

GSSCORE

An Institute for Civil Services

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TEST COPY

KARISHMA NAIR

RANK - 14

ESSAY MOCK - 2



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GS SCORE

ESSAY MOCK TEST - 2

Roll No. _____

Time Allowed: 3 Hrs.

Max. Marks: 250

Instructions to Candidate

- Both sections are compulsory.
- Attempt one 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).

Name Karishma Nair ⁶⁰⁺⁶²
122

Mobile No. _____

Date _____

Signature *Kna*

1. Invigilator Signature *[Signature]*

2. Invigilator Signature _____

Remarks

60
 62
 122

SECTION - A

1. A real champion is one who enjoys the art of competition and not its outcome.
2. Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that.
3. Yesterday is history, tomorrow is a mystery, today is a gift of God.
4. Science is a beautiful gift to humanity; we should not distort it.

SECTION - B

1. Situations do not make or break us; our choices and decisions do.
2. Man does not get two separate lives, one 'to struggle' and the other 'to live.'
3. Winners are not necessarily true and ethical.
4. People decide their own destiny; fortunes are made or unmade by karmas.

"Science is a beautiful gift to humanity, we should not distort it."

The 'boon or bane' debate about science is not a characteristic perfect split. The truth is, with science it is tough to accept such a dichotomy, because science is value-free and objective, it is in our usage that the vice may appear. An old adage goes - "The knife never kills; it is merely a tool in the hands of the killer." In this essay, we shall first begin by

Very well-put

examining what is science, how it is a gift to humanity, ~~and~~ how it faces many distortions and in conclusion we shall look at how such distortions can be minimised.

↳ good structure

Let's imagine humanity ages ago - humans feared natural processes, their survival was precarious due to the absence of agriculture, their life was unexplored, faced with challenges they did not look for the one thing that ~~now~~ defines present-day humans - REASON! ✓

Science brings reasons, evidence and rationality to centre-stage. Science strives on questioning the

status quo till a logical explanation is not received. Science is, in this context, like light, an enabler to human progress.

Science ~~is~~ is often called a gift, but a gift from whom is ~~often~~ left untold. The source of this gift is two-fold - Nature itself and scientists. Nature provides us the gift of science. Had nature not followed the Laws of Physics it could never have been derived and exploited to drive technology. Secondly, we owe our scientific calibre to every individual who examined science and ~~it~~ helped simplify the complexities of science for humanity to use. As Albert Einstein remarked, ~~if he has~~ ^{we have} seen further it is by sitting on the shoulders of giants before us. So what is this gift that so many have contributed to is open for us to examine now.

SCIENCE: A GIFT for Survival

Humanity was gifted by the first Neolithic people who understood and began agriculture. It completely revolutionised our survival mechanism,

providing us the wherewithal to explore other opportunities. Drawing on the same logic, we should feel indebted to Norman Borlaug & MS Swaminathan, because their contributions were gifts in ~~the~~ true sense.

Moving forward to health and medicine, science ensured that child birth is now safer due to the methodologies used. Science has ushered in cures for deadly diseases and spread awareness about a healthy lifestyle to be followed.

On a philosophical tangent, science has inculcated objectivity in people. It has incorporated a propensity towards evidence-based decision making. Science has thus reduced the dependence on superstitions, heuristics, oppressive rituals, etc.

The role of technology in our lives cannot be overstated. It has truly brought in ease of life. Be it security (COMBIS technology), transport (electric vehicles), administration (e-governance), science and technology has impacted every domain.

It has also helped us preserve our culture & heritage through use of machines, preservation

techniques, decryption algorithms, etc.*

The ease with which we can now get things done has led to holistic development of humans as it helps us save one aspect, that humanity cannot think with - Time.

Science also symbolises hope and progress.

It tackles complacency and nourishes an excellence. The Chandrayan 2.0 is a simple example of where science can take us.

A less appreciated role that science plays is in Gender Empowerment. Not long ago, Marie Curie was the only known example of a woman in science, and now we have Mangalyaan Mission spearheaded by a team of ISRO women scientists.

Governments across the world are thus promoting more and more women to take up STEM professions. We have simply scraped the surface of the service that science provides to humanity, but it is important to examine how humanity reciprocates to science.

+ science in reducing the impact on climate change, agriculture, shorter product cycles

Remarks

The Distortions

Albert Einstein felt deeply disturbed, as his research in a way contributed to the creation of atomic bombs.

Science thus acts as the afore mentioned 'Knife' if it falls in the wrong hands.

The same science & technology that creates anti-biotics & medicines is used to create biological & chemical weapons.

Science is thus portrayed as a destroyer when actually it is a victim of distortions. The gift of nature is used to crush the very nature

& environment. The lungs of the world being on fire in the name of development is a case in point.

Recently, in India, a new form of distortion to science is visible. This is in form of 'pseudo-science' where mythologies were used to prove our historic scientific contributions.

Well-informed individuals questioning Evolution, the recent debacle in the Indian Science Congress, and rise in plagiarisms in scientific papers, makes the background murkier for science in India.

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Science also faces fear-mongering - spread of rumours against vaccination, job losses by innovations, etc. are members of this flawed list.

The scientific endeavours taken up in India are questioned as it is seen in competition with developmental activities. This spirit and culture explains our dismal 0.69 % of GDP expenditure on research.

The ethics in science is also seen deteriorating, the recent genetic modifications by a Chinese Doctor is a case in point. Use of animals for testing in science is also an area of concern.

Science is now being viewed in binaries where for every success in IT, people blame a cybercrime, for every cure of a disease, science is also blamed for creating a sedentary life that's causing lifestyle diseases.

Granted there might be externalities to science, but it can & should be overcome by more and better science. The distortions should

not make us view science as a curse, which is only possible if some action is taken.

Way forward

The Constitution through Article 51A, suggests how such distortions can be curbed - through development of scientific temper. This should be inculcated within schools & homes as well.

Further, Government regulations are needed to prevent misuse of science. The recent DNA Usage Regulation Act & Drones Act ^{are} ~~is~~ steps taken on these lines.

Pride in Science should be increased through investments in R & D, conducting authentic Science Congresses, etc. The March for Science protests that took place last year showcases the awakening ^{of} of the scientific community to the challenges faced.

Better stakeholder consultation is ^{thus} needed.

Lastly, ethics in science should be encouraged as a curriculum in academic circles & in practice.

It is upon each & every one of us to safeguard and cherish the gift of science, and not letting the flaws of humanity be percolated & conflated as flaws of science by distortions.

- ① Most aspects of the topic included comprehensively clearly & lucidly written.
- ② Include some interesting pointers on for eg IPR, protecting indigenous knowledge, promoting start-up culture to make your essay unique.
- ③ Before concluding, reiterate what you have said in essay in 2-3 lines.

Remarks

"Situations do not make or break us; our choices and decisions do."

Life can be viewed as a relentless decision-making activity. The choices that we make ~~are~~ range from the trivial ones of food and clothing, to life changing ones of education and career.

Excell-
ent
intro

The tragedy of life however is how much importance we assign to situations, considering ourselves as mere actors in the situational screenplay. Such an external locus is dangerous because it shifts responsibility to situations and thus the art and science of effective decision-making is not learnt.

In this essay we explore how & why situations do not and should not drive our future course, examples of where ~~of~~ our choices & decisions have made or broken us, the power of decision-making and finally what needs to be done to improve our decision-making.

Situations : Do they deserve the praise or blame?

Situations are merely instances that demand a response from us that could be in the form of

action or inaction. Human beings assign a lot of importance to situations as a defence mechanism.

It is seen as deflecting responsibility or a misplaced

sense of humility. However, situations themselves

do not demand a single course of action. There

could be multiple outcomes for the same

situation. A real life example would be how we

handle failure. We have all praised the New Zealand

and Cricket team captain for his response after

the recent World Cup Defeat. The situation was

ordinarily supposed to break a person, but his

decisions ensured that he did not let the situation

have control over him.

The popular quote "Necessity is the mother of

all ^{innovations} innovations" is an example of how much

importance we assign to situations. Our decision

to fulfill a necessity and the future choices

mixed with human ability is actually the mother

of all innovations. Otherwise, the same necessity

for resources could have created more wars

and social unrest rather than, ^{leading to} Industrial Revolution.

Remarks

Decisions and choices : the better parameter

Decision-making scenarios are those that provide a set of alternatives as a response, where one has to choose the course of action. The reason that decisions and choices are so crucial is due to the presence of Opportunity Cost. It is the cost incurred (so to say) of letting go of the other options by picking one alternative.

For example by deciding to opt for the Commerce stream in Class XII, one ~~lets~~ foregoes the fields of profession that requires a science background. The present decisions and choices, thus has a bearing on many future decisions and the ensuing situations that may follow.

Thus, decisions and choices transcend the boundaries of a single situation. It becomes easy to comprehend why decisions and choices have the capacity to break or make us.

Robert Frost's classic, "The Road Not Taken" sums up the essence of this concept, wherein the situation

Excellently
Plt

i.e. these circumstances are created by us in this case & we have no one to blame

of the forked road will be numerous, but the decision to go down one road, will definitely shut out the other road for us.

This was a consequence of the war rather than a pre-war choice

To test this hypothesis, let's examine a few examples. Post Kalinga war, Ashoka was faced with a situation he had faced several times before, of post war horrors and mayhem. His choice of denouncing war as a response to this situation, made him chart the path of Dhamma that made him one of the most beloved kings in Indian History.

Also mention the circumstances Hitler was faced with. Germany & Japan situations can motivate our decision how ever.

Hitler decided to use the post WWI situation in Germany to gain popularity, spread anti-Jew feelings and ultimately led to aggression and World War II. However, post WW II, Germany & Japan chose the path of peace, development and progress, now being one of the most prosperous nations in Europe & Asia respectively.

Nelson Mandela was imprisoned for 29 years for of his life. On his release he was in a situation where he could be full of hate & vengeance against his oppressors, instead he

chose the path of forgiveness and inclusiveness, thus gaining global recognition as a noble leader.

The old adage, "When the going gets tough, the tough get going" explains that situations are not always going to be favourable, we can make them favourable through our actions that are contingent upon our decisions and choices.

Situations are not wholly in our hands, thus to base our making or breaking on such an aspect would be unfair and arbitrary. Decisions, however, are in our hands, that can also help mould the situation, hence are a better parameter to judge abilities.

good/
well-
put
analysis

Flaws in Decisions

Decision-making models have aimed to study how we make decisions. The Incremental model suggests that we make only minute & marginal changes through our decisions to prevent resistance. By far, the most realistic decision-making approach is Herbert Simon's concept of 'bounded rationality'. It accepts that decision-making will be constrained by the absence of information, inability to identify

How does theory relate to the topic? and assess all the consequences of our decisions. Thus, humans do not make perfect decisions, but prefer satisfying ones.

Decision-making holds the power to change the course of policy-making, economy, development, etc. Our ~~is~~ response to situations should thus be more streamlined, considering the potential for success and failure.

Enhancing decision making & choices

We need to learn the right balance between fact & value responses to decisions. It can be developed through spreading knowledge and information of consequences, checking for externalities (eg. Environment Impact Analysis) and analysing opportunity costs.

Innovation point With the advent of AI as assisting in decision-making, concerns are raised about the ethics in decision-making which needs to be incorporated in machine learning as well.

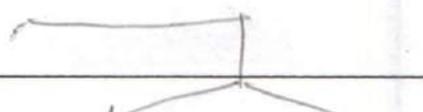
In governance, decision-making ought to be more participatory and following the principle of subsidiarity should be nearer to people. By taking cognisance of bounded rationality

there is always scope for upward delegation.
 Choices to the same situation may vary according to the preparedness and time as well. Example the same Supreme Court that criminalised homosexuality, ~~also~~ ^{in 2013}, also decriminalised it in 2018. Unfortunately, on an individual level, we may not have the ability or opportunity to review and modify our decisions. Thus, the art of decision-making should reach as many people possible, to ensure that we are no longer the slave of situations, such that we begin viewing situations as opportunities eg. The Sendai framework urges us to view disaster situations as opportunities to Build Back Better. Let us strive to grab these opportunities, one decision at a time, to make the right choices that make and define us.

Excellent conclusion

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- ① Your essay is impressive. A good mix of personal & individual examples + egs from history & current affairs. Conclusion + Intro spot on.
- ② You have somewhat ignored 'situations/circumstances'



Remarks
 Circumstances do have a role to play - In India - caste
 how to respond to tough circumstances - how can we side them

Remarks

7

Remarks

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Remarks

7

Remarks

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Remarks

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Remarks

Science is a beautiful gift to humanity ; We should not distort it

Humanity ~~not very~~ long ago?

Modernism - Science $\begin{cases} \rightarrow \text{rationality} \\ \rightarrow \text{evidence} \\ \rightarrow \text{reason/explanation.} \end{cases}$

Gift by $\begin{cases} \rightarrow \text{nature} \\ \rightarrow \text{scientists} \end{cases}$: Einstein's quotes.

Gift to humanity. \rightarrow • fear • Objectivity

- food & agriculture
- Health & x death.
- Superstition x

Ease of work : machines $\begin{cases} \rightarrow \text{productivity} \\ \rightarrow \text{speed} \\ \rightarrow \text{efficiency.} \\ \rightarrow \text{safety.} \end{cases}$

• Technology \rightarrow Transport.

• Science preserving culture, history.

• Science = progress : Chandrayaan. Marie Curie.

• Science = women empowerment : Mangalyaan mission.

We should not distort it

• Einstein (role in atomic bomb)

• chinese doctor.

• Destruction.

• Microbe \rightarrow bio weapon, Chemical weapon.

• Science to spread hate.

• false science (new threat)

• Use science to demean human values

• Science against environment.

What can be done

• Scientific temper BTA Science Congress.

• Regulation (DNA Bill), Drones Bill.

• New Challenge AI : develop capacity.

• Ethics in science.

Situations do not make or break us ; our choices & decisions do.

Situations - instances that demand our response in the form of action/inaction.

Human tendency - blame it on situation, praise situation
external locus

fail to realise true nature of situations
↳ no uni directional course of action.

multiple outcomes through same situation

Decision making & choices - opportunity cost.

eg. Class XIIth, Balakot.

History turning point Ashoka.
Nehru.

Choices that make us

Decisions that break us - Germany's choice of war.
The choice of peace & dev. later.

Why decisions have a possibility of breaking us:

Opportunity cost : One choice effects further choices

When the going gets tough, the tough get going.

How choices & decisions can be improved.

- Strike the right balance between fact & value.
- Bounded rationality - Help, Hierarchy.