

GS SCORE

An Institute for Civil Services

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TEST COPY

DEEPESH KEDIA

Rank - 36

Essay Mock



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ESSAY

Time Allowed: 3 hrs.

Max. Marks: 250

Instructions to Candidate

- Both sections are compulsory.
- Attempt an essay from each section.
- Each essay carries 125 marks.
- Write each essay in about 1000-1200 words.
- After finishing the first essay, attempt the next on a fresh Page.
- Any page left blank in the answer-book must be crossed out clearly.

(Examiner will pay special attention to the candidate's grasp of his/her material, its relevance to the subject chosen, and to his/ her ability to think constructively and to present his/her ideas concisely, logically and effectively).

Remarks

Name Deepesh Kedia

Mobile No. _____

Date _____

Signature Deepesh

(Written on 1/14/15)

1. Invigilator Signature _____

2. Invigilator Signature _____

SECTION - A

1. Politics without ethics leads to disaster
2. Beware the Barrenness of a Busy Life
3. Gender equality is a more than a goal in itself.
4. Forget success if you are without mission.

SECTION - B

1. Democracy cannot succeed unless those who express their choices, are prepared to choose wisely.
2. Civil servants convert political mandate into reality.
3. Science never solves a problem without creating ten more.
4. We don't have to Sacrifice a Strong Economy for a Healthy Environment

Gender Equality is more than a goal in itself

Goals are like targets. You achieve one, and then you focus on another. Goals are meant to achieve something bigger. They serve a larger purpose. Even in football matches, teams don't score goals for the sake of scoring it, they do so to win the match. Similar is the case with goals meant for gender equality.

Gender equality, in itself, is a concept and a very large and important one. It is a state that our society is striving to achieve. In order to achieve, we have broken it down into several components and set individual targets for each, such as sex ratio, enrolment levels, wage parity, health goals, etc. Thus, we ought to achieve on all these dimensions to

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reach a state of gender equality.

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the basis of a girl's figure or her family's capacity for dowry. Instead, it would be a relationship of equals between two rational beings, who would choose each other on the basis of competence.

In a similar way, after the marriage, the woman alone won't be restricted to household works. Instead, both male and female would share the responsibility for the household. In fact, why are we making so much advancements in technology, when we can't put it to good use. These 'Smart' machines could be used to finish the household chores quickly, and then both can. The

On a similar note, the discrimination against men would also be stopped automatically. Today, a large part of discrimination against men is in fact because of the inequality to women. Thus, once there is a state of gender equality, there won't be any need to 'reserve seats' especially for women. Also, men won't be seen with doubt for every crime in the society. Also, there won't be automatic expectation that the man should earn more than the wife. Men too would be given more freedom and opportunities to pursue their interests for career, rather than being buckled down by societal expectations for being ~~the~~ a settled man by mid-20s to 'earn' a 'beautiful' spouse.

Thus, we are quite clear, about what kind of a society do we

expect in the name of gender equality.

Clearly, this can't just be a goal. This is much more than that. It is a state — the penultimate one — in the evolutionary progress of our society (the ultimate being a state of utopia — complete equality).

And even more so, this is a state we need to achieve as quickly as possible. We cannot afford to flounder here, like we have on so many goals in the past (take for example the Millennium Development Goals).

So let us look ~~to~~ at what can be done to reach this state.

Achieving Gender Equality.

As we had seen earlier, gender inequality doesn't represent a gap in just one or two places. Instead, it represents a gap in virtually every domain of our life. Therefore, a multi-dimensional approach needs to be adopted with the underlying theme of change in mindset [the ultimate ~~goal~~^{path}] achieve this state.

In this regard, governments all across the world, and specifically in India, are doing their bit.

Several key areas have been identified in this regard and goals have been set for each. Achievement of these goals in each direction would bring us a step closer towards gender equality.

The key areas identified are: politics, economy, social, health, legal, and administrative.

Thus, achieving political equality, through adequate representation in democratic institutions would provide them strength, confidence, respect and the delivery of results would bring change in perception. However, just reserving 33% seats in PRIs or doing so in parliament won't serve the purpose. True gender equality would manifest itself when even without reservation, there would be equal number of men and women in the democratic institutions. Take the case of Canada in this regard, which is way ahead of us in terms of gender equality and recently saw selection 10 men and women in the cabinet.

Thus, the goal may be to achieve parity in representation, but the purpose is gender equality, and in a way, both are mutually reinforcing in the sense that true gender equality alone would bring

equal representation truly.

Similarly, on economic front, more empowerment is being attempted through compulsory presence of a woman on company's board of directors, launching schemes like Rashtriya Mahila Kosh to promote women entrepreneurs, setting up banks like Bharatiya Mahila Banks, providing cheap credit, directing cash transfers and homes (under JAG)

In the name of woman head of family and many more such steps.

An unsaid goal in this regard could be equal contribution of women to the GDP, or equal participation in workforce. However, again, that would simply represent a state that would be automatically achieved if there is true gender equality.

On the social front too, we are targeting higher education levels, better healthcare, protection from crime, minimization of gender bias, end of

dowry, etc. For each, we have set goals like equal enrolment at all levels of education (currently, a parity at primary level has almost been achieved), reduction in maternity mortality ratio, a child sex ratio of 1. However, once there is an end to the discrimination against women, gender equality would automatically set in and these goals achieved.

We can arrive at similar conclusions with respect to legal rights, participation in administration and other fields.

But as mentioned earlier, these goals in isolation mean nothing and cannot even be achieved.

To achieve gender equality, we need gender sensitization. We need to entrench among the minds of people, both men and women, about the

idea of gender equality. Although it would take some years, but it can surely be achieved. This would involve affirmative action on the part of the state (as it is already doing) along with an all out campaign to entrench in the minds of people, what it truly means and why should be there. There is a need to appeal to the rationality of people, sensitize them about the effects of horrors, the society commits upon them. The biggest problem or challenge is that men often do not understand the problems of women or take them for granted thinking that they are destined for drudgery. In this regard, a video series was released by a reputed Youtube Channel, named 'Man's world', which presents before the viewers a society, where world is turned upside down and

role/
situation of men and women gets interchanged.

Dissemination of such a strong idea of gender equality requires strong and innovative ideas like the above one.

After all, for hundreds of years, we have been accustomed to a particular way of thinking and changing this would be hard.

Thus, gender equality would represent a state of mind—a state of collective conscience of the society, which ^{be}would/is measured on the basis of our achievements of various goals on different parameters.

We don't have to sacrifice a Strong Economy for a Healthy Environment

Astronomers say, we are an accident. Biologists say, we are an accident. Even the geologists say, that we are merely an accident. What do they mean? They simply bring the common underlying fact—that our existence on this planet is an accident, and the most rare one at that. It took a staggering 4.5 billion years, for the known universe to have a life of an intelligent species like ours. But ironically, and stupidly enough, we are bent on nullifying that accident by degrading this life supporting environment at an unprecedented rate to make our life impossible on it in the near future.

The question is, why ~~is~~, despite knowing all this?

The answer is the greed to live a better life without knowing what that means.

Well at least till a few decades ago, this was the case. We ran after the idea of consumerism, attempting to develop technologies better than before in order to make our life more comfortable, but actually making it more uncomfortable in that pursuit.

Today, however, the world has identified the need for sustainable development as essential for the survival of our species.

Keeping aside metaphysics, and talk from the perspective of an economist, development is essential to improve quality of human life, so that he can live up to his aspirations and is not deprived.

of opportunities in this pursuit.

As the evidence from all the developed countries of the world suggests, this is possible only through a strongly booming economy on a sustained basis.

But the problem is, — ~~that~~ ^{This} strong economy is driven by strong economic market situation with high demand and supply of goods and ~~this~~ so that more and more money passes through hands of more and more people and, as a result, people's financial condition is strengthened, allowing them to pursue their aspirations. But the problem is — this method of development or economic growth apparently runs counterproductive to the interests of the environment as it is damaged.

Impact of Strong Economic growth on environment

Such a pattern of growth has touched every aspect of environment / biosphere — land, air, water.

Talking about land, there has been massive degradation of soil, leading to large scale desertification in large tracts of world, thus restricting our ability to grow food and feed the exponentially growing population. Similarly, poor waste management has led to pollution of soil with various toxic metals like Mercury, Arsenic, lead, etc.

Talking about air, the impact has been even more drastic with the potential to wipe out life from earth. If the pattern continues. There has been rapid rise in CO₂ levels since industrialization began and beyond a certain

point, the global warming would make life for humans and several other species impossible on earth.

Climate change is a fact and we can't ignore it. Similarly, ozone levels plummeted few years back, resulting in penetration of UV rays through the atmosphere and causing cancer. Positively, through global cooperation, success has been achieved in restoring it back to earlier levels to some extent.

Water pollution is another massive problem and some argue that the next world war would be over fresh water. Eutrophication, the process of contamination of water bodies through runoffs from agricultural fields and industries has degraded water quality, eroding life inside water bodies to a large extent and threatening life of those outside equally. At the same time, underground water tables are receding

like never before and erratic monsoon has made life harder with cycles of floods and droughts hitting the same regions (e.g. Bihar).

How to maintain the balance

Fortunately enough, we are an intelligent species and having recognized the urgency for action, we have devised various strategies to counter above problems.

The problems of land degradation and desertification can be handled through switching to organic farming, use of drought resistant, less-water intensive crops, following practices proposed in initiatives like Sustainable Sugarcane Initiative. For waste related problems, proper scientific

urban waste management practices can be followed, which would involve better urban town planning, with special provisions for waste management such as dumping pits, etc., promoting practices like composting, vermicomposting, etc.

To preserve the air, focus on renewable energy is already there, with new avenues like offshore wind plants, floating solar plants, use of biofuel etc. The govt. of India has set ambitious targets for renewable energy with more than $\frac{1}{4}^{\text{th}}$ of energy need to come through it by 2030. However, owing to the high costs, more global cooperation is needed. More countries should contribute to research programmes like Global Apollo programme in order to reduce cost. There should be quick consensus on goals for renewable energy and acceptance of common but differential

Responsibility to achieve success here. For climate change, global cooperation becomes especially important as it affects all simultaneously and more or less equally.

Besides this, reduction in energy intensity of GDP through less energy intensive consumption such as LED bulbs, green buildings, public transport is necessary.

Massive afforestation programmes are essential.

People can also realize the potential of agro-forestry.

For water too, similar steps are already there in public knowledge, example, water harvesting, water purification technologies, recycle, reuse and minimum use of water, etc

Where do we stand?

When so many solutions are already available in public domain, why are we still worried? It's because their implementation is largely ineffactory. Although it hasn't been long since we realized about the urgency for a reality check and change, we have moved slowly since...

The reasons are multifold. At the international level, countries are still unable to build consensus on roles and responsibilities. Despite global organizations like UNFCCC, countries have backed out from responsibilities (like US from Kyoto protocol). Targets have been laid through goals such as Sustainable Development Goals, conventions like ~~the~~ United Nations convention to combat Desertification, Nagoya protocol, Stockholm conference, etc. But either there is lack of seriousness or lack of resources, or both, at the national levels.

Countries cannot just stop developmental activities on hitherto patterns, as it would bring the country to a standstill. For implementation of programmes, resources are required, which are being mobilized more and more sincerely by the governments.

Thus, the way ahead involves two-fold strategy — first, the government must continue to spend resources and combat ill-effects of development ~~by~~ ^{to} bringing in sustainability in growth.

On the other hand, public must also realize its responsibility and show prudence and sincerity in expending the resources.

If both the stakeholders work collectively, then an intelligent species like ours, which has even reached Mars, can definitely handle a problem of our ~~to~~ own doing.

If not so, it would greatly disrupt the inter-generational parity and soon we would ~~be~~ undo the accident done by the nature.

The path is clear and the choice is ours.

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