

Championing Equality: A Liberating Feminist Discourse in 'I Am Malala'

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Abstract:

This paper aims to explore the elements of liberal feminism in I AM MALALA the memoir of the youngest Nobel Laureate Malala Yousafzai. The paper critically examines her memoir to examine the unheard voices, gender inequality, and patriarchy and marginalized societies in Pakistan. Malala faced adverse challenges imposed by a patriarchal society but raised her voice against ongoing discrimination and the Taliban's onslaught against girl's education. Her journey for the cause of girl's education remained resilient and determined. This paper emphasizes on finding out the contributing factors in her journey of a liberal feminist. In the context of Mary Wollstonecraft, and Betty Friedan's liberal Feminist framework, this paper unveils Malala's struggle in advocating women's rights and critically evaluates Malala's courageous defiance of oppressive society and system. The book 'I am Malala' emerges as a liberal feminist discourse championing equality.

KEY WORDS: violence, marginalized, feminism, gender inequality, liberal feminist, patriarchal society.

Introduction:

Feminism is not about one gender being superior to the other, it is simply a belief in equal rights for both men and women. Feminism is a movement to cease sexism, sexist exploitation and oppression (Hooks, 2000). In Pashtun patriarchal society, women experience inequality and oppression in the form of deprivation of basic rights. They are denied equal access to education, job opportunities, and the freedom to express themselves. Malala Yousafzai, born in 1997 in Swat Valley, bravely opposed this discrimination, particularly the denial of education to girls

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by the Taliban. She grabbed global attention for her outspoken activism after surviving in assassination attempt. “The militant said they attacked the girl for her pro-peace, anti-Taliban and, secular, agenda” (DAWN Newspaper, 2012). Malala Yousafzai started working for women education and speaking out against the bane on girl’s Schools from Taliban in her region. Her efforts were internationally recognized and become the youngest Nobel Peace Prize laureate in 2014 when she was just 17 years old and Malala Yousafzai expends her activities beyond education and includes gender equality concerns. Her memoir *I AM MALALA* she shares her experience and her struggle for education and gender equality. In her words ‘feminism is another word for equality’ (Yousafzai, 2015). Malala Yousafzai is explored by different writers and critics differently. She is considered as a Muslim feminist, a child’s rights activist, an educationist or an activist for girl’s right to education. Her fearless efforts and commitment to empower women have recognized her as an influential feminist globally and inspired many others to join her movement for gender equality and world-wide access to education. This study exclusively examines the liberal feminist aspect of Malala Yousafzai.

Literature review.

Juliana Daniels Ofori (2013) displays the condition of Ghanaian woman in her in-depth study “The Feminist Voice in Contemporary Ghanaian Female Fiction: A textual analysis of Ama Darko’s *Faceless and Not without Flowers*” who faces certain feminist issues in African society. The study explores the nature, causes of issues and some other possible solutions of these issue. The study is conducted for the advocacy of woman’s rights and alarming feminist issues of African society. (1)

Malala Yousafzai tries to identify some feminist issues facing by Pakistani and Pashtun women. She knows these issues are the root cause of disempowering the women of conservative society. So, it is essential to identify not only those issues but also have some applicable solutions of these issues.

Woman even in 21st century is considered second class citizens or others. This practice should be stopped now not for the sake of

feminism rather for the sake of realism. Nature has created both equally. No superior and inferior concept can be found in nature. Then gender balancing is indispensable, and everyone should respect the need and wants of women and allow her to perform all tasks done by man. Malala appeals for gender equality and is sure about the abilities and skills of modern woman.

Bhutto (2013) on Malala Yousafzai's fearless and still controversial memoir states that the efforts Malala has made for the Pakistani girls' education are unquestionable. She is courageous and bold. Her book, 'I AM MALALA' has touched the hearts of every Pakistani. She has talked about many other political issues of Pakistani politics besides her campaign for girls' education. (2)

Malala, though has talked much about the politics but her main concern is the women's right. She knows about the oppressed feelings and chained freedom of speech in Pashtun society. She speaks up, speaks up and speaks up to encounter the rules made by male dominated society against women in her book, 'I AM MALALA'. She gives voice to all those voiceless women who are chained and repressed by men.

Rafia Zakaria (2013) in her commentary "Malala, the Muslim Feminist" declares Malala as a Muslim feminist within the boundaries and limitations of her culture. She not only adores her culture but also criticizes when it comes to the rights of women. The commentary condemns the demands of west feminism from Muslim feminists to leave their culture and faith. Malala proves herself a Muslim feminist by adopting her culture, faith and tradition. (3)

Malala's struggle for girls' rights is not limited to Pashtun or Pakistani women. She speaks up for every woman living everywhere, whether she is Muslim or non-Muslim. She respects her culture and traditions but does not allow any trait of her culture to destroy the rights of any innocent. She is truly representing her culture through her dresses, her gestures and her styles but her speeches, her struggle, her efforts are beyond the culture and tradition.

Morrison (2014) in 'I AM MALALA, a review of the book and its implications for education' asserts that Malala is a young campaigner of female education. This book is a good attempt for the growth of females'

quality education, and also identifies the core issues of women and their access to education. (4)

If woman is empowered the whole nation will be strong and it only can be possible if women are educated. Women constituted one half of the society. So, if one half of the society is oppressed, subjected, marginalized and repressed then how can one think for progress and development? So, it is essential to know about those hurdles which stop women to be independent and empowered.

Data analysis: The theory applied on this research paper was a liberal feminist theory. Liberal feminism is a particular approach to obtain equality between men and women that emphasizes the power of an individual person to stop discrimination against women. (Science, 2015) This theory was so close and relevant to this topic as the step and the struggles of Malala Yousafzai did for the empowerment of the women were almost same as done by famous liberal feminists. Malala accentuated on some basic rights like quality education for all without any discrimination, equal opportunities for women on work place etc. Same were the objectives and goal of liberal feminists. Mary Wollaston craft, John Stuart Mill, Betty Friedan, and Rebecca Walker are the eminent feminists associated with this theory.

Descriptive research is designed to provide a picture of a situation as naturally as it happens (Grove & Burns, 2011). In this paper descriptive study was used to get the image and opinion of Malala yousafzai.

Thematic analysis is the most common form of analysis in qualitative research. It emphasizes pinpointing, examining, and recording pattern (or themes) within data. Free from violence and threatening, gender inequality, equal opportunity to education, patriarchy, freedom of expression and state should not curb personal liberties of individuals were the emerging themes in the book, I AM MALALA to depict her as a liberal feminist.

Feminism:

Feminism is about achieving gender equality, asserting that the differences between men and women are not inherent but created by society. Feminists believe inequality arises from social and cultural

factors that must be addressed. They assert that status of every woman, regardless of whether she is a homemaker or working woman is equal. Feminism wants legal, political, educational, and other reforms that will permit women to choose lives that are compatible with their own interests and talents rather than accept those that are imposed on them by others (Gassman, 2006). (5)

Liberal Feminism:

The roots of the liberal feminism lie back in 18th and 19th centuries during the era of enlightenment, promoting equality, women's right, liberty within the existing framework of society. They work for legal and political reforms in order to grant equal rights to women especially in the field of education, suffrage and employment. Mary Wollstonecraft, was the pioneers of liberal feminist movement, whose work "A Vindication of the Rights of Woman" (1792) debates for equal legal rights and education for women. Her focus on education as a source of empowering women and enabling them to fully engage in society remains a primary principle of liberal feminism.

Another liberal feminist, John Stuart Mill, in his essay "The Subjection of Women" (1869), also urges for gender equality, addressing social norms and traditions that bounds women's freedoms and opportunities. "Man is judged on his actual interests and abilities, a woman's interests and abilities are limited in certain ways because of her sex." (Jaggar, n.d.).

Liberal feminism continues to progress, evolve, embracing to contemporary issues and advocating for equal opportunities in education, employment, politics, and law, seeking to deconstruct institutional hurdles that bounds female's advancement. "Liberal feminism believes that sexual inequality can be corrected if women, now confined to the domestic sphere, are integrated into the public sphere as equals to men" (Bandarage, 1984).

1: Being free from violence and threatening:

Liberal feminists support a situation free from any kind of violence against women and Malala advocates for such a condition for women. She shivers with fear when she is told by her father that women

in Afghanistan were beaten and even locked up just for wearing nail polish. This kind of violence against women is not justified. Punishing women for wearing nail polish which is purely personal and a harmless act is atrocious. A woman should be free to choose what she wants to wear.

Violence against women does not belong to a specific culture, region or country, or to particular groups of women in a society. The only objective of this violence is to keep women subordinate in this system of men (Ellsberg, 2005). Malala speaks loudly against keeping women away from laughter in Afghanistan. Malala Yousafzai does not estimate this worst situation of women easily. She believes this is an emotional violence. This unbelievable situation frightens her, this is an act that badly hurt her emotions and feelings it weakens a woman emotionally and mentally. Malala speaks for all these unheard women whose tongues are with them but controlled by men hence, they cannot use it without the permission of men. "When the whole world is silent, even one voice becomes powerful". (Malala Yousafzai, 8 october 2013). **"But the Taliban would shout at them and threaten them until they stayed at home. One talib could intimidate a whole village. We children were cross too". (6)**

Malala describes the situation of Swat her home town where Taliban threaten and shout at women to frighten them. The only crime of these women is going to the local market and buying things of their own choice. So by verbal attack and hate speech they forcefully keep women inside homes and make them obedient and tame. She is disturbed when she hears about the whipping of people publically. Malala Yousafzai denounces every kind of violence by any one either male or female.

Dishonoring a woman is not an acceptable act for Malala publicly or secretly. She is against banning women from going outside their homes.

Socially, women have rights to go to perform different kinds of duties. They can go for shopping, for entertainment, for refreshment, for job, and for medical treatment. Sometimes a woman come out due to some compulsion so this is totally unfair to frighten and horrify women on their way. Malala Yousafzai herself was scared by this situation. She

says that only one Talib has all the potentials to frighten the whole community. Even children are not exempted. So, Malala Yousafzai as liberal feminist argues about this brutality and violence.

“My first diary entry appeared on 3rd January 2009 under the heading I am afraid: I had a terrible dream last night filled with military helicopters and Taliban. I also described something that happened on my way home from school: I heard a man behind me saying,” I will kill you”. (7)

Malala started her dairy for BBC with a nickname Gul Makai and first day she wrote with a heading ‘I AM AFRAID’. She wrote that I was afraid from all the terror spread by Taliban in our valley, sleeping at night was a nightmare for me and I had terrible dreams ever since the Taliban emerged in our valley. I was even frightened while coming back to home. Once I heard that someone was saying that I will kill you and I felt as if he was following me. When I turned back, I found him talking on phone with someone else. Fear prevailed everywhere in valley and she herself felt it. That is why she broke her silence and started writing dairy to tell the world of her fear and her people’s fear. She, like other liberal feminist, does not bear an environment fully saturated with fear and stress.

“I showed them the uniform I couldn’t wear and told them I was scared that if Taliban caught me going to school, they would throw acid on my face as they had done to girls in Afghanistan.” (8)

Here Malala is afraid of being burnt by acid if Taliban saw her in school uniform. This is why, she avoids to wear her school uniform. Like all liberal feminists Malala too wants freedom from this fear and violence. She does not want to continue her study under the shadows of fear and violence. What a difficult situation when a school girl in very young age is afraid of wearing school uniform. And is afraid acid can be thrown on her face. Violence against women is an immediate problem, we cannot wait for it to be solved and we know that when we work to eradicate violence against women, we empower our greatest resource for development; mother raising children; lawmakers in parliament; chief executives; negotiators; teachers; doctors; policemen; peacemakers and more. Moon (n.d.)

“A teenager girl wearing a black burqa and red trouser was lying face down on the ground being flogged in broad daylight by a bearded man in a black turban. ‘Please stop it! ‘She begged in Pashto in between screams and whimpers as each blow was delivered. ‘In the name of Allah, I am dying!’ You could hear the Taliban shouting, ‘Hold her down. Hold her hands down.’ At one point her burqa slips and they stop for a moment to adjust it then carry on beating her. They hit her thirty-four times”. (9)

Malala narrates the brutality of Taliban. She says that Taliban hit a teenager girl in the presence of big senseless and wild crowd. None of them had the courage to stop a bearded person from beating a young girl. They all were so calm as if they were watching a movie inside a theater, rather it is was a source of entertainment. This is the extreme kind of violence women were subjected to at the hands of Taliban in Swat. No religion, no state, allows this violence. It is against the religion Islam to treat woman badly. A Malala is horrified and discusses her outrage deeply in her book when you see violence against women and girls, do not sit back. (Moon, n.d.). The girl is begging; she requests that ‘I’m dying please stop it’. But Taliban do not stop beating rather they keep doing so. They say hold on her hands as she might be trying to stop them. Malala Yousafzai hates this situation. She recounts the sufferings, challenges, fears and agonies experienced by every girl of her region under the rule of Taliban’s.

2: Gender inequality: Gender inequality in the society is expressed deeply by Malala in her book. She predicts about hers and her friend’s future when they grow up. She knows they would be kept inside the home to serve and cook for their fathers and brothers. Malala says that she along with her mother could not go outside without male companion even if the boy is just five years old. While man would roam freely. The society has set different rules and regulations for man and woman. Man has been given free hand while women have been kept in chains. Malala targets all these biological differences as liberal feminists do. Theoretically, liberal feminism claims that gender differences are not based in biology, and therefore that women and men are not all that different. (Lorber, n.d.p.9) The question arises why do some societies

treat them differently. Girls from very young age are assigned domestic responsibilities that they have to perform in every circumstances. They are often deprived of education because parents continuously inculcate their tasks in their minds to serve the men. They know they cannot escape this situation and, in their sub, conscious from very early age they accept these roles as the only option. This situation is not acceptable for Malala Yousafzai as all liberal feminist fight against this gender discrimination.

“But, as I watched my brothers running across the roof, flying their kites and skillfully flicking the strings back and forth to cut each other’s down, I wondered how free a daughter could ever be”. (10)

Malala Yousafzai observes this social disparity. She wishes for a day when girls will also move freely without any chains in this society. I am a feminist and we all should be feminists because feminism is another word for equality. (Yousafzai, 2016). She believes in the equality between men and women and questions the restrictions that are only made for girls. Religion tradition, culture, dignity and honor all these are to subjugate women. Women’s role is determined by men who think women can and should only perform domestic tasks and consider anything they do outside the home as characterless. Malala does not agree and asserts that both genders are created with the same human and spiritual nature. Women must be given equal space and opportunities as men. “We cannot all succeed when half of us is held back.” (Malala Yousafzai, 8 October 2013; yousafzai)

“School wasn’t the only thing my aunts missed out on. In the morning when my father was given cream or milk, his sisters were given tea with no milk. If there were eggs, they would only be for the boys. When a chicken was slaughtered for dinner, the girls would get the wings and the neck while the luscious breast meat was enjoyed by my father, his brother and my grandfather”. (11)

Malala explores the gender inequality when she talks about her father’s life in his village. We observe gender inequality so clearly and vividly when Malala narrates that boys are assured their superiority at home when cream and milk are presented to them while girls are with just tea without milk that makes girls feel inferior. Moreover, the

luscious breast meat of chicken is always for brothers and father while neck and wings for girls. So, they are not only deprived of education but also from balanced diet. All good things for boys and all leftovers for girls. Furthermore, man in villages sit upstairs to show their superiority while women down stair to demonstrate women they are inferior, "I raised my voice not for shouting, but for those voiceless who are not heard." (Yousafzai, 2014)

The extent of Malala's desperation on seeing the oppressed position and status of women in Swat is visible when she says she would rather be a vampire of Twilight than be a girl in Swat. The reason is only that here in every case woman has to suffer. She is punished for all those things she is not responsible. She has to pay for every known and unknown mistake. In this male dominant society, a woman leads her life in tension and sufferings. She cannot live a relaxed life. So, it would be better to be a vampire and meet all challenges.

3: Equal rights to education:

Education is the fundamental human right but in Malala's Swat militants blew up many Girls schools to stop girls from getting education. Here she tells how the famous and well reported schools like Sangota Convent School for Girls are blown up. She cried on being deprived of her basic right to education. These extremist Taliban don't know the religion Islam that itself makes it obligatory for every man and woman to get education. If they have knowledge of their religion, they would never snatch the rights of women to get education. (Onaid, 2016) Liberal feminists want equal opportunities to get education and Malala Yousafzai supports their cause by raising her voice for her basic rights. "One child, one teacher, one book, one pen can change the world" (yousafzai)

"They cannot stop me. I will get my education if it's at home, school or somewhere else. This is our request to world – to save our school, save our Pakistan, save our Swat". (12)

Here Malala speaks loudly for education, not only for herself but also for her countrymen and for her valley Swat. She knows the value of education, and only education could save her country form

every evil like corruption, jolting economy, derailing democracy, unemployment, poverty. The strength of the country lies in an educated society. She mentions in her book “, when someone takes your pens, you realize quite how important education is” Education for everyone is a must. No country can ever truly develop if it strangled the potentials of its women and deprives itself of the contributions of half of its citizens. (Michelle, 2014) Malala says I will get education at any cost and I will move for it to anywhere if they stop me from going to school. They cannot hinder my ways leading towards education. She requests to the world to save them, their country and valley, their future and their education. Liberal feminists believe in equal access to education for male and female. So when boys are permitted to go to school and girls are banned, she comes out like a liberal feminist who raises her voice against this discrimination. ‘Our voices are our most strong weapons.’ (Yousafzai, 2013)

4: Target patriarchy:

She mentions in her book the birth of her brother which brings a lot of happiness to her mother’s face. She further says that his every wish was like a command for her mother. Why does her mother show her affection towards her son only even wants a new cradle for him? She did not demand a new cradle for her daughter. The birth of daughter is never celebrated in patriarchal society. Though father of Malala is so liberal and treat son and daughter equally, even then her mother is not blissful. This is just because of the tradition and custom set by patriarchal society where a woman is only honored and accepted if she gives birth to male child. This shows the insecurity of women in patriarchal culture. Malala feels this culture in her society and her mother’s happiness on boy’s birth is the reflection of the society. In her book "I Am Malala," Malala Yousafzai expressed thoughts on patriarchy: "I raise up my voice—not so I can shout, but so that those without a voice can be heard...we cannot succeed when half of us are held back." Women’s position becomes weak by giving birth to girl baby. She feels herself subjugated, repressive and it is a kind of shame for her. Medically, women are not responsible for giving birth to male or female child, rather man is totally responsible for it. The society however does not consider this scientific

fact instead they declare her responsible. Malala feels herself uneasy and wants to bring revolution in her society. We want to say to our sisters around the world to be brave, to embrace the strength within themselves and realize their full potential (Yousafzai, 2015).

“Most Pashtun men never do this, as sharing problems with women is seen as weak. He even asks his wife! They say as an insult”. (13)

Another ill custom of the patriarchal society is to subjugate women by keeping them on arm's length in private and public affairs. It has been considered a weakness of man to share his affairs and problems with his wife or any women close to man. Malala condemns this tradition of her culture. This act is only to prove women weak, feeble, less intelligent and untrustworthy. They believe that women don't have wisdom neither they have the caliber to discuss with them the issues. Civilized man says: I am self, I am master, all the rest is other-outside, below, underneath, subservient. I own, I use, I explore, I exploit, I control. What I do is what matters. What I want is what matters. I am that I am, and the rest is women and wilderness, to be used as I see fit. (Guin, n.d.)

“Khalida had been sold into marriage to an old man who used to beat her, and eventually she ran away with her three daughters. Her own family would not take her back because it is believed that a woman who has left her husband has brought shame on her family”. (14)

In male dominated society it is not permissible for a woman to leave her husband house even though she is facing the worst brutality. Malala narrates a story of lady Khalida who is forced to get married with older man and he used to beat her. So she escapes from there with her three daughters. In this society man is free to treat a woman harshly but when she refuses to accept the hardships, it becomes the matter of shame for man and family. Women in this society where Malala lived are not free to make choices. She argues in book, ““We realize the importance of our voices only when we are silenced.”

They are supposed to only conform and become objects of male's sexual desire, which requires an abandonment of a wide- ranging capacity for choice. (Dworkin, n.d.). Is it allowing in liberal feminism to

tolerate cruelty and brutality silently? Can a man face the same situation? Never, then why is he so harsh toward women. Why a man (a son, a father or husband) hesitates to protect the freedom of women and allow her to spend her life without any external interference. Will she face this situation forever? Why should we be silent? Why don't we speak up for our rights? Why don't we tell the world what is happening? (Yousafzai, 2013).

“My mother always told me, hide your face -people are looking at you. I would reply, it doesn't matter; I'm also looking at them, and she'd get so cross”. (15)

Her mother always advises Malala to cover her face (she is just a kid) because people are looking at her. I have a face why should I hide it(Yousafzai). Her mother's attitude is a reflection of the male dominant culture where even a young girl is not safe. Her mother insists her to conceal your face in order to save her from the ugly eyes of man as women are soft targets woman for them. In such environment woman cannot move freely due to strange attitude of man. Patriarchy, reformed or unreformed, is patriarchy still: its worst abuses violent or foresworn, it might actually be more stable and secure than before. (Millett, 1970).

5: Civil liberties and freedom of expression:

Freedom of expression is an important principal of liberal feminists. They strongly favor freedom of expression equally for man and woman. So Malala shows her deep consent with this principal by mentioning the act of wali (king of Swat valley), who expels the person from the valley for criticizing him. I want freedom for full expression of my personality. (Gandhi, n.d.) Wali, the king of Swat made so many advancements. He worked for the welfare of masses, abolished the taxes, built schools and colleges for inhabitants of valley. But one thing he snatched from them was freedom of speech, expression. All those useful works he did for masses couldn't compensate the freedom of expression. Freedom of expression is the basic need of human beings. One can enjoy life when he has the freedom to speak out. So, if one goes against any ill act of king, he could not stay any more inside the valley. Malala speaks up against this slavery and believes no nation can nourish and survive until unless they have freedom of expression. We realize the importance

of our voice when we are silenced. (Yousafzai, 2013) freedom of expression is essential for any state or government to progress and development. So if someone tries to snatch it, definitely it would have serious repercussion on the state and citizens. That is why Malala favors freedom of expression like other feminists do.

In "I Am Malala," Malala Yousafzai expresses: "We were scared, but our fear was not as strong as our courage." This sentiment indicates the importance of speaking out despite coping the adverse situation.

“Neither the students nor the teachers were supposed to have their own opinions, nor the owners’ control was so tight they even frowned upon friendship between teachers”.
(p.37) (16)

She shows her displeasure when she talks about her father who works in a private school as English teacher where freedom of expression and thoughts are strictly forbidden not only for students but also for teacher. Owners are all in all, they want supremacy over teachers and students so they can do it, fair, or unfair without any interference. They don't like even friendship between teachers as they may unite against them. Malala being a liberal feminist strongly believes on freedom of expression without any distinction between men and women. So here when freedom of speech is taken from male section, she speaks, irrespective of being man or woman as she believes on equality of sexes. I believe in equality. And I believe there is no difference between a man and woman. I even believe that a woman is stronger than men. (Yousafzai, 2015) The freedom of expression ensures the honor, respect, confidence and dignity of people.

6: State has no role to curb personal liberties of individuals:

Liberal feminist intensely opposed the ideas, instruction from state or any coercive body imposed on individual. They are in view that state should protect the rights of individuals rather to impose something considering best for them. So, Malala condemns the act of Zia- ul- haq (ex-president military dictator of Pakistan) who even tells the individuals how to pray and for setting up salat prayers committee all over the country. Prayer is religious ritual and religion is personal. No state, no power can interfere in this matter. It is comprehensively personal act; no

one can dictate how to do it. None of us live in the same state (mental, physical), nor we share the similar feelings, emotions. So, if you think you can force people to follow a path, you will fail terribly. (Joshi, 2016)

“They were forcing men to grow beards as long as a lantern and women to wear burqas. Wearing burqa is like walking inside big fabric shuttlecock with only grille to see through and on hot days it is like an oven”. (17)

Here again comes the matter of illegal power of the Taliban who rule and destroy the private and public lives of individuals. They make it their principal and core responsibility to tell the masses how to lead a life and what is best for them in acquiring success. So, they compel not only man to grow a long beard but also women to observe purdah (veil) in order to marginalize them. There is no compulsion in religion (Quran). Women in the burqa, which is like a tent over head with only three-inch gauze near to eyes, move like a wild animal unaware of the actual direction. It becomes so hot in summer. Malala like other liberal feminists, wants every person to live his/ her life according to their own ways and need. Everyone must feel free to be in burqa or without burqa. At least they must be free to make their own choices. I believe it's a woman's right to decide what she wants to wear and if a woman can go to the beach and wear nothing, then why can't she also wear everything. (Yousafzai, 2016)

Conclusion: In conclusion this paper examining the feminist themes that run across Malala's book finds out that Malala evidently is a strong proponent of feminism. She clearly believes in the core ideas and philosophy of liberal feminism. She demonstrates this by challenging patriarchy in all its forms and is very open about what she faced and saw as a young girl. She does not hesitate to tell stories of how girls are treated as inferior beings inculcating in them a fear, therefore they accept subjugation. She also challenges the state's authority over how education is imparted while curbing personal liberties of men and women both. Walking us through the Taliban's time in Swat she asserts how Islam is misinterpreted by them. Malala does not hesitate to give personal examples and uncovers the patriarchal traditions that are carried on by women in her case her mother who advises a girl child to cover her face. This provides another face of pervasive patriarchy due to the

general structure of the society where men have power over women and women have to carry out the decisions men make. Being unable to play as a girl childlike boy is what Malala faced and she informs the readers many of whom not knowing these societies would be shocked by this as she was just a child but in actual practice this is what happens.

Malala through her book not only highlights the grave challenges women face in achieving equality but also demonstrates herself as a liberal feminist which if interpreted correctly and shared with those who could not read her book can be very enlightening.

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