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Essay Mock - 1

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ESSAY 1 → 55

ESSAY 2 → 60

Try to think of varied perspectives
Also work on explanation & detailing
of counter-perspective.

(Some aspects are suggested)

Essay 2 has been attempted
fairly well.



SECTION - A

1. There are three classes of men; lovers of wisdom, lovers of honour and lovers of gain.

Leo Tolstoy posed the question "What men live by?" in his short story named the same to inquire into the values that motivate and guide human actions. There exists an intention which works as a propeller for every thought, step and decision that individuals take.

These intentions are born from what we hold dear.

Human beings are curious creatures with innumerable desires, beliefs and objectives. But if we were to divide & compartmentalize them, we'll find that most men are motivated by either their desire for knowledge, or their desire for power or for material gains, money, wealth and possessions.

These underlying desires guide the course of a human beings life. His values guide the means that he will adopt to achieve his ends. These desires therefore guide all aspects of what a man wants; why he wants it and how he shall achieve it.

Lovers of wisdom are philosophers, scientists, researchers and men who are propelled by their desire to know and understand the world they live in. Lovers of honour are emperors, soldiers, politicians, men who wish to be seen as respectable and virtuous by fellow beings. Lastly, lovers of gain are people who move forward with their need to accumulate resources; businessmen, traders, colonizers. In pursuit of their desires, each kind of man is faced with tribulations if he obsessively fixates on his desires without balancing other aspects of his life.

} But why categorise only these three?

Lovers of wisdom:

Since the beginning of human civilization there have existed men who painted their caves with constellations, fire & animals. Rock shelters of Bhimbetka, tell the stories of lovers of wisdom that existed 2000 years ago. Such people are driven by their desire to know, understand and make sense of the world they live in.

Philosophers both from east and west have been investigating questions like "what is reality?"; "what is knowledge" and "what makes us ethical being." Socrates, Plato, Aristotle are the flagbearers of men who love wisdom. In ancient India, philosophers like Kanad, Patanjali, Kapila muni and Adi Shankaracharya tried to answer these questions. All these men spent all their lives in pursuit of wisdom.

But why do such men exist? Why was Newton curious to understand the difference between an apple falling from the tree but the sun not falling from the sky. All such men who are lovers of wisdom exist because their values guide them to seek answers, their values guide their behaviour.

Apart from truth which other values guide these men?

Scientists, mathematicians and physicists are equally seekers of truth as are saints, sages and seers. All such men exist even today. A child who is both innately predisposed to look for answers because of his natural tendencies and because of the way he has been nurtured, will make choices in his life which will lead him to wisdom. However, our understanding of what wisdom is becomes equally crucial.

How does their quest to wisdom benefit mankind?

Wisdom does not mean solely being a repository of knowledge but wisdom entails being able to use this knowledge for good. Dr. Oppenheimer, father of the atom bomb believed himself to be a lover of wisdom, but failed in his grasping of what true wisdom is.

Even today scientists and researchers at big phara giants like Mansanto, Rambaxy work indlessly for their pursuit of knowledge. Astrophysicists at space MNCs like Blue by Amazon and space X are lovers of wisdom.

But such men should widen their horizon and understand that true wisdom is that which enables the good of all mankind and that which helps all men achieve a higher degree of conscience. Lovers of wisdom should balance their pursuits with benevolent intentions and utilitarian results.

Discuss why did it happen?

Discuss the means adopted by these men in their pursuit of wisdom.

Lovers of honour:

Alexander the Great decided to conquer the world, Napoleon Bonaparte and Asoka, Akbar and ~~all~~ other such men who spend their lives in pursuit of power and ~~and~~ do so for honour.

Such men understand honour to be respect, obedience and power.

Their understanding of honour is shaped by the times ~~they~~ live in, values of the society, culture and traditions of people. Honourable men are always revered and venerated by society and people at large. It is this reverence and respect that lovers of honour seek. Austin described a "sovereign" as a determinate human superior in habit of obedience from majority.

Lovers of honour are therefore such men who desire to be acknowledged.

Monarchs, emperors and world leaders even today are lovers of honour. One may argue that Putin's decision to attack Ukraine is largely guided by his desire to protect his honour.

Machiavelli in his book "The Prince"

captured the desires and means of such men. Lovers of honour often become misguided due to equating honour with power. Such an understanding of honour can quickly become insidious and dangerous.

Time is witness to innumerable such examples of men who believed they were fighting for honour but were misguided. Hitler deluded all his German fellowmen to believe they were committing such grave atrocities for the honour of Germany which was

what does their quest of honour look like?

- what does honour mean to people?
- To what all do they attach their honour with?

→ What makes people go to any extent in the name of honour?

→ How to feel detached and not get too much wrongly attached.

lost after the Treaty of Versailles.

Our world has constantly been plagued by war and conflicts due to a skewed understanding of honour.

Truman decided to drop atomic bombs for honour of America. Even today, men of villages in India in some states like Punjab and Haryana engage in "honour killing" of their daughters.

Therefore, lovers of honour should tread their paths with extreme caution and a holistic understanding of what honour truly entails. Men like Mahatma Gandhi, Nelson Mandela

and Martin Luther King Jr can also be called honourable. Ambedkar

fought for the honour of dalits but it is their means and path they choose that sets them apart.

Honour cannot be an end but the journey must also be honourable.

Good.

Lovers of gain:

People who believe in maximizing their pleasures and minimizing losses are lovers of gain. This desire to accumulate resources is specially unique to human beings as no other species is drive by desire to store more than what is required.

Capitalists, commerce and the economy at large is driven by such lovers of gain. Human society has evolved around such desires and a vast majority of men even today can be classified as lovers of gain.

A report by Credit Suisse gives us an understanding of how such men function. 90% of the global wealth is accumulated by top 10% of the population.

Lovers of gain therefore are driven to accumulate out of greed and hoard resources just for the sake of ownership.

However, being a man who is a lover of gain is not evil just by virtue of his desire to gain. Gandhiji believed in the idea of trusteeship and benevolent merchants; those men who along with their love of gain also abide to ethical means & ethical ends.

It is this belief that counters ideologies like that of Karl Marx, who believed that profit motive in itself is evil. Lovers of gain are not evil as long as they're methods and means are not so.

The love of gain is offset even today by companies through corporate social responsibility. Foundations like Jata Trust Fund, Bell & Melinda Gates Foundation, World Economic Forum are all examples of the altruistic side of lovers of gain.

But why have you confined yourself to profit-seekers in businesses alone. Gain can have many connotations.

Therefore, it is not the love of men that classifies them. It is the paths they embark upon. Tolstoy answered his question of "what men live by?" with a simple reply that is "love". Men live by love and that love may be guided towards different pursuits. However what makes the difference is that each step towards your desires should be well-intentioned.

Men of all kinds will always exist and all of nature's diversity can be harmonized through positive, moral reasoning and moral sensitivity.

A man guided by first, his genuine love for nature and other men will always choose the right path no matter for wisdom, honour or gain.

SECTION - B

3. People don't notice whether it's winter or summer when they're happy.

Two men walking under the same morning sun perceive their surroundings differently. One man feels the glorious sunlight, revels in the songs of birds and finds comfort in the protective gaze of the sun. The other man, feels himself draining under the same sun. He feels the scorching heat tearing him apart and there is nothing glorious in the unforgiving heat.

How we perceive the world and how ~~our~~ surroundings affect us is largely guided by our state of mind. Our attitude, morality and predispositions would how we perceive the world.

"What is Happiness?"

This question can arguably be labelled as the most significant one of any person's life. The answer to it also varies unfathomably depending upon every individual. What makes us happy and what is happiness is so mystical and elusive that every human attempts to define happiness for themselves.

Aristotle defined happiness as "Eudaimonia" - the highest human good, the highest spirit. A biologist will tell you that happiness is constituted of four hormones; a precise mix of chemicals - serotonin, dopamine, oxytocin and endorphins leads to the potion of happiness. Ancient Indian philosopher Gautam Buddha defined happiness as extinguishment of all desires.

3]

This shows us that happiness can mean literally anything for anyone. A cone of ice cream is the biggest happiness for a little baby. Achieving your goals in life; a hearty meal or a simple cool breeze can mean happiness.

Happiness is the emotion which paints our world. A human being who understands what happiness means for him can face the biggest, most unsurmountable challenges with astonishing bravery and grace.

Helen Keller found her happiness in experiencing the world around her. She was inhibited in this experience itself because of loss of senses like sight, sound. But she overcame the most difficult human challenges because she understood happiness.

→ Why do people perceive happiness differently?

Why people are unhappy?

It can be argued that it is not our state of mind that moulds our surroundings but the complete opposite of it. Our surroundings mould our state of mind. This understanding of happiness however reduces happiness to a fleeting sensation.

Amartya Sen argues through his theory of justice that men who are limited by their surroundings cannot attain the state of genuine happiness. This holds true for people who suffer poverty. One needs basic physiological desires met first.

Maslow's hierarchy of needs helps us understand that happiness travels upwards through a pyramid. A man cannot imagine flying with wings on an empty stomach.

therefore, happiness can only begin once physiological needs of food, nutrition and basic material needs of shelter, safety are met. People who are deprived of such innate basic requirements will always find difficulty in shaping their surroundings just by trying to imagine happiness. For them the more pertinent question becomes survival rather than happiness.

However, once such needs are met, then our journey towards happiness need to be built through a path that leads itself makes us happy. This means that people who understand that both the path and the destination are sources of happiness find it easier to stay happy. An understanding which is not wholesome causes people to be unhappy.

Human civilization today faces the biggest mental health crisis. According to WHO, one out of every 5 people suffer some form of depression. Scandinavian nations like Sweden which have envious GDP and holistic distribution of wealth are simultaneously the suicide capitals of the world.

With advent of modern capitalism, globalization and the internet and IT revolution the world is more connected and closer than it had ever been but people have successively become more isolated, detached & lonely.

This contradictory state of affairs requires us to delve further into the question of happiness. An unhappy man will always find the rain in his garden gloomy and depressing. Unhappiness will mould his perception of the world then.

What would happen when someone attacks happiness with wrong ideals & motives?

How to become happy and how to stay happy?

Spiritual leaders guide us to happiness through love of higher consciousness. Psychologists believe that happiness can be attained and maintained through a holistic understanding of our psyche, subconscious patterns and underlying desires.

Yoga philosophy believes that happiness can be achieved by the simple act of breathing. Therefore, once a man has defined what happiness means to him, his task becomes to seek that happiness.

If an individual becomes misguided in the first step itself, they find difficulty in maintaining happiness. People who believe that happiness is an end that is achieved as a by-product often suffer and happiness eludes them.

Hence, happiness cannot be found by becoming rich or achieving your goals or even through engaging in activities that are pleasurable. Hedonistic philosophy believes that happiness lies in maximizing pleasures but that too wears off soon.

By virtue of diminishing marginal utility of gains, happiness cannot be maintained. Therefore, man needs to find contentment through his daily actions. Japanese philosophy of shikai preaches that happiness is a way of life.

briefly elaborate what it denotes.

When every action is guided by purpose and we consciously derive happiness out of every act we perform, we can reach a higher level of consciousness. Jordan Peterson in his book "12 rules for life" says that happiness begins

with making one's bed in the morning. Bhagavad Gita preaches the philosophy of Nishkama Karma for happiness.

A man who has discovered how to be happy transcends his environment. Anne Frank, a little Jewish girl found happiness by writing in her diary while her family was hiding from the Nazis in the attic of a building. People who have cracked the code to stay happy do not let their surroundings, failure, challenges and sufferings to meddle with their positive state of mind.

Albert Camus' Sisyphus found that happiness has to be found in the act of pushing the rock up the hill daily.

→ Discuss what does winter & summer denote?

What it means to different people?