

EVALUATION INDICATORS

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

Overall Macro Comments / feedback / suggestions on Answer Booklet:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

VisionIAS

"If liberty means anything at all, it means the right to tell people what they do not want to hear"

Hannah Arendt, one of the most profound and original thinkers of 20th century, describes her notion of conditions of human existence in her book "on human condition".

She beautifully describes the essence of liberty for a human being with her sentence -

"freedom is natality"

According to Arendt, freedom or liberty of human being has the capacity to produce something new.

She describes freedom in the content of public sphere. According to her, man enjoys freedom only

When he participates in public sphere and is able to express his opinion freely.

The capacity to freely express opinion unconstrained by the wishes of those who do not want to listen anything against them is a vital requirement, according to Arendt, to fight any evil.

Only when men are able to exercise this freedom, they are able to produce something new, destroying the evil. Many examples from history also support Hannah's view. Indian freedom struggle is one such example:

Indian freedom movement,

Throughout its course was a communication to the British that Indians are uninterested in their 'civilizing mission'. Britishers, in order to suppress the dissent & mask the exposure of their intentions, brought draconian laws like Vernacular press act.

Gandhi's non-cooperation movement, civil disobedience movement & Quit-India movement were all archetypal examples of telling the British what they did not want to listen. Here, our liberty or freedom was directly linked with enforcing the injustice of British rule & communicating our disinterest to them.

Having liberty to communicate to the people what they do not want to listen is also linked

to our social well-being. In a society that rewards blind conformity, standing up to what one truly believes and values requires convictions.

It is because of strong conviction of people like Raja Ram Mohan Roy who stood against Sati, Nelson Mandela who stood against apartheid, and many such great leaders, we are living in this world with liberty.

In the political sphere, dull conformity and inability to counter ill-policies of government leads to authoritarianism. Germany under Nazi rule, which could successfully convince Germans of anti-semitism and mute their criticism created hell on this

earth. Autocrats like Hitler assume unwieldy power and suppress all criticism through propaganda and brutal methods. When people do not stand up against such dictators, like what happened during Arab Spring, they lose their liberty and fall prey to the ideologies.

Liberty to disagree with rulers and freely express the opinion is all the more required in contemporary world with religious fundamentalism, extreme right & xenophobic sentiments on rise.

For democracies to function efficiently, all the three organs must be accountable to public. If any organ assumes itself unquestioning power, it may shake the very foundation of democracy.

In this content, the ability of a common man to express dissa-
-tisfaction with the functioning of any body is a minimum requireme-
-nt for maintaining health of democracy.

In the recent times, we have seen such ability of common man come into question due to acts like contempt of courts act.

The power of contempt which is bestowed upon supreme court to safeguard its dignity may be misused by honourable judges, who may be irritated by the idea of criticism of their performance, thereby putting liberty of common man at stake.

Liberty to tell people what they do not want to hear is also important for safeguarding the

livelihoods of marginal people. We may give reference to Chipko movement, one of the most popular environmental movements in modern India.

Chipko movement essentially was group of tribal people asserting their rights and telling no to the government and corporate companies to take away their forests. Environmental movements across the world - the "not in my backyard" movement in the west and many other movements in the developing ones depict the same.

A similar comparison can be drawn to the exploitation faced by workers (or) the proletariat by the capitalists or the bourgeois. Karl Marx, who is one of the most influential political philosophers of all time has given the idea of socialist revolution the only way in which

Workers can gain liberty by telling
no to the exploitative capitalists.

When governments do not heed
to the opinion & concerns of public
and encourage the unsustainable
business practices & economic policies in
the name of higher growth and
greater GDP, it results into move-
ments such as "Occupy wall street"
where people want to assert their
right to livelihood, dignity & liberty
by saying no to the government.

Good governance also involves
two-way communication between
government & public. If bureaucracy
is adamant to concerns of
public, it result in arm-chair
bureaucracy, red tapism & corruption.

World bank also identifies that enjoyment of liberty requires good governance which in turn requires people's participation. Instruments like citizens audit empower people to hold government officials accountable and point out ^{their} lackadaidical attitude.

Thus, there is a substantive relationship with liberty and right to tell people what they do not want to listen, with latter being a pre-condition to former many times. However, unquestionable right to free speech is also problematic in some cases.

Instances of cow vigilantism and love jihad involve lecturing people about their religious beliefs and cultural practices, which goes against their rights like right

to religion.

The growing menace of fake news, false accusations of rape, defaming celebrities online, etc. are all ill effects of misuse of freedom of speech.

Indian constitution precisely recog- nizes this challenge and tries to address it by striking a balance between Article 19 - freedom of speech and Article 21 - Right to liberty. Supreme court in the past held that right to freedom of speech is not absolute.

Freedom of speech can only be exercised in a manner which doesn't affect the liberty & dignity of other person. Hence constitution also incorporates safeguards such as morality,

defamation, contempt, etc as a check
for freedom of speech.

Thus, to sum up, liberty to
tell people what they do not want
to hear at times is crucial for
enjoying a truly human existence.

We have seen utility of such liberty
in various spheres like political, social,
economical, legal & environmental.

Historically also this liberty
played a key role in our freedom
movement and shaping the society
we live in. Recognizing the importance
of liberty to free speech, we should
also be wary of negative consequences
of even right to free speech.

☞ If all, but one has a difference
of opinion, all should let that
one to speak - as silencing of
one by all is equally guilty as
silencing of all by one ☞
- J-S Mill

VisionIAS

“Legislative measures are alone not enough to ensure women's safety”

Gandhiji once said, true swaraj is said to have been attained only when women of this country could freely walk outside in the night, alone. Even after 75 years of independence, India is far from achieving that swaraj.

Indian women have played a key role in freedom struggle. Leaders like Sarojini Naidu, Aruna Asif Ali have displayed exemplary leadership and broken the stereotypes attached to women. Social reformers like Sarla Devi, Pandita Ramabai Ranade, etc. have fought for women's education.

It was believed that in the independent India, under the democracy and freedoms granted by the constitution, Indian women would unleash their energies and live a life of liberty.

Article 14, 15, 16 explicitly permit state for making policies for their upliftment, including reservations. However, Indian women continue to live a limited life constrained by fears of harassment, assault, rape, etc. that is detrimental to their safety.

NCRB report points that crimes against women are on rise. The report acknowledges only formally lodged complaints with unreported

Crimes being many times more.

Inspite of strong laws like POCSO - which has provisions of capital punishment, sexual harassment at workplace and bodies like National Commission for women, crimes like rape are only increasing.

Susan Moller, a social scientist conducted a survey couple of decades ago and found a startling fact that, rapes are in majority of cases, not committed out of instincts of sexual desire. She says, rape is an institution of patriarchy.

It was found in the case of Nirbhaya incident too that the accused in the case, in his interview to a BBC channel expressed no remorse. For people

like those rape is a tool to
teach a lesson to women and subju-
-gate them.

Such attitude is the direct
effect of living in a patriarchal
society. Women are considered a
weaker gender. Infact, feminists argue
that the term 'gender' is a
social construct.

Feminists say that females
are not born woman, they are
made woman. Societies ascribe social
stereotypes and practices to women.

Derogatory practices like female-genital
mutilitation are practiced by people
of some religions.

The sexist attitudes and bias
against females is also reflected in

poor sex ratio of 932. The cases of female infanticide are also common. Female literacy rate is also only 66% compared to 92% of men, according to Census 2011.

Economic survey 2018 points to 'son meta preference' which has resulted in 21 million unwanted girls. Hence, as long as society's attitude towards women changes, laws can have little effect in achieving women safety.

Change in societal attitudes should start at family level, as family is the first agent of socialization for children. Distinction between boy and girl in the family starts from the level of toys given to them to play and the household works allotted.

Hence, parents should be taught to raise boys and girls as equals with each gender treating others with respect. Next, the schools also should encourage interaction among boys and girls and conduct debates on themes, such as women safety.

Such debates will nurture a healthy thought on the problems faced by women from an early age itself. Finally, the workplaces should also be designed in women friendly manner.

Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) 2018-19 shows that women female labour force participation rate is

a low 17%. Concerns about safety at workplace are among the prime reasons for women opting out of work force.

Along with changing social attitudes, political empowerment plays a key role in enhancing women safety. 17th Lok Sabha has record number of women parliamentarians with 78 women MPs. Having larger women representation in legislature leads to greater recognition & debate on women issues.

The 73rd and 74th constitutional amendment acts, by providing reservations for women in panchayats and municipalities had a great impact on women empowerment.

Success stories of panchayats of Kerala, Andhra Pradesh and Rajasthan show that villages with women panchayats had greater safety measures for women than others.

However, World Economic Forum's Global Gender Gap Report ranks India at 112th place. India fares worst in political representation for women pointing to the need for greater involvement of women in politics. Hence, reserving seats in legislatures and political parties may be considered for their political empowerment.

Along with political empowerment, educational and economic empowerment

of women will go a long way in ensuring women's safety.

To this effect, government is running schemes such as Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao, Standup India, Mudra Yojana, Self-help group-bank linkage program, etc. Such programs will result in informed & independent women who are aware of their rights are in a better position to protect themselves.

Empowerment of women should go parallelly with increased public investment in infrastructure. Lack of toilets in schools, poorly lit roads & inadequate public trans-port also increase exposure of women to risk.

Installing CCTVs, imparting self-defense training among women, and investing in capacity building of police will also improve the safety level of women.

Poor understanding of women problems among to police personnel, their insensitive attitude while investigating, and less number of women personnel in police are some of the reasons where state intervention is required for decreasing under-reporting of cases and enhancing women's confidence in police.

All the above steps should be complemented with enhanced effectiveness in enforcement of women safety laws.

Currently, there are over 3 crore cases pending in India in all courts put together, according to Indian Judicial Data grid.

Such high pendency of cases impedes efficient delivery of justice.

As Supreme court has directed in the past, in all districts where there are more than 100 pending cases of POCSO, special courts have to be setup for speedy disposal.

Along with increasing number of courts, states capacity to enforce the laws should also be increased. Violations in setting up of a special committee in each corporation with a size of 10 or more to enquire into allegations under sexual harassment act, should be strictly dealt with.

Cyber crime is the new area of crime that is adversely affecting women's safety with growing instances of stalking, harassment, circulation of child porn, etc. In the

Central governments efforts such as Cyber crime helpline number for women should be complemented with state efforts in the lines of Cyber dome of Kerala.

Thus, to effectively deal with women's safety, along with strong laws other steps also need to be taken, starting with working towards bringing societal attitude changes, contributing towards women's political, educational & economical

empowerment, improving public infrastructure and investing in better enforcement of laws.

Only when all the above steps are taken, will Gandhi's true Swaraj will be realised and Indian women will be liberated from fears.

[[I measure the development of a country in terms of the freedom, the women of the country enjoy]]

B. R. Ambedkar