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# **MAINS ANSWER WRITING** **APPROACH ANSWERS**

**Topic- ETHICS DAY 5**



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**What do the terms 'moral attitude' and 'political attitude' mean? What role does social media play in shaping "moral attitude" and "political attitude"? (10 marks) (150 words)**

Moral convictions about what is "Right" and "Wrong" underpin moral attitudes. They have a greater impact than moral standards.

### **Moral Attitude**

**Perseverance, faithfulness, veracity, and kindness** are all traits of moral attitude. Because of the **fear of social ostracization**, positive moral attitudes prevent deviant acts in normal cultures. Moral attitude has a negative consequence in that it can be used to justify aggressive behaviour and insanity. It has the potential to **incite riots, massacres, and terrorism**.

### **Political attitudes**

Political attitudes are **a person's feelings about politicians, political parties, and political beliefs**. Political perspectives range from exceedingly liberal to extremely conservative.

On the **positive side**, political attitudes can lead to **zero tolerance for corruption, pro-poor policies, welfare for the poor, and listening to public grievances**; on the **negative side**, political attitudes can take the form of **regionalism, communalizing the public in order to polarise them during elections**.

### **Impact of Social Media on Moral Attitude**

- **Moral degeneration** - Social media platforms such as Facebook, Whatsapp, and others can **corrupt young people's moral attitudes by exposing them to filthy jokes, MMS, and pornography** on a daily basis, causing cognitive dissonance.
- **Moral upliftment** - By offering a venue for involvement, social media can help to **raise the ethical quotient**. For example, **teen activist Greta Thunberg**, who became a phenomenon as a result of social media rallies for **ecology protection and sustainability**, emphasised the topic of environmental ethics.
- **Social transformation** – Social media has the potential to change social moral attitudes. By revitalising the new generation of feminism, the **#MeToo movement**, for example, attacked the **patriarchal status quo**. It focused on the emotive aspect of moral behaviour.

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- **Massive scale-** The **anonymity and enormous reach** of social media influence moral attitudes more quickly. **#GiveitUp, like the Beti Bachao Beti Padhao campaign**, fosters the development of a positive cognitive moral attitude.

### **Impact of Social Media on Political Attitudes**

- **New avenues to share political views**
- **Greater participation** - Immediate connection allows protests or political meetings to be planned at the last minute and extensively published via tweets or Facebook posts. For example, the **rise of the Aam Aadmi Party in Delhi** was largely due to the influence of media and social media on people's political attitudes.
- **Customization** - The Internet allows voters to look at sources and news that are relevant to them only, while dismissing opposing viewpoints.
- **The domino effect** - Through **retweeting** or **reposting**, voters can spread information like wildfire. Voters are more inclined to support the same point of view when the news comes from a friend or trustworthy colleague.

In conclusion, moral attitude inspires **altruism, volunteerism, and social service**. Political attitude determines one's belief and action system, which is based on electoral gains. Greater ethical awareness, public participation, and social discussions can all be used to improve political and moral attitudes, bringing society closer to maturity and humanity.

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**What do you understand by social influence and persuasion? Explain with examples, how bureaucrats can use these tools to implement welfare programs. (10 marks) (150 words)**

Our thoughts, actions, feelings and attitudes are influenced by other people, whether we are passively observing their behavior or actively complying with their requests. This is **Social influence**.

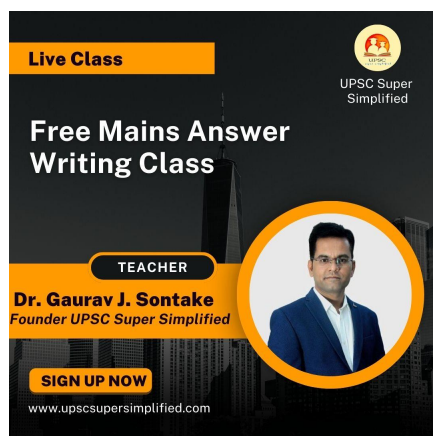
**Persuasion** is a form of social influence in which an audience is intentionally encouraged to adopt an idea, attitude, or course of action by symbolic means.

### **Social influence & Persuasion to implement welfare programs**

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- Social influence and persuasion can be employed to change individuals' attitude towards an object or an issue. Eg. Prevailing negative attitudes in society.
  - **Social influence & Persuasion** directs how a person forms his or her thinking and organizes outward conduct and activities.
  - **Social influence & Persuasion** can have a significant impact on changing people's moral compass.
  - **Examples**
    - People's social attitudes can be changed through persuasion. Regular announcements, for example, to maintain the station clean urge people to change their behavior. The Selfie campaign was a huge success in spreading the word about the Beti Padhao Beti Bachao program. It helps in making people follow rules which bring inconvenience to them, like District collectors visiting houses in the morning to persuade people for waste segregation before disposal.
    - Making celebrities ambassadors for various social programmes, such as Beti Padhao Beti Bachao, is an example of this. Persuasion can be ascribed to the success of initiatives such as Swacch Bharat Abhiyaan-cleanliness drives and Ujjwala Yojana's give it up campaign.

Thus, social behavior and persuasion are helpful features for dealing with issues such as girl child education, inter-caste marriage, and women's temple entry. These tactics are democratic and adhere to Gandhi's philosophy of prioritizing insistence over coercion. They can be effective in bringing about behavioral change in civil services while maintaining the dignity and respect of all stakeholders.

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Suppose you are an officer in-charge of implementing a social service scheme to provide support to old and destitute women. An old and illiterate woman comes to you to avail the benefits of the scheme. However, she has no documents to show that she fulfils the eligibility criteria. But after meeting her and listening to her you feel that she certainly needs support. Your enquiries also show that she is really destitute and living in a pitiable condition. You are in a dilemma as to what to do. Putting her under the scheme without necessary documents would clearly be violation of rules. But denying her the support would be cruel and inhuman.

- (a) Can you think of a rational way to resolve this dilemma?  
 (b) Give your reason for it. (250 words) (20 marks)

The given case illustrates an ethical dilemma between **professional ethics and empathy for others**. You want to do your job honestly, yet situations happen that require you to break regulations and principles. Many moral dilemmas arise in such situations.

#### (A) Plan of action to resolve the dilemma

- The first step would be to determine if any rules exist for dealing with such a scenario or exemption.

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- If there are no such rules, I cannot consent to proceed without the required documents and evidences, and my professional duty ends here.
  - Because the person is truly in need, I am impelled to take steps that may not be within my formal jurisdiction.
  - I would look for similar foundations or NGOs that help underprivileged and destitute women. This is outside my duty, but exceptions can be made in exceptional situations.
  - I would personally guarantee the person's genuineness so she gets her rewards.
  - This is not in my official capacity, but as a concerned citizen seeking to improve the lives of those less fortunate.

**(B) Reasons for my action**

- **Humanity**

Government programmes are choked with red tape and excessive requirements. But that doesn't imply genuine people without papers can't live decently. As humans, we must be prepared to manage such harsh situations.

- **Professional duty**

- While my job ends when I leave the workplace, my profession teaches me to remain ready long after I leave. Beyond my jurisdiction cannot be an excuse for not helping the poor.

- **Empathy**

Every human empathises with the emotions of others, especially the weak. Empathy will help us overcome obstacles and perform duties we cannot control. This is a must for any public servant.

Thus, the case summarises balancing professional and human duty. We must use our human instincts when professional instincts fail.

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