GSSCORE

An Institute for Civil Services

MAINS TEST SERIES 2023

GS MAINS Q&A

TOPICAL TEST - 27

(5 QUESTION)

ESSAY

Philosophical Topics 2

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GS Q&A (Answer Writing) 2023

Hints: Essay Test - 2

1. Excellence is a continuous process and not an accident.

We all have heard the story of 'The Climbing Ant' who tries to climb a rock and every time she tries to move, she slips down. But, the Ant did not stop from climbing and tried again and again until she reached over the top. This small story of one of the smallest creatures shows the power of persistence that ultimately led to excellence. Excellence is the quality of being outstanding or extremely good. Excellence is something that may not be achieved in a single day. It is not something that comes all of a sudden rather excellence is achieved through hard work and consistent efforts. Excellence is also associated with the individual's personal capacity such as intelligence and high IQ but lack of effort can also make intelligence redundant. It is also said that hard work will always beat intelligence, only if intelligence doesn't work hard enough.

We can't think of any occupation or passion that may be reached to its zenith in a single effort or in a day. We can't learn dancing in a day. Even the various forms of dancing whether it is Indian classical dance styles, including Bharatnatyam, Kuchipudi, Kathak etc, or western dance forms such as jez, hiphop, salsa etc. can never be mastered in a single day or through a single dance class. To get that mastery of learning dance forms people devote themselves completely. To name a few such as Pandit Birju Maharaj, Padma Subramanyam, Rukmini Devi devoted their entire life to reach excellence in their respective fields of performing arts. Excellence works on the famous axiom of 'Practice makes a man perfect'. The more we do practice the more excellence and perfection we get in doing anything.

The famous painting of 'Mona Lisa' by Leonardo Da Vinci' did not come out of the single stroke of brush rather it was the result of an inspiration, imagination of Da Vinci, a thorough understanding of the minute technicalities of painting and a right knowledge of brush strokes. Excellence of a painter is gained not only through the mixing of colors or handling brush. Painting is an art of imagination and visualization that may not be achieved by joining a few months of art classes or attending the royal school of painting. It is, though, can be found naturally but has to be polished with time and a constant effort. An artist has to make him/herself free from all the restrictions. They mostly live an anonymous life just to set them free from biases, judgements and norms.

Even motherhood and its associated emotions are not reached in one or two days or weeks. It takes a whole nine months to develop a mother's connection and emotions with her child. Even nature knows that the sacred relationships such as motherhood are not built instantly with the moment of conceiving. But as the time progresses and a mother starts feeling the existence of her baby she starts getting more attached and connected. Even the development of a child does not take place instantly. It is a slow process that a baby comes into its full shape going through a gradual developmental process.

It is a law of nature that things occur in a progressive and a slow manner. If we go by the scientific theory of the creation of life on earth, it says that the origin of life took place via the process of evolution and did not take place by a sudden jerk automatically. Even the formation of plants on the earth surface is a slow process which starts with the struggle of seed to germinate beneath the soil, development of shoots and roots, emergence of shoots out of the soil, development of leaves, growth of a small plant to a big tree and bearing of fruits. This complete process of

reaching a plant life to its excellence and providing fruits and seeds is a complete cycle in itself which takes months and sometimes years to take place.

Sprinters with the record breaking run for example Usain Bolt did not just start running in the competition and won golds in olympics. To reach that excellence, a sprinter has to transform their body and muscles to the shape that may support them positively while running on the ground. It takes continuous practice and physical exercise to get that strength. People who think of getting instant success might get trapped in scandals such as drug intakes and found guilty in dopp tests. There is no substitute for hard work.

Today, technology has eased the human life to such a great extent that human is turning into a slave of his own idleness. The fast pace of life is making humans more anxious, restless and quick in terms of expectations of outcomes. Humans are losing patience and getting more attracted to the modes which may get him quick results. The fast pace of life is also changing the values of humans such as we are getting more negligent, less patient, less considerate etc. The compromise on values is making humans more result oriented and less excellence oriented. We focus more on creating demand and marketing through presenting ourselves excellent that we often forget the real excellence. In the race of getting success, we often forget that the quick success is not long lasting but the success which is achieved through hard work and patience is sustainable. The success which is achieved through focusing on excellence is the one which is more satisfying and fulfilling.

Excellent men and societies are compassionate, loving, caring, moral, ethical, honest and full of integrity. Such societies give space to everyone to grow and are based on equity. They support the aspirations of every individual to develop and contribute to society, where people assert their free will and understand their responsibility also. The ethical and moral values of the individual of such societies is the effort of progressive mindsets that struggle for ages to reach that level. Though an ideal society does not still exist, the constant human effort to reach that level of excellence is something that matters. Whether it is the #Meetoo or #blacklifematters, they all work towards achieving excellence towards equality and respect.

Moreover, the real motto of excellence is not always to achieve success rather it is to get the sense of accomplishment. So those who run behind success might not think about excellence but those who run behind excellence surely see success.

2. Attitude is a little thing that makes a big difference.

Attitude is a value, a trait, a perception, an outlook. It's an important attribute of human character as it decides our viewpoint of taking things, handling situations and influences our reactions towards everything that happens to us. Our Attitude impacts our life and relationship we make with the people and situations. Attitude decides the decisions we make in our life whether they are long term or short term decisions. It changes our perception towards life and events that happen to us. As Khalil Gibran also asserted, saying once, "Your living is determined not so much by what life brings to you as by the attitude you bring to life; not so much by what happens to you as by the way your mind looks at what happens." It asserts that whatever happens to our life does not occur by its own; instead our attitude plays a significant role in determining whatever happens to us.

Attitude could be positive or negative. People with positive attitudes are mostly optimists and see possibilities even in the darkest situation. Positive attitude brings hope and desire to not to get defeated in any circumstances. It motivates people to reach the destination they have chosen for their lives. People with a positive attitude believe in themselves which makes them consistent in their efforts. Such an individual's never lose hope and keep trying until they reach their destination. These people do not get demotivated irrespective of any situation and never let any difficulty defeat them. Stevie Wonder, who was blind from birth, has recorded more than thirty U.S. top ten hits and won twenty-two Grammy Awards, was able to achieve success due to his positive

outlook and attitude towards life. Positive attitude helps in building self-confidence, which makes people firm regarding their decisions. Such individuals do not get affected by the obstacles that might come their way, instead believe in the final destination by believing the philosophy of 'Manzil milegi, bhatak kar hi sahi, Gumrah to wo hai jo ghar se nikle hi nahi'. American President 'Abraham Lincoln's positive attitude filled him with such confidence that he admired the strength of his opponents but always believed in himself and never let other's achievements or intelligence take over him.

On the other hand, a negative attitude fills the mind with doubts and negatively affects our self-esteem. People get disheartened and lose hope easily. It compromises their confidence level and deter them from reaching their destination before even starting the journey. Negative attitude is the result of our experiences and perceptions. Multiple factors such as conditioning, surroundings, psychological factors, opportunities, shortcomings, values, spiritualism, family, teachers etc helps in the development of someone's attitude towards life and events. This is not something which develops overnight, sometimes a sequence of negative events also shapes negative attitudes in people. It leads to the mistrust in people and shakes their confidence. For example people might show a negative attitude towards government policies due to several incomplete earlier commitments.

Our attitude determines our behavior which in turn influences our actions. The prejudices and perceptions regarding things also shapes our attitude which in turn is reflected through our behavior and actions. While talking about women in Indian society the persisting sexual inequality and gender discrimination are the result of prejudices against her. She has been taken as a burden on the family due to the persisting dowry system which is given on her marriage. Earlier she was not allowed to remarry or also considered as a symbol of family honor. She was not allowed to marry with her own will. She was killed even before bringing to the world which give rise to the lower sex ratio in the country. The attitude of society towards women made and kept her subordinated against man. Even today, prejudices and perception against women stops her from getting equal salary for equal work. She is not considered to be fit for some of the most important posts in defense due to her physical appearance. She is body shamed for her overweight or underweightness. She is made to feel under psychological pressure due her dark complexion or her height. She is shamed for making her choice in terms of what she wears and how she carries herself. She is judged at every step in her life. These instances are the result of the attitude of society regarding women.

How and how much a society invests in science, technology, arts, literature is also influenced by her attitude towards achieving progressive society and an enlightened future for her youth. Educated and enlightened brains do not accept anything regressive and question it before adopting. Education has the power to change the perception and outlook of the people towards life. A society can become more progressive by focusing and investing on education. It makes people's attitude to become more rational, thoughtful and inquisitive. Aristotle said, "It is the mark of an educated mind to be able to entertain a thought without accepting it". Arts and literature connect people and societies. It is a great medium of communication and opens up channels for exchange of ideas between people from different communities and societies. Art has no religion. It comes from the heart of an artist and gets panned or brushed on sheets. Art never asks the religion or race of an artist. It has the magic of connecting people's thoughts and minds. Art knows no boundary. It transcends through boundaries of geography and time periods. It connects generations and opens up their minds and hearts towards becoming more together and tolerant.

Indeed Attitude is such a small part of our character but plays a significant role in determining and defining us. We may conquer Mount Everest or even fight a battle against fatal disease such as cancer just because of our positive attitude towards life. On the other hand, we may lose even the won situation due to our negative attitude and its attributes such as anger, pride, overconfidence, jealousy etc. In the story of 'The tortoise and the Hare', the positive attitude of

the tortoise kept her going even though the win of the Hare was sure. On the other hand, Hare lost the race due to overconfidence and pride. Our positive attitude can turn failures into success and the opposite attitude can turn the table. Positive attitude can be developed through values, positive conditioning, atmosphere to grow, equality, rationality and willingness to bring positive change.

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