



Mains Practice Question

Q. Explain the term moral intuition and differentiate between intuition and reasoning with suitable examples. (150 Words)

03 Mar, 2022 GS Paper 4 Theoretical Questions

Approach

- Explain the meaning of moral intuition with examples
- Define the meaning of intuition and reasoning
- Differentiate between the two with examples

Answer

Moral intuition refers to the psychological process that involves an instant feeling of approval or disapproval about a social event, person or ideas. It does not involve reasoning but is based on feelings, thoughts, and attitudes. We all possess such intuitions, which when encounters a scenario, generates opinion based on our preconceived notions of morality. For example - Mahatma Gandhi on his visit to Kalighat temple in Kolkata lamented animal sacrifice on the basis of his moral intuition.

Moral intuitions are highly subjective and depend upon a person's ethical dispositions. In the above example, animal sacrifice was morally repugnant for Mahatma Gandhi but for devotees, it was a religious ritual.

Intuition and Reasoning

Intuition and reasoning refer to two kinds of cognition that help us in making decisions about a wide range of issues in daily life. While reasoning occurs slowly, requires some effort and involves at least some steps that are accessible to consciousness, intuition largely occurs quickly, effortlessly and automatically, such that the mental process is not discernible.

The difference between the two could also be understood by Nobel Laureate Daniel Kahneman's dichotomous division of human cognition into System 1 and System 2. He theorizes that System 1 is impulsive and involves actions that are carried out without any second thought, while System 2 constitutes deliberative and rational actions.

Activities like driving, playing sports, investment in shares, etc. are examples of the intuitive functions of the brain because they require quick judgment and response. Other activities like writing, debating and strategizing needs deliberative mental exercise. However, there are some actions performed by specialists that mandate the use of both intuitive as well as deliberative faculties of human cognition, for example, a doctor diagnosing diseased patients or football players discussing a game plan

