

CSS- English Essay - Proverbial

"Too many of us are not living our dreams because we are living our fears"

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In human experience, dreams and fears are intricately connected, each influencing the course of life significantly. Dreams reflect highest aspirations while fears represent the barriers erected. At times these barriers are built by our own insecurities and doubts. The pervasive impact of fear hinders our ability to pursue and realize our dreams. The presence of fear stifles innovation, creativity, and progress at the individual, societal, and global level. The foundation of fear is explored through the psychological mechanisms, societal influences, and global implications. Understanding the foundation provides the opportunity through which individuals and societies can move beyond fear, towards a reality where dreams are not just envisioned but rather pursued.

Dreams are our highest aspirations. They reflect what we want to achieve as an individual or as a society. Dreams at the global level are more broad in nature, focused on collective goals such as peace and cooperation. These aspirations are faced with major barriers which are

laid down by fear. These fears are emotional barriers which restrict the possibility of achieving our desires. They are majorly based on perceived threats, past traumas, or caused by information asymmetry.

The psychological foundation of fears is a well researched topic. The psychological mechanism of "fight or flight" is greatly influenced by fear. Past traumas as the foundation of fear are true for all levels. Past traumas influence decision-making in a negative manner due to fear being attached with it. Similarly, perceived threats are caused by information asymmetry which exists at all levels, leading to compromised decision-making. The psychological impact of fear is that it makes human nature pessimistic which inherently reduces the will to pursue dreams. However, psychological studies have proven that these conditions can be improved over time to inhibit actions towards dream realisation.

The philosophical perspective on overcoming fear is also positive similar to the psychological narrative.

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Existential philosophers like Kierkegaard believe that fear is a fundamental condition within humans and confronting fear is essential for true freedom. While he believes that fear could act as a paralyzing force, he observes it to act as a catalyst for action. The confrontation of fear allows humans to realize their full potential which essentially leads to them, realizing their dreams. Thus, existential philosophers link fear with personal freedom, action, and personal growth in a optimistic manner.

At the individual manner the failure of confronting fears as expected and outlined by philosophers like Kierkegaard, act detrimental to the realization of dreams. Fear restricts the ability of an individual to live up to their full potential. The unfulfilled potential results in negative personal development and failure. For example, the renowned company, Kodak, missed the digital revolution as it remained fixated to its traditional film business. Kodak believed that if it shifts toward the digitalisation side it would lose its position as the market leader in the traditional film

business. Eventually Kodak went bankrupt as it had missed the digital revolution. The inability of Kodak to pivot as per evolving market trends was because of its fear of losing its position within the traditional film business which it had successfully dominated since decades. Fear dictated Kodak's actions due to which it failed to personally develop and realise its full potential in the digital era.

Kodak's example of the inability to develop personally is also linked with its conservative and risk-averse approach. Fear influences individuals to take safe options and restricted decision-making. Individuals which are more risk-oriented are inherently less influenced by fear as they have a larger risk appetite. Nokia, once a leader in the mobile phone market, ceased to exist within a few years after Apple launched its smartphone. Nokia's inability and resistance to adapt towards producing smartphones is linked with the company's conservative approach. After Nokia realised that the market was evolving and Apple was attaining significant ground, it still remained focused on its traditional product line due to its risk-averse

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approach. Nokia's risk-averse approach was influenced by its fear of losing both the traditional mobile phone market and the evolving smartphone product line. The case of Nokia reflects that individuals are risk-averse not because of a natural inclination but rather because of fear. Nokia's dream of remaining the dominant player in the mobile phone industry was compromised due to its fear of losing to the innovative outlook of Apple.

The inability to pivot and innovate is intricably linked with fear. The presence of fear makes individuals risk-averse which stifles innovation and creativity. This leads to abandoned projects. For example, in 2012 Google launched its Google Glass which were smart eyewear. However, after receiving initial criticism, Google decided to abandon the project despite it being a highly innovative product. In response, Meta and Apple pursued their dream of producing innovative smart eye wear and launched their product lines between 2021-2024. Google had an eight year lead on Apple and Meta but its fear from initial criticism led to its failure to capitalise on its innovation.

Fear also plays a negative

role at the personal level. Due to perceived fears of social judgement, individuals are unable to express their personality or preferred career choices. For example, the social stigma attached with ~~interfluid~~ identity expression in conservative societies restricts individual expression of transgenders. Similarly, women residing in tribal societies are unable to pursue careers in almost any field except nursing and teaching. The culturally imposed restrictions towards personal expression are linked to fears of social judgement, religion, and perception.

At the societal level, changing long-standing cultural norms are more tough as they are linked to deep-seated fears and traditionalism. The reluctance of societies to embrace change compromises achieving collective dreams. For example, Pakistan currently stands at 162/192 on Human Development Index (HDI) and 145th out of 146 on Global Gender Gap Report. The lack of educational reforms and absence of gender equality is linked to traditional cultural norms in Pakistan which resist female education, female

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mobility, and overall scientific education. The fear of losing traditional cultural values, Islamic principles, and social structure, leads to reluctance of Pakistan towards embracing much needed reforms.

The reluctance leads to the society achieving ^{the} dream of 100 percent literacy rate, economic growth, and lead in scientific innovation.

Societal fears can also lead to societal stagnation and regression. The fear of perceived response to much needed actions blocks societies from taking necessary steps. For example, Neville Chamberlain's appeasement policy between 1933 to 1937 has often been credited as one of the major reasons for outbreak of World War II. The appeasement policy was a result of fears attached towards provoking Hitler because of past trauma of the Great War (1914 till 1918). However, due to fear induced appeasement policy, Hitler was further emboldened and eventually began pursuing the German concept of Lebensraum. The societal fear among European societies and leaders dictated the appeasement policy. Ironically it was the appeasement policy which

eventually led to the outbreak of World War II in 1939 and denied the collective dream of global peace and cooperation.

Societal fear in the digital world differs from the 20th century.

Today, media sensationalism contributes to fear within the society. For example, the role of media in amplifying the threat of Covid-19 and continuous misinformation resulted in widespread panic and irrational behaviour. The collective dream of combating a global health crisis in a structured and cooperative manner with the utilisation of international organisations like the WHO was compromised due to fear spread by media. The false alarms of infection breakout, medically dangerous hoax treatments, conspiracies attached with WHO and China, and misquotation of number of deaths, all contributed in exacerbating the Covid-19 crisis. Media, traditional and digital, is perceived by individuals as the only truth. This is misused by some at times for ulterior motives and thus contributed in spreading fear.

The irrational analysis and reporting from media at times also

Contributes in resisting innovative policies due to impact on decision-making. The international media played a significant role in questioning the feasibility of Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030. ~~Within~~ The Vision 2030 comprised of a highly innovative project of developing a city named 'Neom'. Due to the fear spread by media analyst surrounding the unfeasible cost of the project and its potential negative consequences on the economy, it has been scaled down. The Neom city project which was intended to be a 170 km linear city in 2017 is now reduced to only 2.4 km. Despite the long-term economic potential of the innovative project it has been downsized due to fear of short-term economic disruption, compromising Saudi dream outlined in Vision 2030 document.

At the global level, fear impacts worldwide aspirations significantly. The role of fear within decision-making has almost always contributed negatively ~~its~~ at the global level. The fear of terrorism after the 9/11, influenced U.S. decision-making. The U.S. adopted an aggressive interventionist policy to eradicate terrorism. Although

the Afghan War (2001-2021) was sanctioned by United Nations Security Council Council as per international law; the intervention destabilised the region and gave rise to extremism. In addition, the U.S intervention in Iraq in 2003 and Syria in 2011 defied international law and the principles of peace enshrined in post-WW2 rules-based world order. The U.S due to fear emerging from a single event in 2001, compromised the world order and global aspiration of achieving peace especially in the post-cold war era.

The post-WW2 liberal world order which is based on cooperation, interdependence, and multilateralism was further destabilised by isolationist policies reemergence. After the U.S pursued interventionist policies in the Middle East, the wave of refugees that struck Europe led to the reemergence of isolationist policies. For example, Brexit (2016) gained traction due to the fear of economic instability because of EU refugee policy. The fear was intensified by media and misinformation. Provided the dire situation, populist leaders misused the narrative to achieve their political objective leading to

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The referendum and formal exit in 2020.

The Brexit had a global impact as it indicated a major shift from multilateralism and global governance to isolationism.

The event which took place due to fear, undermined worldwide liberal aspiration of cooperation, multilateralism, and complex interdependence.

Fear at the global level not only compromises multilateralism but also intensifies the potential of armed conflict and destruction. For example, during the Cold War (1947-1991), both US and Soviet Union were afraid of losing dominance and ability to impose their respective ideologies. Furthermore, due to distrust between the two major powers, there existed an information asymmetry. US was suspicious about the intentions of the Soviet Union and vice-versa. Resultantly, the realist principles of power took over and it triggered ^{an} arms race and multiple proxy wars. The arms race was expected to maintain the balance of power among the major powers and the proxy wars were a step of retaining dominance. The actions of US and the Soviet Union were heavily influenced by fear which

compromised the worldwide aspiration of maintaining global peace in the post-WWII era.

A similar fear is being observed between U.S. and China in the 21st century which international relations scholars are terming as "Cold War 2.0." The central struggle between China and the U.S. is not related to arms, instead it revolves around the technological race. The fear of U.S. of potentially losing in the technological race against revisionist power China, has led to a trade war between the two countries since 2017. Under the ambit of US-China trade war, the U.S. has restricted China's access to advanced chips required for production of technologically advanced products. Moreover, the U.S. has banned Chinese technological companies like Huawei over privacy concerns. The strategic struggle between U.S. and China over the fear of U.S. losing its hegemonic position has hindered worldwide aspiration of technological advancement.

However, the fears of the individual, societal, and

global levels can be overcome if conditioned in a manner which confronts the challenges posed by fears to pursue dreams. At the individual level it is essential to learn from individuals who overcome their fears, innovated, and eventually dominated. For example, Elon Musk managed to pivot from Paypal to SpaceX because of his dream. He managed to confront his fear of financial risks and by challenging societal notions of conservatism and risk-averse actions he managed to achieve greatness at SpaceX. Similarly, Steve Jobs overcame the fear of rejection after being ousted from Apple. He made his comeback and revolutionized the computer and music pod industry. The examples of Elon Musk and Steve Jobs are not only showcase success but rather a process of overcoming barriers created by fear to achieve their dreams and excellence.

Similarly, visionary leaders successfully overcome societal fears by leading social and political change.

For example, Malala Yousafzai confronted the fears imposed by Taliban in KPK province of Pakistan through restricting girls education. Despite an assassination attempt she continued to advocate

for girls education and was successful in establishing schools in the area. Another example is of Nelson Mandela who fought against apartheid in South Africa (1948-1994). Despite being imprisoned for 27 years, Mandela continued his struggle for political change. He managed to overcome the societal fears among the black community by becoming the first black President of South Africa, ending the apartheid. Nelson Mandela's achievement reflects his continuous struggle in confronting his fears and eventually attaining his dream.

Leaders like Elon Musk, Steve Jobs, Nelson Mandela, and Malala Yousafzai have a common trait. They learnt from failure and embraced failure as a positive learning opportunity. Their examples are lessons for all individuals that pursuing dreams amidst presence of fear requires a positive attitude towards failure. The perception of risk for Steve Jobs and Elon Musk and the resilience of Mandela and Malala reflects a positive attitude which counters fear. Similarly, the founder of Pakistan, M.A. Jinnah, overcame the risk of failure he faced during the 1937-1939 Congress Ministry elections

and eventually attained significant success in The 1946 elections. Jinnah eventually pursued his dream of acting as a leader of the Muslims in India by overcoming the fears of failure in the subsequent elections. Consequently, he attained success and managed to achieve his dream. Thus, ~~fears~~^{fears} can be overcome by embracing risk and failure as a positive learning opportunity rather than a trigger for persistent failure.

At the global level, fears can be mitigated by reducing information asymmetry which is a major cause of wars, arm race, and irrational behaviour. The information asymmetry is further exploited by media and individuals with ulterior motives. This should be overcome through principles established by liberal institutionalism which emphasises on cooperation through resilient multilateral networks. These networks include international organisations which promote trust, confidence, and interdependence, providing safety net at the global level. For example, The UN since 1945 has played a key role in reducing fears at the global level by increasing transparency and reducing information

gaps which intensify fear due to mistrust. The reduced fear through cooperation would allow fulfillment of global aspiration of peace.

In sum, The exploration of how fear impedes pursuit of dreams presents a complex interplay of internal psychological mechanisms, societal pressures, and global dynamics. Fear not only confines individuals but also extends its influence in reducing societal progress and global innovation.

The philosophical insights of existential thinkers highlight that confronting and mastering control over fear leads to true freedom. Both individuals and societies must promote resilience and adopt proactive strategies to reduce limitations imposed by fear. By embracing educational reforms, promoting risk-taking, and implementing policies that mitigate the impact of fear on collective action, would allow individual liberation and societal transformation.