**“Today’s youths are conditioned to be apathetic.” To what extent is this description reflective of your society?**

**Type of question:** Extent of Agreement

**Thinking aspect:** For this question, it is crucial that students comprehend the key term “apathetic” which means a sense of emotional detachment from various aspects of life. To help with the brainstorming process. Students can think of youth apathy being demonstrated in the education, social and political spectrum. As it is an Extent of Agreement question, there should be an EOA paragraph after each supporting view to demonstrate the student’s understanding of the limitations of the supporting argument. In the conclusion, a clear stand is required with the key determinant factor identified.

**Introduction**

As Prime Minister Goh Chok Tong once remarked “Has the younger generation of Singaporeans gone soft? Look yourself in the mirror and ask: Am I a stayer or a quitter? Am I a fair-weather Singaporean or an all-weather Singaporean?”. Such a view parallels the increasing criticism youths face for being apathetic – whether socially, politically or otherwise. However, some argue that there are other avenues which encourage engagement of these youths. In view of such contrasting arguments, this essay requires a multidimensional introspection about youths in modern society before a nuanced conclusion can be made.

**Main body**

Supporting view 1:

From a political perspective, Singaporean youths are conditioned to be politically apathetic due to the one-sided nature of the political scene here that suppresses any form of constructive criticism on the ruling government .

EOA 1:

However it could be argued that today’s youth are not conditioned to be apathetic due to the active engagement of some youths in platforms and avenues by contributing meaningful political opinions and dialogue.

Supporting view 2: ·

Nonetheless, youths today are conditioned to be apathetic as Singaporean youths are too blessed materially to be able to empathise with the less fortunate. These youths are not being exposed to hardship, they tend to be sheltered and are at times not even aware of the plight of the needy.

EOA 2:

Yet, it could be argued that today’s youths are not conditioned to be apathetic as there are some youths who go out all the way to help those in need in crucial times by providing monetary and financial aid.

Supporting view 3:

Today’s youths are conditioned to be apathetic as the rigorous demands of the education system and meant that today’s youth are very focused on their education in order to live the “Singapore Dream” and are less concerned with the welfare of others or anything that does not benefit or impact them directly.

EOA 3:

Yet such a view holds a modicum of truth due to compulsory social work programmes in schools which raise awareness among students of the plight of the less fortunate and the needy.

**Conclusion**

In Singapore, compared to other nations, it does seem like the youths are conditioned to be apathetic due to the lack of vibrancy and excitement in the political scene, even as there are measures to give a larger voice to the opposition party (increasing the number of nominated members of parliament and opposition seats for instance). However, in terms of social apathy, I believe that there are adequate platforms to encourage greater social engagement among youths, and this to a certain extent is successful. In this aspect, I feel it unfair if one were to claim that our youths were simply conditioned to be apathetic.