress. The essay highlights evolution, contribution, barriers and future prospects for

women leaders across different sectors.

Traditional exclusion of women from power structures is the glaring point in history where patriarchal norms and colonial legacies excluded the role of women in leadership. The rights of women, voting rights and gender-based rights were neglected until the ~~20~~ twentieth (20th) century. The exclusion of women was normal and traditional. Similarly, the colonial legacies have also put their contributions in this dark regard. These made challenges for

women to progress. In short, historically, the negligence of colonial powers and tradition ~~are~~ kept the role of women in leadership aside.

The rise of women's suffrage and feminist movements was a milestone for women to provide a chance in playing their role in leadership. That evolution was the significant factor which compelled the patriarchal norms and societies to adjust women and accept them with new roles in society and in government. The feminist movement struggle bestowed women with

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voting rights and some basic rights. It can be stated that the rise of feminist movements opened a new chapter for women to play their role in leadership.

The above two paragraphs were about the historical evolution of women. The following paragraphs are about current global condition of women in leadership.

Political leadership of women in current global landscape shows a remarkable achievement where women play their roles in politics around the world. In modern day

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leadership, there are many women leaders around the world. Jacinda played a vital role in crisis of COVID-19 in ~~At~~ New Zealand. Similarly, Sheikh Hasina played a key role in Bangladesh's economic growth and women empowerment. According to IPU women make up 26% of national parliamentarians worldwide. In short, women have been playing key roles in modern day political ground around the world.

Women have also contributed in civil societies and grassroots activism in today's world. Their

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role of activism and agents of several societies' cannot be ignored. They are contributing in improving global education reforms as the advocates from different places of the world. There are famous personalities like Mala Yousafzai and Wangari Maathai from Pakistan and Kenya playing their key roles as leaders. To sum up, women have evolved positively in modern day ~~in~~ as civil societies and grassroots activists.

As mention ~~in~~ⁱⁿ ~~the~~ above paragraphs, women have not only played their roles in politics and civil

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societies, but also in corporate businesses. Mary Barra the CEO of General Motors the best example who has made her place in business and plays her role as a woman champion. Women's role in modern times has been replaced from a weak and dependent to a strong and independent leader. In short, women leadership can be seen and their positive and fruitful contribution in corporate businesses too.

Above three paragraphs about women's role in globally, however, the following paragraphs

show that why women leadership matters and its impact

Female leaders prioritize education, health-care and social protection when they are included in decision-making. Females are the real bearers of ignorance and deprivation, that is why they know and rationally are prone to take such measures when they are the part of a table.

As Sheryl says, "When women are at the table, the conversation changes"

It is a fact, when women are the part of a government in

decision-making, the policies will be not made ~~only~~ in narrow prism which may only represent males. To sum up, females do make a change when included in decision-making.

The role of women has a key impact as mentioned in prior ~~para~~ prior paragraph not only in inclusive decision-making but also in economic productivity. Their inclusion leads to a gender equality in economy. When half of the population is added, there will be much more. If they are kept segmented, the real advancement

and progress is not possible without their inclusion and participation. Precisely, women's role in economic productivity cannot be divorced from the success of overall nation.

With ^{the} same token, women inclusion in governance and transparency is key pillar that has a significant impact. Their inclusion leads to a more diverse and broader sense of handling the governance issues and bringing reforms which include the female segment also under the umbrella. According to

Forbes, females as leaders handled COVID-19 more effectively than of male leaders of countries. It shows a key insight and significance of women role as a leader. In short, women inclusion matters because of the above facts that a broader impact cannot be made if women's role is segmented in leadership.

The following paragraphs show few persistent challenges to women in leadership.

Women still have been victim of persistent barriers in leadership such

as gender stereotypes, double burden of work and home. In countries like; Pakistan, India, Bangladesh and African countries South Africa, Nigeria, Burkina Faso, etc are still in vulnerable condition to provide a full gender parity and their rights. Socio-cultural and patriarchal norms are still dominating these countries. In such societies, a true gender parity does not exist. Hence, it can be stated that patriarchal norms and socio-cultural norms are the barriers against their roles ^{such as} ~~in~~ leadership.

Similarly, institutional

barriers, safety, harassment, and political violence are dominating factors that hinder women to play their roles in such countries. According to United Nations, 82% of women parliamentarians faced psychological violence. It is a glaring fact that stops women from progress and suppress them against their will.

Similarly, it is a general observation that ~~in~~ countries like in Asia and in Africa, the economy, parliament and other key leadership roles are captured by the males. It is undeniable

fact that they are still many barriers for women that hinder their progress

The following paragraphs are about regional focus where women has a key roles; especially in Pakistan.

By turning the pages of history, Benazir Bhutto and Justice Ayesha Malik were the first women prime minister globally and ^{first} woman appointed to Pakistan Supreme Court. The evolution of women in leadership can be witnessed obviously in historical key leadership

positions. Their roles as the Prime Minister and first appointee to Supreme Court of Pakistan were motivation for other women to come forward and play their roles. To sum up, evolution of women in leadership has been the part of Pakistan from its history.

As in historical leadership women had ~~made~~ evolved and played their roles in leadership, also today in Pakistan 17.5% representation in National Assembly (2024) is a notable fact. Women have evolved,

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their roles have evolved and their inclusion is also notably evolved. The women who would be represented by less informed male representative are now being represented by women in both houses of Pakistan. Rabeha Durrani the Education Minister of Balochistan, and other female members of both houses are the women ambassadors who are controlling key positions and leading. In a nutshell, currently the representation of women is significant and notable in Pakistan.

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The following paragraph will show way forward to enhance women's leadership.

The way forward strategies shall be taken to enhance women's leadership such as; legislative reforms, affirmative actions, capacity building and mentorship. In countries like; Rwanda has 6.1% female parliamentarians. It is a very low representation percent. The percent shall be increased by allowing women to freely participate without being judged or restrained by patriarchal norms. Similarly, programs

like Women's Leadership Program (UNDP), and Lean in circles be promoted to provide broad and various platforms. To ^{be} precise, legislative and affirmative actions are significant solution to enhance women leadership.

Media representation and male allyship policies shall be helpful to enhance women leadership. It is not the only fight of women for progress and better but also of males. The impact is general and broader, that is why media narratives for women leadership and

male allyship be promoted.
To sum up it is essential
to enhance women
leadership by positive
media representation
and male allyship to
make a great change.

In last, ^{it has been argued} ~~that~~ ^{that} quotas
undermine meritocracy
and also ^{has} ~~been~~ ^{that} women
lack leadership experience.
As rebuttal, quotas do not
undermine meritocracy
but it enables fair
competition and corrects
structural biases. Moreover,
systematic exclusion limits
experience; when given
space, women excel.
In short, women are also
~~him~~ like men; they can

contribute, participate,
make the rules and especially
become a leader.

To make a long
story short, women's
evolving leadership is not
just a gender issue,
but a governance,
development, and
justice & imperative. "The
fastest way to change
society is to mobilize
the women of the
world." Charles Malik. It
is a fact that a true
equality and gender-equal
rights cannot be achieved
without them. On the
contrast, ~~women~~ women
in leadership has been

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evolved and now making a greater impact than yesterday. Similarly, their contributions in today's world cannot be ignored, # however, for a more equitable and prosperous world, leadership must reflect the diversity of its people—including its women. To sum up, it is a daydream to achieve greater progress or advancement without women in leadership.

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