

Section A

Simplicity is the Ultimate Sophistication

Saalumavada Thimmakka, a 107 year old environmentalist has made India and the global community very proud. She has planted over 8000 trees in 80 years along with her husband over a simple journey of pure dedication, untiring and unselfish love of planting trees and nourishing them till they bore fruit. The couple went to this hardship out of sheer passion for helping the environment and fellow human beings. This never changed their financial status, but they lived humbly and in simplicity. They never lamented nor flaunted their work. Thimmakka was awarded with the Padma Shri in 2019. Simplicity, truly is the Ultimate Sophistication.

This remarkable idea that came to the mind of Leonardo da Vinci in the mid fourteenth century has been an eternally constant truth about the world. A single line could create a masterpiece like Mona Lisa and Starry Night. A single brick created the foundation for the 6000 km long Wall of China. A single drop of water has cumulatively created the ocean. And, Da Vinci

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had immortalised his legacy to become the hallmark of European Renaissance and modernity.

Most of the pathbreaking discoveries in the journey of human beings have emerged from simple ideas. The simple need to feel warm and protected helped man create fire by rubbing two stones against each other. The discovery of fire revolutionised the world of the early man to an infinite possibilities of cooking, heating, preparing tools and ultimate live sedentarily.

It took Isaac Newton a falling apple to come up with the complex laws of gravity and motion, without which we would have never been able to reach the space and unravel the mysteries of the universe. Similarly, Oliver and Wilber Wright (also known as the Wright brothers) observed the flying of birds to create the world's first aircraft. No one would be able to imagine a world without aeroplanes today! The world has been brought closer from days and months to a few hours of time.

It would be incorrect to say that simplicity exists only in the human-social world. Brevity is in the very soul of nature. The sky and the grass with their shades of blue and green may look simple, but they



host a multitude of highly dynamic and complex interactive relationship between organisms. The little ant is dependent on the nectar of the bark and the bark is home to several other insects and, birds and smaller mammals. The tree as a whole has a highly important function in climate stabilisation, nutrient recycling and preventing soil from being eroded. Nature is highly simple and aesthetic in appearance, but very complex and sophisticated in its functions. It is the reason we are able to survive.

Unfortunately, human beings are not realising the role of environment in their own sustainability. The rapid progress and mechanisation in the age of industrialisation has forced animals into retreat and trees have vanished from the surface of the earth and replaced by non-biodegradable concrete. The greyness of the concrete jungle has immensely threatened the existence of other organisms. According to Law of 50 highlighted by several organisations like IUCN, World Environmental Outlook, 50% of our species will disappear into extinction in the next 50 years.

The concrete world is damaging for the humans as well. The mind is tired and barely keeping up with the 'fast-paced' nature of things. Most of the adults of the world are facing the threat of mental illnesses like anxiety, insomnia and



depression. India ranked 153rd out of 174 countries when it came to Happiness Index. Excess has never been sophistication. People are now realising the need to move beyond the hype and glitter and live in simplicity and Minimalism.

Minimalism has emerged as a trendy idea amongst the youth. It is based on the the idea that creativity and productivity emerge only where there are free flowing spaces. This would be achieved by decluttering of the physical space. There are less and less of colours and only the bare minimum objects needed for living are kept. The rest are donated as part of philanthropic work.

Meditation has also emerged as a way of achieving simplicity of mind. A highly functioning and undistracted mind can concentrate better on the task ahead. Our ages old, tradition of asceticism and sagehood, also known as VANAPRASTHA and SANYASA ashrama fully embody this spirit. An und cluttered mind can think clearly and also accumulate spiritual merit needed to free one self from the trials and tribulations of kauma. At Gautama Buddha, would be the epitome of highlighting the importance of living



in simplicity through the MADHYA MARG (Middle path). The middle path perfectly harmonises the Material-physical needs with the spiritual needs of a person. All over the world, most religions preach a simple, humble and prudent living to achieve happiness and salvation.

Is salvation the ultimate goal? Perhaps, Swami Vivekananda's life would answer the question. From a young age, Vivekananda chose to renounce worldly living and delve deep into the path of spirituality. It is with his simplicity of attire but sophistication of mind that he was able to win the hearts and minds of the folk in America with his incredibly simple 'My dear brothers and sisters of America'. It broke an unperceived barrier of hesitancy and doubt and allowed people to bend themselves in the spirit of humanity and togetherness.

Simplicity the world. It ties people together. It ties objects together. A simple piece of cloth when sewn rightly could create the dazzling dresses worn by celebrities. A simple piece of cloth when put inside the body, absorbs the excess bleeding and stops the clotting. The same cloth with different colours help us to identify our nationalities and come together as citizens of a nation. It is the simple and vibrant aspects of food, lifestyle and culture that linger in our memory.



However, when it comes to politics, it is the human being's mixture that simplicity is seen as incapacity. The crowds and masses are moved by those who wrap big words and big promises into grandiose threads of imagination. Time and again, politicians make lofty promises before election, yet disappear once elected only to return before the election again. While the simple promise-makers are sidelined and disbelieved.

Laconicity should thus not be seen as incapability but the capability to deliver. Abraham Lincoln is known for his famous 300 words speech at Gettysburg that moved people. Several leaders such as Lal Bahadur Shastri personify simplicity. With his simple yet profound 'Jai Jawan, Jai Kisan', he moved people to action. He was able to convince people to give up one meal a day till India could ensure food for the poorest of the poor.

The poor also suffers at the hands of government insufficiency. Through a complex entanglement of laws and rules, the bureaucracy have been able to keep their need and presence important rather than solving or helping the people with their day to day needs. It is due to this, the idea of e-governance or my-governance



has emerged. Through the electronic media, the government apparatus and bureaucracy is forced to be accountable at all times. Applications like e-sampada, Government e-marketplace, BHIM app, MyGov app are providing a simple platform to perform multiple day to day services. This has reduced corruption to a big extent and made governance more citizen friendly.

The government has also undertaken a huge exercise to simplify hundreds of laws and codes. An example of this is the simplification of 44 central laws on labour into 4 codes on wages, occupation safety, health and social security. Similar efforts have been made to look into the Indian Penal Code and Criminal Procedure Code, that are not only outdated for the New India of the 21st century, but also very complex to navigate through.

A smooth and sailing administration does have a significant impact on businesses and economic sector activities. India recently got the 63rd rank out of 190 countries in Ease of Doing Business report published by the World Bank. ~~These~~ This report encompasses a wide range of parameters like construction permits, maintaining contracts, licenses, land acquisition, clearances etc. Easing of procedures reduces time that could be constructively spent in enhancing efficiency and coming up with newer ideas. It leads to increased



incomes, diversified livelihoods and helps the nation grow in terms of goods-services as well as in terms of purchasing power.

Innovation and scientific temperament are deeply connected in a simple but complex web of social-economic-technological factors. If Da Vinci was the first person to use this phrase on simplicity, it is Steve Jobs who popularised its use in his techno-venture "Apple". Apple products are known with the catchphrase "simplicity is the ultimate sophistication" and have won the hearts and minds of their consumers through ipods, macbook, i-phones through their innovative features and breakthrough technology like airpods, high resolution camera, water proof devices, device bending and folding.

But perhaps, simplicity could not have been better exemplified more than ~~the~~ former late President of India, APJ Abdul Kalam. He hailed from a small fishermen community in the remote part of island Rameshwaram island. Kalam lived in simplicity and had humble beginnings. Yet, he went on to become a Programme director at ISRO, contributed to the development of Polar satellite launch vehicle (PSLV). In the 1980s, he led India's Missile programme. Under his leadership, India became a major



military power after the successes of Agni and Prithvi. He went on to become the President of India. Kalam would say, Luxury and lies have huge maintenance costs. But the Truth and simplicity are self-maintained, without any cost?

Simplicity is truly about clarity. It is not only less is more but also constant refinement of it. Simplicity is confidence and contentment at the same time.

Simplicity is peace and a perfect harmony between the various trials and tribulations of life. It gives a sense of self amidst chaos. As Mahatma Gandhi, who despite his laurels in the world of law and politics discarded all fanciness to embrace the cause of poor colonised man would say "simple living, high thinking".

It is the right intention and purity of action that make great people, great. A little piece of matchstick can light up the whole world.

Parameters

- Introduction - relevant, interesting & gives insight of entire essay

Body - Multi-dimensional - Yes  
↳ Explains the main theme lucidly

- Creativity - ideas, examples - many

- Conclusion

Ends the theme on positive light

- Flow of ideas, arrangement & cohesiveness - good

- Overall good effort

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