

Roll No. _____

Time Allowed: 3 Hrs.

Max. Marks: 250

Instructions to Candidate

- Attempt both essays
- The test carries 250 marks.
- Write each essay in about 1000-1200 words.
- 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).

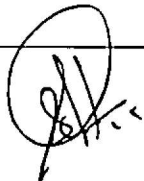
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Date _____

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1. Invigilator Signature 

2. Invigilator Signature _____

Remarks

11-8-19

ESSAY TEST-2

1. ONE IS NOT BORN, BUT RATHER
BECOMES A WOMAN

What is womanhood? It means

Introductory
is
not
briefly
addressed
the
core
issue
of the
topic
- Good

different things for different people. Some say womanhood is about care. Some say it is about grace, compassion and purity. Almost certainly, most narratives suggest a sensitive, ever-ready, chaste and peaceful person for women. And yet, a look at the 2016 Olympics medallists from India suggests very different stories. Mary Kom tells a story of dominating strength, P V Sindhu tells of unrelenting tenacity, and Sakshi Malik tells of lionine determination. This massive contrast sparks the question as to whether one is born a woman, or one becomes a woman.

In the book 'The Second

Sex', Simone de Beauvoir distinguishes between two concepts of sex and gender, even though both are colloquially used interchangeably. Sex refers to the biological differences between men and women. Women are mostly smaller in size and have a reproductive role in their life cycle. These differences are often present in most species, from mammals to reptiles. But, only among humans, has these differences been cited as a disability or a disadvantage.

This is attributed to 'gender' which means the cultural meanings attributed to the basic biological difference between men and women. Traditions dictate that women are destined to a life of raising children and performing the household chores of cooking, cleaning, etc.

Understanding
of the
difference
between
sex and
gender
is
the
point

The reasons for the above phenomena are many. Childrearing practices take the prime position among them, because it is the first step to transform a newborn baby who is born equal, into a 'woman' with all the ~~in~~ feminine qualities. Forms of dress, behaviour and play subconsciously inculcate this difference. For example, girls wear pink, don't engage in violent sport like football, and play with dolls, which is essentially symbolising motherly roles.

①

The society, in the past and in the present, explicitly devalues feminine qualities. Reason is valued over emotion. Physical strength is valued over moral fortitude. Impersonal impartiality is valued over compassion. Gay

Kasparov once controversially claimed that chess is a men's game because ~~the~~ women are incapable of making rational difficult choices, which may involve sacrificing one's units for the greater good. This judgement is largely an unfair generalization, denying the inherent abilities in women.

② Kasparov himself was forced to swallow his words after he was beaten by Susan Polgar^{11th}, showing that women's emotional ability does not translate to a rational inability.

Throughout the history of modern civilization, religion has been a uniting factor, and one common theme in all major religions is attributing an inferior position to women. Women are not allowed into the sanctum sanctorum in Christianity, Islam and Hinduism, along with restrictions on priesthood. Recent Sabarimala and Temple Talaq controversy are clear evidences which show religion's critical role in 'manufacturing' women's persons.

through a host of disabilities.

Other social instruments like caste, ^{ethnicity} play an equal role. Rules of caste ~~inter-caste~~ endogamy and gotra exogamy has transformed into parental and social control over women's ^{sexuality} and reproduction choice. In ^{Dharmashastra} ~~Kashmir~~, if a ~~untouchable~~ man marries a woman outside the ^{caste} ~~state~~, he has no ^{social} ~~legal~~ disabilities but if a woman does so, she loses her right to property. On the contrary in tribal societies untouched by such social stratification, women enjoy a position of respect, with high economic engagement and development indicator.

Media is also responsible in creating the feminine myth, best seen in the 'Bechdel Test'. It involves ~~a series~~ three questions - whether a movie has at least two women characters, whether the two characters have names, and whether they have at least two

conversations regarding any topic other than a man. More than 60% movies fail the Bechdel Test, because women's characters often merely exist to help motivate the male hero to achieve his goal. There is little wonder a society watching such ideas every day demands the same.

Feminists attribute all these influences under the umbrella concept of 'Patriarchy'. It is both an ideology and a structure. As an ideology, it ~~declares~~ states that men are inherently superior in marketable/valuable skills than women and children. As a structure, it ~~tries~~ ensures male dominance through social and political institutions, created by men, for men.

The IMPACT of this

process is complex and multifaceted. Also, should've explored the role of biology in breeding dependency for women.

4

From Point 3 to 4 Reason have been clearly with good content quality.

Social disabilities, as explained earlier, translates into economic disabilities: ~~to~~ Indian women's labour force participation is less than 24% while women's share is 75%. Even when women participate, it is mostly restricted to 'pink' sector of teaching and nursing; both of which are underpaid 'caring' professions. Women are denied higher education opportunities and ambitious job dreams.

Can also add:
Double burden of work
Gender pay gap
Glass ceiling
Maternity benefit induced disadvantages

Women are denied their role in social leadership through politics, helping perpetuate patriarchy. In India, women Lok Sabha MPs in 2019 is only 14%, and globally, only eleven countries have women heads of state out of 192. Even when they participate, women are merely proxies ~~for~~ for men, as seen in the Sarpanch Pati syndrome.

Female
Footicide.

Social evils are a direct manifestation of it. Sati and female infanticide required a century long battle by social reformers to bring down to manageable levels. In contemporary times, it manifests in the form of rape. Kathua, Unnao, Nirbhaya and Mathura cases show a long history of this, even though issues like marital rape are never even acknowledged.

The end result of this is a cruel perversion on the very idea of womanhood, creating a 'Feminine Mystique'. Women themselves emerge as champions of patriarchy, as seen in traditional ~~form~~ and urban families alike. The idea of an independent identity of women has been drowned in a matrix of other social identities. As a result, it is much easier to mobilise women on matters of religion, rather than women's own issues.

However, these ideas have been debated considerably. Radical Feminists, like Kate Millet writes in her book 'Sexual Politics' that differences between men and women are not something to be ashamed of and "equalised". It calls for a different approach; of embracing ~~the~~ the differences as valuable elements. ~~Women must~~ It would result in women being respected for what they are, rather than on the bases of standards set by men.

Its a good & insightful point

Cultural differences ^{is} also cannot be ignored. The problems faced by an American fashion victim is considerably different from that of a female Kurdish refugee. Patriarchy is itself multidimensional, turning into 'capitalist patriarchy' in the west or 'brahmanical patriarchy' in India.

The way forward is difficult, because major sections of women themselves resist change, due to internalization of distorted cultural ideas. ~~Solutions~~ Solutions must be multipronged -

Steps
taken for
improving
women
conditions
has
been
propagated
Explains

① Disabilities must be removed through legal and constitutional mechanisms. It includes social disabilities like Triple Talak or economic disabilities like "glass ceiling effect" and wage disparity. Recent steps increasing maternity leave and Visaka guidelines of Supreme Court are good steps and need to be followed up.

② Norms and identity must be shaped to affect a social reconstruction of reality. Norm entrepreneurs like ~~some~~ some celebrities and sports heroes must be engaged to dispense popular myths. Media and awareness campaigns must be leveraged to create a "norm cascade".

But, the first step must begin neither each and every one of us, in accepting that present reality is unjust and needs to change. Status quo might seem comfortable, but as Malala Yousafzai said, "No nation can prosper with half of its population unfree, just as a bird cannot fly with just one wing". Rwanda has achieved massive successes in this regard, with more than 60% legislators being women. India and the world needs to realise the time for change, is right here and ~~not~~ now.

Conclusion
in the line
with
the
topic

(65)

- * Understanding of the topic is really good.
- * Need to incorporate the role of biology in affecting women's condition.
- * Also should include the steps taken by the government for women empowerment.

2. INDIA VS BHARAT: IS IT STILL RELEVANT

Article 1 of the Indian Constitution declares that "India, that is, Bharat, shall be a Union of states". The presence of both names of Bharat and India showed a lack of consensus on the very idea of India among the wise constitution makers. India often symbolises modernity while Bharat symbolises the traditional idea of the nation. This essay aims to analyse whether this debate between India and Bharat is still relevant in the present, or if it is only a distorted reception of reality.

What is 'India'? India is essentially a derivative of Sindon, a word used by the Arab Merchants to denote the lands across the Indus. More than a geographical entity, it was an idea, a land of

Introduction
is adequate
in
opening
up the
topic

legends of fabulous wealth and luxury. This name 'India' was later popularised by the colonial rulers, especially the British, as for denoting the land parcel ~~in~~ ^{between} ~~the~~ which was "traditionally" under the Mughals.

In the book 'Discovery of India', Nehru writes that the social reformers and freedom fighters were constantly trying to discover the very idea of India, with its cosmopolitan culture, peaceful tradition and co-habitation of multiple religions in place. Post Independence, 'India' represented a vision for the future for its leaders, an aspiring Great Power, who is a natural leader of the Third World.

The 'Nehruvian Consensus', as the historian Bipan Chandra called it, was that India should embrace its new identity based on modern industry, modern values like secularism, etc and shed its past image as a land of snake charmers and superstition.

Meaning
of
Bharat
&
India
in the
context of
the
topic
has been
covered.

However 'Bharat' represents a highly different vision. It aims to embrace a Gandhian vision of Indian society based on social reality rather than utopian dreams of the political elite, who were mostly educated in the West. 'Bharat' represents the India where villages are the social life centres. Farming and agriculture are its dominant occupations, while practices based on religion and caste are an inescapable part of any Indian's life.

The name 'Bharat' is itself derived from the mythical Bharata clan which are the protagonists of the Mahabharata legend. Ancient religious scriptures called the entire region below the Himalayas to the Indian Ocean as 'Bharat varsha' and proclaimed it as the duty of the king to bring it under a single rule. Therefore, 'Bharat' symbolises

a tradition-based unification
of the Indian sub-continent.

There are strong reasons to believe that the debate between 'India' and 'Bharat' is still relevant. Economic justification is strongly evident, considering the fact that more than 49% of India's population is still dependent on agriculture. But India's growth has ~~also~~ been driven by the highly state of the art services & industry, especially the IT sector. Government's policies are also focussed on modern vision, like 'Make in India' promoting value added manufacturing and 'Startup India' which is majorly aimed at technological start-ups by highly educated entrepreneurs.

Since it's not a mere urban-rural divide issue. The [rural-urban] divide is the underlying factor, because more than 700 million Indians reside in its villages, as per 2011 Census. Disparity of education and media penetration has created a

①
Since it's not a mere urban-rural divide issue. It also highlights the divide within rural regions also.

difference in the ^{world}views of the urban and rural folk. The economic life is dominated by the urban city birds, and it creates a materiality cycle for them increasing their own standards of living. Its evidence is seen in the Orfann report which declared that 1% of Indians own more than 72% of nation's wealth.

Moreover, the very identity of the people are divided. A look at the recent Quadrilateral Dialogue of India, Japan, USA and Australia showed India constantly touting its gigantic democratic functions, secularism and its aspirations for being a global leader. However, the local and regional news are almost always dictated by religion and caste. Recent 2019 elections showed how 'Secularism' was no longer a campaign plank, and the

only difference was in soft-religiosity and hard-religiosity;

Apart from religion, caste continues to dictate the social life of people. A single glance of matrimonial page of any local newspaper will show that people are unwilling to view other castes as family or even equals.

From Point 3 to 4
gap has been properly explained

③ This is despite the fact that the constitution was drafted by Ambedkar, who envisaged an "Annihilation of caste" and waged a lifelong struggle against it.

On deeper analysis, this debate is more complex than it seems. 'India vs Bharat' is an idea driven by ~~two~~ three major challenges theories:

1) IGNORANCE / Misrepresentation of History

Most people tend to ignore the fact that Indian history is much longer than the later Vedic Period and the fact that Indian identity has always been fluid. Aryans were essentially central Asians, ~~and~~ Kushans,

1. Parthians, Indo-Greeks and Shakas were all foreigners who came and settled in India. There was never a single idea of unifying religion or caste system. Historian Romila Thapar calls the vedic system of belief as 'Brahmanical religion' and present Hinduism is essentially a confluence of Buddhist, Jain and Dravidian beliefs.

Reasons given for the debate are analytical and in line with the topics.

Also, all societies evolve, with Britain and France also moving from the feudal relations of lord and serf to the modern relations of production in the capitalist economy.

2) Issues with Indian democracy

Since democracy is essentially a game of numbers, the 'rural' and 'traditional' population has been centres of political propaganda. Politicians exaggerate the differences consciously/subconsciously which in turn creates a vicious cycle.

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propagating the preventing the development of a 'modern consciousness'. For example, the caste based parties in India ~~divided~~ Class-based parties in both membership and political performance. This gives them a vested interest to maintain the 'Bharat vs India' image.

3) Dissonance in identity

Forces of globalization and urbanization have heralded new self-identification categories which often lead to the demise of primordial community bonds of caste and ethnicity. However, in India, the modern identities led to a sense of loss and alienation, because of the absence of well-developed new identities. For example, a man working in a steel company is forced to work with other caste groups, because of its ~~local~~ non-rural setting. However, the 'proletariat' or 'working class' solidarity is underdeveloped, forcing people to seek refuge in the ancient identities again. As a result, India and Bharat seems to remain separate ideas.

Points highlighting the issue on one's identity is insightful

The impact of this dichotomy between India and Bharat is disastrous. Bharat has often become a leit word for majoritarianism and homogenization. It has resulted in blind glorification of past, resulting in ridiculous claims which are seen in the Indian Science Congress about 'Lotus Airplanes' and WMDs in ancient India. It is preventing social evolution, into a modern identity, which is in tune with global changes in consciousness, as seen in green rights, animal rights, cosmopolitanism, multiculturalism, etc.

On the other hand, the idea of 'India' seemed to ignore the fact that the project of social change and reform is incomplete. Constitution makers believed the threat of sanctions through different Articles and laws will automatically transform India. Social

construction of reality, is a long process, because in essence, the leaders were attempting to invent a new India and not merely discovering the past.

Several steps are required to remedy the situation. First we must clarify that our cultural heritage is not antithetical to the modern ideas of India. For example, PM Modi promoting Yoga in the west shows that it is traditions are valuable. However, primitive beliefs with no basis on rationality must require determined efforts to eradicate. Education on national lines to promote critical thinking helps disprove most myths and nip the prejudices of children in the bud. Politicians and movie stars who ~~essentially~~ ^{practically} rule over the minds of the people, need to take a principled stand in promoting the idea of new India. Media, especially present social media can be a vehicle for this.

Impact is aptly covered.

On a symbolic plane

The debate also represented rich & poor & Educated

or interested divide or well. Should suggest measures in that as well.

There is a need to engage scholars and intellectuals to debate on both India and Bharati concepts. Ashish Nandy famously called himself an anti-secularist because he believed Indian secularism failed due to its western model. The idea of 'Tolerance' and universal ethics was more suited for Indian ethos. Such new interpretations can help create a hybridised identities between India and Bharat.

Thus, it is clear that debate is still relevant between India and Bharat. Bharat is the reality in the minds of most Indians, but India represents a dream. Fortunately, powerful forces like globalization, social media and constitutional values are constantly working to bridge the divide between the two.

Globalisation
is
bridging
and has
a
positive
impact

- * Essay is well-structured & anal. analytical in nature
- * In Suggesting other aspect of the debate & behaviour, educated wisdom also need to be addressed.

