

ESSAY-TEST-I

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EGP # 1

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Test Date: 20-10-20

Start time: 12:40 PM

End time: 3:50 PM

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MARKING SCHEME

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Parameter		Total Marks	Essay 1	Essay 2
Basic Format	Introduction + Conclusion	10		
	Body	15		
Content		25		
Organisation		25		
Language skills		25		
Examiner's Discretion		25		

Parameters	very good	good	Average	Poor
Coherence				
Language				
Handwriting				
Pre-writing				

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Time: 12:40 - 3:50 pm.

Sec - A

② India cannot eliminate poverty unless it tackles inequality first

"Poverty anywhere is a threat to prosperity everywhere."
- Kofi Annan

India is the country with the highest number of poor people in the world according to global development indices. In the last three decades, India has made huge strides in reducing poverty levels. However, this has been accompanied by rising inequality.

This rising inequality is somewhat part of a global phenomena as described by Thomas Piketty in 'Capital in 21st Century'. This raises important questions for the development paradigm of Indian government. Aristotle described inequality as a cause of revolution and chaos.

Therefore, in this essay, we will discuss India's post-independence experience with respect to poverty and inequality, current status of the debate and what the way forward should look like.

Poverty and Inequality: The Post-Independence Experience

Since ancient times, poverty and inequality have existed together. Prosperity of few has been built on poverty of masses.

According to travel accounts of foreign visitors in medieval age, the ruling classes in cities lived in luxury while agrarian masses only had enough to feed themselves.

During British colonial rule as well, poverty kept increasing. British policies of divide and rule also meant that this poverty was unequally distributed among various castes, religions, gender and geography.

This phenomenon started reversing under the socialist influence of the

national movement. The new republic promised prosperity as well as equality to people.

However, the record of the Indian state towards this end has been mixed. Socialist system of planning resulted into poor growth and 'equality of poors'. Excessive government intervention and redistribution failed to cure poverty.

Following this, Post-1991 reforms of liberalization, globalization have given a new life to poverty elimination agenda of the government. According to Multi-dimensional Poverty Report, India brought close to 260 million people out of poverty between 2004-05 and 2015-16.

However, this has been accompanied by a sharp rise in inequality. Benefits of growth have been cornered by only a minority of people while majority human development indicators remain dismal.

This raises questions on what the future strategy should be?

Not necessary to target inequality

One school of thought believes that it is not needed to target inequality. Rapid growth as seen in recent decades is invariably accompanied by rise in inequality. However, this is a Kuznets-curve and inequality will automatically decrease in due time as the trickle-down effect comes into picture.

This school, led by Jagdish Bhagwati, argues that to promote growth, inequality is needed to provide incentives. In the course of time, poverty will be eliminated as the size of pie increases. Thus, our focus should be on how to promote growth through market-led development and minimum state intervention.

It lays stress on the fact that policies to remove inequality have been a shoddy failure. Land Reforms Failed due to inadequate state Capacity. In recent times, subsidy leakage in welfare programmes and poor execution of government schemes has led to wasting of resources.

Cannot Remove Poverty without targeting Inequality

On the other hand, this school of thought believes that poverty and inequality are inextricably linked. They focus on inequality along with poverty and believe both need to be tackled in concert. Amartya Sen, Joseph Stiglitz, Thomas Piketty belong to this camp.

They focus on the social experience of poverty and its linkage to social and economic inequality. Market-led development has in fact led to increase in inequalities. The growth has not been inclusive and is therefore, not sustainable.

Rapid growth has not been followed by a commensurate increase in human development. A major chunk has been cornered by urban elites. As a result, Maoism and Naxalism have reared their ugly head in poor predominantly tribal areas of Jharkhand, Chattisgarh, Andhra Pradesh.

Social inequalities of caste, gender and religious minorities has also not received due attention. This leads to fissures in the

overall stability and development. India remains a laggard in human development index (129/179 position), gender inequality index, global hunger index, etc.

They point to areas with less inequality as having better development record. Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Himachal Pradesh have emerged as success stories. Successful land reforms, State-led welfare policies and government regulation of market are policies which have borne maximum fruit. As a counter point, areas with more inequality like eastern states of Bihar, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh have struggled to grow.

They also point to the fact that left unchecked, inequalities may persist. Old inequalities based on health, education may be replaced by new inequalities based on technology, higher education. Therefore, focus is needed on inequality removal for sustainable development and poverty elimination.

How to remove Inequality : What is the Solution

As we have seen, there has been growing recognition of the need to tackle inequality in concert with poverty elimination. There is a debate on what is the correct strategy to tackle these dual challenges.

In this respect, socialist experience has been a failure. Excessive government control throttles the growth itself. Indira Gandhi's Garibi Hatao did not succeed in removing poverty. Global examples like Venezuela also point to the dangers of prioritizing redistribution without sustainable and broadbased growth.

On the other hand, India's Post-LPG reforms experience shows that markets have a major role to play in growth. The role of state is to curb crony capitalism and provide indicative planning. This will give greater resources to government for social spending.

Amartya Sen's capability approach suggests that increased social spending on health and education is imperative for sustainable and equitable growth. Healthy and educated citizenry will work for growth. Instead of redistributing incomes, government should focus on equalizing social conditions so that all citizens can fulfill their potential to maximum.

Universal Basic Income has also gained currency in recent times. For example, direct cash transfer to small farmers will help in empowering them. Similarly, a basic income can be provided to vulnerable sections of society. But, this can only be a supplemental option and cannot replace basic public goods.

Inequality needs to be tackled at multiple levels. Within families, gender inequality is a major drag on overall development. Nation cannot develop if half the population is left disempowered. Increased female education and health can have manifold impact on

growth and development. Focus should be on women empowerment to reduce poverty transmission across generations.

Multidimensional poverty report has pointed out that more than 50% of global burden of poverty falls on children. Thus, more needs to be done to put children into school, give them healthy environment and nutrition so that intergenerational inequality can be tackled.

India needs to think broadly on the development paradigm. Increased poverty levels among scheduled castes and tribal people points to their exclusion from mainstream development. Thus, special focus should be on making them equal with urban, propertied classes.

Inequality is good and way forward

Even after taking remedial welfare provisions, some measure of inequality is bound to persist in capitalist mode of development. This is not wholly bad as inequality is also a source of motivation and development.

What matters however is that inequality is not entrenched. Equality of opportunity should be ensured through welfare measures and capability approach. This will lead to increased social mobility.

On the whole, inequality needs more focused attention and debate in view of the advances in technology. The advent of Industrial Revolution 4.0 threatens to make majority of people irrelevant. It can lead to a future where majority subsist on few resources while a small global elite control majority of resources.

Conclusion :

We can conclude that poverty and inequality go hand in hand. More debate is needed on how the two are linked and how they should be tackled in tandem.

Democracy needs to be strengthened so that development becomes an issue of public debate as has happened in recent times. For example, debate between Gujarat model of development vs Kerala model. As suggested by Amartya Sen, if we empower people and focus on making them equally capable, equal and higher development will follow.

On the other front, the growth process needs to be more inclusive. State capacity needs to be bolstered to provide public goods and regulate market effectively.

Only if we act on both poverty and inequality in concert, we can achieve a prosperous India as dreamt by APJ Abdul Kalam.

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Section-B

② There is no education like adversity

Strong men create good times. Good times create weak men. Weak men create bad times. Bad times create strong men. And so on.

The above mentioned aphorism points to the role of adversity in human life. Adversity is any obstacle in our path, which is not to our liking. However, every adversity is a chance to overcome it and evolve to a new standing.

Plato talked about law of dialectics in ancient Greece. A higher idea i.e. thesis confronts a lower idea i.e. antithesis to produce synthesis i.e. something new is constructed. In recent times, even Joseph Schumpeter has talked about 'creative destruction' i.e. destroying what is to create something better.

We can see that adversity is an education. Education serves to teach us about society, natural world, values through books in school. Adversity can play the same role. Man learns through experience and every adverse experience is a chance to learn something new. 'What does not kill us, makes us stronger.'

In this essay, we will discuss role of adversity in human life, how it can serve as an education, how best to learn from adversities and how to prepare for adversities.

Role of adversity in human life

The theory of evolution given by Darwin tells us that human species was formed by a process of natural selection. All life adapts to the natural world constantly. Thus, life itself is a story of overcoming

adversity. What sets humans apart from other animals is that we have the reason to learn from adverse conditions.

In Indian mythology, times of great turmoil and adversity are the times when the social character changes and an 'avatar' comes to guide humanity. Thus, adversity is a condition for development and evolution.

We can see numerous examples where adversity has served to strengthen the character and resolve of people. The persecution of Jews during World War II led to them later emerging as the most successful ethnic group in the world. Closer home, we can see the example of Indian national movement. Disparate communities were welded together into an Indian nation under the adverse colonial experience. The colonial subjugation served as an education for

nationalists who later Founded The indian republic .

There is no education like adversity

Education serves the purpose of preparing us to lead complete and fulfilling lives . Children go to schools and colleges to learn about science, society, values, morals, human cooperation, etc. However, education is not limited to educational institutions . It is a life-long learning process .

Adversity in life teaches a person many things which even school can not . School education provides us with facts and information that we can use . However, the character of a person is a better determinant of his success . And character is built through adversity . Hugely successful rulers have been those who ascended to the throne by overcoming adversity .

Chandragupta Maurya and Akbar come to mind as examples.

School and formal education can teach us to follow the status quo and dull our critical capability. For example, Macaulay's scheme of education was aimed to enslave Indians under the colonial rule. People who went through colonial education uncritically became collaborators to imperialism.

On the other hand, Gandhi is a shining example of learning through adversity. Although he was professionally educated and an advocate, his true character and greatness took form when he was thrown off a train in South Africa. The adverse racial discrimination coaxed Gandhi to become the Mahatma and Father of the Nation. Gandhi kept evolving his methods according to the situation he faced. His 'experiments with truth' were done in the face of adversity and therefore, hold so much value.

Value education and character building are more important than rote learning. And character is best shaped by adverse experience. Adversity inspires man to seek solutions to social issues. Ambedkar was born in penury but emerged as the leader of dalits through hardwork.

Adversity needs not be celebrated

Though it is true that adversity produces conditions for the best in man to emerge. However, this does not mean that we need to increase adversity for all as a virtue. Social darwinism or survival of the fittest was used as an excuse by nazis to exterminate disabled people in Germany.

Adversity has a dual effect. Adversity met with resilience can lead to great character and outcomes. However, at a social level, adversity in the form of poverty is

nothing to be celebrated. A huge mass of humanity ~~travels~~ lives and dies in adversity. This adversity needs to be addressed and removed. The role of government is to remove adversities and fulfill every citizen's potential.

The effects of adversity are disproportionate. For example, in poor households, male children have a better chance to complete education than females. The development model of India presents great adversity to farmers and disadvantaged sections like tribals.

Adversity is not the only education

Adversity also operates on individual as well as social level. Individual adversity can be overcome if social support is provided. For example, Stephen Hawking could never have become a great scientist without social support.

History shows us that majority of inventors, scientists have also belonged to elite feudal classes. Subaltern classes have always dealt with adversity without an escape.

Therefore, we need to

Overcome adversity through education.

Focus needs to be given on lessening adversity for the great masses of people. Capability approach of Amartya Sen is a good prescription for reducing adversities. State needs to provide basic healthcare, education and an opportunity to compete equally.

All citizens of the world need to be educated to overcome problems like climate change, nuclear proliferation, pollution. These adversities that society faces today

are also an opportunity for education.

Conclusion :

' All my successes were built on my failures.'

- Benjamin Disraeli

Thus, we have seen that adversity is a part and parcel of success in human life. Adversity is not just an obstacle but a condition for growth.

Our aim should be to equip people in such a manner that they are able to convert adversities into achievements.

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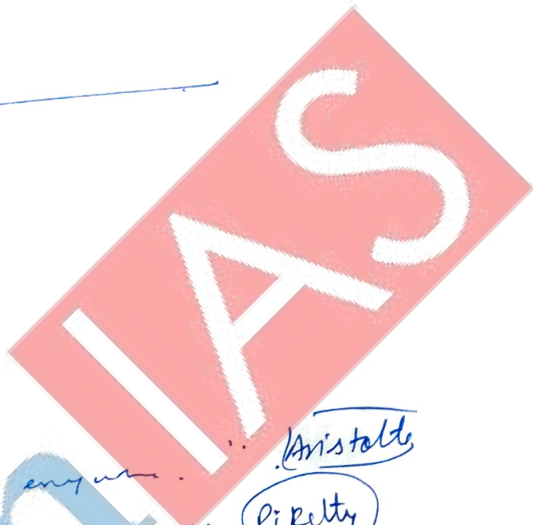
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② India cannot eliminate poverty unless it tackles inequality first.

cannot elim. poverty unless ineq. tackled.

can elim. poverty w/o ineq. tackled.

Tackle ineq. to elim. poverty.



Intro: "Poverty argument"

- India is poor country. Increasingly unequal as well.
- Master thesis - what is the relation b/w removing poverty & inequality.

• Post indep. Experiences: Trends of poverty and Ineq.

M.B: Argument: cannot eliminate poverty unless ineq. tackled.

- Amartya Sen

• Dimensions

social ; Techno.
↳ gender, caste, minorities, new ineq. emerging.

Politic ; Nationalism ; Success of Land Reform

Picharens ; Equality vs Bimars
↳ Coop; Land Reform

Dimensions → Kuznets curve
Failure of land Reform

ist. Argument: Not necessary to target ineq.

- growth approach.
- Bhagwati - trickle down.
- Pauls.

Argument: ~~Remove~~ how to remove ineq. → Debate.

- socialised engulgence → failure - Indira Gandhi
- Post-CPG - experience.
- Global examples.
- Capability approach - VBI - welfare approach.

Argument: Inequality is good in moderate amount.

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- Motivation
- Social mobility is more imp. → ₹00 should be there.

Argument: Way Forward:

- JK 4.0 → Labour vs Capital
- Inequality needs more focus.
↳ Various dimensions.

Conclusion:

- Both need to go hand in hand.
- Need to strengthen democracy → give public empowerment → automatically will happen. (Amartya Sen).
- State capacity needs to improved.
- only then ~~Gandhi's vision of~~ APJ Abdul Kalam vision will be fulfilled.

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There is no education like adversity

No edu. like adv.

Adv. is the best edu.

Adversity is not the only education.

Education helps in facing adversity.

Intro:

Adversity
(obstacles)

Education:

- good men create ~~for~~ good times → weak men → bad times → good men.
- Education is needed to grow
- Adversity - best edu.

Adversity → obstacles
→ external / internal

• Natural selection.

(social darwinism → Not anymore.

(eg. WW2 - techno-developments -

India → National movement in face of adversity.

• Indian mythology → Avatars → good times in adverse situations.