**GP Essays – Modern Society**

**Question 1**

In the digital age do newspaper still have a role in your society?

**Question 2**

To what extent does the modern society undermine the elderly?

**Do you agree that the modern society undermines the elderly?**

**Question 3**

Given the growing demands of modern society, has raising children become more of a burden?

Introduction – paragraph

Main body – opposing view

Rebuttal

3 supporting view

Conclusion

**Question 4**

Will technological advancement be the death of education in your society?

**Question 5**

Does capital punishment still have a place in your society?

**Question 6**

Assess the view that regulating freedom of speech can never be truly successful in your society.

**Question for Social Media**

**Title: In this digital age does newspaper still have a role in your society?**

Thinking perspective

1. **Type of question** – Do you agree?
* It will determine the structure of the question
* Introduction, MB (opposing view (1), rebuttal (1), supporting view (3), conclusion
1. **Requirement of the question**
* To assess whether the newspaper still plays a role in this digital age
1. Meaning of digital age – the era of domination of social media and digital format of presentation
2. Newspaper plays a role in this digital age
3. It does not play a role

4. What are the roles played by the newspaper in our society at this digital age?

1. **Content of argument**
2. Must have a good understanding of the roles the newspaper can play in the interests of the society
* informative, educational, political, cultural function, entertainment
1. Must know how to use the features of the newspaper to assess whether they can or cannot play the roles in the society – In doing so, we need to know how to depict why these features of the newspaper can help them to play or why the features will be the source of limitations in playing the roles.
2. Must know how to compare the features of the social media to the features of newspaper and assess whether the newspaper is still significant in playing this role when compared to the mass media.

**Question 1**

**In the digital age do newspaper still have a role in your society?**

Introduction

(observation / perspectives / stand) – DYA structure

With the advent of digital technology, the media industry has been dramatically altered and transformed from a traditional informative format based on a one-way interaction to a user-based, multiple interactive and community format. As a result, savvy technocrats are quick to challenge the functionality of the newspaper’s role in this digital age, disputing their capacity to perform the various functions of the mass media in the modern society such as its role as the fourth estate of a country. However, there are traditionalists who still see newspaper as a significant institution that will promote the interests of the society. **In view of these controversial opinions**, this essay is more inclined to the view that the newspaper has no role to play in this digital age as it is not functional as social media platforms.

Main body

**1. Opposing view – newspaper still have a role in your society**

**(starting sentence – set perspective / topic sentence / elaboration / example, linking sentence)**

For those who still share a nostalgia attachment with newspaper, they view it as a source of information to help them understand more about the world. The newspaper has been **an orderly and organized source of information** which appeals to them as they **are familiar with the structure and approach on how news is transmitted to them.** In Singapore, some of local Chinese newspaper like Shinmin Daily News and Lianhe WanPao are appealing to readers as they report local incidents and domestic issues that are close to the hearts of the older and heartland readers. Likewise, Financial Times and Wall Street Journal appeal to professionals for their informative insights to the financial, economic and political issues. The newspapers are informative to the readers **as they are comfortable with a structural way on how they receive information and has become part of their way of life that helped these readers to stay informed about the world.**

**2. Rebuttal – rebuttal starting sentence, conceptualized idea, elaboration, examples, linking sentence**

However, Luddites who are skeptical about the functional roles of the newspaper are quick to show the limitations of newspaper in the digital age in fulfilling their informative role, given their limited space of information which it can provide based on its format of presentation. In a paper format, the information given by the newspaper is limited by the space listed in the paper. Compared to digital format, the information provided by the digital media is immense and extensive. Readers can access the information through a video and attain a variety source of information through many collaborative platforms like Wikipedia and Wikis projects and content community news media platforms like Flickr, SlideShare and YouTube. The newspaper’s role as a source of information is limited when compared to these new social media platforms which are able to provide information in vast quantity and interlinked approach, through lively audio and visual presentation and at great convenience with instant and real-time updating, asserting the view that there is no longer an informative role for the newspaper to play in this digital age.

**3. Supporting View – starting sentence, conceptualized idea, elaboration, example, linking sentence**

When we further examine the other roles of this traditional medium, we will agree with the view that the newspa0per plays a diminished or insignificant role in many aspects. One role that it has failed to perform is its educational role in our modern society. It is undeniable that the mass media perform this function in educating the public on how to conduct their lives socially, economically and politically as they highlight the social norms, economics opportunities, legal regulation and political development which will affect the lives of the people. The functionality of the newspaper is no longer as effective as the social media as it is not as **demonstrative and illustrative in effects**, given that the education process is done only through description and narration while social media present **a more stimulating education process in terms of visual and audio impact on the audience.** Furthermore, the social media encourage participation and interaction which will engage the individuals to participate actively. One can also search more information online through Wikipedia and on-line learning platforms like Udemy, Khan Academy and Code Academy. Some of the YouTube videos made by social portals like The School of Life also seeks to educate the society on how to conduct their lives in this complexed world. More lively way of presentation and vast information provided by social media will make the newspaper archaic and obsolete in playing the educational role in this digital age.

From the moral and behavioural aspect, the traditional mass media often act as the moral compass for the society as it is able to uphold the moral code of the society by influencing the perception and instilling the values to guide their moral values and behaviours, especially for the youth who are most vulnerable to succumb to moral degradation. It is more difficult for the newspaper to function in this digital age as the readership for paper form of news is dwindling, implying the influential impact of the newspaper will diminish too. This is pre-eminently observed on how the newspaper has affected the youth, where its effect is futile and minimum. Furthermore, any social campaign runs through the social media will definitely be able get the attention of the youths due it omnipresence and interactive form of influence, thus raising their influence on moral values of the youths. For example, we can observe how the social media campaigns used by those who pro LGBT stance and those who are against this stance as in the Pink dot and the white dot movement. Such intra-civic conflict is unlikely to be debated extensively in traditional newspaper due to its sensitivity and controversy and limited instant participation from the masses.

Politically, the newspaper is often criticized for being used a political tool by the state to set out propaganda against the democratization of the society, failing to uphold itself as the fourth estate that regulate the society. The nature of the newspaper as an institution make it easy for the state to use it to control the masses in the interest of the politicians and the business owners. Very often, the freedom of speech that our society upholds dearly is distorted and upheld in the interest of the press owners, rather not in the interest of the people. On the other hand, social media platform allows the masses the platform to voice out political injustice and suppression by dictatorship against the people, proving that the newspaper will not uphold the interests of the society. This is greatly observed in the Arab Spring in 2011 where the social media platform like Instagram and Twitter play vital roles in the upstage against the dictatorship of the regime of the nations in the Arab league, proving that the social media are more effective than newspaper as an institution in performing its political role in promoting democracy.

Conclusion – Retrospective summary / opinionated suggestion

In conclusion, the advent of technology in revolutionizing the mass media has profound impact on how the mass media will affect the society and her people. The traditional paper format of newspaper will definitely lose its influential status and cease to play a role in the society. It is important for us to understand this change as we still have to use the mass media or social media to perform their crucial functional roles to uphold the interests of the society and her people.

**Question 3**

**Given the growing demands of modern society, has raising children become more of a burden?**

**Growing demand – shape people to think that it is a burden – declining birth rate – population crisis – aging population**

Question Requirements

* Analyse ‘the growing demands of modern society’ in countries beyond their own, in order to broaden the scope of their arguments to consider a range of concerns that parents face in raising children
* Possible ways of presenting opposing arguments could be to posit that the task of raising children has always been burdensome or challenging, and is not significantly increased despite the growing demands of modern society.
* Subject matter:
	+ Understanding of the challenges of raising children in today’s world, for all levels of society.
	+ This is primarily focused on parents as the key figures responsible for the raising of their children (from infancy to their school-going ages), but could potentially include other members of the family involved in the process of raising children, or even the role of institutions in shaping the formative years of children in the education system as well (although this latter point should not form the main or only focus of the essay).
* Key Terms:
	+ Growing demands – Consider how modern society places increasing demands on parents to raise their children in an increasingly complex world.
	+ More of a burden – the term ‘more of a burden’ requires comparison on whether the challenges and costs of raising children in today’s world have increased as compared to the past.
* Context: modern societies, worldwide; modern societies, in general
* Category of discussion:
* Issues:
	+ The raising of children is inextricably connected to the environment in which they grow up. Parents take on the main responsibility of ensuring that their children are raised in a physically, mentally and emotionally healthy manner.
	+ However, given the higher expectations that modern society exerts on parents as compared to the past, this task of raising children has become much more demanding, and therefore a heavier burden on the shoulders of parents, who have to navigate these challenges alongside their children.
* Assumptions: Because of the more complex and challenging demands that modern society creates for families with children, it has indeed become more burdensome to have children and to raise them based on good moral standards together with a good standard of living.

**2. Essay Outline:**

**Question 3**

**2.1 Introduction**

 The upbringing of a child is not an easy task as it involves parents putting aside a huge sum of money, devotion of love and care and dedication of time which shapes many to have the view that raising a child can be a burden. This is especially real and applicable to parents in **our modern society** as social, economic and political development in our society had laden parents under adverse circumstances to make them feel that raising a child has become a burden. At the same time, there is extensive institutional development to make upbringing of children in a modern society that will rebut this perception of the young parents, criticizing them for being immature and irresponsible as they choose a more carefree life and abandon their family responsibility. However, having understood how complex and demanding the modern society has developed, this essay takes the stand that raising a child has become more of a burden with the growing demand of a modern society.

**Main body**

**Opposing View: (anti-thesis)**

Although we cannot deny that there is a hefty price in raising a child and it is time-consuming to devote the care to young ones (setting perspective), it has not become a burden beyond the capacity of parents as there are (idea)extensive financial initiatives and family policies introduced by governments of many countries (intensification) to alleviate the financial and social difficulties faced by modern parents.

**Rebuttal: prove why the opposing view is wrong**

However, such financial assistance and family policies are limited and may not be stretched out adequately to solve all frictions involved in this journey of family upbringing as the economic and social circumvents in our modern society have long and deep impacts on families. (intensification)

**Supporting view 1:**

It is logical for young parents to view raising a child a burden in modern society as it is seen as a contest of their time and energy in their life which will undermine their advancements in academic and career development.

**Supporting view 2:**

Another reason for this perception is the economic burden that young parents will be laden with when we consider the economic hardship they will experience in modern society.

**Supporting View 3:**

Psychologically, most young parents will recognise the higher level of stress in raising children and deemed them as a burden when they adjust to the demand of work, parenthood, social commitments and the allure of the materialism and entertainment in our modern society.

**Conclusion:**

**In this issue of family development, we cannot deny that it is a great joy to have a child, but the adverse reality of the modern society has made it more difficult for young couple to raise a child. The demanding nature of the modern society has made many couples choose to have DINK model of life – double income, no kid and this explains why the birth rate is at such critical level that there is a population crisis in countries like Japan. It is time for the government of today to face this negative social development and change the social attitude towards the upbringing of children.**

**Question 5**

**Has your society sacrificed too much for progress?**

Question Requirements

* Assess whether various aspects of the price we have paid in order for the country to gain progress in multiple domains has become excessive or come at the expense of equally or more important concerns.
* Identify areas of development that have been sidelined, overlooked, undermined, or completely sacrificed in the pursuit of progress.
* Assess whether these sacrifices that have been made are justified or worthwhile, based on the effect that has been produced on society – for the better or worse, and for whom (differing perspectives by differing stakeholders).
* Subject matter: society’s progress – whether too much (what specifically?) has been given up in service of the pursuit of progress
* Key Terms:
	+ society … progress – can be considered in terms of various domains: economic, social, or political
	+ too much -- candidates should assess whether the price that one’s society has paid for the sake of progress is excessive, or has resulted in a state of affairs that has become unsatisfactory or undesirable (or even worse off than before), despite the benefits that progress itself has brought about
* Context: Singapore society
* Issues:
	+ Can we justify the price that one’s society has paid for the sake of progress?
	+ If we cannot, does this entail that too much has been sacrificed for progress?
	+ If we can, what are the reasons to reconcile the trade-offs and rationalise that too much has not been compromised in the pursuit of progress?
	+ What does progress look like in one’s society?
	+ What are sacrificed in pursuit of it? How were these sacrifices legitimised? Were they small trade-offs or trade-offs of important national needs?
	+ Would the magnitude of sacrifice be perceived differently by different stakeholders? E.g. would environment conservation groups hold a different view from urban developers?
	+ What have sacrifices in the short-term looked like? And in the long-term? Do the short- and long-term sacrifices bear upon the worthwhileness of these sacrifices?
* Assumptions:
	+ One’s society has sidelined other important concerns in the name of progress to a degree that is too much for society to bear.
	+ Progress is a good in itself and ought to be pursued.
	+ Most in society agree that what is defined as national progress is beneficial are truly a hallmark of national advancement.

Possible Arguments & Examples:

Due to the pragmatic pursuit of progress, my society has indeed sacrificed too much of the more intangible, emotional dimensions of our lives.

* In Singapore, the psyche of pursuing tangible economic growth and progress has resulted in a very competitive, calculative, and individualistic culture.
* The way in which my country has progressed as a society is also reflected in our individual mindsets and ambitions for ourselves: just as Singapore behaves as a country in relation to bigger powers in the region or world, many Singaporeans seek to outperform others around them in pursuit of quicker and greater progress.
* Such a culture has proven to be detrimental to our sense of civic-mindedness and in our social interactions, as we often prioritise our own interests rather than those of others.

Progress, which looks forward towards ever-rising standards and goals, has often come at the cost of cherishing and preserving the things that really matter in the present, and even the parts of our past that have led us to our present stage.

* Our society has progressed to a level that is lauded in the international community, in terms of economic growth, education standards, and social and political stability. However, these improvements have also come at the cost of rising complacency, ruthless competitiveness, and general apathy.
* Our country’s steady economic growth has led us to feel a sense of complacency and dissatisfaction with the state of our individual lives.
* We engage in competition in so many aspects of our lives (education, social status, wealth, careers) that we seldom allow ourselves to slow down to savour daily experiences, and instead relentlessly pursue the next milestone or goal in our lives.
* Many still feel that Singaporeans are not sufficiently aware of, let alone engaged with important issues of politics and civic discourse (for the citizen: economic acumen developed at the expense of political consciousness).
* Our society’s impressive progress has ironically left the current generation rather disengaged and uninterested in taking ownership of the country’s future progress – a price that is too high to pay as a result of the stable progress that we have enjoyed for a large part of our country’s journey towards achieving progress.

What we might have gained in the short-run: political stability and follower-ship as a result of a citizenry that does not often question the decisions political leaders make, we might lose in the long-run, especially in a future world where the political climate might be volatile, and political discernment is necessary.

With that being said, there is truth to the perspective that the sacrifices that my society has made have not been ‘too much’. Hefty has they may seem, these sacrifices have in fact been necessary and worthwhile in order for the country to have progressed.

* As said by Lee Kuan Yew in his book Hard Truths to Keep Singapore Going

**To what extent does the modern society undermine the elderly?**

**Introduction**

 The modern society is characterized by fast-paced lifestyle, technological devices, rampant crime and vices and stressful and hazardous environment which will be of great detriment to anyone in our society **and the most vulnerable of all to be undermined by the modern society would be the elderly.** If the elderly is not prepared in their youth and adulthood, they are likely to subjected to an adverse environment that undermines their interests, making life a tough journey at this stage. On the other hand, if the elderly has made adequate preparation for the modern society, they can still enjoy their sunset years and make the best out of it. To examine this extent of agreement, we would need to examine the impact of the modern society on the elderly and the way the government or the elderly are preparing their lives for the modern society.

**Main body**

**Proposition view 1**

Critics of modernisation are often quick to point out that technological advancement aligned with modern society are undermining elderly in their economic opportunities for employment and their capacity to maintain their living standard.

elaboration

Individual –

Society –

example

**Extent of agreement 1**

However, with proper financial planning and a sound economic, social and retirement policies, elderly can avoid the financial adversity they will face in their old age in this modern society.

**Proposition view 2**

Socially, elderly faced a lonely and alienated society which will create the social divide due to their failures to adapt the fast-paced, modernized way of life which are often influenced by technology, undermining them to adapt to live meaningfully and happily.

**Extent of Agreement 2**

Not all elderly will be placed under such detriments as elderly are still able to live an active social life when they are given adequate social and institutional support to make lives easy, convenient and manageable.

**Proposition 3**

Elderly are often discriminated in a modern society for being outdated and archaic as technological advancement and modern values and norms become disruptive, putting in unfavourable status in society.

**Extent of agreement 3**

However, such discrimination and unfair judgement of the elderly can be proven untrue if there is a change in perception of the elderly in our society through institutional and social campaign.

Conclusion

In retrospect, we can understand that the impact of modernisation is extensive, dimensional and impact, especially on the elderly and it is often seen to be detrimental and adverse. However, its impairment on the elderly can be avoided if there is proper planning and development from the society and preparation by the elderly to handle such severance on them. It is imperative for the society and the individuals to recognize the reverse of the modern society on the elderly and be prepared for them to enable the elderly to live a more stable, meaningful

and merry old age.