**Q.1) "In contemporary politics, identity often overrides ideology as the primary driver of political attitudes." Discuss. (150 words, 10 marks)**

**Introduction**

Identity is one's sense of belonging based on traits like religion, caste, or ethnicity. Ideology is a set of political beliefs and values. Today, identity often shapes political attitudes more strongly than ideology.

**Body**

**Political attitudes shaped more by identity**

*"As Amartya Sen noted, 'Identity can be a source of pride but also a prison'.*

1. **Identity drives loyalty** :  Caste, religion, or region often define political alignment.
   Example: Caste voting patterns in Bihar elections.

2. **Emotion beats reason** : Identity-linked emotions like pride or fear distort rational choice.
   Example:  Nationalism dominating economic debates in 2019 elections.

3. **Leaders exploit divisions**:  Politicians mobilise identity narratives to deflect accountability.
   Example:  Communal overtones during Delhi riots controversy.

4. **Media reinforces echo chambers** :  Algorithms fuel identity-based content bubbles.
   Example:  Social media polarisation during CAA protests.

5. **Socialisation embeds identity early** :  Children inherit identity-based affiliations before political awareness.
   Example:  Family-based party loyalty in rural India.

**Enduring relevance of ideology**

1. **Ideology appeals to urban voters** : Educated youth favour issue-based politics.
   Example:  Bengaluru's youth backing climate-focused candidates.

2. **Ideologies mobilise reform** : Movements need ideological vision to sustain.
   Example:  Leftist ideology in Kerala's land reforms.

3. **Civic education promotes ideology** : Awareness helps citizens shift focus from identity.
   Example:  Kerala's civic literacy aiding issue-based politics.

## Conclusion

Though identity often dominates, but ideology remains vital where civic awareness is strong. A healthy democracy must move beyond identity traps. A balanced democracy demands a conscious shift from emotive identity politics to informed ideological participation.

**Q.2) In the era of digital technologies, persuasion has evolved into a highly sophisticated and pervasive tool. Critically analyse how social influence operates in the digital age, especially its role in shaping public opinion, political behaviour, and social norms. (150 words, 10 marks)**

## Introduction

Persuasion is the act of influencing others' attitudes, beliefs, or behaviours. In the digital age, it has become more complex and far-reaching, with social media and algorithms amplifying social influence and shaping public opinion, politics, and norms.

*Marshall McLuhan once remarked, "The medium is the message."*

## Body

**Positive aspects of Social Influence**

1. **Access for all:** Social media platforms democratise opinion-making by amplifying voices across class and geography.

   Example: #MeToo began with individual stories and grew into a global movement.

2. **Movement mobilisation:** Hashtags and viral content catalyse mass mobilisation and protest participation.

   Example: Farmers' protests drew strength from online solidarity and coordination.

3. **Global idea exchange:** Online platforms globalise reformist ideas, inspiring youth activism across borders.

   Example: Greta Thunberg's climate protests influenced school movements in India.

4. **Participatory governance:** Governments use digital tools for direct citizen engagement in policy feedback.

   Example: Delhi's Mohalla Sabhas integrated online consultation methods.

5. **Behavioural nudging:** Digital campaigns subtly shift user behaviour towards socially desirable outcomes.

   Example: Swachh Bharat used online ads and reminders to promote sanitation habits.

**Negative Aspects of Digital Social Influence**

1. **Echo chambers:** Algorithms feed users content that confirms bias, deepening ideological divides.

   Example: Election periods often see users trapped in one-sided information loops.

2. **Data-driven propaganda:** Microtargeting via user data enables manipulative political advertising.

   Example: Cambridge Analytica shaped US voter behaviour through psychometric targeting.

3. **Fake news virality:** False information spreads faster than corrections, harming public understanding.

   Example: Fake COVID-19 remedies went viral before being debunked.

4. **Hidden interests:** Influencers may unknowingly promote agendas that mislead audiences.

   Example: Scam investment apps gained trust through popular endorsements.

5. **Peer conformity:** Likes and shares pressure users to conform to dominant online narratives.

   Example: Online outrage and cancel culture silence dissenting opinions.

## Conclusion

Digital persuasion is a double-edged sword—while it empowers and connects, it can just as easily polarise and manipulate. The way forward lies in digital literacy, stronger content accountability grounded in transparency and public welfare.

**Q.3) Differentiate between aptitude and moral competence. In the context of public service, Critically evaluate which one plays a more decisive role in ensuring ethical and effective governance. (150 words, 10 marks)**

## Introduction

Aptitude is the ability to perform tasks efficiently, while moral competence is the capacity to act ethically. In public service, both are vital, but their impact on ethical and effective governance differs significantly.

## Body

**Differentiation between Aptitude and Moral Competence**

1. **Capability vs. Conscience:** Aptitude is cognitive ability; moral competence guides ethical decisions with empathy and integrity.

   **Example:** Dr. Bindeshwar Pathak showed aptitude in innovation and moral strength in uplifting sanitation workers.

2. **How to act vs. Whether to act:** Aptitude finds efficient methods; moral competence filters them through ethical judgment.

   **Example:** A Telangana officer stopped a highway project harming tribal land despite pressure.

3. **Can be taught vs. Must be nurtured:** Aptitude is trainable; moral competence stems from personal values and upbringing.

   **Example:** Schools teach aptitude, but moral clarity grows from family and internal ethics.

4. **Performance vs. Principles:** Aptitude boosts outcomes; moral competence ensures outcomes serve public good.

   **Example:** Aruna Roy used both bureaucratic skill and ethical vision to strengthen RTI.


**Moral competence plays the more decisive role**

1. **Protects democracy:** It ensures governance is just, fair, and rooted in public interest.
   **Example:** E. Sreedharan maintained transparency while leading the Delhi Metro project.

2. **Restrains power misuse:** Moral compass prevents corruption and authoritarian tendencies.
   **Example:** Kiran Bedi upheld ethical policing even under political strain.

3. **Provides clarity in grey zones:** Ethics fill gaps where law and rules fall short.
   **Example:** An Odisha collector resisted forced displacement of tribal communities.

4. **Inspires servant leadership:** Moral competence places people before power and ego.
   **Example:** Dr. Verghese Kurien built institutions serving farmers, not profit.

5. **Builds long-term trust:** Ethical governance earns public confidence and legitimacy.
   **Example:** Raghuram Rajan prioritized reform over populism at the RBI.

6. **Balances empathy with efficiency:** It ensures human impact is factored into decisions.
   **Example:** A Kerala IAS officer paused evictions during floods to protect the poor.

**Conclusion**

*As Theodore Roosevelt said, "To educate a person in the mind but not in morals is to educate a menace to society."* **Moral competence is ultimately more decisive, as it upholds justice, trust, and the soul of ethical governance.**

**Q.4) Identify eight essential values that are needed to be an effective public servant. Describe the ways and means to prevent non-ethical behavior in the public servants. (150 words, 10 marks)**

**Introduction**

The 2nd ARC rightly observed that while rules dictate actions, values inspire integrity; they are the moral compass of effective public service and democratic governance.

**Body**

**Eight Essential Values for Public Servants**

**1. Integrity:** Remaining honest and incorruptible preserves public trust in institutions.

Example: Raju Narayanaswamy (IAS) exposed corruption despite facing repeated transfers.

**2. Empathy:** Understanding citizens' struggles leads to inclusive and humane policies.

Example: Sreedhanya Suresh (IAS), from a tribal background, champions social equity.

**3. Accountability:** Owning decisions enhances transparency and institutional reliability.

Example: P. Narahari (IAS) resolved grievances directly via social media.

**4. Impartiality:** Acting without prejudice upholds fairness and institutional neutrality.

Example: Prakash Singh (IPS) advocated police reforms free from political bias.

**5. Selflessness:** Serving people selflessly ensures equitable development.

Example: S. R. Sankaran (IAS) worked tirelessly for Dalits and tribal welfare.

**6. Transparency:** Visible procedures reduce scope for arbitrary or corrupt practices.

Example: Tukaram Mundhe (IAS) made civic finances open to public scrutiny.

**7. Compassion:** Administering with humanity reinforces the dignity of all stakeholders.

Example: Harsh Mander left IAS to serve the homeless and marginalised.

**8. Moral Courage:** Taking ethical stands despite pressure safeguards public interest.

Example: Rajni Sekhri Sibal (IAS) exposed the Haryana recruitment scam.

**Ways to Prevent Non-Ethical Behaviour**

**1. Ethical codes and training:** Formal guidelines and case-based modules shape moral reasoning.

Example: LBSNAA uses real-life dilemmas to train officers in ethics.

**2. Whistleblower protection:** Legal safeguards encourage reporting without fear of reprisal.

Example: Satyendra Dube (IES) exposed NHAI corruption despite threats to life.

**3. Transparent HR processes:** Merit-based recruitment and promotion block nepotism and bias.

Example: UPSC's anonymised evaluation upholds fairness in civil service selection.

**4. Media and public scrutiny:** External vigilance ensures greater accountability and discipline.

Example: Parveen Kaswan (IFS) uses social media for public engagement.

**5. Institutional oversight:** Lokpal and Lokayuktas bring legal checks on public functionaries.

Example: Karnataka Lokayukta exposed major mining scams and corruption.

**6. Citizen charters and standards:** Setting benchmarks boosts service delivery and trust.

Example: e-Mitra under Sevottam in Rajasthan improved efficiency and feedback.

**Conclusion**

A values-driven bureaucracy, bound by ethics and accountability, transforms governance into justice. Public trust thrives when moral conviction backs public action—making civil service a guardian of democratic ideals.


**Q.5)** "**Nearly all men can stand adversity, but if you want to test a man's character, give him power.**" **Discuss the role of integrity in governance in light of this statement. (150 words, 10 marks)**

**Introduction**

Power reveals a person's true nature more than adversity does. While many can endure hardships, how one uses power reflects their character. In governance, this makes integrity a crucial quality for ethical leadership.

**Body**

**The True Test of Character Lies in Power**

- Power exposes true values, as individuals are free to act without external pressure.

- Unlike adversity, power offers control—revealing whether one chooses self-interest or public good.
- Integrity in power ensures just, accountable, and ethical governance.

  Example: An IAS officer in Maharashtra returned a bribe sent home and reported it instead of ignoring it.

**Role of Integrity in Governance**

1. **Ensures fair decisions:** Integrity allows neutrality and guards against bias or pressure.

   Example: Pranjal Patil (IAS) upheld impartial decisions despite adversity and disability.

2. **Builds public trust:** Ethical conduct assures citizens of transparency and institutional honesty.

   Example: RTI implementation raised accountability across multiple states.

3. **Prevents corruption:** Integrity shields officers from bribes, coercion, and shortcuts.

   Example: A Kerala vigilance officer exposed rigged PWD tenders despite threats.

4. **Sets cultural tone:** Honest leaders inspire ethical behaviour across the system.

   Example: Ethical conduct by State ECs improved transparency in local elections.

5. **Guides tough choices:** In complex dilemmas, integrity anchors decisions in justice.

   Example: Justice H.R. Khanna's dissent during Emergency defended constitutional rights.

**Conclusion**

Power unveils who we are—in public service, integrity ensures power serves, not corrupts.

*"In looking for people to hire, you look for three qualities: integrity, intelligence, and energy. And if they don't have the first, the other two will kill you."- Warren Buffet.*