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Topic : Learning from the past
paves the way for the future

Outline :

1- Introduction ;

Thesis statement

2- How the future reflects an
essence of the past.

3- Individuals learning from the
past and shaping up their future;

3a- Child learning from his parents
relationship and shaping up his
relationship with his own family;

social learning
theory

3b- Individuals learning from historical
mistakes and succeeding e.g.
Sultan Mehmet II and the fall
of constantinople.

3c- Individuals learning from the
mistakes of their forefathers, and

not repeating them e.g. King
Louis XVI.

3d- Individuals future is determined
by his past; Eric Eriksons theory
of personality development.

4- The future changed by learning
from the past at national level;

4a- Nations not repeating the past
errors committed by them e.g. The
German nation.

4b- Nations disregarding the
discriminatory practices of their
ancestors e.g. Black lives matter
movement.

4c- People uprising against oppressive
regimes to change their future
e.g. Arab Spring.

4d- Nations uniting against
violence for a prosperous
future e.g. European Union.

5- Learning from the past determining
the future at macro level;

5a- Multilateral institutions being formed to progress from isolationism to globalization.

5b- Climate awareness due to the effects of the past activities shaping up climate action in the future.

5c- Muelime learning from the loss of Cahazwa - e - Ulud and following the strategy in later wars.

5d- States learning from the past and devising new policies leading to development e.g. China's one child policy.

Essay:

As the famous saying goes, "If you keep on repeating the same mistakes, you will keep on getting the same results". Another famous quote by Albert Einstein is, "A mistake repeated more than once is not a mistake, it is a habit". Similarly, if one does not pay heed to the past and does not learn from it, his future will always be precarious.

The future is always determined by the past. The reason is that one going through a positive or negative phase in the past also gets the opportunity to learn from it. He can use the experience gained

to further better his future and can also all-out neglect the "learning" and only focus on the "suffering". According to the Indian cricketer Narijit Singh Sidhu, "The past is in your head but the future is in your hands". Similarly, if the past is paid heed to and used as an experience, the future can be positively impacted.

When a child spends his adolescence observing the level of understanding and the strength of trust between his parents, he is actually shaping up his mindset how he himself would treat his life partner. A scientific theory that explains this situation is called, "social learning theory". According to it, the

child uses his observations to determine his future actions. So when a child perceives a healthy relation of his parents in the past, his future family life is positively impacted. Similarly, there are instances from the past when individuals have learnt from the past mistakes and created wonders which were considered unimaginable. For instance Constantinople, the capital of Byzantine empire had been the apple of the eye for the outsiders. There were a total of 36 failed attempts to conquer it. Many failed candidates equaled it to the proverbial 'sour grapes' and returned dejected. But then came the Ottoman Sultan Mehmet II

He analyzed the past conquest attempts and realized that the main mistake of all attempts was the lack of firepower. So he ordered a Supergun which was a huge cannon and multiple other cannons. In 1423 he was successful in conquering the unconquered Constantinople and was named "The Great Conqueror". This story is mentioned in the book, "The history of Ottoman Empire and the modern Turkey" by Stanford Shaw. This shows that if one learns from the past he can surely pave the way for the future.

Another incident of learning from the mistakes of the past is that when

Tipu Sultan sent his emissaries to King Louis XVI of France and asked that if the king could send his army to help Tipu against the British, British could be wiped out of the Indian subcontinent. But King Louis learnt from the past mistake of his grandfather Louis XIV who he sent the French army to help the Americans against the British, the French people uprose against the king so King Louis XVI did not accept Tipu's request and thus did not make the same mistake leading to an order in his own empire. This is mentioned in the book, "The History of the French Revolution, from

enlightenment to tyranny"⁹⁹
by Ian Davidson. This
shows that not ignoring
the past will lead to
a peaceful future.

A scientific theory
explaining this behaviour is
that of Erik Ericson, named
as "The theory of the development
of personality". This theory
states 8 stages of
personality development and
each latter stage is
dependent on the learning
from the former stage.

The 8 stages are; trust,
independence, initiative, accomplishment,
identity, relationship, contribution,
reflection. If a child learns
the required qualities in
the initial stages, only
then can he successfully
enjoy the later stages. This

shows that if a child
regrets or is neglected
in any of these stages,
it will have dire
consequences for his next
stage.

Furthermore, there are
instances where nations have
refused to repeat their past
and instead learn the
lessons from it and change
their future. For example
the German nation has
all-out rejected and
abandoned the Nazi ideology
and learnt that it
only leads to exploitation
and oppression. They have
abandoned the title of
"Führer" used in the Nazi
era and replaced it with
"Chancellor" for their leader.
A study by the German news

channel DW shows that 85% of Germans feel dissociated with their past and if given a chance would like to change it. 90% of Germans believe Adolf Hitler to be a tyrant and hate him. Due to learning from the past, the German nation has shifted from an isolated nation in the 1940s to on a path to become one of the top 5 economies of the world by 2030.

Similarly the American nation has outrightly rejected the policy of discrimination against the black people by their forefathers. They have started the "Black Lives Matter" movement and are calling for equal treatment of the

people. According to the UN office of the High Commissioner on human rights, after the killing of George Floyd, a black American, American people have repeatedly called for greater representation of Blacks in the executive and as a result we see Mr. Lloyd Austin, the first black American to be appointed the National security advisor of USA. This shows that learning from the past shapes up a prosperous and equitable future.

Another example is the "Arab Spring" of 2010 when autocratic regimes oppressed the people for a long time. The commoners learnt that if they keep on living

in dilapidated conditions
like their forefathers
and do not call for
a change, their future
will remain bleak. They
also learnt that if
they are not united
in their demands like
their ancestors, they will
be crushed. So the Arab
Spring saw united efforts
to change the future of
the Arab people.
After the world war 2
and to the loss of billions
of dollars, the European
nations learnt that if they
keep on fighting like in the
past, their future would
remain bleak. So, they learnt
a lesson and decided to
unite forming the "European
Union". They opened their borders

for each other and invested in human development. As a result we observe that unlike the past, the future of Europe is bright. Most of the top economies of the world are in Europe.

According to world indexes like, "world happiness index", "world peace index", European states top the chart.

This shows that when they decided to learn from the past, they shaped up a positive future.

Moreover, the global efforts to move the society from isolationism and oppression from the past to development and prosperity in the future ~~was~~ ^{were} possible.

only due to a shift of narratives. When nations felt the need to use their past experiences to change their futures. Institutions like United Nations, World health organization, SAARC etc were formed due to this. The charter of UN says that its goal is the mutual development and prosperity of its member states. This shows a paradigm shift from ~~empire~~ empires going to war in the past to global cohesion efforts in the future, thanks to paying heed to the past bitter experiences.

As a result of this, we see that a focus has been climate awareness. In the past, climate was neglected

and it lead to mutual loss for all. According to UN ~~and~~ UNEP, climate awareness has led a policy shift from economic development to human development in the 21st century. So when states learnt from the past, they started efforts to save the future.

An example from the past is when during the Battle of Uhud, the Muslims neglected the orders of Holy Prophet^ﷺ and left the archer-poets to collect booty. As a result the Non-Muslims caused a great loss to them. Consequently Muslims made this an integral part of the warfare strategy to focus

on the commands of the higher authority. This resulted in communism triumphs in the future. So when the lessons are learnt from the past the future is shaped.

Another example is China where the government decided to make and implement a "One Child Policy" to tackle the issue of resource distribution and overpopulation from the past. If China neglected it, we would not see the China of today that is developed. So learning from the past secured China's future.

In a nutshell, any individual or nation that learns from the past will

always succeed if it devises
a strategy eliminating the
past errors. This shows
that one who learns
from the past shapes his
future. It is in his
own hands to write
his destiny.