

EVALUATION INDICATORS

1. Contextual Competence
2. Content Competence
3. Language Competence
4. Introduction Competence
5. Structure - Presentation Competence
6. Conclusion Competence

Overall Macro Comments / feedback / suggestions on Answer Booklet:

1.

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6.

A) Education: Key to breaking curse of generational Poverty

Renowned Author Amish Tripathi in his book "Shiva Trilogy" mentions an interesting comparison of kingdoms of Meluha and Swadeep. The two despite being neighbours face very different demographic and economic situations. The Author pins it down to the education system of the two.

Meluha has a well oiled maika system where children are educated, taken care of and groomed. This has resulted into innovations, mechanisation and prosperity of the empire. On the other hand

in Swadhyay children are seen as 'extra hands for work' resulting into a collective poverty and primitive economy.

The above anecdote highlights the role of education in prosperity of people and upliftment from generational poverty. Amartya Sen in his 'Freedom and development' calls generational poverty a result of lack of freedom translating to lack of opportunities and growth for present and future generation. He has stressed on education as one of the most important means to break this curse. So how education helps?

In this essay, we shall explore various dimensions of this question of role of education. Then we will talk about some issues in this regard and finally end with some solutions. But let us first explore the historic dimension of the issue and how education in India has till now responded.

Education over Poverty: Journey through Time

The ancient Varnashrama system stressed on the 'ashrama of Brahmacharya' where a student first attained education under guru. This was necessary to become capable of earning in 'grihastha'

ashrama for self, family and community. The Shudras devoid of Brahmacharya ashram remained in perpetual poverty.

During ancient period, the centres like Nalanda rose to fame not only for educational quality but also for their bronze, stone arts famously now called 'Nalan da art'. This proliferation of Art forms to society provided aes- thic as well as economic upliftm ent to many.

When during British times, William Adams toured Bengal, he pointed how education was inter mingled with economic system and provided upliftment to masses. Such a role was stressed by

Gandhiji in Varanasi became of education.

Yet the policies adopted by British left India both educati
onally and economically drained.

The 'downward filtration' theory made mockery of mass learning.

Independent India realized the need of educated masses. Steps were taken like $\frac{42^{nd}}$ constitutional amendment

to transfer education to central list, setting commissions like Kothari commission and very recently policy of NEP. Let us understand the need of this stress on education as 'harbinger' of growth and upliftment from poverty.

Education: 'Antidote' to the poison of
generational poverty

According to World Bank a
US\$ 1 investment to education
yields a gain of US\$ 20 in
GDP. Hence on the very outset
stressing on education increases the
amount of pie for the citizenry.

Moreover, education acts
as a 'social capital' according
to scholars like Ripankar Gupta
which is translated to 'economic
capital' through virtuous cycle
of education and earnings.

This 'social capital' under
standing has been especially
critical for sections of society

which have faced discrimination. Dr. BR Ambedkar stressed on this when he put his efforts towards Maha Bodhi Society to educate the Mahars. Thomas Picketty in his recent book "A brief history of equality" has praised India's reservation system which not only increased literacy rates of sections like ST's to 59.1 (2011 census) but also lifted its 270 million from poverty.

On a very similar note Khaled Hosseini in his "A thousand splendid suns" has stressed on women education to change the fate of Afghanistan economy as 'when you teach a woman, you teach a generation'.

Moreover, education in today's era of knowledge economy results into increased opportunities for earnings. Sundar Pichai's inspirational story is apt in this regard. Dr APJ Abdul Kalam had to sell newspapers before his quest for space education turned him into 'missile man' of India.

Also education today is largely seen in terms of skill set to participate in market. The concept of vocational education has become even more important for upliftment of citizens and breaking curse of generational poverty. Stories like Lijjat Papad, Koraput

coffee rebound where such informal and skill education did wonders.

Not only confined to economy education has spillover effects on other domains that help in tackling poverty. The story of Tamil Nadu's success of economically can be linked to its push for education and its linkages. Its mid day meal programme has not only uplifted literacy but also health status helping in overcoming debt bondage due to diseases.

Similarly today education can be seen in fields of agri culture through app like m-Ki-San, Farm-to-pedia, soil

health card providing critical information and education to improve their income. on industrial all front we have education in the forms like Toycathon, IDEX which is providing critical push to economy !

Also with COVID, financial literacy has become synonymous to accessing services and come out of curse of poverty. Schemes like Jan Dhan Yojana, Mudra Yojana have become important in bringing this change. No doubt RBI has pushed for financial as well as digital literacy through its Nandan Nilekani Panel.

In ~~a~~ such a complex

World of edu governance, educat
ion has also imparted tools to
Policy makers as well as public serv
ants to lift the citizens out
of poverty. The 'Bhoomi project' in
Andhra Pradesh has been a land
mark project of e-governance liter
acy and land reforms.

Finally education promotes
innovation which creates ripple
effects on many lives. Nobel Prize
winner Abhijeet Banerjee did his
research on 'experimental approach
to end poverty'. Having under
stood the importance of education,
why has India not been able to
reap maximum benefits? Let us
understand the bottlenecks.

Weaknesses of Indian education system

The first issue pointed by many experts like Kothari committee is dearth and stagnation of public spending hovering around 3-4% of GDP. According to NITI 3 year task force such a situation has resulted into conundrum of increasing number of literates with decreasing quality. It has especially led to 'hollowing out' of public schools.

Secondly excessive centralisation has impeded growth of regional education system. This is especially true for state universities.

Thirdly, upliftment out of poverty by education has been impacted by inequalities still existing in society. For example, IIT's only have 7% of research scholars as ST's. Similarly ukraine war highlighted the unaffordability of Indian education to the poor section.

Fourthly, there is gap between demand and supply of education. 55% of Indian factories claim lack of human resource whereas 27% of undergraduates are unemployed. Such situation won't help in dealing with poverty rather aggravates it with debts & loans.

Finally there is need for value based education. Rather than helping in prosperity of Indraprastha, Duryodhan led to its downfall through his wrong path. So what should be the way forward and ?

Holistic education: Road to tackle poverty in future

First and foremost is need to increase spending on education to 6% as pointed by Kothari commission. This should be also focussed on state universities which provide critical services to many economically and socially vulnerable.

Also to properly implement

RTE, 2009 NITI 3 year force has suggested schemes like voucher coup
ons where local gover^{nm}~~ments~~ can purchase for education of poor.

Moreover there is need to bridge the gap of skills and dem
ands in decentralized manner. Schem
es like Sankalp, C-Skill portal
are way to go. Also focus on
'5-3-3-3' Strategy with curriculum
as suggested by NEP is step in
right direction

Finally there is need to provide digital education for its
role today in revolutionizing lives.
PmEvidya is a landmark step.
The above steps can become a har
linger of change and translate

our India to our olon Meluha
in the upcoming Ansit Kaul
x x

B) Commodification of water: An inevitable reality?

The seminal book "Why nations fail?" describes the town of Nogales that is split between Mexico and America. Authors Daron Acemoglu and Robinson describe that although the American section has made considerable progress and become more developed, it has come at ^{the} cost of water shortage caused by deforestation, concretization etc. Today the American part purchases water from the Mexican.

The above description might force one to think if somehow

India and the whole world is headed towards the same destination of water commodification.

In this essay we will examine various facets of the above stated premise and why is it increasingly looking like a reality. Next we will examine some steps which can be taken to present such a bleak future. First, let us take account of current situation.

'Water, water' - not everywhere and not single drop to drink

The contemporary water situation has turned the famous lines of 'water-water everywhere' on its head. Recently, China has reported

a sweating heat wave with such impact, that it has deprived rivers of water and cities of hydro electricity. Such a situation occurred in Europe a few days ago. Sudan is ^{on} brink of a water crisis. The global picture does not look good.

Also, The Indian picture is as gloomy. Niti Aayog predicts water/person/annum to drop to 1300 m³ by 2025 effectively putting country in water stress. Agriculture uses more than 80% of groundwater and the unsustainable use has no doubt put severe stress on the resource especially in states

like Punjab and Haryana
moreover India is increasin
gly facing the worath of ^{extreme} climate
events. Recently selected photog
raph by Syratim Bhatla chargee for
UNESCO climate change challenge shows
how cyclone in Sunderbans has
rendered Fraisergang water insecure.
All the above clearly sets a
background for commodification
of water.

Commodification of Water: A close
reality, not a distant dream

commodification of water simply
refers to putting a price tag on
water to promote its commerciali
alization. The concept was first
globally presented along with

its tenets in 'World conference on sustainable development': So why is it looking more real today? Let us try to analyze.

As the famous Greek scholar Timoclydus said, "There is no concept of equality among unequals. The mighty win, the weak suffer", water shortage has resulted into similar situation where the interest of two se who can afford is met by exploitation of vulnerable through luxure of money. Supply of water tankers to Bangalore presents same story. At first it was done freely from near by villages, then by purchasing as they resisted and now by force.

Such provisioning of water for the upper sections has increased the demands to commodify water.

Brian Yagan, An authority on the subject has pointed to water being treated as commercial, economic resource in future, with its increasing shortage and value he predicts next crisis to be water crisis thus intensifying commodification.

A trend towards commodification is already visible. Recently Central Ground Water Board (CGWB) has laid down guidelines entailing price for extraction of water. Chicago has already moved to set up a stock

exchange. Add to all this correlation concepts like GEP, green GDP that calculate the value of such resources providing grounds for further putting mathematical tags on them.

All this is compounded by the predictions for future. IPCC AR6 recently has put forward more water cycle amplification thus difficult in harvesting water. Also there is going to be increased demand of energy entailing more pressure on water. The new rising data intensive digital technologies like Bitcoin, AI will further diminute the resource. The recent Iran crisis because of Bitcoins

is an example. All this points to water commodification to meet the needs.

Al Gore's film "An inconvenient truth" already shows such water exchange as the resources are poisoned by our actions. Take the examples of nutritious ground water today being replaced by 'Black water' endorsed by celebrities like Virat Kohli. One can immediately think the stark consequences if nutritious water becomes an exclusive commodity of a few. Let us examine

Water commodification: A cascade of disasters

'Paying for water' strikes at

the very core of water is a basic public good which nations are expected to provide by virtue of being welfare state. Also it is mockery of Fundamental right to life as well as humanism which proclaims, "Serving water as a benevolent act"

Also, it would be double whammy for poor as their "needs" would be sacrificed for other's greeds" Think of developed nations exploiting African nations' water resource through forced sales. A much more dramatic consequence be could be water rich nations forming an 'OPEC type' cartel. Yet

this is not only intercountry but also an intracountry ~~issue~~

Moreover other challenge comes with regulation of such commodification. With no pre
cedent before, it can be daunting
challenge.

Lastly it can also create inherent contradictions with cur
ent economic and governance
structure. For example, what about
PM KUSUM scheme which subsidizes
groundwater extraction? One might
ask are we ready for such changes
and radical turnovers? Should we
wait till we reach brink of
crisis or take action now. And
what actions can be taken? Let

Let See

Water conservation over water
commodification

Firstly, we need to initiate
discussions on this regard on
global scale. A water conference
is utmost necessary that holds
discussions at fixed intervals.

Nationally, India has ~~immense~~
immense capacity of decentralized
solutions which could be augm
ented. Talass of Rajasthan, Stupas
of ice of Ladakh are such examples
schemes like Atal Bhujal Yojana,
Jal Abhiyan needs to be reinforced
Success story of Jalosh is enough
to put their importance.

Moreover there is need to

Stress on circular economy of water AMROT, Swachh Bharat mission 2.0 are very much necessary.

Moreover, we need to break away from hydrochizophrenia of water governance. Holistic solutions such as 'sponge city' concept of China is needed. A National water commission should be made.

Finally there is need of watershed conservation of rivers.

Namami Gange should be taken for other rivers. Today, we have the chance to turn our fate away from what happened to Nogales. We have role models like Anna Hazare who revolutionized their village water story. Let us act today because "Gal hai to Gal hai".