[Name of the Writer]

[Name of Instructor]

[Subject]

[Date]

**Paper on Diary of Lady Muraski**

There is a constant struggle for the equal rights of the women and a positive gender role. However, all around the world whether it is Europe, Africa or Asia, gender role is something that regulates the pattern of society. Male and female consider their role in society based on norms, traditions, mentality, and stereotypes which formulate culture. Most of the nations have male dominant society where female have lower rank and are bound to follow specific roles. Gender role and participation of male and female determine the prosperity of the nation. The main purpose of the paper is to analyze the two-story *The Pillow Book* and *The Diary of Lady Murasaki* for comparing and understanding the gender roles through the work of two famous female Japanese writers. It will be helpful to understand the gender roles among Japanese people where it is observed that American culture was based on male dominance and female were supposed to stay at home or able to avail limited opportunities in early time.

The pillow book indicates the fact that women need the support of men to accomplish their goals. They were linked to the men of the society at home as well as in professional life. The author of “The Pillow Book” highlighted the love for the father and selection of her professional that was based on the interest of his father. The role of the male publisher had impact on her life who was a lover of her father and later made relation with her love of life. The whole story indicates how different circumstances came into the author's life due to the different behaviour of men around her. On the other hand, “The Diary of Lady Murasaki” revealed that male has a strong role and influence in the lives of women. She wrote about the situation and condition that she faced after the death of her husband. She expressed her feeling by expressing her thoughts of loneliness that were unbearable. In addition, the role of her father was also important to her life. According to the story the culture was expressed as a male dominant society where the female child was not able to acquire knowledge. However, the author was lucky enough whose father gave education to both his child equally and she became able to join literature. These two stories indicate that men had a great influence on the condition of the women where even the success of the women was unable to eliminate the need for male support in life.

The Diary of Lady Murasaki highlighted the fact that being a girl was difficult in society. Men had more power than women in both personal and professional life. The lines were written by the author that "When my brother Nobunori ... was a young boy learning the Chinese classics, I was in the habit of listening with him and I became unusually proficient at understanding those passages that he found too difficult to grasp and memorize. Father, a most learned man, was always regretting the fact: 'Just my luck!' he would say. 'What a pity she was not born a man!” (*The Diary of Lady Murasaki, 58*) indicate that even after having the father's support and intelligent mind her father was unsure about her future because she was a girl. When she entered into the professional life and became the part of court her name became unknown. It is because women were known by the rank or name of their male relatives “father or husband”. In the story “The Pillow Book", the author discussed the similar gender role in the imperial court surrounding. She explained that the language of the literature was determined based on gender. Female was supposed to write in Japanese while male wrote in Chinese language and most of the business interaction were conducted in Chinese. It indicates that women had a special role in the society as they wrote in the Japanese language which was used by common people hence had a great influence on society.

Men were more involved in professional life while women served their home more. In society, female get the role as the caretaker of the home and children while men look after the business and financial situation of the family. Both the stories on different occasion highlights the gender role where “The Pillow Book” author looked after her child after the death of the husband along with professional life. A similar situation happened to the author of "The Diary of Lady Murasaki" whose husband died and she got pregnant and later gave birth to a daughter. Both the women were educated and linked to the literature, however, being a woman and mother she took family and profession side by side. Both the stories are in the form of diaries which means the authors wrote about their thoughts, perceptions, and thinking rather than considering the choice or attention of the readers. It shows the empowerment of the women who were allowed to express their thoughts. In addition, men were on higher-ranked and designation handling the business and matter of court. Both the stories also experienced discrimination and cruelty by the men in the court but no-one pointed them because they were men (*The Pillow Book*).

Therefore, it can be concluded that both the stories “The Diary of Lady Murasaki” and “The Pillow Book”, portrait the gender role in Japanese society through various life experiences mentioned in the story. Men had a dominant role as compared to women but women were not bound to the houses. Women had limited opportunities but they were able to contribute to the society professionally.

**References**

*The Diary of Lady Murasaki*. https://www.goodreads.com/work/best\_book/111499-murasaki-shikibu-nikki. Accessed 7 Oct. 2019.

*The Pillow Book*. https://www.goodreads.com/work/best\_book/639833-makura-no-s-shi. Accessed 7 Oct. 2019.