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Q6

Our attitudes towards life, work, other people and society are generally shaped unconsciously by the family and the social surroundings in which we grow up. Some of these unconsciously acquired attitudes and values are often undesirable in the citizens of a modern democratic and egalitarian society. (a) Discuss such undesirable values prevalent in Today's educated Indians. (b) How can such undesirable attitudes be changed and socio-ethical values considered necessary in public services be cultivated in the aspiring and serving civil servants?

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2016 · GS IV · 12 marks · Attitude

Attitude: content, structure, function; its influence and relation with thought and behaviour; moral and political attitudes; social influence and persuasion.

Core demand of the question

- Our attitudes towards life, work, other people and society are generally shaped unconsciously by the family and the social surroundings in which we grow up. Some of these unconsciously acquired attitudes and values are often undesirable in the citizens of a modern democratic and egalitarian society. (a) Discuss such undesirable values prevalent in Today's educated Indians. (b) How can such undesirable attitudes be changed and socio-ethical values considered necessary in public services be cultivated in the aspiring and serving civil servants?

Revision summary

Attitudes are first learned at home and often survive a degree.

Undesirable patterns include status contempt, kin and caste preference, gender hierarchy, queue-jumping as cleverness, civic indifference and communal stereotype.

Public service needs integrity, impartiality, empathy, objectivity and **constitutional morality**.

Cultivate them through hard selection, case-based academies, upright mentors, mixed living, RTI and e-systems, mid-career ethics, and leadership example.

Slogans and cultural excuses do not delete the old software.

Introduction

Family and neighbourhood write the first software of attitude. Education does not automatically delete it. Part (a) names the unwanted files still running in many educated Indians. Part (b) asks how to rewrite them in people who seek or already hold public office.

Body**(a) Undesirable values among many educated Indians**

- **Status hunger:** degree and English as a caste of the classroom, with contempt for manual and care work.
- **Kin and caste preference:** a "good boy" is still often defined as one who helps his own, including in a hostel vote or a private job referral that shuts out a stranger.
- **Gendered hierarchy:** educated homes that fund a son's coaching and treat a daughter's job as optional, or that excuse domestic control as culture.
- **Soft corruption as cleverness:** a "contact" for a seat, a medical queue jump, a copied assignment - treated as smart, not as theft of another's turn.
- **Civic indifference:** litter, tax gossip, and outrage online without standing in a real queue or a real gram sabha.
- **Communal and stereotype thinking that survives a science degree:** the neighbour as a category, not a person.
- **Credential without curiosity:** marks as honour, and little respect for evidence when it hurts one's group.
- Consumer display and short-term success as the only worth, which makes public service look like a consolation prize unless it brings power.
- These are not the whole of educated India. They are common enough to damage an egalitarian Constitution if they walk into a collectorate.

(b) Changing attitudes and cultivating public-service values

- **Name the values the service actually needs:** integrity, impartiality, empathy, objectivity, courage, **constitutional morality**, and respect for the weakest stakeholder.
- **Selection:** the **Union Public Service Commission** interview and ethics paper can probe attitude, but one interview cannot rewire a life. Still, recorded integrity and a refusal of fake certificates must remain hard gates.
- Foundation training at the **Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration** and State academies must use live humiliation cases, village stays, and attachment with a poor petitioner, not only a lecture on the Preamble.
- **Mentoring:** the first boss teaches more than the academy. Posting a probationer with a known upright officer is a value tool.
- **Unlearning caste and gender:** mixed messes, equal leave, zero tolerance for sexist "jokes", and punishment for a caste slur, so that the old family software meets a new peer court.
- **Systems that make the old attitude expensive:** e-procurement, published queues, asset returns, the **Right to Information Act, 2005**, and rotation out of a captured desk.
- Counselling and 360-degree feedback, used honestly, can catch a brilliant officer who still treats the public as dirt.
- Mid-career training should return to ethics when power has already tempted the person, not only at age twenty-four.
- Family and society will keep pulling. Service identity - "I am a trustee, not my uncle's clerk" - has to be rehearsed until it is automatic.
- **Example over circular:** a secretary who stands in the same canteen line and refuses a festival gift does more than a mission statement.
- **For aspirants:** volunteer work with real accountability, not a certificate mill; reading **Ambedkar** and the Constituent Assembly on **constitutional morality**; and treating a mock test leak as a rehearsal of future graft.

What not to do

- Do not pretend a slogan or a yoga session has deleted caste contempt.

- Do not use "Indian culture" as a shield for dowry, untouchability-by-other-means, or a woman's unpaid labour.
- Do not train only in English polish; an egalitarian officer needs the language of the counter.

Flow diagram

Family and milieu -> Undesirable attitudes

Undesirable attitudes -> Status kin gender soft graft

Academy mentors systems example -> Integrity impartiality empathy

Integrity impartiality empathy -> Public service character

Conclusion

Educated India still carries status, kin bias, gender hierarchy, soft graft and civic shrug from the home. Public service needs the opposite software. Change it by selection that refuses fake integrity, training that humiliates the old contempt, mentors, systems that make bias costly, and bosses who live the code.

Facts & figures

Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration

The principal foundation academy for All India Services, where unlearning and value rehearsal must be designed as skill, not poster.

Union Public Service Commission

The constitutional recruiter; integrity of examination and interview is the first public-service value test for aspirants.

Constitutional morality (Ambedkar)

The habit of respecting the Constitution's procedures and equal citizenship even when social morality pulls the other way.

Right to Information Act, 2005

A system that makes kin-and-contact government visible and therefore costlier.

Central Civil Services (Conduct) Rules, 1964

The enforceable reminder that private "cleverness" can be conduct unbecoming in office.

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