

1. What do you understand by the cognitive component of attitude? Explain with the help of suitable examples.

Introduction

Attitudes are views, beliefs, or evaluations of people about something (the attitude object). The attitude object can be a person, place, thing, ideology, or an event. Attitudes can be positive or negative. Thus attitude is subjective individual interpretation of objective outside world.

Body

Cognitive component of attitude

The cognitive component of attitudes refers to the beliefs, thoughts, and attributes that we would associate with an object. It is the opinion or belief segment of an attitude. It refers to that part of attitude which is related in general knowledge of a person. This component of attitude is the product of deliberate thoughts, interpretations and rationality.

Cognitive component consists of following elements:

- Knowledge about target object
- Awareness about other's opinion about that object
- Overall societal opinion about that object
- Awareness of societal expectations as to how the attitude towards that object be.

Suppose a person sees a snake. In this case cognitive component of his attitudes would be as follows:

- His knowledge that a few snakes are dangerous and a few are not.
- That there are some persons who treat snakes as an integral part of biodiversity
- Society regards it as Nagdevtha
- A person is supposed to worship but not kill the snake. All these determine how s/he interprets the sight of snake.

Suppose an SDM/Sub-collector holds a meeting with leaders of two religious communities to avoid a communal clash. In this case, cognitive component of attitude of SDM towards religious communities involves

- Awareness about the past behavior of given religious communities
- Readings about communal clashes elsewhere in the country
- Stereotypes about the religious communities and their leaders
- his/her personal past experience in dealing with religious leaders

All these factors collectively determine the cognitive component of an SDM's attitude.

Suppose DC/DM wants to make his District Open defecation free, then cognitive component of attitude of DC/DM involves

- Awareness about clean environment and need of it to make his district ODF

- Reading about other Districts which became open defecation free
- His personal experiences in dealing about open defecation which spreads diseases like Cholera, Diarrhea.

All these factors collectively determine the cognitive component of a DC/DM's attitude.

Suppose a person wants to vote to a political party his/her Cognitive component deals knowledge, thoughts and associated interpretations, newspaper reports, political manifestos, coffee table discussions, grapevine and other such media, a person develops some conscious opinions about political ideologies and implementation mechanisms. Whenever a conservative political party captures power, a person opines that it would set development targets that are just over the target of previous year. Similarly, an individual would think that a leftist party would tighten labor regulation. These cognitive components drive person to vote to particular political party.

Conclusion

“Attitude decides one’s Altitude” .Our attitude is what influences all our actions. Attitude can be understood as the factor that shapes our goals. It also corresponds to how to perceive, view and approach the different aspects of life. Attitudes speak of an individual's personality. Constructive or right attitudes make a strong and commendable personality, while destructive or wrong attitudes make a weak and deplorable personality. It is only the right attitude, which gets us good results.

2. What are the adaptive functions of one’s attitude? Illustrate.

Introduction

An attitude is "a relatively enduring organization of beliefs, feelings, and behavioral tendencies towards socially significant objects, groups, events or symbols". Adaptive functions refer to those skills that are necessary for us to navigate through the demands that are placed on us by our environments in a way that is effective.

Body

Adaptation means adjustment. Adaptive functions of one’s attitude includes the ability to work, practice social skills, and take personal responsibility. Thus, attitudes enable a person to adjust to the outside environment. To elaborate, it helps a person to modify his traits, actions to suit the needs of outside environment. If a person holds and/or expresses socially acceptable attitudes, other people will reward them with approval and social acceptance. Attitudes then, are to do with being a part of a social group and the adaptive functions help us fit in with a social group. People seek out others who share their attitudes, and develop similar attitudes to those they like.

Illustration

- Attitudes often help people to adjust to their work environment. When employees are well treated, they are likely to develop a positive attitude towards management and the organization. When employees are criticized and given a minimal salary, they are likely to develop a negative attitude towards management and the organization. These attitudes help employees adjust to their environment and are a basis for future behavior. The adjustment function directs people towards pleasurable or rewarding objects and away from unpleasant, undesirable ones. It serves the utilitarian concept of maximizing reward and minimizing punishment.
- Suppose I shift to other country for temporarily due to my job demand, the country where I shift is almost non-veg consumers I being a vegetarian it will be hard to find vegetarian food there. In that case if I detest with non-veg food then I have to live on empty stomach. Here my attitude will be in conflict with the needs of the outside environment. Here I need to change my attitude thinking that there is nothing wrong in eating non-vegetarian food and in fact non-veg food will be tastier, then only I can adopt to that environment.

Conclusion

The most important function of an attitude can only be ascertained by considering it in relation to the person who holds it and the environment in which they operate. Consequently, what is apparently the same attitude may serve rather different purposes depending on who holds it and where/when it becomes salient to them.

3. What are your views on homosexuality? Is it immoral?

Introduction

Homosexuality refer's to both attraction or sexual behavior between people of the same sex, or to a sexual orientation. Homosexuality is contrasted with heterosexuality, bisexuality and asexuality. Most scientists today agree that sexual orientation is most likely the result of a complex interaction of environmental, cognitive and biological factors.

Body

- The term 'homosexuality' was coined in the late 19th century by a German psychologist, Karoly Maria Benkert. Although the term is new, discussions about sexuality in general, and same-sex attraction in particular, have occurred since ancient times to contemporary period. Conventional wisdom in the west has held homosexuality as immoral behaviour and in India, the influence of Victorian morality led to immorality being attached to homosexuality.
- Broader currents in society have influenced the ways in which scholars and activists have approached sexuality and same-sex attraction. During early 20th century, people seeking to vindicate same-sex relations in societies that

disparaged and criminalized it, put forward lists of famous historical figures attracted to persons of the same sex.

- At the same time, society in modern times has tried to suppress non-heterosexuality as a threat towards established social order. This led to stigma being associated with homosexuality in the form of it being considered a mental illness. Such a scenario necessitates better understanding of homosexuality in the society.
- Sexual orientation is distinct from other components of sex and gender, including biological sex (the anatomical, physiological and genetic characteristics associated with being male or female), gender identity (the psychological sense of being male or female) and social gender role (the cultural norms that define feminine and masculine behavior).
- There is no consensus among scientists about the exact reasons that an individual develops a heterosexual, bisexual, gay or lesbian orientation. Many think that nature and nurture both play complex roles; most people experience little or no sense of choice about their sexual orientation.
- Moreover, although homosexuality does not appear to be adaptive from an evolutionary standpoint, because homosexual sex does not produce children, there is evidence of its existence through human history.
- Furthermore, irrespective of one's sexual preference, every human has a natural right towards a dignified life in society free from prejudice and discrimination.
- The contestations with regards to homosexuality have led to questions about its morality. Morality is a set of beliefs and practices concerned with what is understood as good and evil by an individual.

Following factors can be considered while attaching morality to homosexuality-

- Scientific evidence shows that, in many cases, people don't choose their sexual orientations—it is in their natures to prefer sexual relations with members of the same sex, members of the opposite sex, or both. It is morally right for people to act in accordance with their natures, whether heterosexual, homosexual, or anything in-between.
- Recently, homosexuality has been decriminalised in India. Thus, constitutional morality holds that homosexuality is moral.
- Homosexuality is normal because it is as natural as heterosexuality and bisexuality and thus are just modes of healthy sexuality.
- Immorality of homosexuality is attached by some due to its deviation from natural order of procreation.
- Further, homosexuality is also seen against established order of society where man-woman relation forms basis of family system.

Conclusion

In complex interface of human relations, sexual orientation per se is neither moral nor immoral where the relevant issue is whether, given a person's orientation, he approaches his choice in a rational, self-interested, rights-respecting manner rather than under the pressure of external forces.

4. What inferences can you draw about the political attitude of the middle class on the basis of the results of the last General Elections held in India?

Introduction

Political attitude refers to the attitude and beliefs of common citizen about the political system, related institutions, leadership and other events of public life. Political attitude of citizens determines their voting pattern. The latest General Election results too reveal the political attitude of citizens.

Body

Inferences about the political attitude of the middle class:

The last held general election was different from any other held in India in the sense that for this election, the ruling party as well as the opposition were in serious election mode for almost four years before it was held. The middle class which comprise almost 2/3rd of the population played a decisive role in the final results. It can be inferred that

- **Leadership:** The election was majorly fought in the name of the Prime Minister candidate. The 2 previous general elections showed that the middle class prefer a strong leader with international credibility. Further, Survey report states that, majority of middle-class youth voted for the winning party. It reveals that the youth prefer an experienced, strong and credible leader who can take bold decisions.
- **Image and credibility:** PM candidate with an image of an honest and a Hindu nationalist leader influenced political attitude of middle class. E.g. campaigns like 'Main Bhi Chowkidar' were a great success.
- **Religion:** Fortunately/Unfortunately as Gandhiji has said religion is always mixed with politics. The issues like Ayodhya, Sabarimala, Triple Talaq played a major role in influencing the political attitude of the middle class. This can be seen in increased presence of ruling party in states like Kerala and several constituencies of UP with Muslim majority.
- **Administration:** The major influence is the absence of corruption or major scandals which built credibility of ruling party positively impacting the middle class who are the most affected by inefficient administration.
- **Nationalism:** The strong leadership with befitting replies to incidents like Pulwama bolstered the image of the government which played a major role on middle classes favoring the ruling party. It was also inferred, in spite of unemployment rate being 45 year high (affecting middle classes), farmer distress being worrying – they were over-ridden by the nationalist issues.

- Psychological factor: the rise of right-wing politics is on the rise not only in India but in the entire world. To an extent, the Hindu nationalism worked for the winning party in several states and it reveals the middle-class political attitude towards rightist issues as affirmative.
- Women: the steps taken towards women empowerment which includes various women centered schemes as well as political empowerment with Women defence minister, external affairs minister etc., helped influencing the middle-class women in favor of the winning party.

Conclusion

The needs, aspirations and ambitions of middle class is changing which is also influencing the political attitude. At the same time, issues vis-à-vis religion, nationalism has and will always play a major role. However, it can definitely be inferred that the issues of employment, economic growth, efficient administration are taking the main-seat which is influencing political attitude of middle class.

5. What is your perception of left wing politics? Do you think left wing politics is dying a natural death today? Discuss.

Introduction

Political parties are voluntary associations or organized groups of individuals who share the same political views and who try to gain political power through constitutional means and who desire to work for promoting the national integration. On the basis of ideologies the radical parties, which aims at establishing a new order by overthrowing the existing institution, are the left wing parties eg, CPI ,CPM in India.

Body

- When compared to other democracies, India has had a large number of political parties during its history under democratic governance. It has been estimated that over 200 parties were formed after India became independent in 1947. Leadership of political parties in India is commonly interwoven with well-known families whose dynastic leaders actively play the dominant role in a party.
- The Left movement had and still has two strands: the social democratic or socialist stream, and the communist stream. This is the same whether in Europe or India or America. The Communist parties of China, India, Europe, Cuba, Vietnam etc were all inspired by the Soviet revolution led by Lenin. On the other hand, the Social democratic party of Germany, Labour party of Britain, Socialist parties in Europe, Indian National Congress in India etc come under the Socialist camp.
- Left-wing politics supports social equality and egalitarianism, often in opposition to social hierarchy. It typically involves a concern for those in society whom its adherents perceive as disadvantaged relative to others as

well as a belief that there are unjustified inequalities that need to be reduced or abolished.

Left wing politics is dying a natural death today

- In the Indian context, in 1952, in the first general election after Independence, the undivided CPI had 22 seats. The CPI won 33 seats in 1957 as well as in 1962.
- But in the just-concluded 2019 polls, the CPI(M) won three seats, while the Communist Party of India (CPI) bagged two.
- The Left's early electoral success was very much due to the land reforms it undertook in the states of Kerala, West Bengal, Tripura which put an end to feudal practices in agriculture. The reforms were indeed widely popular among the general public, especially peasants, but they didn't reach everyone that they should have.
- The Naxalbari uprising was a harbinger of what was to come: the parties within the Left Front led by the CPI(M) steadily moved away from the political ideals they purported to espouse and embraced electoral politics for the sake of staying in power.
- Example: CPI(M) leaders, such as former Chief Minister of West Bengal Buddhadeb Bhattacharjee, increasingly grew friendly towards big corporations, changing tax policies in their favour and welcoming the implementation of anti-worker legislation such as the Special Economic Zones (SEZ) Act introduced by the central government.
- On matters of national importance, the Left Front has also failed to live up to its own ideological standards. In 2006-2007, it publicly opposed the US-India nuclear deal, arguing that it went against India's national interests; yet leaked cables published by WikiLeaks showed that CPI(M) members told US officials that the party would not oppose a related bill in parliament.
- On the Kashmir issue, the Left Front has also displayed remarkable hypocrisy; rhetorically, it has criticised brutal crackdowns on civilians, but in effect, it has not recognised Kashmiris' aspirations for self-determination.

Left wing politics is not dying

- As for the CPI(M), after several years' hesitation, it opted to further its ideological agenda by playing the game of reformism and parliamentary democracy. It won the 1977 elections and went on to govern West Bengal continuously within a Left Front whose greatest political achievements were substantial land reform and strong decentralization.
- In Kerala, where power alternated between the Left Front and a Congress-dominated coalition, the CPI(M)'s main victory was high human development in the state.
- In the global context, the classic example of the Left getting strengthened against the Right is in the United States, where Republican (Left wing in US) Donald Trump defeated its main opponent in the US Hilary Clinton, a Democrat.

- Despite the losses, Though the CPI and the CPI(M) — and their smaller partners, the Forward Bloc and the Revolutionary Socialist Party — were nowhere close to the ruling parties when it came to numbers in Parliament, they were largely treated with respect.

Conclusion

The left-wing politics is imperative in Indian politics today, as this alone will help balance the right-wing offensive which has posed a serious threat to the secular, democratic order. If the Indian left is to come back on the political scene, it would have to come from the grassroots, particularly from landless peasants, tribals and lower castes. They are the most oppressed classes in the Indian context and yet the most resilient and rebellious as well.

