

Conclusion

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TEST: Essay Test 6

TOPIC: Examinations are a necessary evil.

MARKS: 250

48
125

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made it a
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one argument
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write in simple
language &
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Examinations are a necessary evil

The hot summer wind has replaced the pleasant spring weather. The parks look empty, with the swings gliding due to wind. The birds have been left alone in their evening duet, for there are no chirpy young kids playing & jumping around. Yes, you guessed it right, it's one of the most dreaded time in a student's year - THE EXAM TIME!

The history of exams can be traced to the beginnings of human civilisations. The ancient scriptures, inscriptions on stones, walls, seals all point out that learning formed an essential part of human life. Man's highly evolved brain is testimony to the fact that learning has been natural to him. Over time, man accumulated immense knowledge, about himself, his surroundings, the natural processes & even the cosmic space. This knowledge led to the emergence of great civilisations & empires. These empires needed able men to defend it. The search for desired qualities can be said to have led to origin of exams.

no such need for floral language in UPSC write academically

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write in simple language and to the point

Exams have been a way of testing individuals to judge their suitability for a particular occupation or thing. The ancient evidences of exams can be seen in The Vedas, which describes the gurukul system, wherein the teacher & students would stay in forest & the teacher would test his students' knowledge based upon his teachings. eg. The famous story about Arjun's immense focus while shooting the parrot's eye in Mahabharata.

~~This shows exams have existed since long & have evolved over time based upon the needs of the society in particular & nation in general.~~ eg. The ICS exams ^{during} British rule had a horse-riding component since ~~that was~~ ^{was} ~~one~~ one of the few modes of transportation during those times. Today such tests stand irrelevant, while ethics, integrity & aptitude being the new focus to suit today's times.

Such dynamic nature of exams has led to lot of research on it.

The findings of such researches have led to lot of criticisms about them - to the extent of calls crit.

One now wonders, what exactly should one call a thing evil? Simplistic analysis would say anything that does harm to the concerned stakeholders (here students, teachers, parents among others) should be considered evil. Our experience in life teaches us that there is nothing black or white in life - there are only grey areas. This is also true in the case of examinations. There are some good things about them & some bad. It is the relative weight of one over the another, according to the concerned stakeholders that'll determine if they are a evil, a necessary thing or a necessary evil!

The prime reason why exams are considered evil is that they put undue stress on students. This excessive stress often translates into suicides. The rigid pass-fail system seen in Indian examinations has created too much stress because it assumes that every child learns at the same pace.

This misguided assumption has led to our examinations being standardised tests. The annual exams at the end of the year will decide if a student deserves to go to the next class or not. This ^{kind of} rigidness is also seen in social attitudes towards examinations. There is so much stigma attached with failures in exams that students terminally lose confidence in themselves. Not only his/her confidence goes down ~~beco~~ but also chances of making it big in life because one exam needs to be cleared to reach the bigger one & so on which ultimately decide a person's career.

Apart from stigma, the punishment for failing can be far more severe. One of its form is corporal punishment, which although has been criminalised by the amendments to the Juvenile Justice Act, but is widely prevalent in Indian society. Such punishments create a fear of about exams & learning through fear is not learning, it is a mental Scanned by CamScanner

sets other way forward

Bring in the dimension of Competition & its Impact on students,

Moreover, corporal punishment risks alienation of child from his/her parents. Such forms of punishment & social stigma lead to drop out - more commonly seen in rural areas where seriousness about education is less to begin with. This leads to large number of students remaining uneducated. As a result, they do not find jobs within the formal sector & end up doing petty jobs in informal sector. Worse still, they fall victims to crime, drug addiction, human trafficking. Thus examinations induced stress (social behaviour can be very detrimental for the society as a whole).

Not only are the existence of exams criticised, but also the nature of examinations & what kind of learning they impart to the students. Most of our school level exams do not evaluate a student's thinking process, his intelligent quotient, his problem solving capacity. There is disproportionate focus on memorisation aspect of learning.

How is this related to issue

This breeds rote learning, with students not gaining any real knowledge! This is not the way we intended to take our education system.

There is also a gender dimension to the whole gamut of problems created by ^{rigid} examinations.

Girls who fail even once are mostly withdrawn from the education system, & made to do household chores or married off. This overnight kills

their dreams, removing possibilities of financial independence. Yet we

focus on lighting candles or showing messages about women empowerment

& not realising where the root problems lie. Although this might be

seen as a social problem of patriar-

chal attitude, rigid examinations

create conditions which reinforce

such attitudes. eg: "What would girls

achieve by studying? See she already

failed". As a result ^{gender} inequalities

are given a boost.

Talking about inequalities, the existing inequalities in the society are reflected in the outcomes of rigid

examinations. The rich have access to best coaching facilities whereas the poor cannot even afford to buy a slate! No wonder the rich are more successful in competitive exams because more human capital is invested in them. Thus rigid exams curtail chance of success of the poor.

The income inequalities and fear about examinations has led to proliferation of coaching classes in India. The menace created by them has led to commercialization of the exam process. There are coachings available for practically everything. The poor & less aware are often misled by such coachings & are exploited. Such money making institutions capitalise on the necessity to clear the exams & on the fear of the poor. They are a menace also because the value of schools & colleges as institutions of learning are slowly but surely degrading.

Examinations, thus tend to create too much focus on studies, which leads to other Scanned by CamScanner wrong analysis

irrelevant, its more about

interest & opportunities being neglected. eg There is a reason why we don't get large number of gold medals at the Olympics because our ~~children~~ ^{potential} sportsmen are probably now engineers! Along with sports, music, literature & other cultural arts gets neglected, thus holistic learning & development of a student ceases.

The negative consequences are realised by researchers & the government alike. The Right to Education Act (2009), which places the responsibility of students schooling on the government reflects this concern. The Act calls for a no detention policy. This goes a long way in reducing the stress created by ~~fixed~~ end of the year exams.

The social impacts of exams are seen in the rates of suicides amongst students in India which is one of the highest in the world. eg a news about a student suicide seems to be a norm rather than an exception.

But a more fundamental question relevant in today's scenario is, are our examinations &

mention which support says no, don't manufacture facts

wrong, its different subset altogether
skill development is targeted at unskilled
education system creating or increasing. ^{for} ^{pro}
the employability of students, for the ^{pur}
purpose of education is to be able ^{to}
to find a career opportunity. ^{note}

Recent scenario of shortage of
technical workmen in industries shows
how skewed our ~~ex~~ workforce is in
favour of engineers & managers.

There is also an apprehension
today that the unsatisfactory system
of education is leading to brain drain
from India. If this is true then there
is lot to learn from the experiences
of other countries. eg. education in
U.S.A is considered student friendly.

• Also the education system in
Scandinavian countries (Norway, Sweden
etc) is one which is student centric &
exams are more activity based.

Thus the evidences in current
scenario point towards examinations
being an evil in India. But as said
earlier, there ~~are~~ ^{is} no black & white
in life. If exams ~~have~~ themselves have
stood the test of time, over centuries,
then they must have some irreplaceable
advantages about them.

Don't
oversee
this
argument

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brain drain is because of lack of opportunities
& too high competition & not exam fear.

One of the most obvious advantage or utility of examinations is that they help evaluate. They help us in differentiating an educated ~~person from an uneducated~~ one, a literate person from an illiterate one, a science expert from a maths expert. Examinations are indispensable in order to categorise students based upon their level of learning & education gained.

This is the main reason why exams will be relevant come what may.

The basic ~~is~~ need to separate deserving from the less deserving is felt in all societies across all spheres of life because opportunities are always going to be less in number than those wanting to take advantage of that opportunity. This basic rule of life makes it necessary to conduct examinations.

~~This finds utility while giving~~ employment to seeking candidates.

Every job in the economy has its own

special requirement. No job would be productive if essential qualities of employee are not present. eg: a software engineer ~~job~~ cannot be given to a computer engineering student unless he proves it in his exams that he can code effectively in C++ or Java. Moreover job competencies to be tested by companies before giving out the job. Similarly a student who doesn't know the basics of human body cannot be employed as a doctor in government. This fundamentals of economics & employment studies demand examinations.

One social advantage offered by exams is that students are kept on their toes. They remain serious about studies. Otherwise without examinations, there is no incentive to study for there is no fear of losing anything. Thus a minimum amount of fear is necessary to keep students enchanted with studies, otherwise how would he ^{is he} be a doctor when he/she won't be asked the structure of human heart. This also ensures students during teenage years.

The essay should have ended by now,
its going over word limit.

don't fall prey to anti-social activities. eg. exams would ensure, a student would study rather than roam around the streets drinking with his friends.

The most important criticism of exams that they create stress on students too is an advantage in a sense. This stress is necessary to an extent because children are trained to handle stress from a young age. That is more synonymous to young children's brain being given some responsibility. The students will get trained & used to the unversed truth that life is not going to be an easy ride. This mental condition-

ing from an early age would help them better handle them, over more stressful situations in life in future.

eg: ~~Passing~~ ^{failing} in class VII exam will create stress to help the student cope up with stress created when he is rejected by 4 companies in a row!

Thus if handled well in the beginning ~~stress~~ examination induced stress can be a ~~boon~~ ^{blessing} in ~~scanned~~ ^{scanned} by CamScanner

Moreover, we tend to see exams only ~~is~~ from school/college/university point of view. Exams are present all around us, be it sports, music, art, everything. Life itself is a one big exam. eg: Trials during football team selection are an exam. singing competition for a scholarship in reputed arts school is an exam. Thus exams are truly indispensable & necessary in our lives.

But since they have certain defects, they need to be modified to ameliorate such defects. A holistic rethink is required to what we should base our examinations upon. This can be seen in the form of multi disciplinary research on exams.

Empirical data should be combined with social behaviour, psychological tendencies to get a broader picture into the needs and defects of examinations. There is a need to involve all the concerned stakeholders in the planning process - students, teachers,

parents, education experts, policy makers to arrive at an encompassing policy framework towards exams.

At the same time, measures to reduce undue stress should be taken such as active student counselling, support from parents, equal importance being given to sports & playtime of students.

The Continuous & Comprehensive Evaluation (CCE) introduced by the Right to Education Act is a step in right direction to capture holistic development of students. This helps us in... understanding relative weaknesses & strengths of a student, this helping in understanding the unique needs of students & also an aid in deciding upon career option. This teaches need to be trained to make them understand this system which is new to them. This along with admission in age appropriate class [AAAC] can lead to academic, intellectual, social, cognitive development of a student.

We can also learn a lot from international experiences. Thus there is a need to not only promote student exchange programmes but also to promote teacher exchange programmes. This will help not only the students but also the teachers to realise what additional steps can be taken to improve the nature of examinations to suit Indian conditions better.

The most important aspect in reform of our examination system is to change social attitudes towards examination. Examinations have become the evil they are because our society's disproportionate importance being given to them. No doubt exams are very essential, but stigmatising failed students, ~~social~~ virtual social exclusion must stop. Counselling on this regard to parents could help.

Thus it can be concluded that exams are an integral part of any society. They come with certain shortcomings, partly because of their

nature & partly due to socio-economic considerations. But there exists ample scope to make them student friendly. The solutions are in front of us but there is a need to be reactive to the problem. Students & young children aren't always vocal about their grievances. It is upon the adult society to realise the consequences & solutions of various problems. ~~Otherwise~~ We can definitely create a better examination system & make ~~exam~~ them fun & activity based but there exists a need to act, otherwise like Bob Dylan said, "The answer my friend, is blowing in the wind, the answer my friend is blowing in the wind".

