



Be Mains Ready

How could influence and persuasion contribute to desirable social and economic change in the country? (250 words)

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Approach / Explanation / Answer

Approach

- Introduce the answer by using a quote.
- Briefly explain persuasion and social influence.
- Using examples explain their contribution to bringing change in social and economic fields.
- Give a way forward.

Answer

- As famously said by **Plato** - "**What is honoured in a country is cultivated there.**"
- The above statement of Plato gave an insight into the importance of behaviour in bringing the desirable change.
- Indian society is **behavioural driven** where social and religious norms play a dominant role in shaping the **individual** as well as **societal behaviour** which further drives the social and economic change in the country.
- **Persuasion** and **influence** are behavioural tactics that influence an audience intentionally to encourage them to adopt an idea, attitude or course of action by symbolic means utilizing words, images, sounds etc, as people's actions are greatly influenced by other people in their environment. **Let us analyse the role of persuasion and influence in bringing social and economic change with the help of the examples:**
- For encouraging gender equality and tackling the menace of declining sex ratio, the government launched the **Beti Bachao Beti Pado (BBBP)** scheme which had used the behavioural tactics of persuasion and influence **by associating famous personalities with the campaign.**
 - The scope of the scheme can be further enlarged to accommodate the idea of **BADLAV (Beti Aapki Dhan Laxmi Aur Vijay Laxmi)** to represent change toward gender equality and further reap the benefits.
- Similarly, **wildlife conservation** can be promoted by emotionally associating people with them by highlighting their mythological significance. For eg: **Tiger** as the **vehicle** of **Goddess Durga**.
- For **Economic change**, it is essential to modify the social norm from '**evading taxes is acceptable**' to '**paying taxes honestly is honourable**'. This can be achieved by periodically informing people about neighbours or people living around paying taxes honestly or **public**

shaming of eligible individuals who do not pay taxes.

- If leakages and targeting errors from welfare schemes are eliminated, a lot of economic resources can be productively used for growth. '**Give it Up**' scheme where people from **upper poverty line** were motivated to give up their LPG subsidy, has greatly influenced the societal outlook and thus paving the way for a more **just society**.
 - The base of the scheme can be further broadened by advertising and circulating the videos of the people who gave up subsidy or organising pledge ceremonies on special occasions, so as to motivate others and reinforce this feeling.

Therefore, **persuasion** and **social influence** are dynamic tools that holds a huge potential in a country like India with abnormally large rural background shackled in the age old traditions. If creatively used, they can change the whole social and economic scenario in the country.

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