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## HINTS – Essay Test Series cum Guidance Program

### 1. **Gender Equality: Turning Promises into Reality**

*Achieving equality for women is not only a laudable goal and a human right. It is also good economics, helps deepen democracy, and enables genuine long-term stability.”*

#### HINTS to Think:

- **Gender equality means that men, women and transgenders possess equal power, rights and opportunities for financial independence, education, and personal development.** Traditionally, the concept of Gender equality aimed to achieve equal rights and opportunities for men and women across all sectors of society, including economic participation and decision-making. Recently, a third dimension has been added to the concept of gender equality as many countries including India have recognized Transgenders as a third gender in the society and have enacted legislations to meet their aspirations and needs. **Thus Gender Equality exists when the rights of all three genders in the society are equally valued and provided equal opportunities.**
- **It has been realized that policies and projects without concerning the female position in the society have adverse impact on development.** United Nations International Conference on Women in 1995, held in Beijing, stressed on the need to reduce gender inequality and to increase women empowerment. The third target of Millennium Development Goal is regarding gender equality and women empowerment. Recently, many countries have passed some form of legislations recognizing the rights of Transgenders. Argentina and Denmark top the list in this regard. India has introduced Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Act, 2019 to provide social justice and empowerment to Transgenders. Numerous countries, regions and International Development Organizations have made commitments to reduce gender inequality as a key for sustainable economic development.

#### TEMPORAL ELABORATION

- **It is evident from history that among all the underprivileged groups in the entire world women endured and suffered the most. Since ages women have been the target of political, social, economic, religious and even psychological bondages imposed by their very own protectors.** The repercussion of these kinds of practices leads to the dire need of women emancipation and Gender equality. **The condition of women belonging to higher classes and royalties**

**was far better in ancient India. In early period Aryans treated men and women alike in all religious rituals and social functions.** In ancient time the women had enjoyed a remarkable and better state than their descendents in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. History tells us that in those times, women used to possess dynamic powers and personalities and there are several examples of their undaunted courage and mental faculties under most trying times and circumstances. Like their male counterparts, female have also ruled over vast empires ably and effectively. Ahilyabai Holker's administration of her State was once considered model for India. Besides capable administrators, they were notable poets, scholars, artists and regional leaders.

- **Over the period of time, a social change has occurred in the thinking of society regarding the status of women.** Women are being seen as actors, not just as victims or vulnerable beneficiaries. **In India, the movement for women's upliftment, to provide them equal status and rights that were exercised by men, was initiated by Brahma Samaj under eminent social reformer Raja Ram Mohan Roy.** But perceptible changes did not come before the beginning of the twentieth century. It was under the call of genius and farsightedness of Father of Nation, M.K. Gandhi, who realized the untapped potential in the womanhood of India, many women broke the shackles and come forward openly to participate non-cooperation movement. At that crucial time the Indian women showed such great courage that they left the men folk behind and took up all types of work connected with the national movement.
- **After Independence, the architects of the Indian Constitution wanted to introduce reforms and were keen to establish an egalitarian society.** To achieve this end they use law as an instrument to check gender discrimination and unfavorable social environment. Many legislative reforms were made to raise the status of women in society. They were considered equal to men in every walk of life. Equal rights were given to them to participate in democratic processes of casting vote in State Assemblies as well as the Parliament. They were appointed to the highest posts as members of the Cabinet, as Governors of Provinces, as Ambassadors and leaders of delegations to international conferences.
- **Today, We are living in a world where along with her ascribed status of a women, sister, mother and wife, she has also achieved so many other statuses.** They are doctors, engineers, scientists, pilots, drivers, conductors, chartered accountants, bank officers, insurance agents, police officers, army officers, film directors, ministers, fashion designers and what not. If we talk

about the next word 'Opportunities' then without a doubt with the massive success the world is providing women with new and new opportunities.

- **Gender equality is not only a significant concern from a human rights standpoint, but it will allow for the economic and political growth that developing nations need to make them competitive in world markets.** Women are key agents of change and when women and men are equal, economies grow faster; less people remain in poverty, and the overall well-being of people increases. According to the World Bank, countries with greater gender equality are more prosperous and competitive. So it is somehow right to say that in this century the promises of Gender Equality are turning into a Reality.
- **The principle of gender equality is enshrined in the Indian Constitution in its preamble, fundamental rights, fundamental duties and directive principles.** The Constitution not only grants equality to women, but also empowers the state to adopt measures in favour of women. Various legislations have been enacted and amended, plans, policies and programmes formulated towards producing tangible outcomes that positively impact the lives of women.

## **GENDER EQUALITY IS TURNING INTO REALITY**

### **Indian Constitution and Gender Equality**

- **The principle of gender equality is enshrined in the Indian Constitution in its Preamble, Fundamental Rights, Fundamental Duties and Directive Principles.** The word "Equality" in Preamble emphasise upon Gender equality also.
- **The Fundamental Rights**  
**According to the Article 14**, the state shall not deny any individual equality whether a foreigner or a citizen. This is further elaborated on in **Article 15(1) and Article 15(3)**. **Article 15(1) states equality and non-discrimination on grounds of gender while Article 15(3) empowers the constitution to make special provisions for women and children.**
- **Directive Principle of the State Policy–**  
**Article 39** directs the State towards its policy for securing and maintaining the livelihood for both men and women as far as work, health, employment.  
**Article 42**, stresses on the humane conditions of work guaranteed to women and men.( Labor laws). **Article 51(A)** is particularly interesting, as it casts a duty upon the citizens of India to give up practices, which may be considered derogatory to the dignity of women.

### **Gender Equality in Social and Cultural Sphere**

- **Changing mindset of Society and Family: A perceptible change has occurred in the intention of so-called male-dominated Society whose intention now is to bring equality and respect for women.** The last two decades have seen a sea change in the status of women worldwide in walks of life.
- **What has changed during the last two decades is the attitude of the parents towards their girl child.** As the girls have shown in the field of education, the parents have given up their preference or insistence on male child.
- **As the floodgates of opportunities have opened for both males and females for new jobs and professions with the development of science, technology and informatics,** today the parents neither hesitate to give higher and professional education to their girl child nor to send them away from home to undertake trainings and jobs. In families, now females also get due recognition in decision making.
- **Equal inheritance rights, Equal rights in matter marriage has been extended to women through laws.** Further, **to ensure gender equality, the Supreme Court of India has repeatedly struck down discriminatory religious practices against women, the latest of which is the triple talaq** (in Shayara Bano v. Union of India, 2017). The apex court in the judgment paralyzed triple talaq by declaring it as unconstitutional. This means that no more these three words will be able to invalidate the marriage. Through this, an armament has been provided to the women to guard themselves against this barbaric law and to liberate themselves from the coercive chains set by the males.

### Gender Equality in Economic Sphere

- **Increased participation of women in agriculture. of Agriculture: In rural areas where women were supposed to stay in four walls of the house now play big role in providing food security to the family.**  
Large number of activities at fields are performed by female. Women comprise about half the agricultural labor force in the developing world, and in some countries—particularly Sub-Saharan Africa—make up 80 percent of farmers.
- **Economic Independence: In this developed world, several women, who were once dependent on men, have taken control of their own economic fates and are coping with emerging social challenges.** They profess an independent outlook, whether they are living inside their home or working outside. They are increasingly gaining control over their lives and taking their own decisions with regard to their education, career, profession and lifestyle. With steady increase in the number of working women, they have gained financial independence, which has given them confidence to lead their own lives and

build their own identity. They are successfully taking up diverse professions to prove that they are second to none in any respect.

- **Occupational Empowerment: Women have entered every field of activity and one can find women in every conceivable job.** For example: It is so common to see women flying a plane, a woman leading a country a woman winning Nobel Prize, women building software and women constructing buildings. Women account for one-half of the potential human capital in any economy. More than half a billion women have joined the world's work force over the past 30 years, and they make up 40 percent of the agriculture labor force. **Entry of women in those areas of employment which were till date a monopoly of men community, itself is a testimony of the fact that gender equality is turning into a reality in India as well.**
- **In a major step towards empowering women and greater gender parity, the Indian Coast Guard became the first force to deploy female officers in combat roles on board ships patrolling the country's maritime zone near the borders with Pakistan.** Creating history, the **first batch of three female pilots** — Avani Chaturvedi, Bhawana Kanth and Mohana Singh were inducted in Indian Air Force fighter squadron to take combat roles in Indian Air force. **Nirmala Sitharaman became the first women to take charge as head of Indian defence Ministry in 2017.**
- **Transgenders have been allowed to enter in almost all spheres of employment as third Gender to earn a dignified livelihood.**

### Gender Equality in Political sphere

- **Participation in Decision making :Women are now holding positions of influence not only in public forums and government, but also in their own homes and families.** The number of women that hold parliamentary seats has increased in almost every world region since 2000, mostly due to the creation of legislative or voluntary quotas that require a certain number of female members. In India, **upto 33% reservations for women in the Parliament and the Legislatures has been proposed** which will not only empower women politically but also have social implications.
- **Strengthening of criminal laws for protection of women from sexual harassment in recent times reflects gender equality. Laws has also been strengthened for protection of women from domestic violence, Protection of girl child from sexual offences.**
- **Gender equality reflected in all other spheres of society: Education, Religion, Culture etc.**

### CHALLENGES IN TURNING GENDER EQUALITY INTO REALITY

The challenges which women are facing today have its roots in the past (traditional society) because of the prevalence of patriarchy in society. Patriarchy is a social system in which men are considered to be superior to women. Men had more control over resources, decision-making and ideology in every aspect of society- Family,

Economy, Politics, Education, Religion etc. In patriarchy, violence against women becomes part of the system.

Women were controlled through violence or the threat of violence. But now the perception has changed, no nation, society, and family can flourish and be happy if fifty per cent of its population, i.e. women and girls, are not respected, free and happy.

But in spite of modernization and social changes in from tradition to modernity, challenges in Gender Equality continues in present society.

### At Social & Cultural Level

- Inequality, discrimination, exclusion & deprivation in the family,
- Gender-specific socialization and education in the family and society.
- Cultural definitions of appropriate sex roles.
- Rigid expectations of roles within relationships.
- Value belief in the inherent superiority of males.
- Values that give men proprietary rights over women and girls.
- Notion of the family as the private sphere and under male control.
- Customs of marriage (bride price/dowry).
- Acceptability of violence as a means to resolve conflict.
- Problem of Alcoholism and Drug abuse in the society. Which affects the woman. Alcoholism and drug abuse paralysis and reduces efficiency of valuable human resource of the society. It leads to unemployment, poverty, migration and living away from the home. The biggest set back is for the family – broken homes, one parent family, which ultimately results in alienation from the family.

### Economic Level

- Women's economic dependence on men.
- Limited access to cash and credit to women.
- Discriminatory practices regarding inheritance, property rights, use of family lands, and maintenance after divorce or widowhood.
- Limited access to employment in formal and informal sectors.
- Limited access to education and training for women.

### Legal Level

- Lesser legal status of women in practice.
- Failures of Laws regarding divorce, child custody, maintenance and inheritance in empowering women.
- Complicated legal definitions of rape and domestic abuse.
- Low levels of legal literacy among women.
- Insensitive treatment of women and girls by police and judiciary.

### Political Level

- Under-representation of women in power, politics, the media and in the legal and medical professions.
- Domestic violence not taken seriously
- Notions of family being private and beyond control of the state.
- Limited organization of women as a political force
- Limited participation of women in organized political system

### Emergent problems caused by Environmental Changes:

- Lack of equal capacity for mitigation and adoption to the environmental problems.
- Growth in the numbers of Environmental refugees will lead to trafficking of women world over.

## INITIATIVES FOR TURNING PROMISES INTO REALITY FOR GENDER EQUALITY

### Social and Cultural

- In the Society : Democratization, constitutionalism, values of equality freedom, justice, liberty.
- In the Family : Inheritance rights, equal rights, choices for marriages, equal entitlements, and protection from domestic violence
- Further, the Government has initiated article 44, which is related to uniform civil code to give the status of equality to all women kind.
- Recent verdicts by various courts has given women the right to enter temple and shrines.
- The Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Act, 2017, increased the maternity leave for working women from 12 to 26 weeks will definitely promote female workforce participation in India.
- For ensuring women's safety pertaining to the strategic areas of prevention, protection and rehabilitation, Government has established a Nirbhaya Fund.
- One Stop Centres for facilitating/providing medical aid, police assistance, legal counselling/ court case management, psycho-social counselling and temporary shelter to women affected by violence.



- Women Helpline for providing 24 hour emergency and non-emergency response, Investigative Units for Crime against Women (IUCAW) in all police districts of the country, installation of CCTV surveillance cameras in coaches to strengthen security on trains, National Emergency Response System.
- The multi-sectoral Beti Bachao Beti Padhao initiative also aims to secure a bright future and welfare of the girl child in India and address the declining child sex ratio and related issues of disempowerment of women over a life-cycle continuum.
- To increase the visibility of women in the police force, 33 per cent reservation has been made for women in the police force, in UTs and some States.
- **Many initiatives have been taken by Government to provide equal rights to Transgenders in social, economic, political, cultural, educational spheres. Kerala becomes first state to unveil transgender policy to ensure them non-discriminatory treatment for transgenders The state has opened separate schools for transgenders. Maharashtra has become the second state in India to set up a welfare board and the first, to set up a cultural institute dedicated to the transgender community to meet welfare needs of transgenders.**

### Economy Sphere

- Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme, National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM) while providing livelihood security to thousands of rural women have also provided them with economic security, empowered them and created rural assets simultaneously.
- Rashtriya Mahila Kosh(RMK), which is working exclusively for poor women, providing them with regular funds and facilitating market linkages.
- To promote such women entrepreneurs and Self Help Groups, Mahila E-Haat has been launched as a start-up initiative by the RMK. This web based marketing, initiative under Digital India, will facilitate the access of women to the global market and promote the development of relations between the business community and women entrepreneurs. Financial Inclusion is one of the top most priorities of the government.
- Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana has given confidence to lakhs of women in opening their first bank account and a break through to overcome the vicious cycle of poverty and debt.
- Further, to promote skills and employability of women, the sectors which employ a large number of women have been identified under the National Skill Development Policy and Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) launched to help them securing a decent employment to move out of poverty. With a mission to secure the financial future of the girl child, a small savings

scheme Sukanya Samridhi Yojana has also been launched under the Beti Padhao Beti Bachao initiative.

- In a bid to address the social stigma, Government has started the umbrella scheme to provide monetary benefit to families with transgender children and encourage them not to abandon them. The umbrella scheme would have five components – pre-matric and post-matric scholarship for transgender children, support for vocational training of Transgenders, pension for out-of-work Transgenders in the age group of 40 to 60 years and monthly monetary support for families with transgender children. Recently, Government has also amended Income Tax rules to recognize Transgenders as independent gender category in PAN form.

### Legal Security

- The Criminal Law (Amendment), Act 2013 was enacted to make the punishment more stringent for offences like rape and has broadened the definition of sexual assault and harassment. New offences like acid attack, sexual harassment, voyeurism and stalking, disrobing a woman, have been incorporated in the Indian Penal Code. The Act has also made provisions for greater accountability of public officials including the health care providers for immediate relief to the woman affected by violence.
- The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 aims to provide a safe and secured environment for women to work.
- The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005; for protection of the rights of women who are the victims of violence of any kind within the family;
- The Prohibition of Child Marriage Act, 2006, for prohibition of solemnisation of child marriages;
- The Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012 to protect children from offences of sexual assault;
- The Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques Act (PC & PNDT), 1994 for prohibition of sex selection, before or after conception.
- The Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 provides for proper care, protection and treatment to the child by catering to their development needs, and by adopting a child friendly approach.
- **The Transgenders persons (Protection of rights) Act, 2019 provides to protect their rights and makes it more transgenders friendly.**

### Health

- To address the issue of maternal and child malnutrition, the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) scheme has been universalized and strengthened.
- Institutional deliveries through the Janani Suraksha Yojana which is absolutely free and no expense delivery, including caesarean section.  
Mother and Child Protection Card to monitor service delivery for mothers and children
- Mother and Child Tracking System to ensure antenatal, intra-natal and postnatal care along with immunization services.
- The National Health Policy 2016 also addresses women's health needs. It mentions the need to increase the targets of male sterilization and contraception utilization.

### Education

- The Right to Education (RTE) Act 2009 was enacted in April 2010 to make free and compulsory elementary education a right for all children.  
Padhe Bharat, Badhe Bharat has been launched to ensure that learning levels of class I and II students in reading, writing, language, comprehension and mathematics is at par with the world.
- Vidyanjali (School Volunteer Programme) to enhance community and private sector involvement in Government run elementary schools across the country.
- Udaan for girl students. It is a mentoring and scholarship scheme which aims at addressing the lower enrolment ratio of girl students in engineering colleges and also aims to enrich and enhance teaching and learning of mathematics and science at senior secondary school level by providing free online resources for all.
- To make young boys and girls gender sensitive and create positive social norms that value the girls and their rights, provision has been made to engage Gender Champions in colleges across the country.
- Political Opportunities : PRI, State and Centre

### Civil Society Providing Opportunities

- Despite the presence of a strong women's movement with strong grass-roots presence and their active participation, it's being said that the various initiatives of our government for the empowerment of women have not had the desired result, which has given rise to widening of gender disparity, as opposed to gender equality.
- This is where the Civil Societies and the media can play a decisive role in women's emancipation. Many NGO's had taken a lead in such programmes to unchain the shackles of inequality.

- SHE Teams and Bharosa integrated centre, give victims of harassment and sexual assault the confidence to complain.
- Azad Foundation provides livelihoods with dignity for resource-poor women living in urban areas in India by providing bold livelihoods options that enhance women' economic status, dignity, and decision-making within their families.
- CARE has been working in India for over 65 years, focusing on ending poverty and social injustice through wellplanned and comprehensive programmes in health, education, livelihoods and disaster preparedness and response.
- Various women oriented programmes shown on TV and covered by Media go a longway in attaining the goal of gender equality.
- These organisations not only help women in distress but also train them to channelize their voice against social, economic and moral suppression by the society.
- What seems to be obvious is that while there are thousands of women's NGOs operating from the grass roots up to the international stage, and widespread endorsement of the idea that there should be gender equality, the gains are insufficient to see women becoming equal to men on a global scale. A clear message from women's NGOs is that the transformations that are required for gender equality must occur at a structural level, all women must have equal rights that are inclusive of human, civil, political, legal, social, welfare and economic rights.

### PRECONCLUSIVE ASSUMPTIONS TO CONCLUSION

- Though, there is a progressive change in the society towards women status and gender equality is turning into reality but still women face some social challenges to be at par with that of men. Governments, civil societies, national and international organisations and individuals are doing their bit to push gender equality forward; there are still several areas that reflect the ongoing stereotypes regarding the role of women in society and even in their day-to-day living. Though, women are better off today, but still far from being equal with men. A lot more needs to be done especially in areas where orthodoxy still prevails though in lesser intensity. More concerted efforts at local and national levels and international level by both public and the private sector are needed to bring women to parity with men.
- Guaranteeing the rights of women and giving them opportunities to reach their full potential is critical not only for attaining gender equality, but also for meeting a wide range of international development goals. Empowered women and girls contribute to the health and productivity of their families, communities, and countries, creating a ripple effect that benefits everyone.

Political participation is crucial for achieving gender equality and genuine. Further, harnessing women's potential as economic actors, leaders and consumers results in higher levels of industrialization and more sustained growth rates. Global gross domestic product could increase by more than 25 per cent by 2025 if women played the same role in labour markets as men.

- Working women should be more cognizant and they have to stay organized to get over challenging situations at home and all other spheres of life –social, economic, political, cultural etc. They must deal with ordeal wisely to earn success. Women should work on new lines to scale up power and to get recognition. The equal rights and opportunities of women and men must be assured as equitable access to assets and services will strengthen woman's position. Developing societies must understand that spending on women's education will reduce hunger and world will be healthier and peaceful place to live in. Moreover, organizations must encourage by acknowledging their participation and ensuring adoption of policies which aimed at empowerment of women.
- Things have certainly improved for women and, it is desirable to bring an attitudinal change in our societies that women are no lesser than men and are competent enough in all fields of life. While increasing representation of women in the public spheres is important and can potentially be attained through some form of affirmative action. Educating children from an early age about the importance of gender equality could be a meaningful start in that direction. Also zero tolerance for crime against women should be brought in as measure of deterrence in the society. For gender equality to become a reality, effective implementation of harsh laws has to be done with zero tolerance for violation for a sustained period in a fire fighting manner .”Gender is more than a goal in itself. It is a precondition for meeting the challenge of reducing poverty, promoting sustainable development and building good governance.”

With the continuous efforts in India and around the world ,today all the opportunities and rights – Social, Economic, Political,Cultural etc.- are open equally for both men and women leading towards a world where Gender Equality seems to have been turned into reality

## **ESSAY 2: POVERTY: FINANCIAL DEPRIVATION OR SOCIAL INJUSTICE?**

### Some quotes:

1. “Extreme poverty anywhere is a threat to human security everywhere.” — Kofi

Annan, Seventh Secretary-General of the United Nations

2. "Poverty is the parent of revolution and crime." — Aristotle, Greek philosopher
3. "Poverty is the worst form of violence." — Mahatma Gandhi
4. "Poverty is like punishment for a crime you didn't commit." — Eli Khamarov, writer
5. "In a country well governed, poverty is something to be ashamed of. In a country badly governed, wealth is something to be ashamed of." — Confucius
6. "An imbalance between rich and poor is the oldest and most fatal ailment of all republics." — Plutarch, Greek historian
7. "Some people think luxury is the opposite of poverty. It is not. It is the opposite of vulgarity." — Coco Chanel, French fashion designer.
8. "The hunger for love is much more difficult to remove than the hunger for bread." — Mother Teresa
9. "History is written by the rich, and so the poor get blamed for everything." — Jeffrey D. Sachs, economist.
10. "When a poor person dies of hunger, it has not happened because God did not take care of him or her. It has happened because neither you nor I wanted to give that person what he or she needed." — Mother Teresa
11. "As long as poverty, injustice and gross inequality exist in our world, none of us can truly rest." — Nelson Mandela
12. "Wars of nations are fought to change maps. But wars of poverty are fought to map change." — Muhammad Ali
13. "Overcoming poverty is not a gesture of charity. It is the protection of a fundamental human right, the right to dignity and a decent life." — Nelson Mandela
14. "If human beings are perceived as potentials rather than problems, as possessing strengths instead of weaknesses, as unlimited rather than dull and unresponsive, then they thrive and grow to their capabilities." — Barbara Bush
15. A rat who is caught in a rat trap tries everything to escape. In the same way, a poor person does everything he possibly can to escape poverty, but he is so deeply surrounded by it that his wish is just left a wish. —Women's discussion group, UP

### Introduction:

Poverty has been described as a situation of "pronounced deprivation in well-being" and being poor as "to be hungry, to lack shelter and clothing, to be sick and not cared for, to be illiterate and not schooled. Poor people are particularly vulnerable to adverse events outside their control.

They are often treated badly by institutions of the state and society and excluded from voice and power in those institutions."

Lack of access to resources or asset-lessness is a unifying characteristic of poverty in all its manifestations. The poor lack ownership of or access to assets such as land, water, forest, dwelling units, credit, literacy, longevity, voice and capital-both

physical and social.

The poor can be classified into two sub groups - those who are poor over an extended duration or chronically poor and those who are transiently poor. The Chronic Poverty means those who are deprived so as to draw attention to those who find it hardest to emerge from poverty. Chronic poverty in terms of – severe poverty, extended duration poverty and multidimensional poverty.

### Poverty as financial deprivation:

In practice, the two dimensions are not distinct: deprivation in the nonmaterial dimension partially manifests itself in deprivation in the material dimension and vice versa. Thus, discrimination experienced by the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in the past resulted in reduced access to food, clothing shelter and other sources of material wellbeing. Equally, material deprivation may lead to a loss of social dignity.

The conventional approach to measuring poverty focuses on the material dimension. It asks whether the individual or household earns enough to purchase goods and services at market prices to satisfy basic needs at socially acceptable levels. The level of requisite financial resources depends on the extent to which the government subsidizes the provision of goods and services such as food, shelter, education and health. But in practice, we do not take this into account adequately, especially when comparing poverty levels over time or across regions.

**The first step** in measuring poverty is to specify a threshold level of expenditure that separates the poor from non-poor. The threshold expenditure, called the **poverty line**, is the amount necessary to purchase a basket of goods and services deemed necessary to satisfy basic human needs at socially acceptable levels. The basket itself may be referred to as the poverty line basket (PLB). Perceptions of what represents basic human needs (and socially acceptable levels) vary according to general level of prosperity. What is “want” at low levels of income may turn into “need” at higher levels of income. For example, refrigerator may be a want at low levels of income but may become a need at a high enough level of income. Therefore, rising incomes require upward revisions of the PLB. Equally, since social norms may vary across social, economic and religious groups, an element of arbitrariness in defining the PLB cannot be avoided. This factor has often led to controversy on the appropriate calibration of poverty line.

### Poverty as social injustice:

India has been one of the fastest growing economies in the world during the past three decades and has therefore attracted worldwide attention among scholars, policy makers and intelligent people. Given the perceptions (both within India and abroad) that the extent and depth of Indian poverty are severe and that its

contribution to world poverty is significant, one question that has interested many observers is whether or not growth is benefiting the poor.

There is also concern regarding the impact of growth on disadvantaged groups in the Indian society. How absolute poverty (as measured by the Head Count Ratio (HCR) or Poverty Gap Ratio (PGR)) calculated using official money-metric poverty lines has declined over time for the whole population, and for various groups. An increase in the rate of poverty reduction over time and faster rates of reduction for the disadvantaged groups (either over time or as compared to the same for the other groups) have been interpreted as signs of progress. It is well known that measures like HCR and PGR do not take into account the inequality among the poor, but apart from this, the above approach suffers from certain limitations.

First, controversy exists over the official poverty line and there is widespread perception that these lines have been kept artificially low, implying that both the extent of poverty and rates of poverty reduction have been estimated incorrectly. Recent discussions have focussed on the recommendations of the 2009 expert committee (the Suresh Tendulkar committee) appointed by the Indian government, which suggested new rural and urban poverty lines for various states.

Several scholars (e.g. Suryanarayana 2011, Subramanian 2011) have persuasively argued that these lines are not based upon any coherent methodology. The Indian government has in a way acknowledged this, and has since appointed another committee to come up with new poverty lines. Given the above, it is not clear how much credence can be attached to poverty rates and rates of poverty reduction that are based upon such poverty lines, particularly since the rates of poverty reduction change if we vary the poverty lines even slightly

The policy stance in India on these issues has converged on “inclusion” or “**inclusive growth.**”

These terms have been defined vaguely and broadly, most economists seem to have interpreted them as growth that raises all incomes and is therefore poverty reducing (Balakrishnan 2012) but it is no so in reality. Dividing households into those belonging to scheduled castes (SC), scheduled tribes (ST), Muslims, and others explains only about 4 percent of India’s consumption inequality. At the state level the picture is less reassuring. In some states, notably rural Bihar, scheduled caste households appear, as a group, to be falling behind the rest of the population. More frequently the analysis shows that it is the more advantaged segments that are pulling ahead from the traditionally disadvantaged groups (scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, and Muslims taken together). It also shows that within-group inequalities are more important than those across groups. In other words, the gaps between elites and the poorest within the excluded groups are greater than the average gaps between groups. That is not to deny that social group membership



continues to be an important welfare determinant. Progress indicators are particularly worrying for scheduled tribes.

Everything else being equal, a rise in inequality will dampen the poverty-reducing impact of an increase in mean incomes. But everything else is not equal, and some growth accelerations may not be possible without an increase in inequality. The recent experience of India might fall into such a category, as increasing returns to education are an important factor driving the rise in inequality. The growing importance of education fits exactly with a story of accelerating urban growth and a growing nonfarm sector, as the less the economy is dominated by agriculture, the more important education is. National accounts data also point to growing disparities between states, although the household survey data do not reveal similar patterns. Even so, other sources of inequality may be more structural in nature and may hold back participation of some groups in the development process.

Gender inequality in the form of 'female disadvantage' is most starkly evident in the lower survival chances of baby girls compared to boys. India and, to a lesser extent, Nepal are the only two countries where the survival of infant girls is known to be lower than that of boys. At the same time, notable areas of progress can be seen. Fertility decline, for instance, frees up women from the cycle of childbearing and child rearing and allows them to enter into other arenas. Economic and social outcomes for women are underpinned by low levels of security for them both within and outside their homes.

Female disadvantage in India continues, despite high rates of growth, and women die both in infancy and in motherhood, with poorer outcomes for women from scheduled castes and tribes.

Economic and social outcomes for women are underpinned by low levels of security within and outside their home. Caste remains a potent indicator of labor market outcomes and social status, but positive signs of dynamism are also appearing within the caste hierarchy. Indicators that India's educational expansion is leaving scheduled tribes behind, especially at the secondary school and higher levels are worrying. Scheduled tribes show the least improvement in intergenerational mobility in education and also display the worst indicators of child nutrition and mortality. Scheduled tribes appear to be at risk of becoming locked out of sharing in India's growth and prosperity.

### **Poverty: Other factors**

Poverty is the sum total of a multiplicity of factors that include not just income and calorie intake but also access to land and credit, nutrition, health and longevity, literacy and education and safe drinking water, sanitation and other infrastructural facilities. Hence the need to look at multidimensional indicators of poverty such as

indicators reflecting human and gender development and empowerment. State level estimates of HDI, GDI, GEM and HPI as also infant mortality estimates are presented and analyzed to see if those located in areas that have a high incidence of severe income poverty also suffer deprivation in access to literacy, knowledge, nutrition, voice and infrastructure.

Inclusive growth may be defined as a form of growth which should result in lower incidence of poverty, broad-based and significant improvement in health outcomes, universal access for children to school, increased access to higher education and improved standards of education, including skill development. It should also be reflected in better opportunities for both wage employment and livelihood, and in improvement in provision of basic amenities like water, electricity, roads, sanitation and housing. Particular attention needs to be paid to the needs of the SC/ST and OBC population (Planning Commission 2011)

Some problems, such as malnutrition and poor learning outcomes, are endemic and alarming and are not confined to the poor. That suggests that improving human development outcomes is not merely, or even primarily, an issue of better targeting of existing programs and services to the poor. Larger, and systemic, challenges of service delivery remain.

### **Educational poverty**

Education is an essential tool for breaking the intergenerational transmission of poverty. It is becoming increasingly important if the poor are to share in the benefits of growth, as the economy transforms away from agriculture towards a greater role of urban and non-farm growth. Poor health outcomes are not just a loss for the people concerned. Because they have high out-of-pocket expenditures and little health care coverage, ill health can be a catastrophe for poor families. Malnutrition can itself become a critical factor in perpetuating poverty. The evidence unambiguously suggests that childhood deprivation is associated with poorer childhood development, results in significant long-term impairment in later life, and may also adversely affect future generations.

The features of educational poverty include non-participation or low rates of participation of children in schooling, high rates of drop out and failures, low rates of continuation in schooling, low rates of achievement and finally exclusion of the poor from education. All these aspects of educational poverty are closely related with income poverty. Individuals without a high school degree in average experience unemployment rates that are around 3 to 5 times greater than with individual with college degree. In other words, poverty is predominant among illiterates and it is almost a non-existent phenomenon among educated households.

### **Politico-geographic poverty:**

Civil war and politically instable countries are also one of the causes of poverty. Households whose house was destroyed or who lost land encountered a greater risk of falling into poverty.

Many countries are inherently poor due to their geographic characteristics that predispose them to weak economic growth. For example, most Africans live much inwards from the sea coast or navigable rivers than in other regions and hence face higher transportation costs for exports.

Furthermore, much of the population lives in countries which are landlocked. Also, these problems of distance are compounded by political barriers. Mainly, the landlocked countries are surrounded by national borders on all sides. This may constitute an irreducible barrier to trade even if they have good relations with their neighbors.

Some countries also suffer from natural disaster such as drought and hurricanes which cause damage to properties and lives. Given their geographically unfavorable situations, these countries are in fact standing on a disadvantage route to escape from poverty trap.

### **Moral poverty:**

Moral poverty is also a manifestation of poverty, of which corruption is a goliath scourge. Corruption undermines the driving forces behind reform. Vital resources are siphoned off shore. Foreign investors turn away in frustration. It reduces public revenue, undermines public trust, and weakens the credibility of the state. It weakens public service delivery, misdirects public resources, and holds back the growth that is necessary to pull people out of poverty.

Corruption leads to the concentration of assets among a few wealthy elites who can influence public policy and increase income inequality. Because earning power depends, to some extent, on resource endowment (including inherited wealth), the rich are able to use their wealth to further consolidate their economic and political power such as trade policies, including exchange rate, spending programs and preferential tax treatment of their assets.

### **Poverty declining trends:**

Declining poverty, based on consumption expenditures, implies that India's households could buy more calories. The Indian poverty line was originally anchored in the amount that would enable minimum calorie needs to be met, if a household so chose. So why aren't households devoting incremental consumption spending on additional calories?

There is tentative support for **two reasons**: First, some evidence is seen of a shift in food preferences from cheaper sources of calories toward more expensive foods. That is likely to be due to changes in incomes and relative food prices, as well as to income factors (such as exposure to new foods, imitation of consumption patterns of the wealthy, the influence of advertising, and changes induced by public policy). **Second**, calorie requirements may be less as a result of improvements in the public health environment. A number of developments over the last two decades also imply a decline in activity levels, particularly in rural areas, including greater mechanization of agricultural activities and domestic work, greater ownership of consumer durables, greater access to safe drinking water, and expansion of transportation networks.

Improvements are seen not only in increase in incomes and purchasing power, but also in some education and health outcomes and an increase in personal freedom and choices (related to reduced dependence on patrons in rural areas and greater enterprise in urban areas)

Contrary to popular perception, more than two-thirds of nonfarm jobs are in the service sector.

Construction is the fastest-growing rural nonfarm sector and now provides almost 20 percent of nonfarm employment, up from 10 percent only a decade ago. About 50 percent of participants in the nonfarm sector are self-employed, a ratio that has stayed fairly constant over time. The share of casual employment in total nonfarm employment has risen. Growth in the formal sector has mainly been at the lower-paid end, and a dual wage structure is emerging in the regular employment category: well-paid regular employees have seen a growth in their average wage; poorly paid regular employees have seen little growth in their average wage and more growth in numbers. The effect is a trend toward the casualization of the nonfarm sector. It is mainly young men who obtain nonfarm jobs. The poor are more likely to obtain casual than regular employment as they are more likely to be uneducated and socially disadvantaged, which are greater barriers to regular than to casual employment. Because casual nonfarm employment, though worth considerably less than regular employment, still pays considerably better than agriculture the rapid growth of casual employment in recent years is likely to have been poverty reducing.

### Measures to reduce poverty:

Several measures have been taken to get rid of this anathema called poverty from 'Garibi Hatao' to the now proposed Universal Basic Income (UBI) schemes,

implemented in a few states. However, a lot of road is yet to be covered. Poverty reduction or elimination can be made possible by a multi-pronged approach such as introducing discipline in sovereign lending and borrowing activities to prevent future crises; introducing accountability, transparency and probity to counter corruption in borrowing and lending activities; by strengthening local democratic institutions and empowering them to decide and influence inappropriate policy/rules and so on. There is also a crying need to encourage greater understanding and economic literacy among citizens to challenge and express dissatisfaction those responsible of wrongdoings.

Budget transparency is importance to many of the international development discourses such as climate change mitigation financing, sustainable development goals (SDG), accounting for the sale of natural resources and international aid given to developing countries. Making budgets transparent with adequate checks and balances can enhance the credibility of policy decisions.

This will avoid corruption and wasteful spending.

In India, a wave of anti-corruption crusade has arisen with leaders such as Anna Hazare capturing the imagination of many. Hazare vowed to fast to death with the aim to tackle corruption by demanding the Jan Lokpal. His non-violent civil disobedience approach in a neoGandhian manner has created a mass of followers. Nepal has also seen mass demonstrations, inspired by Hazare's protests in India. The people from various backgrounds have held public fasts against corruption and pressed the new government on post-monarchy reforms.

To tackle poverty, education is indispensable. Literacy programs are needed for the poor. More reforms in education sector with a larger share of GDP to education sector, collaboration with foreign countries for best practices, leverage of technology for e-classes, better quality infrastructure and favourable teacher-pupil ratio can be some methods to improve education and thereby having a positive impact on eradication of poverty by enabling the social capital of the demography of India. The fight against poverty and the promotion of an equal education must become a priority for all.

Development initiatives should be in the form of cooperation to transfer skills to targeted population. Quality education is most critical solution so that they can help themselves to come out from the vicious cycle of poverty and impoverishment.

Priority must be given to children aged 6 and below so that the habit to learn and develop study technique can be instilled, and thus have a greater chance to perform and excel in the elementary, high school, and college years.

This will help to shape their characters and personalities the most. In addition to

quality basic education, secondary and higher education, vocational training, and skill acquisition throughout life are indispensable tools to eradicate poverty.

The government must be committed to providing economic policy incentive for promoting private sector investment and increase foreign direct investment to reduce poverty such as improving household savings, attracting FDI and FII, banking sector reforms like reducing NPA, bank mergers etc. The government must also commit to public expenditure and ensure that money spent is targeted at improving the welfare of the poor by utilizing the potential of ICT, courtesy JAM trinity.

The government must also be committed to ensure that the public has easy access to market information, accessibility and infrastructure. The construction and maintenance of a good road network is required for market accessibility of agriculture from rural and remote areas. Value addition in agriculture, eg food processing, composite farming, corporate farming etc. can ease rural distress and help in the fight against poverty.

### **Conclusion:**

A lot has been done to reduced poverty. In fact, according to United Nation Development Programmer, India have lifted 271 million people out of poverty in just 10 year time period from 2005/06 to 2015/16 which is a commendable feat! Signs of improvement are appearing in every sphere of life but improvements in nutrition and some other key indicators have been extremely slow and remain cause for serious concern. Due to the multidimensional problem, more attention needs to be focused on investment in human capital, particular in education as a means to increase earnings, quality of jobs and improving the quality of life such as better utilization of health facilities, shelter, water and sanitation.

Together, by leveraging a multi stakeholder approach and adopting a multi-pronged strategy in health, education, employment, investment, sectoral reforms in agriculture, manufacturing, political reforms and societal reforms for ensuring social justice, this humungous scourge called poverty can be definitely tamed to usher in an inclusive and prosperous society.

### **Some quotes:**

1. "Together we can remind them there are no excuses to sit back and watch the cycle of extreme poverty continue."— Auliq Ice
2. **"Millions of people in the world's poorest countries remain imprisoned, enslaved, and in chains. They are trapped in the prison of poverty. It is time to set them free."** - By Nelson Mandela at London's Trafalgar Square in 2005.
3. **"Overcoming poverty is not a gesture of charity. It is an act of justice. It is the protection of a fundamental human right, the right to dignity and a decent life."**
4. Do not look the other way; do not hesitate. Recognize that the world is hungry for action, not words. Act with courage and vision." By Nelson Mandela

## **ESSAY 3: SILENCE OF GOOD IS MORE DANGEROUS THAN THE ACTION OF EVIL**

In today's society, many people complain about all the political corruption that occurs in government, but none are willing to step up and take on this opposing evil. India which is the largest democracies of the world have low voter turnout on election days. This is a great example of how good men doing nothing allows the evil to triumph. If all of those people who talked about getting the evil politicians out of power actually voted, then they could possibly be removed.

Therefore, if all of those good people acted upon their spoken words, the evil people of not only the government but all other social evils might be removed.

In the life experiences of an average person, many things occur that could be stopped if the good would try to stop the evil. Often times, two parents of a household work and do not spend enough time with their children. Because the parents do not spare proper times for their child, the child may begin taking drugs, get bad grades, and become involved in crime. Each of these things is evil but could have been prevented if the parent had done something and taken proper concern on proper time.

Introduction and conclusion of an essay should be such that it should attract the attention of the examiner and give a sense of what someone is about to write in the next few pages. So, special care should be taken while introducing and concluding an essay. An essay can be introduced in multiple ways, there is no fixed formula or pattern for it. However, some of the popular and suggestible introduction includes

- Introducing using an anecdote/story
- Introducing using some quotes
- Introducing with some current incident
- General introduction which may contain historical examples or straight away paragraphs.

### **Introducing using anecdote**

One fine day Vinay stopped near a juice corner on highway to have some juice. It was a very hot day and there was only one juice shop on that long stretch, so there was huge gathering on his shop. The poor fruit juice seller was trying to serve everyone as quickly as possible. In between 3-4 people came from car and ordered juice, these persons got furious over juice seller because of the delay and started abusing him. At the end when he asked for money, they started beating him and threw up all his

stuffs on the highway. Most of the onlookers either took to their cars or stood meekly seeing what those goons were doing to the juice seller. This is one among many day to day stories where we see evil forces of the society beating torturing people but people keep on watching as meek spectators. Such acts encourage those bullies and evil forces of the society to flex their muscles unhindered, therefore, it has been said **Silence of good is more dangerous than the action of evil.**

### Introducing using quotes

“The world suffers a lot. Not because the violence of bad people. But because of the silence of the good people.” — Napoleon

“Silence becomes cowardice when occasion demands speaking out the whole truth and acting accordingly.” – Mahatma Gandhi

"All it takes for evil to triumph is for good men to do nothing." Abraham Lincoln

“In the end, we will remember not the words of our enemies, but the silence of our friends.” — Dr Martin Luther King Jr

“To sin by silence when they should protest makes cowards of men.” — Ella Wheeler Wilcox

“If you are neutral in situations of injustice, you have chosen the side of the oppressor. If an elephant has its foot on the tail of a mouse and you say that you are neutral, the mouse will not appreciate your neutrality.” — Archbishop Desmond Tutu

“A man dies when he refuses to stand up for that which is right. A man dies when he refuses to stand up for justice. A man dies when he refuses to take a stand for that which is true.” — Dr Martin Luther King Jr

“What is the source of our first suffering? It lies in the fact that we hesitated to speak. It was born in the moment when we accumulated silent things within us.” – Gaston Bachelard

### Introducing using current incident

**26th** December was a horrific night for Nirbhaya. She boarded an unauthorised bus in Delhi wherein she was brutally raped and threw away on a road, she kept on groaning in pain, it happened to be a busiest route of Delhi but no by passers took her to the hospital. It was only when the police van reached there that she was taken to the hospital, it is possible that if people had acted swiftly they could have caught hold of the perpetrators then and there and could have saved her life by taking her immediately to the hospital. Thus silence of many spectators lead to grave crimes like mob lynching, snatching, arm twisting, theft and loot but we do not react. We are the reason that the world has become a dangerous place to live in. Not through our actions, but through our inaction. Because good people often do nothing. Our inaction often allows evil to flourish. Taking action can be dangerous, time consuming, tedious, and a real pain in the neck, but it is the thing that is most



effective at minimizing the danger and evil in the world.

### Understanding good and evil

‘Good’ means a lack of self-centredness. It means the ability to empathize with other people, to feel compassion for them, and to put their needs before our own. It means, if necessary, sacrificing our own well-being for the sake of others’. It means benevolence, altruism and selflessness, and self-sacrifice towards a greater cause all qualities which stem from a sense of empathy. It means being able to see beyond the superficial difference of race, gender, or nationality and relate to a common human essence beneath them.

All of the saintly people in human history have these qualities in abundance. Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King, risked their own safety and well-being for the goal of gaining equal rights and freedom for Indians and African Americans. These were human beings with an exceptional degree of empathy and compassion, which overrode any concern for their own ambitions or wellbeing.

‘Evil’ people are those who are unable to empathize with others. As a result, their own needs and desires are of paramount importance. They are selfish, self-absorbed, and narcissistic. In fact, other people only have value for them to the extent that they can help them satisfy their own desires or be exploited. This applies to dictators like Stalin and Hitler, and to serial killers and rapists. Their primary characteristic is an inability to empathize with others. They can’t sense other people’s emotions or suffering, can’t see the world from other people’s perspectives, and so have no sense of their rights. Other human beings are just objects to them, which is what makes their brutality and cruelty possible.

### Why is action important?

Action is what gets things done. Inaction means nothing gets done. Action, in the case of this quote, is about doing things to either thwart, retard or deter the evil acts of others. The actions necessary to thwart evil acts is probably the most dangerous and the rarest. Breaking up a fight, scaring off a robber (or worse), these are actions of extreme bravery. It is an action the evil-doer is not expecting, as it is so rarely done. The actions necessary to retard or deter evil acts are what most of us can do most easily, and with little to no risk. These might include joining (or forming) a neighbourhood watch group, keeping our neighbourhood clean, well lit and unappealing to thieves. In each case, some action has been taken and the action has in some way made it harder for evil to succeed. That is the action of which the quote asks of us. Evil is everywhere, and the wolf is always at the door.

Caste system started getting entrenched into the society since Gupta dynasty. Discrimination against the oppressed class went on increasing. It was not that every section of the society equally supported such discriminations or acts of untouchability but the deadly silence of masses gave mock support to these acts and the system got institutionalised. There were rebellious female leaders like Gargi and Maitreyi in the ancient periods who participated in court room debates but overall position of women kept on deteriorating because females themselves believed that women are meant for gratification of Kings. Women or queen were so badly treated in King's houses but thousands of queens who lived there left it upon the destiny of sufferers. Those who were frequently attended by Kings believed themselves to be destined and king's favourites but they never raised concerns over the plight of women who were going through unsaid miseries.

These trends perpetuated itself in the form of Sati system wherein women believed that it was her destiny to set herself on fire if her husband left this world. They never opposed the system or the system of polygamy or marriages of young girls to an old person. These trends still continue in some backward regions where literacy is low, awareness is minimal.

In modern India, the battle of 1757 CE is believed to be the foundation of English empire in India. Lord Clive defeated Mir Zafar with a very small contingent of British force, historian Bipin Chandra writes, had 20 lakh people raised their 40 lakhs hands, British would have never dared see back Indian territory but, no, Indians chose to be meek spectators and the result was penetration of British empire in India, treaty of 1764, thus transferring diwani and nizamat rights to the British. Though there was action by the evil British forces but they were very few in numbers had the Indians reacted timely that evil could have disappeared before taking its actual shape. Inaction of people made India slave.

The USA attacked Afghanistan and Iraq unilaterally in the name of war on terror. The United Nations which has the prime responsibility to safeguard the interests of various nation and establish proper world order remained a meek spectator. Several unilateral sanctions have been imposed against many countries of the world by the USA but the powerful developed nations of west could not raise their voice thus silently supported actions of the USA. Under JCPOA deal Iran had already started curtailing its nuclear enrichment programme but without the consensus of all European countries, the USA went on re-imposing sanctions and the world remained silent.

### People who raised their voices

It's not that everyone in the society conform to the rules of the society, there have

been numerous examples wherein people have raised their voices against the injustice and atrocities taking place in the society or anywhere in the world.

It required immense courage for Raja Ram Mohan Roy to raise his voice against the Sati system. When Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar established first girls' school with the help of Drink Water Bethune, he was almost ousted from the society because people believed the real place of girls is within the four walls of the home. With their efforts Sati abolition act and Widow Remarriage act was brought in force.

Gurudev Ravindra Nath Tagore believed that nationalism was the last refuge of cowards and despots, when he lectured whole world about the importance of modern education, science and humanism, Gadarites in the USA believed him to be an English agent. However, he braved all those allegations and tried to instil modern values among the Indians, established Vishwa Bharti University which is today one of the best institutions of India.

Mahatma Gandhi was thrown out of a moving train even after possessing a valid ticket just because he was a black. Had he not raised his voice against such despotic acts, South Africa would never have fought apartheid and Gandhi would never have emerged as a mass leader. He did not conform to the rule of society and let the evil prevail.

Malala Yusufzai was shot in her brains at such a tender age because she raised the voice for female education in a war torn country, she wanted to be a flag bearer of modern values and education amidst meek conformist people of conservative society of Pakistan.

Nadia Murad who was taken into captivity by the ISIS and sold as sex slave, freed herself from their hold and narrated to the world her entire story. She exposed the crude most face of ISIS even after having life threat.

### [Repercussions of Speaking up against the evil](#)

A Pune based RTI activist was murdered recently because he had filed multiple RTIs against illegal works being done by Pune Metropolitan Region Development Authority (PMRDA). On March 9, Nanjibhai Sondarva (35), a resident of Manekvada village in Kotda Sangani *taluka* of Rajkot district, was allegedly clubbed to death by six people. The attack occurred soon after Sondarvai filed an RTI application demanding transparency about the funds spent on the construction of a road in his village. In October 2015, a day before the Central Information Commission (CIC)

organised a national convention to celebrate ten years of the RTI Act, a 30-year-old RTI activist Ratansinh Chaudhary was murdered for exposing financial irregularities in the Banaskantha district of the state. Media reports of more than 300 instances of attacks on or harassment of citizens and at least 51 murders and five suicides can be linked to information sought under The Right to Information Act. Maharashtra followed by Gujarat tops the list for states with the most attacks on RTI users.

Since 1992, 47 journalists have been killed in India, according to data compiled by the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), a non-profit organisation that campaigns for the right of journalists to report the news without fear of reprisal. These 47 are out of 1,305 journalists killed worldwide in these 26 years either murdered or killed in crossfire or on dangerous assignments. Rising Kashmir editor Shujaat Bukhari was gunned down in Srinagar, Gauri Lankesh was gunned down in Bengaluru, Sudip Dutta Bhaumik was shot dead by a police officer in Tripura, three journalists were mowed down by vehicles in back-to-back killings Navin Singh and Vijay Singh in Bihar, and Sandeep Sharma in Madhya Pradesh. They all raised their voice against the persistent evils of the society.

It's not that such journalists are being killed in India only, Jamal Ahmad Khashoggi a Saudi Arabian dissident, author, columnist for The Washington Post, was assassinated at the Saudi consulate in Istanbul on 2 October 2018 allegedly by the agents of the Saudi government.

Khashoggi had been sharply critical of Saudi Arabia's crown prince, Mohammad bin Salman, and the country's king, Salman of Saudi Arabia. He also opposed the Saudi Arabian-led intervention in Yemen.

### [How can people speak up against injustice](#)

Most of the cases of rape, domestic violence or marital rape are not reported because of the legality involved at various levels, so, with the time various legislative interventions have been done to smoothen the process and give confidence to people to report such cases. Internal complaint committee have been setup at all government institutions where cases are disposed of swiftly. Ministry of women and child development has started SHE box where complaints can be submitted. Such innovative ideas have enabled people to speak up against women related violence and injustices.

Reports of crimes against women in India have been on the rise. The National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) figures indicate that gender crimes have increased by 26.7 per cent in the current year there were 309,546 reported crimes as compared to 244,270 the previous year. Alarmingly, the number of rapes has risen by 35.2 per cent, and when it comes to domestic violence, every five minutes one case is brought

before the authorities.

Women are slowly gaining the confidence to speak up for their rights and this is because for the first time in their lives they are being backed by their communities. Over the last few years, people have galvanised in large numbers to deal with violence against women.

Case studies have proven that in many cases by-stander intervention has, in fact, saved people.

“We definitely need that kind of an involvement in our society too because a lot of young women who face violence do not retaliate for the fear that no one will come forward and back them up,” observes Manak Matiyani of ComMutiny-The Youth Collective, which motivates young people to bring about social change. Matiyani has been consistently mobilising the community through his Must Bol Campaign as well as through The Youth Collective, which he now heads in Delhi.

### [RTI as a tool towards people's action against evil](#)

Article 19(1) of the Indian Constitution specifies that the Right to Information (RTI) is a part of the fundamental rights. It says that every citizen has freedom of speech and expression. In 1976, in the *Raj Narain vs the State of UP*, it was held by the Supreme Court that people cannot speak unless they know. An informed citizen is better equipped to have a better vigilance on the instruments of governance in order to make the government more accountable to the governed.

RTI is a huge leap in keeping the citizens informed about the activities of the government.

That RTI application revealed that flats in the Adarsh Housing Society, a 31-storey building, which was originally meant to provide residence for war widows and veterans, were used to house politicians, bureaucrats and their relatives. The RTI Act was also used to expose corruption after the Commonwealth Games scam, in which the corrupt deals by a certain politician embarrassed the nation. The report said that an RTI application filed by non-profit Housing and Land Rights Network showed that the then Delhi government had allegedly diverted Rs 744 crore from social welfare projects for Dalits to the Commonwealth Games from 2005-06 to 2010-11.

In 2007, the RTI request filed by Krishak Mukti Sangram Samiti, an NGO, revealed irregularities in the distribution of food meant for people living below the poverty line by the public distribution system in Assam, according to a report in *The Wall Street Journal*. In 2008, an RTI application by a Punjab-based NGO revealed that heads of the local branches of the Indian Red Cross Society had allegedly used money intended for the victims of the Kargil war and natural disasters to buy cars, air-

conditioners and pay for hotel bills.

These are few examples of various good efforts taken by ordinary people of the country in raising their voice against evil doers. However, as highlighted earlier major concern that impede people from playing proactive role is their safety and peace. Considerable safety provisions have been ensured under whistle blower act. Whistle Blowers Protection Act, 2014 is an Act in the Parliament of India which provides a mechanism to investigate alleged corruption and misuse of power by public servants and also protect anyone who exposes alleged wrongdoing in government bodies, projects and offices. The wrongdoing might take the form of fraud, corruption or mismanagement. The Act also ensures punishment for false or frivolous complaints.

Various e government initiatives have also increased people's participation in governance activities. People earlier did not speak up because of prevalent babudom and red tapism in the public offices. No one would write reports and entertain complaints. People used to see their own comforts also. They felt lazy in going and writing a complaint at some public office. E government initiatives and online portals have enabled them to file their complaints and grievances sitting at their homes thus it has also played a facilitating role active involvement of people.

### Role of social media

Social media brings confidence to many people who are not scared anymore to say what they really think. A study by the Pew Research Center demonstrates that around half of Americans have engaged in some form of political or social-minded activity on social media in 2017. This phenomenon is particularly true when it comes to minorities: social media platforms are very important for half of black social media users in the USA, whether it is to express their political opinion or to engage in situations they feel concerned about.

### **#BlackLivesMatter**

One of the most significant examples is the #BlackLivesMatter hashtag. Created in 2013 after the acquittal of George Zimmerman – a policeman who shot to death Trayvon Martin, a 17-years-old black man – this hashtag was used approximatively 30 million times on Twitter with 17,002 mentions per day on average. The reason for this success is the black community's wish to be seen, listened and understood. It is the desire to show they are numerous even though they are considered as a minority. Behind this hashtag, there is the opportunity for them to prove that

strength lies in numbers and that they can act to make things change. Behind this hashtag, there are millions of people doing activism online.

**#Metoo campaign** in India which ran on social media exposed so many famous film producers, directors and actors and also ministers. Thus people have found various innovative ways to express themselves. When the situation has demanded good and ordinary people of India have resorted to roads to express their displeasure over the ongoing evil issues, some of such major events are:-

### Jan Lokpal Bill: Anti-Corruption Movement by Anna Hazare, 2011

When anti-corruption activist Shri Anna Hazare began a hunger strike at Jantar Mantar in New Delhi on April 5, 2011, the movement led to the resignation of Agriculture Minister Sharad Pawar from the group of ministers that had been charged with reviewing the draft Jan Lokpal bill. The initiative brought together a huge number of people, making it a one-of-its-kind event in decades.

The movement was named among the “Top 10 News Stories of 2011” by Time Magazine.

### Nirbhaya Movement, 2012

The 2012 Delhi gang rape incident saw one of the most angry reactions from people who were very clear on expressing that they have had enough. After the incident, thousands came out on streets to protest in several parts of the country. The movement also created a stir in social media. Taking the movement into consideration, the government at the centre and various states announced several steps to ensure the safety of women.

### Conclusion

When the situation warrants masses have shown that they have the ability to turn down the most powerful regimes. Arab Spring, Indian Freedom movement, Anti-apartheid movement, Nirbhaya movement are examples of some such movements which shook the foundations of evil forces, however, in normal circumstances people conform to the going trends in society and become complacent. Growing awareness of rights and increasing level of literacy would propel the masses to express their dissents against the evil forces of the society. To enable citizens to really take up the national or international issues they need to assure of their safety, security and livelihood. The collective conscience of the good people in the society is indispensable for a peaceful and prosperous living of the masses. When the responsible citizens of a society are agile and stand up for a cause, the whole community can have a peaceful sleep

## **ESSAY 4 : "CONTROL LEADS TO COMPLIANCE, AUTONOMY LEADS TO ENGAGEMENT"**

**Preface:** The essay is philosophical in nature having real life justifications. A student while exploring the philosophical route needs to explore on real life examples which provide a justification to the quote.

### **Introduction:**

You can introduce in one of the following ways.

1) Establishing a relation between different facets of the quote: i.e. Control and autonomy and Compliance and Engagement

2) Defining different facets of the quote with their relevance:

- Control:
- Compliance:
- Autonomy:
- Engagement:

3) You can start by sharing an anecdote from real life happenings. For e.g. recent examples of cooperative federalism.

4) The quote is a very straight forward and doesn't have much to interpret.

### **A model Introduction:**

Control and autonomy like management and leadership are often used interchangeably.

However, they are not alike; each carries a different meaning. Control leads to compliant behaviour, that is, a situation where a person obeys to or rather comply with the directions given by someone else. In addition to obeying the order, the person is also expected to work in the same manner as has been directed to. On the other hand, autonomy lets a person explore and engage rather than just comply. It leads to collaboration, participation and a sense of belonging.

(You can alternatively begin with a story, analogy or two case studies that show how control leads to compliance and the other how autonomy leads to engagement)

Every organization requires both control and autonomy. For example, every school and classroom is balanced with a time for compliance and time for engagement. It is essential that children/students need to be compliant towards certain rules and regulations but at the same time one would want them to be instil a sense of



autonomous behaviour. There are certain subjects, foundational skills or areas which a student is expected to learn and for that a requisite amount of control needs to be exercised to make the student fall in line. However, it is also imperative that the students are allowed to engage and explore their passion. It is not surprising that today's academic curriculum has a separate subject where the student is given a range of subjects to choose from.

There are times when each of us needs to be disciplined whether we like it or not. Life is not just rainbows and butterflies; we have to strive to achieve success even in areas that we aren't passionate about. Also, there are times when we need to free ourselves and let us engage with our passions. A balance between control and autonomy is necessary.

The tussle between autonomy and control is seen every day in almost every sphere. It is the balance between the two modes that decides the success/failure of a project.

### Why control is necessary?

As enunciated control leads to compliance, hence, it is an indispensable function of management. Control is necessary to get work done in the manner it is expected to; it is necessary to ensure discipline and compliance to the code of conduct and other rules and regulations. But the manner in which control is exercised, or how much control is necessary determines compliance or defiance. If control is meant to regulate, discipline, or get things done keeping in mind other variables (psychological satisfaction), the subordinate/student/ or an individual and society at large will comply. For example, participating in certain outdoor activities in foundation courses in various government services.

The degree of control also depends on the kind of workforce or the nature of the job. If the workforce is skilled and proficient, the control exercised would be relatively less and autonomy could be more. On the other hand, if the workforce is not competitive, inefficient, lazy, unskilled, a larger control will need to be exercised to get the work done. In this situation, granting complete autonomy would not the desired results.

Similarly, the other factor that determines the degree of control to be exercised is the nature of the job- routinised or non-routinised; programmatic or non-programmatic. If the job is routinised, autonomy can be compromised with and larger control would be required so as to make the person perform the job even if he/she does not like to do it. The other case would be the job that demands creativity,

innovation and a larger engagement with the entire workforce. In such a scenario, exercising too much control would lead to failure, hence, more autonomy is desirable. Autonomy will lead to enhanced perseverance, larger engagement, participation and better decision-making.

### Drawbacks of control

If control is exercised arbitrarily, it may lead to a backlash in an organisation, institution, or anywhere else. Control smothers creativity, psychological well-being, reduces participation and engagement. Too much control can act as a deterrent or an obstacle in achieving the desired goal. For example, forcing a child to pursue a subject he is least interested in or something which does not engage him. Cases of frequent suicides among students can be attributed to excessive control and lesser autonomy.

### Methods of control

Control can be exercised in a number of ways ---societal control through institutions like family, school, marriage, etc.

Political control in terms accountability – Executive responsible to the Legislature; laying reports in the Parliament.

Control in an organisation through management codes

### Why autonomy is desired but not absolute autonomy?

The opposite of control is autonomy which means the Golden mean “autonomy with control”

*“A culture of collaboration enables successful ideas and innovations to be shared and spread rapidly throughout the organization.” -John Mackey*

*“A society cannot flourish without some sense of shared purpose.”- Richard Layard*

*“A strong, shared culture is the glue that keeps empowered organizations from falling apart.” - Frederic Laloux*

*“Human beings have an innate inner drive to be autonomous, self-determined, and connected to one another.”*

*“All I want is compliance with my wishes, after reasonable discussion.”*

Winston Churchill

*“A joy-filled workplace gives people the freedom to use their talents and skills for the benefit of society, without being crushed or controlled by autocratic supervisors.”*

Dennis Bakke

*“A leader is anyone who can give you the support and direction you need to achieve your goal.” - Ken Blanchard*

## Economy

The Indian economy is a perfect example to show how control and autonomy function. Before the 1991 LPG Reforms, the government exercised full control or rather regulated the market. The market functioned as per government directives without any discretion to act as per the forces of demand and supply. This led to a crisis like situation after which the government acted more as a facilitator rather than a regulator. The market was given autonomy in many sectors which the market forces could manage better while the government took charge of the areas which related to the overall welfare of the society. Hence, it is the balance between autonomy and control that is the panacea of certain problems.

The other example which show the difference between autonomy and control is the mechanism of auditing- external vs internal/social audit. External audit is meant to control or rather it is a mechanism to ensure compliance to certain financial codes while internal audit seeks to examine much more than just compliance. Social audit on the other hand is a method which provides autonomy and hence engagement while also ensuring compliance. It is the participatory approach and a sense of belonging that has made social audit a success.

## Polity

Control exercised by the Centre over the states has always been a matter of concern. The demand for autonomy by states stems from the problems that have occurred due to excessive control or rather very less flexibility/autonomy, besides other issues. States have termed as glorified municipalities precisely because they do not have a larger say in most of the areas. The shift from Planning Commission to NITI Ayog is seen by political thinkers as a shift from larger control to some autonomy and more engagement of states in planning.

Another example can be the statutory bodies like the University Grants Commission (UGC), National Green Tribunal (NGT), and National Commission for Women (NCW), etc. These bodies were established to permit a certain level of independence from the government control; however, the government still exercises some control over the functioning of these bodies albeit in an indirect way. The taxpayer's funds utilised in the operation of these bodies is subject to the scrutiny of the centre. Ministers are also accountable to Parliament for the operation of the portfolios they hold. These examples show how autonomy coupled with limited control leads to compliance as well as engagement of both states and centre. It is this approach that truly establishes the democratic spirit of the country- participation of all.

Co-operative federalism, decentralisation in the form of 73rd and 74th Amendment Acts, the mechanism of GST Council, Inter State Council, NITI Ayog aim to strike a fine

balance between both control and certain degree of autonomy between the centre and the states. The devolution of funds increased by the 14th Finance Commission was also the right step in increasing states autonomy so that they could plan their programs as per their requirements. One size fits all approach was not feasible for states which have diversity and problems that vary across.

### Education

Certain areas in the education sector like primary education is controlled via the government. The method of teaching, curriculum, and other aspects are universalised to have a common mechanism. However, if we look at the higher education, certain institutions and universities are made autonomous. In these institutes, candidates are given the option to engage, research and explore to reach their goal as per their ideology. This leads to creativity, innovation and psychological satisfaction which is not the case otherwise. It is because with compliant behavior, one does the work as per the guidelines. With autonomy comes engagement, and one does a particular work because one truly wants to do it.

At some level, compliance is a lot easier for the people at the very top of an education system.

This, however, kills the creative and entrepreneurial spirit which is plaguing the education system of our country. Less number of patents, research papers are a manifestation of this problem. Hence, it is necessary that a certain degree of freedom is granted to certain institutions.

### International Events

The excessive control exercised by the USSR eventually led to its breakdown. The Soviet Union was supposed to be “a society of true democracy,” but in many ways it was no less repressive than the czarist autocracy that preceded it. It was ruled by a single party, the Communist Party that demanded the allegiance of every Russian citizen. The totalitarian tendency of the state was manifested in the way the state controlled almost every aspect of economy, polity, society, industry and administration. There was no degree of autonomy to anyone and if people protested, they were detained or sent to labor camps. This led to resentment and a backlash which ultimately led to the fall of the mighty power.

### History

Britain and its desire for more colonies made it pursue a policy of rampant control and subjugation which ultimately led to revolts across the world.

The tribal revolts in the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries that took place in British India were a revolt against excessive control and interference in the local customs of the indigenous people of the forests. The British didn't try to engage the

people or consider their opinion even if it was for their well-being. Anything that is coerced or forced is obeyed to some extent but with a certain degree of apprehension and for a temporary period. Autonomy, flexibility to manage one's own resources, and engagement with the tribals would have been the right mechanism for the British.

The secessionist movements in the North East aimed at demanding autonomy in their functioning. This is despite the creation of several new states and territorially defined autonomous councils in these states. The reason cited by the revolting tribals is that an adequate share of political power is a necessary condition for retaining their socio-cultural identities and development. The call is for more autonomous functioning, engagement, and participation in decision making. The never-ending crisis in the North-east can be attributed to this tussle between absolute control and demand for some flexibility.

### Naxalism

Naxalism is the biggest security threat India is facing. The conflict began in the late 1960s in the Naxalbari village in West Bengal. The reason for the conflict was the prolonged failure of the government to implement constitutional reforms which would provide for limited tribal autonomy with respect to natural resources on their lands. The way the problem has been dealt with till now brings to the surface the binary of control and autonomy. Deployment of paramilitary forces or the Army to contain the menace can provide for relief for a temporary period only. The real weapon is engagement with the revolting people; to make them realise that they are an integral part and the government is for them as well. It is about granting them certain degree of freedom to choose the way they want to live, respecting their culture, customs and traditions.

Control will only ensure compliance and that too for a certain period. After some respite, the revolt will strike again maybe with a greater force. Hence, the permanent solution lies in acceptance, involvement, and engagement with the people at large by providing them a certain degree of autonomy.

### The language discourse in the 1960s

The debate around the national and official language of India way back in the 1960s is a perfect example to show how control and autonomy were exercised to achieve the desired objectives.

Indian being a diverse country with multiple customs, traditions and languages could not afford to have one single language as the official language. The linguistic agitation and repression resulted in loss of several human lives and destruction of

public property.

It was in response to this agitation that the three-language formula (Hindi, English, and one modern language) was formulated in 1968 by the government of India in consultation with the states. This provided autonomy to both the Hindi speaking as well as the non-Hindi population.

### Conclusion

Both autonomy and control are important mechanisms to get things done. No one idea can be absolute and hence the Indian Constitution grants liberty and freedom of various kinds but with certain provisos. The idea is to promote a fine balance between the two for effective, efficient and better utilisation of resources to attain the desirable goals.