

Q 4: He profits the most who serves the best.

"The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others"

- Mahatma Gandhi

Service is not merely a selfless exercise. True service when provided with high quality standards has the potential to maximise benefits for the service providers also.

In this essay we will explore the nature of this benefits, how these benefits become lucrative for the service providers, why some people fail to provide their best, how can we empower people to serve the best, what other positive externalities are created by serving well and concerns associated with providing the best services.

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## Multitudeness of Gains

Serving others well is an attractive opportunity to maximise profits for self. These profits are often multidimensional.

Countries which act selflessly for the welfare of global community not only help ensure human wellbeing but also gain soft power. India's humanitarian Aid & Disaster Relief endeavours like Vaccine Maitri and Operation Dost (Turkey) are shining examples.

Countries which strive to create an enabling economic ecosystem by focusing on ease of doing business, ~~keep~~ reap many benefits. Enhanced GDP, increased FDI, employment opportunities for youth and decreased poverty levels are some profits to name a few.

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When governments prioritise the wellbeing of citizens by creating citizen charters for quality service delivery. They gain <sup>in terms of</sup> participation of people, transparency and accountability in the system and reduced corruption.

The benefits are not exclusive to the state, corporates too enjoy profits by serving well. A corporate with a robust CSR ecosystem gains the trust of consumers in addition to promoting ethical Capitalism. Additionally when corporates serve their employees well, they gain in terms of efficiency by encouraging a positive work culture.

While there are obvious gains from serving well for governments and corporates, individuals also stand to profit from serving well. All of us have a purpose

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and job to do in this world. And when we do our jobs well we stand to benefit from heavy profits.

First, we are able to fulfill our social ego and self actualisation needs as per Maslow. An act well done attracts social appreciation, respect and affection. When Bollywood actor Sonu Sood helped migrants during covid, he was unanimously celebrated as a messiah.

Second, serving our best provides us mental satisfaction. There is no greater feeling in the world than knowing that you put in your best. It soothes our spirit and relaxes our mind.

Third, serving others provides an opportunity for self reflection and growth. It makes us better persons by empowering us to envision a world beyond the self. This idea is also the essence of

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## Gandhiji's Talisman.

"When you are in doubt, recall the face of the poorest person you may have seen. And think if the action you contemplate is going to do any good for him. Will it restore him swaraj over himself.... then you will find your 'self' melting away."

Fourth, serving our best offers obvious tangible benefits such as higher salary, performance based incentives and opportunities for career progression. The PM's award for excellence in civil services is one such example.

## Roadblocks Along the way

Therefore serving to the best of our capabilities has many benefits, but despite being such a lucrative ideal, we see that many people fail to put in their best foot forward.

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The primary reason for this issue is often selfishness and greed. This prevents them from serving others well. They focus on only their own self interest, but ironically this self interest leads to more harm than good. India ranks poorly at 92 in the corruption perception index this is a manifestation of such greed.

Additionally people also suffer from having a myopic vision which limits their ability to work well for others. Political populism in the form of revdie culture to capitalise on electoral gains is a grim reminder of this myopia.

Sometimes it is not their motive or perspective but their faith in their own capabilities which impedes from putting in their best effort. This lack of confidence in one's own capabilities is called Imposter Syndrome.

## The path to excellence

But despite such limitations, people possess the intrinsic capability to be the best version of themselves and serve well. But to ensure this we must take active efforts.

To serve the best one's first & foremost need is possession of relevant skills.

In order to do, we must first know how to do.

This can be ensured by investing in capacity building and skilling programmes.

The GoI's Mission Karmayogi for civil servants and PM-Kaushal Vikas Yojana for youth are some examples.

But sometimes mere knowledge does not suffice. We also need to inculcate a strong sense of Nishkam Karma in people. Devotion to duty has the power to act as an intrinsic motivational force empowering us to serve our best.

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Additionally we also need to focus on integrity of character. This becomes crucial to ensure that we serve our best not only when the sun is shining but also when tempests wreak havoc. Nepal Government's Integrity Awards are a celebration of ~~such~~ virtue displayed by government officials. Such positive reinforcements can go a long way in inculcating integrity.

However there may come challenges which overpower even the most capable and well intentioned individuals. In such a scenario we must tap into our collective strength by forging meaningful alliances. India's partnership with USA, Australia Japan in QUAD against Chinese hegemony highlights the power of collective strength.

⑤ To further enhance our capability to serve well, in this day and age, we

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must leverage the potential of technology. Former NITI Aayog CEO has remarked that India's Digital Public Infrastructure (Aadhar, GSTN etc) has helped India achieve development goals in a decade which otherwise would have taken 50 years.

### Shared Profits & Prosperity

While it is true that he who peruses the best profits the most. But it is also true that such efforts create many positive externalities.

Socio-religious reformers like Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Jawahar Chandra Vidyasagar etc in their pursuit of eradicating social evils like (sati, polygamy etc) also helped lay down the foundation for national freedom movement.

When individuals strive to excel in all spheres of their personal life as per our fundamental duty, we help

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create a loving society which in turn helps the cause for national development. It is rightly said in this regard that the 'journey of a thousand miles begins with a single step.'

### Overambition is Dangerous

Therefore we have seen how fulfilling it is for ourselves and others when we serve our best, but we must be cautious in this regard.

In our pursuit to serve the best we must indulge in unethical means.

Students resorting to unfair means in competitive exams; corporates greenwashing their operations to gain favourable ESG ratings; and police resorting to encounters for speedy justice are all warnings against the issues created by resorting to impure means.

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We must always remember Kant's Categorical Imperative to balance our means and ends in all of life's pursuits.

Thus serving the best offers us multidimensional profits. These profits rejuvenate our mind, body and soul. Putting our best foot forward is not only beneficial for ourself but also for the society at large.

While there are some impediments limiting our serving ability, they can be tackled by a variety of quantitative & qualitative interventions. However in our profit maximisation pursuit we must not lose sight of what's important, and tread carefully onto the right path.

Finally we must always remember Swami Vivekananda's Doctrine of service based on Vedantic philosophy, which

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can help us to fully develop the potential  
of ourself and also contribute towards  
the attainment of collective goal of  
Viksit Bharat

x ————— x ————— x .

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Mains Marathon - Answer Writing Pages for UPSC CS Mains Exam (with EXACT same writing area as in Mains QCAB)

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He profits most who serves the best

① Why serve?

Profits

for self

intrinsic  
self  
ego needs  
(Maslow)  
Career progression  
mental satisfaction  
social respect  
love affection  
economic  
so soft power 1  
Prize

intro → The best way to find your place is in service before self

② Who serves?

int. org

Country

Society

Indiv

WFP → Nobel peace prize  
DPI ✓ 50 years 1 decade  
sewa bhav; Indian value  
civil servants: TN Seshan, Sukumar Sen  
Blindeshwar Pathak Sulabh (social enterpr)  
Gandhi peace prize award

for society, country, environment, world (vaccine matter)  
extrinsic  
we go state  
intro motiv  
quid pro quo  
CSR  
win win  
Govt → Citizen charters

③ How to serve the best?

devotion to duty (Nishkam Karma)

acquire the skill through practice Olympians

knowledge enhance MK, PMKVY, Smarthy Sen → Capability approach

integrity of character even in adversity

Cpt. Dharmendra Singh  
Kirti Chakra awardee  
India cold war NAM

④ Why don't people serve best?

selfish, myopic vision, corruption  
Outcomes observed  
Importer syndrome

best  
Extraneous means  
predatory pricing  
privacy invasion  
servo state

Concl Vivekananda  
Vedanta  
mutual benefit

He is most who serves the best.

how do people profit

- countries
- govt
- states
- corporates
- indiv
- society

intro Serving others  
 charity, wellbeing  
 of others, little for  
 the self. But in  
quid pro quo, gains  
 for the most, Gandhi  
quote.

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Q8

Serial media is more about psychology than technology.

Mr ABC is an active netizen. He has a thriving presence on Facebook, X, Instagram, Youtube, Snapchat and Threads. He gets his daily update on current events from X, goes to 'trendy and viral' beats on Youtube and makes his purchases based on Instagram influencers' expert suggestions.

His story is also the story of millions of others and is reflective of the fact that social media is more about psychology than technology.

The advent of social media can be traced to the early 2000s. This era of Web 2.0 revolutionised our communication with one another. Faster speed powered by sophisticated algorithms allowed us to stay connected 24\*7. In addition to conventional voice calls and SMSs now we

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— Could exchange images, videos, emojis, GIFs and what not.

But behind the complex technological facade of social media lies a deeper undercurrent of human psychology. In this essay we shall explore the bidirectional relationship between social media and psychology, additional dimensions associated with social media and ways by which we can leverage social media to our benefit.

### Psychological Social Media

The life blood of any social media platform is user participation. So long as people interact with the application's interface, social media thrives.

To ensure this continuously, social media platforms invest huge amount of capital to study human psychology. A netflix documentary 'The Social Dilemma' dwelves

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deep into this idea and highlights how social media algorithms study our online behaviour to feed us curated content. The aim is to hook users into an endless circle of often mindless scrolling.

Algorithms rely on our anchoring bias and expose us to content that they know we would relate most to. former facebook employee and whistle blower frances Haugen has spoken at length about such practices in the social media business.

Another carrot dangled by social media is ~~the~~ the option of 'likes'. These pseudo forms of online validation create dopamine hits in our nervous systems. It leads to instant gratification for us. This euphoria in turn pushes to post & consume more content on social media to gain more likes.

Corporate houses also exploit our vulnerabilities on social media. Through targeted advertising they ensure that

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monetise the psychological awareness of social media algorithms. & It is no surprise that once we like a picture of holiday destination, the next set of posts promise to offer us best deals on holiday packages by tour operators.

Therefore social media is not only about coding to create efficient algorithms but also about studying psychology. But the nexus of social media and psychology does not end here.

What we see, we believe. Today most of what we see is filtered down via social media. Social media thus heavily influences our psychology.

This influence can be positive. Social media offers a conduit to raise awareness about pressing issues of the day and helps change human behaviour. The GoI actively uses

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Social media for raising awareness about key policies like Beti Bachao Beti Padhao. The #Selfie with Daughter campaign was instrumental in dealing with deep rooted son bias.

Social media is also a powerful tool to raise ~~the~~ voice against injustices especially for the marginalised. Communities that are not allowed space in the mainstream resort to social media to raise their concerns. The #BlackLivesMatter Movement is one such example which raised issue of institutionalised racism.

But sadly social media is a double edged sword. Social media often manipulates our psychology. Just like MrABC many of us get influenced by the sea of influencers on social media. These influencers sell us the idea of a 'good life'. One that is rooted in hyper consumerism and greed.

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We do not ~~not do we~~ gain happiness by subscribing to their ideas. But by not subscribing we suffer from FOMO (fear of missing out). This creates a lose-lose situation.

Social media can also perpetuate hate, envy, jealousy and other disvalues in our conscience. Trolling is a manifestation of this malice. Recently a 10<sup>th</sup> class topper was mercilessly trolled for her appearance, disregarding her merit & dignity.

Social media despite being a scientific and technological solution can end up promoting pseudo science. Repeated exposure to pseudo science content erodes our scientific temper. This was common during the pandemic when a variety of health hacks were ~~do~~ getting viral on social media.

Additionally, studies have highlighted that there is an inverse relationship

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between social media usage and attention spans. As we consume more & more amounts of short form content like reels our attention span progressively decreases. This negatively affects our cognitive capabilities.

It is a paradox that on the one hand our attention span has decreased but our screen-time has skyrocketed. This has created the issue of digital addiction especially in youngsters. A survey of kids aged 5-16 revealed that 60% exhibited potential signs of digital addiction. Such issues at a tender age can ~~have~~ impede their intellectual development.

A natural consequence of our high screen-times is social isolation as well. When we spend more time on our gadgets and less time around people, loneliness starts to creep in. ~~It is iron~~ It is ironical how despite being connected 24x7, social media has made us more ~~loneliness~~ lonely.

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This loneliness further leads to issues of mental health (14% population suffers from mental health issues) like stress, anxiety, depression etc.

Social media also fuels delusion by creating an artificial social construct it confuses us. We are unable to differentiate between REAL & REEL friends. Many of us don't realise that thousands of digital friends have little value against few real close friends.

### Beyond Psychology

Therefore we have seen how social media is more about psychology than technology. But it is also about other things.

Social media is about money & economics. Social media giants like Facebook, X, Instagram are multi billion dollar enterprise

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Influencers on these platforms are part of the creative economy. Recently a youtuber revealed, he makes Rs 30L a month! Social media is a powerful economic engine for both developers and influencers.

Social media is about politics. Election campaigns in this techade have a new digital theatre. Most leading parties have a dedicated social media cell responsible for running social media campaigns. People and Government officials engage with one another on platforms like X for grievance redressal. Opposition parties hold government accountable for governance deficits on social media.

Finally social media is about sociology. It allows to connect with one another. This was most apparent during the pandemic when all of us stuck inside amidst the lockdown.

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Social media emerged as a lifeline for all craving human connections

### Maximising Gains from Social media

"The internet is the new town square for the global village of tomorrow" - Bill Gates  
Social media is here to stay, but given its potential to alter our psychology it's important we use it constructively.

As individuals we should practice the virtue of temperance and moderate our use of social media. We can experiment with digital detoxing to reduce our digital addiction.

Secondly we must also learn cyber hygiene and become responsible netizens. So as to not violate the rights of others or hurt their sentiments. This would go a long way in curtailing online hate speech.

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The government should establish a robust regulatory regime which enables innovation and protects citizen rights simultaneously. The Social Media Intermediaries Rules 2023, are a step in the right direction.

Tech giants should practice commerce with morality and establish guard rails against any negative social and psychological engineering of people. They should also explore the possibilities of creating Web3.0 on a decentralised blockchain model.

Social media has completely revolutionised our world. Social media is created upon a strong foundation of psychology and technology and at the same time strives to alter our psychology. To prevent any catastrophes we must ensure

Constructive use of social media in our lives.

In this techade we should ensure we transform social media ~~as~~ from a source of entertainment to a source of inspiration. from an echo chamber of hate to a force of positive change. Ethical usage of social media can ensure peace & prosperity in the future.

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Social media is more about psychology than tech.

Intro. humans social beings, enjoy bonding & relationships therein. Since time immemorial we collectively thrived, adv species on the planet. SM now (FB, X, Insta) new avenue/medium for us to bond digitally 24x7 / connected. But behind the tech facade of these plat undercurrent of of underst of human psycho.

Social media & tech

social media psycho - SM

SM -> psycho

SM -> multi

tapping potential / self

need - web 3.0

deep - AI dip detox

cyber hygiene

protection for

weak

per-itive force

moderation of use - temperance

what else is it about

sociology -> bonding

economics -> content

creative

creativity

politics -> election

Campaigns

The internet -> town square for the global village of tom

concl

Study them pr basis

of underst of the world

SM is no different. Techade.

-> degradation Go!

-> Echo chamber

-> algo influence

-> Short form attention span

-> X-rational intuitive

perspectives

frances hayen privacy

-> Bulli Bai

-> Viral

-> bois locker room

-> black pill red pill

-> consp

social media use

part -> policy awareness

brand marketing

campaigns

REAL & REEL

friends

hyper condemnation

good life

class of influencers

dealing us number of things

National

creators

awards

greta -> env awareness

# Me Too

# BLP

# Boycot Natives

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