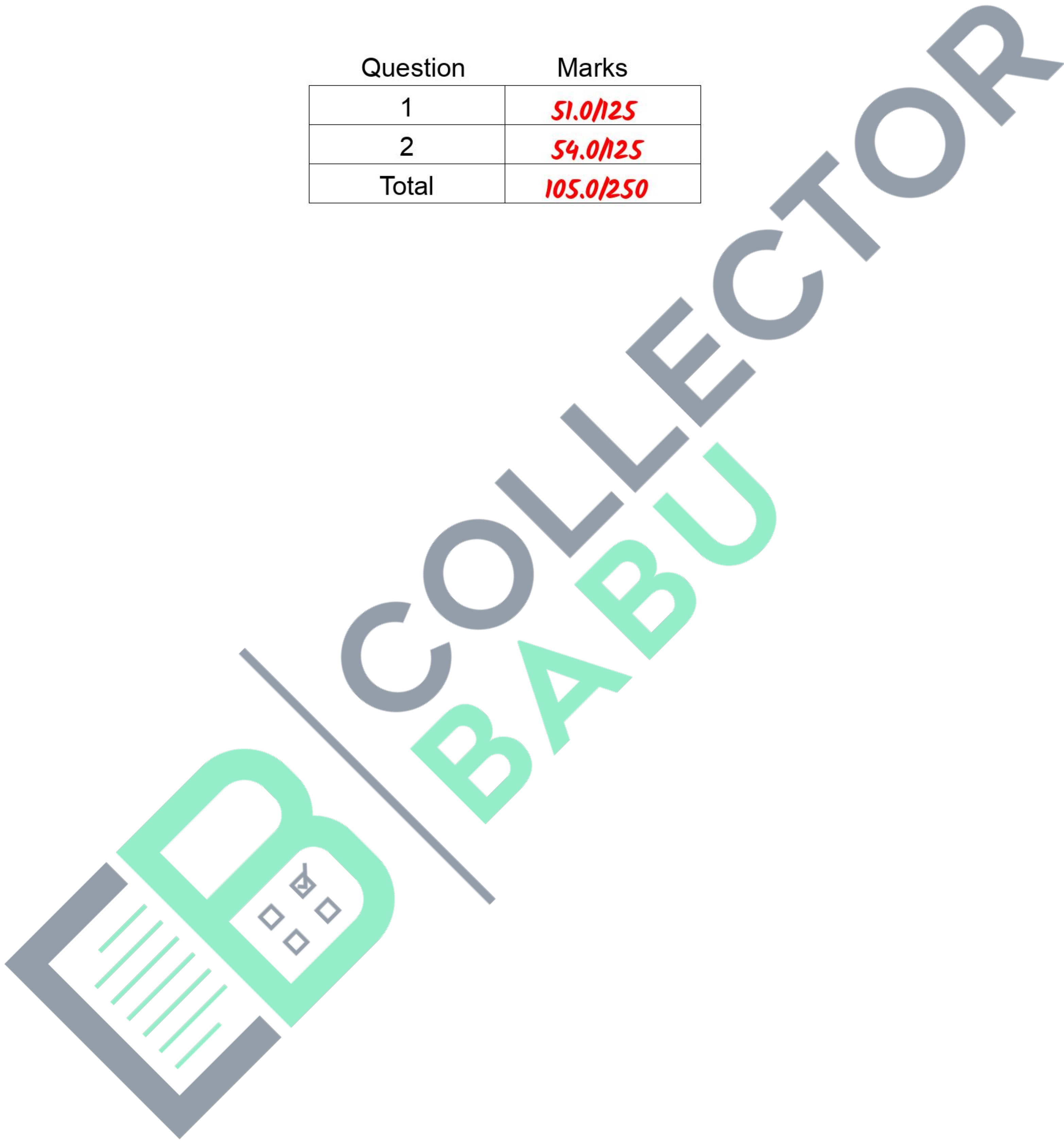


Question	Marks
1	51.0/125
2	54.0/125
Total	105.0/250



[Time allowed: 3 hours]

[Maximum Marks: 250]

Name of the Candidate **SHUBHANKAR**

ONLINE

Date **21/07/25**

Mobile No.

UPSC Roll No.

0806917

Email ID:

Q.No.	Marks Obtained	Max. Marks

**QUESTION PAPER SPECIFIC
INSTRUCTION**

Please read each of the following instructions carefully before attempting questions.

Instruction-Any **Two** out of four, choosing one from each section.

Keep the word limit indicated in the questions in mind.

Any page or portion of the page left blank in the Answer Booklet must be clearly struck off.

Examiner Signature

EVALUATION CRITERIA

	Poor	Average	Good	Very Good	Excellent
Structure					
Presentation					
Content					
Analysis					
Comprehension					
Language					
Handwriting					

COMMENTS:

SECTION-'A'

Q1. Those who are free of resentful thoughts surely find peace. Shub79546

☒ **Q2.** 'We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit.' – Aristotle

Q3. 'The strongest principle of growth lies in the human choice' – George Eliot;

Q4. "Gratitude is the memory of the heart."

Shub79546

Shub79546

SECTION-A

Q2. We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence
then, is not an act, but a habit
~ Aristotle

उम्मीदवारों को
इस हाशिए में
नहीं लिखना
चाहिए

Candidates
must not
write on
this margin

We are all familiar with the
legacy left behind by Bruce Lee. His
training and martial arts technique
were always pristine on the screen. He
played a crucial role in putting the
discipline of martial arts on the global
stage.

In one of his interviews, he
was asked about his secret to such
formidable technique. To this question
he replied - "I train, not to defeat
the person who has practiced 10,000
techniques one time, but face the
opponent who has practiced one technique
a thousand times."

This statement by Bruce Lee, reflects that a person is what he repeatedly does, making excellence not a quality but rather a habit. He emphasises that consistently practicing and persevering paves the road to greatness.

This thought inducing statement really raises plenty of questions - what is consistency and how does it shape people? What are the qualities in a person that acts as building blocks for excellence? What happens when it's absent in individuals and society at large? And how ~~does~~ shall the world utilize this quality in the contemporary scenario.

To begin, we shall understand the crux of consistency. It is nothing but the ability to do one's duty through time and space without major deviations. consistency in

उम्मीदवारों को
इस हाशिए में
नहीं लिखना
चाहिए

Candidates
must not
write on
this margin

an act in turn forms habits. The basic construct of habits is that they enable a person to find magic in the mundane. It is like a river in its youth. It flows tirelessly and cuts down the steepest mountains.

Thus, constant and consistent effort towards anything, is a sure shot way to tackle a task no matter how big or small. A set of habits a person possesses, ~~have~~ plays a huge role in shaping their character and destiny. We are nothing but molten iron shaped by the cast of habits.

All in all, it's the consistent habits that inculcate excellence in people. We learn this from the commendable records ~~some~~ of the sports person possess. Usain Bolt, the world's fastest man is a testament to this fact. To run 100 metres under 10 seconds, he consistently practiced

उम्मीदवारों को
इस हाशिए में
नहीं लिखना
चाहिए

Candidates
must not
write on
this margin

and have run more than a thousand kilometers.

Similarly, JK Rowling, while going through the crisis of single motherhood and poverty, kept persevering and writing. This consistent belief in her own stories introduced the magical world of Harry Potter. There are countless ~~and~~ other people who brilliantly exemplify how excellence is nothing but a concoction of consistency and unwavering commitment to one's habits.

However, if we dive deeper and explore their recipe of excellence and success, we find some common ingredients. We notice that despite varying levels of talents, they all mastered the art of discipline. Come rain, hail or snow, discipline is the driving factor of consistency. It

उम्मीदवारों को
इस हाशिए में
नहीं लिखना
चाहिए

Candidates
must not
write on
this margin

ensures that one shows up to work towards their goal daily irrespective of the situation being conducive or challenging. Due to ^a disciplined approach, Steve Jobs was apt able to revolutionise and reimagine computers.

Apart from discipline, to strive for excellence and make it a habit, one has to be determined and display fortitude. The hunger to excel and achieve, makes the person overcome great adversities. It is the same determination with which Dashrath Hanjli set his eyes on a mountain and carved a road through it. He overcame his grief of losing his wife and made it his life mission - which bore fruit 30 years later!

Apart from discipline and determination, we also require immense emotional intelligence. This allows a person to

उम्मीदवारों को इस हाशिए में नहीं लिखना चाहिए

Candidates must not write on this margin

have a never say die approach in the face of failure. It allows us to fall seven times, stand up eight. Emotional Intelligence helps us realise that failure is a part of the journey ~~towards~~ excellence. Thomas Edison, displaying high degree of emotional intelligence once said - "I didn't fail 999 times, rather discovered that many ways to of how not to make a bulb".

Having discussed the essence of consistency and its building blocks translating into excellence, we shall also explore how this quality has impacted the humanity through time.

Looking back at the ancient times, the consistent struggle for survival led to the discovery of fire and mation of microlithic tools. Moving forward, we also

उम्मीदवारों को
इस हाशिए में
नहीं लिखना
चाहिए

Candidates
must not
write on
this margin

mit nessed how the constant effort of various saints, scholars and kings shaped the cultural landscape of many regions. We see how, for example, Buddhism as a religion faced so many ups and downs and yet is a prominent religion being followed throughout the Indian subcontinent.

Similarly, the present form of polity and governance has its origin in the consistent effort made by various personalities through various struggles. We gathered the idea of fraternity from the French Revolution. The spirit of freedom and democracy was bestowed upon humanity due to the consistent fight for excellence in the American Revolution. Back at home in India, our freedom fighters upheld the Gandhian idea of satyagrah and sarodaya to achieve Independence.

उम्मीदवारों को
इस हाशिए में
नहीं लिखना
चाहिए

Candidates
must not
write on
this margin

In the socio-economic sphere, we saw how consistent and constant push for cleanliness and hygiene gave commendable results through the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan. Similarly, the habit of inclusive development and strive for economic excellence has culminated into India becoming the 4th largest economy globally.

Thus, it is clear that practice and consistent habits makes man and society move towards excellence. However, lately the world has been witnessing these values fade away.

We are in an era where chasing excellence through cultivating good habits has become overrated. Despite being 8.1 billion strong we are entrenched in the habit of settling for mediocrity. There has

उम्मीदवारों को
इस हाशिए में
नहीं लिखना
चाहिए

Candidates
must not
write on
this margin

been an excess of chasing ends of profit and prosperity without caring for the means deployed to achieve it.

This sudden craze for materialism and comfort is rather damaging. We see our youth turning into dopamine zombies, spending their crucial formative years chasing one more 'like' on social media. Similarly, our public servants have become habitual to stagnancy. The habit of bureaucratic

innovation and dedication to public service has become a rare sight. Moreover, the world seems to be content with becoming what it has become - completely ignorant of the urge to consistently work towards prosperity and excellence.

While we have seen how good habits, consistency, discipline and determination ~~provi~~ make excellence a norm. The fast moving civilisation,

उम्मीदवारों को
इस हाशिए में
नहीं लिखना
चाहिए

Candidates
must not
write on
this margin

although mostly ignorant to its benefit, has also associated plenty of negativity around it.

We witness how the culture of "hustle and grind" is portrayed in a glorified manner turning it into a rat race of sorts. This makes us forget about how equally essential mindfulness and mental health are.

The famous dialogue from '3 Idiots' really personifies the situation -

"It's our society & not a pressure cooker".

Consistency and chasing & embodying excellence are terrific traits. But the golden mean of a healthy mind and body is just as essential. This delicate balance if maintained, will allow the coexistence of excellence and Aristotelean Eudaimonia i.e. a harmonious and healthy society.

So achieve this, there are a few steps that we must take.

उम्मीदवारों को
इस हाशिए में
नहीं लिखना
चाहिए

Candidates
must not
write on
this margin

this will preserve the benefits that consistency and practice provide while enabling us to tackle the contemporary issues that trouble us.

At an individual level, the habit of upholding the values of compassion and consistently fulfilling one's duty, will repair the prevalent socio-cultural scars. On a societal level, we must nurture our children and educate them about the importance of good habits and consistency. This will translate into a responsible and genuine population.

The government and public servants need to go a step further. A consistent habit of fulfilling the social contract and making sure inequality is eradicated will lead to an excellent nation. On an international level, consistent effort towards tackling climate change and achieving world peace must be the primary agenda.

उम्मीदवारों को
इस हाशिए में
नहीं लिखना
चाहिए

Candidates
must not
write on
this margin

This attitude will give the human
 civilisation to prosperity that has
 not been witnessed yet. We must
 realise that - "There are better practices
 to best practices". Humanity collectively
 has to become the one person who
~~practised~~ practices one single work
 of consistent growth and embody
 the essence of Vasudeva Kutumbakam

उम्मीदवारों को
इस हाशिए में
नहीं लिखना
चाहिए

Candidates
must not
write on
this margin

Marks: 51/125

This essay shows good understanding of Aristotle's quote! You've used Bruce Lee's example effectively to introduce the concept of consistency leading to excellence. Nice touch!

Strengths:

- Good structure with introduction, body and conclusion
- Relevant examples like Usain Bolt, JK Rowling, Steve Jobs
- Attempt to connect consistency with societal progress
- Balanced view acknowledging potential downsides of 'hustle culture'

Areas for improvement:

1. When you write "We are nothing but like molten iron shaped by the cast of habits" - expand this metaphor! How exactly do habits forge character? Give specific examples of daily habits creating excellence.
2. Your mention of "discipline, determination, and emotional intelligence" needs deeper exploration. How specifically do these qualities create habits? Maybe discuss how Olympic athletes structure their daily routines or how writers develop consistent writing schedules.

3. The section on "impacts of consistency on humanity" feels disconnected. Instead of broad historical references, focus on how specific historical figures developed habits that led to excellence. How did Gandhi's daily habits contribute to his excellence as a leader?

4. When discussing "dopamine zombies" and social media, analyze how technology disrupts habit formation. How can we build digital habits that lead to excellence rather than distraction?

5. The conclusion about "Vasudeva Kutumbakam" feels rushed. How can we practically cultivate global habits of excellence? What daily practices would this involve?

Missing dimensions that would strengthen your essay:

- The neuroscience of habit formation (how repetition creates neural pathways)
- The role of deliberate practice vs. mere repetition in achieving excellence
- How cultural differences influence habit formation and concepts of excellence
- The connection between habits, identity and self-concept (we become what we believe we are)
- The role of systems and environments in supporting excellence-building habits

Overall, a good attempt that shows understanding of the topic but needs more depth in analyzing how specific habits translate to excellence! Keep practicing your writing habit!



SECTION-'B'

Q1. "Be curious, not judgmental." – Walt Whitman.

Shub79546

☒ **Q2.** "Curiosity will conquer fear more than bravery will." - James Stephenson

Q3. Appreciation is a wonderful thing. It makes what is excellent in others belong to us as well.' – Voltaire

Q4. 'Don't let your happiness depend on something you may lose.' – C.S. Lewis

Shub79546

Shub79546

SECTION - B

Q2. "Curiosity will conquer far more than bravery ever will"
~ James Stephenson

The outer space is vast and mysterious. The human civilisation is unaware of its potential and vagaries. But we see a global effort to know more about space. All this has been possible due to the pioneering efforts by NASA during the Apollo Missions.

There was a strange mystery about the lunar surface which was unraveled by Neil Armstrong & Buzz Aldrin - the occupants of Apollo 11. Armstrong upon setting foot on the moon had said - "One small step for man, a giant leap for humanity". Sure, despite countless skirmishes faced across various Apollo Missions, the lunar success was not driven by NASA's bravado but inquisitive

उम्मीदवारों को इस हाशिए में नहीं लिखना चाहिए

Candidates must not write on this margin

experimentation. The first lunar landing, conquered the uncertainties of the moon and proved - "courage will conquer fear, more than bravery ever will".

This inspiring story, really makes one question fear and its meaning. What role does curiosity play and has it benefitted humans throughout time and space? What is the interplay between bravery, curiosity and fear and how should we cultivate the good aspects related to it?

Fear is an inherent psychological response present in almost all living things. In some lower order organisms like insects, it is merely the fear of predators. But for human beings, it has countless meanings.

Despite its multiple forms and interpretations, the core aspect of fear lies in the uncertainty of unknown. For a child, the fear of unknown

उम्मीदवारों को
इस हाशिए में
नहीं लिखना
चाहिए

Candidates
must not
write on
this margin

could simply be the uncertainty around tomorrow's class test. However on a serious note - for humanity, the fear can be as grave as questioning the chances of human survival, if the world heated up by 2°C more than the pre-industrial level.

Thus, the solution to knowing the unknown lies in curiosity and inquisitiveness. Curiosity enables humans to deconstruct the onion of fear - layer by layer. Neurosciences have also laid results that overcoming the unknown creates a reward function in our brains.

This is vividly visible when we compare the behaviour of a toddler with that of an adult. The toddler, curious about his new surroundings, crawls around to find new things and familiarize himself. Whereas, an adult is usually weary of his surroundings as his past

उम्मीदवारों को
इस हाशिए में
नहीं लिखना
चाहिए

Candidates
must not
write on
this margin

experiences may have induced the quality of being alert to unknown stimulus.

All in all, when we compare the effectiveness of curiosity vis-a-vis bravery in tackling fear, the former tends to show more consistent and fruitful results. Bravery is nothing but the unwavering fortitude to stand tall in the face of danger. It just ensures that one chooses the option to 'fight' when presented with a 'fight or flight' scenario.

On the other hand, the qualities of curiosity and inquisitiveness has been an effective driver for humans to overcome the fear of unknown.

Man has always been a curious animal. It has also been the species that constantly strive for progress and has also been successful on many accounts. Throughout history,

उम्मीदवारों को
इस हार्शिए में
नहीं लिखना
चाहिए

Candidates
must not
write on
this margin

we have witnessed civilizational
progress driven by inquisitiveness. The
age of voyages witnessed Christopher
Columbus and Vasco De Gama discover
new continents and Trade routes. Their
curiosity to explore successfully overcame
the fearful and harsh oceans.

Similarly, humanity also championed
scientific and technological progress. The
people ~~were~~ of science were always
unfazed by the failures they encountered.
They always valued knowledge and
societal progress over fear of being
unsuccessful in their endeavors. Madame
Curie's seminal work in discovering
radioactive isotopes is a testament to
the defeat of fear through the
spirit of curiosity.

Moreover, the essence of curiosity
has also been a marker in the
development of societal & political
values. Questioning the status quo

उम्मीदवारों को
इस हाशिए में
नहीं लिखना
चाहिए

Candidates
must not
write on
this margin

established during the administrations of various eras led to the birth of ethical values that govern the world today. Mahatma Gandhi, 'experimented with the concept of truth' and slayed the fearful enemy of colonial tyranny with the sword of satyagrah and ahimsa.

Thus, societal progress and overcoming the fear of unknown and uncertainty is deeply rooted in the essence of curiosity. However, there is a flip side that must not be overlooked.

Curiosity if unaccompanied by rationality often becomes counter-productive. There is a rhyme and reason to everything in the world, and the poet must be equipped with rational inquisitiveness to be able to make sense of the rhyme. If this precaution is not taken, it often ends up being disastrous.

उम्मीदवाले
इस हार्डिप
नहीं लिखना
चाहिए

Candidates
must not
write on
this margin

It can lead wide spread chaos.
Sometimes economies collapse - as
was the case when the Tughlaq
administration issued aluminium
currency out of curiosity. It can become
life altering and take serious turns.
The atom bombs that descended upon
Hiroshima and Nagasaki were after all
the children of curiosity that stemmed
from the Manhattan project. Not only
this, mindless curiosity can have
environmental repercussions as well.
They threaten the survival of our
forests and ecosystems. The case
of Concord Jet planes exemplify this
dichotomy. Despite being the fastest
vessels in the sky, they were
extremely harmful to the avian
environment.

Therefore, it is imperative to
understand and embody Aristotle's
Golden mean. It is, when
applied to curiosity and the spirit

उम्मीदवारों को
इस हाशिए में
नहीं लिखना
चाहिए

Candidates
must not
write on
this margin

of inquiry, promotes rational moderation. This ensures that to achieve the end of overcoming the wall of fear, the right rope is used to climb it.

Having dwelled upon the charisma of curiosity, we must not neglect the cardinal virtue of bravery and courage. It is an equally important quality that has proved its utility from time to time.

Bravery - the display of commitment to one's value in the face of imminent adversity is a commendable deterrent to all kinds of evil. Bravery of our soldiers and servicemen at our borders ensure the civilians ~~are~~ enjoy peace. The fortitude and courage of Field Marshal Sam Manekshaw enabled India to pass the test of military attacks by other countries.

उम्मीदवारों को
इस हार्शिए में
नहीं लिखना
चाहिए

Candidates
must not
write on
this margin

In the same way, it takes bravado to go against social malpractices that have become a norm. Jyoti Bai Phule & savitribai Phule's bravery to stand against the ostracization faced by widows exemplifies the crucial role of bravery in such situations.

उम्मीदवारों को इस हाशिए में नहीं लिखना चाहिए

Candidates must not write on this margin

Hence, bravery must also be respected. It should be paired with knowledge and rationality to achieve the maximum good. Just how Galileo stood strong about heliocentricity even in the face of punishment by the church, we must practice a harmonious balance of bravery and curiosity.

But, the contemporary times have been witnessing erosion of these values. Somehow, despite the proven track record of curiosity, ~~inquisitor~~ spirit of inquiry and bravery, the society seems to be engulfed in by a tide of complacency and indifference.

Our schools now promote scoring marks as the end goal of education. The parents force our children to engage in rote learning. The era where children played around the neighbourhood and explored ~~there~~ has been taken over by a time where they prefer being locked ~~around~~ ⁱⁿ a room with a screen.

Similarly, our youth favours and aspires money over knowledge. The only curiosity these days has become - "how early can I get rich and retire?" There is no bravery in chasing knowledge and now it's looked down upon.

Hence, the erosion of the cardinal values of curiosity and bravery is pushing the society into a cave ~~cave~~ filled with fear and uncertainty. It is the need of the hour that the society as a

उम्मीदवाले
इस हाशिए
नहीं लिखने
चाहिए

Candidate
must not
write on
this margin

collective entity join hands and turn around the tide.

We need proper implementation of schemes like Atal Tinkering Labs to reignite the dormant curiosity among children. On a ~~pro~~ broader level, we need to recognise and celebrate those who still have the courage to be curious. Schemes like Start up India should be brought to the forefront to enable those who dare to inquire.

We also need to reorient the narratives that emanate courage and bravery. The stories like that of Capt. Vikram Bata need to ~~pe~~ be honoured and propagated to inspire children and elders alike.

Overall, we must strive to inculcate good and responsible citizenship. The population with morals

उम्मीदवारों को इस हाशिए में नहीं लिखना चाहिए

Candidates must not write on this margin

and the hunger to experiment will uphold the spirit of scientific temper as envisaged in the Fundamental duties.

Finally, we must remember the golden words of Albert Einstein - "The most important thing is that we must not stop questioning".

This will ensure that as a society we take countless other steps like Neil Armstrong and make sure ~~our~~ it experiences leaps and bounds of progress and prosperity.

X X

उम्मीदवारों को
इस हार्डिंग में
नहीं लिखना
चाहिए

Candidates
must not
write on
this margin

Marks: 54/125

This essay shows good understanding of the topic but needs more depth and focus!

Strengths:

- Great opening with the Apollo missions example showing curiosity conquering space exploration fears
- Good attempt to analyze the interplay between curiosity, fear and bravery
- Some relevant examples like Marie Curie, Gandhi, Columbus
- Balanced approach acknowledging both curiosity and bravery's importance

Areas for improvement:

1. The essay wanders too much! When you write "What role does curiosity play and has it benefitted humans throughout time and space?", you set up questions but don't fully answer them with structured arguments.



2. More direct engagement with Stephenson's quote needed! You mention it briefly but don't deeply analyze what he meant - is curiosity truly more powerful than bravery? Why?

3. Your examples need stronger connections. The Manhattan Project example is good but needs deeper analysis - was it curiosity gone wrong or bravery misapplied?

4. When you mention "Somehow, despite the proven track record of curiosity...society seems to be engulfed by a tide of complacency" - this needed more exploration! How exactly is modern society rejecting curiosity?

5. The conclusion with Einstein's quote is nice, but you could have tied it back to Stephenson more effectively.

Missing dimensions that would enhance the essay:



- *The evolutionary advantage of curiosity vs. bravery - why did humans evolve both traits?*
- *Curiosity in artificial intelligence and how it differs from human curiosity*
- *Cultural differences in valuing curiosity vs. bravery across different societies*
- *The role of curiosity in mental health and overcoming phobias*
- *How educational systems can better balance teaching facts vs. fostering curiosity*

Overall, a good attempt with interesting examples, but needed more focus on directly addressing the quote and developing a clearer argument structure! The essay shows potential but doesn't fully conquer the topic!

