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TEST: Essay Mock Test

TOPIC:

Don't just find a fault, find a remedy too

Poverty is not just a economic condition.

Section A:

Don't just find a fault, find a remedy too.

During ancient times, when ~~woman~~ man wanted to fetch water from the river, he was initially left helpless. Soon he made a crude vessel out of leaves of a tree but he found that too much water leaked from it. Then he came to know about the art of pot making. But again his earthern pots were not leak proof & temporary. He learnt to fire. bake them, but then again his pots were brittle when they fell on the ground. He then started using metal pots after he discovered metal. but again his pot was corrodable. Few centuries later ~~someone~~ man invented plastic. Man realised he could use it to make his vessel. So man moulded the plastic to suit his needs. This end product is nothing but the <u>plastic bottle</u> which we use in our daily lives without realising how the entire story went about. This shows us that man through-out his journey has been facing problems but he has tried to overcome them ~~bec-aure~~ has been quite successful because <u>he just didn't find a fault, he found a remedy too!</u>

Man his within his instincts to identify a pro

is a very important quality of his which has helped him progress the way he has. Finding a fault is important because that makes us realise what is going wrong. Unless we find a fault, there is no scope of improving upon it. It also helps in understanding why the particular thing or phenomenon went wrong. This inquisitive nature of man explains why his brain has evolved more than other animals.

But along with finding a fault, finding a solution is equally important. This is because finding a solution actually helps us realise the benefits of finding a fault. eg: we can utilise the knowledge gained from finding a fault to improve the system or the faulty thing. Faults without remedies are just like useless complaints.

The most vivid example of above logic can be seen in Sri Lanka's sanitation scenario. Once plagued with high open defacation scenario with spread of diarrhoeal diseases, Sri Lanka today has improved its sanitation to such an extent that the deaths occuring due to related diseases have reduced by more than 70%! This

innovative approach wherein people were given the choice & authority to design & construct their type of toilet. Thus a bottoms up approach was a perfect remedy to the social problem.

Similar social problem of low literacy rates was (partly is) witnessed in India. We not only found the faults eg: low drop out rates, low enrollment rates, but also a remedy in the form of Right to Education Act. Thus the issue of socio-economic obstacles was resolved by entrusting the responsibility of primary education on the state. The success of this solution based thinking can be ascertained by the fact that India has achieved near universal enrollment rates - ASER report. Although some gaps remain, they are bound to be bridged by our positive approach to problems.

While we've seen the positive side of finding a remedy in social sphere, there are negative sides of not finding a solution. eg: Despite several efforts in India for curbing sexual crimes against women were not been very successful. This can be explained by the fact that while we've identified the fault (patriarchal attitudes, poor law enforcement) there are no remedies found to effectively counter these faults.

The utility of solutionist approach can be seen in political + international sphere too. The positive side is seen in the recent Iran + P5+1 nuclear deal. Finding a solution to the problem of nuclear proliferation has prevented a war which could've further destabilised the region. However the negative side of not finding a solution is seen in Iraq-Kuwait war or the US-Iraq war or the western military intervention in Libya + Syria. These all have led to destabalisation of the region through civil wars + rise of religious terrorism. Similar catastrophe was witnessed in the form of World War-II. The western nations had identified that ~~the problem~~ problem that threat to world peace was in the form of Nazi Germany. Yet they did not do anything + find a solution + infact appeased Hitler with the hope that he would destroy USSR. This non-solutionist approach cost the world huge losses in terms of life + property.

Talking of Nazi Germany, the idea of finding solutions + not just a problem finds resonance in economic spheres too. Post world war-I, ~~the~~ Germany

was gripped in a severe economic crisis in the form of hyperinflation. But their leadership could not find a solution to this problem, as a result it led to conditions which proved conducive for the rise of Nazism in Germany.

The positive side of finding a solution in economic sphere is seen in India's Green Revolution. We identified the problem of low food production & invested a lot of human & monetary capital to find a sustainable solution, thus making India self sufficient in the foodgrain production.

Even in man's interaction with nature, he has been facing numerous problems. eg: tough terrains, hot deserts. Yet he has tried to overcome these. The recent film Manjhi- the mountain man which is based on a true story portrays how a single man ~~brought~~ destroyed a mountain. The mountain had been obstructing the village's route to the city. Many villagers had realised this problem, but he was the one who found a remedy.

Yet the consequences of not finding a solution in man's interaction with nature can be catastrophic. The prime example being the flash floods in Uttarakhand in 2013.

Despite realising that the dams were creating a recipe for disaster, no solution was found out & the result is for everyone to see!

Even in cultural sphere, we've seen man finding solutions. Earlier, in ancient times it was difficult to make a common man understand the nature of god. Idols were seen as a remedy so that man _a common_ could connect with the divine. Similar modifications in complex rituals are seen in today's modern world. Thus instead of finding faults in the traditions, we've found solutions so as to fit the present needs & realities of man. This approach explains the peaceful nature of some religion. Whereas some people who prescribe to the medieval notions of religion & do not find solutions in of rituals/religions to suit present context are often the victims of religious terrorism.

But apart from above field, it is science which has truly internalised thoroughly the idea of finding solutions & not just sitting on a problem. There are numerous examples which justify this. In the field of medicine, surgeries

used to be very painful because they were carried while the man was conscious. This problem led to the development of anasthesia. Similarly when James Watt invented the bulb, he had failed over 100 times earlier, each time encountering a new problem. But he found the solution eventually. Our space organisation - ISRO too has demonstrated this approach. The recent Mars Orbital Mission (MoM) wherein innovative & cost effective frugal techniques were used helped lower the cost of mission. eg. Orbital maneouvering.

Thus we can see that human history is full of examples wherein finding remedies to problems has been hugely beneficial to man, whereas finding a fault and not a remedy has not only denied him these benefits but have also impacted him negatively. Thus it becomes important for us to develop this approach.

The first & foremost thing to do is to develop a scientific temper because in today's technological world, many of our problems have technological solution. One must also try some kind of meditation exercise. This will help is destressing us because finding

faults without any remedies only stresses us. But solutions cheer us. We must also discuss & share our problems so that the input we get from different sources can help us in arriving at a viable solution.

Thus our attitudes towards problems in life - no matter how small or how big should change. We must try to see the positive sides of things along with the negative sides & try to improve & rectify the negative ones. This will help us in improving the quality of our life. Finding only faults would make us a grumpy person. Thus our personal happiness & external happiness together determine the state of our mind & we have the capacity to give it a direction to suit us provided we have the right attitude!

Poverty is not just a economic condition.

Ever since the dawn of civilisation, the issue of poverty has troubled man. Efforts to ameliorate it have been seen in the works of kings upon the advice of ~~his~~ their ministers. eg: Chanakya's Arthashastra focusses on how a kingdom should be governed for welfare of the people.

The story of modern world starts from the industrial revolution in the 18th century & not unsurprisingly the discourse on poverty has gained steam ever since. Industrial revolution was primarily responsible for creating class differences in the society. This translated into economic disparities. Over time as humanity & science progressed & modern political systems evolved, these economic disparities got widened into multidimensional disparities like social, educational, political etc. This led to the genesis of modern concept of welfare state wherein the governments of nations would be fully committed to the upliftment of its citizens.

Such efforts are being manifested in the form of scientific measurement of poverty & deprivation. Traditionally poverty was thought to be just an economic

condition. The economic aspect of poverty as defined by the world bank is a person earning less than $1.25 per day to be extremely poor. However with time the traditional poverty line measurement has been sought to be replaced by a more dynamic index called as Multidimensional poverty index (MPI), brought by the United Nations, which apart from the economic dimension tries to capture the social, health, educational, gender dimensions of poverty.

Similar efforts have been seen in India. Although both recent committees on calculating poverty line i.e Tendulkar committee & Rangarajan committee stick to the economic concept, they try to bring in other aspect within the economic aspect. eg: Including expenditure on health, education, transport apart from food intake. Although not of the widest spectrum, such efforts portray the need to measure various dimensions of poverty.

One then wonders what the other dimensions of poverty are because right from childhood we've imagined a beggar to be a poor person & a bussinessman tycoon to be a rich person. The most visible other dimension is the social dimension.

Lack of availability of health facilities renders a person physically & mentally poor. Along with availability, access too forms a part of this poverty. This poverty manifests itself in the form of high infant mortality ratio, high maternal mortality ratio, spread of diseases like cholera, typhoid, lower life expectancy. As a result the quality of life is lowered. The above scenario may very well be possible, even if a person is rich. eg: a rich ~~businessman~~ farmer in Meghalaya is deprived of such facilities.

Lack of access & availability of education along with its denial forms another dimension of poverty. Education determines literacy, & employability. Thus low education levels directly impacts earning potential, rendering a person poor in direct economic sense. Moreover, low education levels leads to lower self confidence. This directly impacts the way a person deals with the society & is often shy in contributing towards issues & participating in discussion. eg: women are often neglected (voluntarily stay away) from ~~reso~~ disuwssions in Panchayats even though there are women representatives.

Thus above forms of social poverty combine together when superimposed by another form known as gender poverty.

In Indian society, women've always been treated unfairly as compared to men. Thus gender inequality accentuates the poor conditions of women by denying them the needs by which they can improve their conditions. Moreover women are often subjected to sexual violence, both within & outside the marriage. Thus lack of autonomy over her body renders her socially & poor in the coldest sense. The recent discourse on women empowerment especially after the 2012 Delhi Gang rape case is to ameliorate this kind of poverty of women.

    The patriarchal attitudes, lack of respect for women reflect a deeper malaise & lead us to another dimension of poverty i.e ethical poverty. Ethical person is one whose value system is in consonance with the generally accepted moral & good values like honesty, integrity, compassion, etc. Unfortunately these values are rare to come by in today's material world. eg: A person may be rich economically, but if he is not considerate towards the needs of poor, if he is not an honest person in his work, then he is ethically poor because he doesn't possess good values like empathy, compassion.

Similarly politicians & civil servants though economically & socially rich, may be ethically poor because of their corrupt activities.

The ethical dimension of poverty explains why even in developed countries, having high standard of living, people are considered poor. One such unethical factor is prevalent racism. eg: Recent incident in Paris metro where a dark coloured man wasn't allowed in the train by white football fans shows no matter how rich your infrastructure is you'll remain poor.

Another reason why developed world is considered "poor" is because of the mental dimension of poverty. or the psychological dimension. No amount of money can make your satisfied but peace of mind can. eg: a business tycoons is always worried about the market conditions, thus cannot have real peace of mind, but a beggar having slept hungry on the streets in a cold winter night is a "rich" person because he has mental peace. & Peace of mind also concerns a person's relation with his family friends & their behaviour too can affect his mental richness.

Talking about mental peace, what better place than a watching the sun setting on a beach! Also, we're denied

this scenic beauty as our beaches are filled with garbage. In this sense we are environmentally poor. Pollution of air, water & land has reached alarming levels. This leads to poor quality of life. eg: Delhi is one of the most prosperous cities in India, but high pollution levels squeeze out the conditions which make life enjoyable. Even our Supreme Court has ruled that Right to Clean environment is a fundamental right under Right to life under Article 21 of our constitution. How can we be rich if we are denied even fundamental rights.

Thus we can see that poverty has multiple dimensions, & there are several advantages of measuring the various dimensions of it. Prime among them all is that it presents a holistic picture which in turn provides us with wide ranging data which can be very useful in effective policymaking. Also removing or reducing these multiple dimensions of poverty constitutes true welfare & we can stay true to the ideals of our constitution.

However we must realise that if poverty is considered an economic condition in everyday life, then there

is a reason for that. This is because economic condition quite often determines & impacts other dimensions of poverty. high income levels means a family is more likely to invest in human capital Thus ameliorating social poverty. Also it corresponds to increasing openness of the society. eg: high income societies are more open to progressive ideas. This reduces the gender dimension of poverty.

Also economic poverty is given a prime consideration especially in a developing country like India because of the limited resources. This demands prioritisation & the best way to attack multiple dimensions of poverty is to attack the economic dimension of it.

This calls for policies to increase employment & skill levels This can be done through increased public & private investments in the social sector. Moreover, focus should be given on maximising the use of technology to achieve the above goals. eg: to provide education scholar- ship, or gas subsidy, money can be sent to bank accounts through mobile money. This'll help in increasing cost effective- ness.

Thus economic & social dimension of poverty can be tackled with concerted action. But tackling the ethical dimension is a lot more difficult. There needs to be an effort in improving the value system in the society. This can be achieved through focus on inculcating good values right since childhood in school curriculum. Moreover the international community should be mobilised on such vital issues. Such collaborations are seen today in the form of millenium development goals & Sustainable development goals. But We need to extend them to value system & human behaviour.

Thus the solutions to the multiple dimension of poverty are not difficult to achieve if there is will on the part of political leadership, people, civil society. All efforts should act in synergy. The outcomes are very much achievable given we start the process of identifying the issues. Otherwise like Bob Dylan said. "The answer my friend is blowing in the wind... The answer my friend is blowing in the wind...."