



## Mains Practice Question

**Q.** Examine the role of social influence and persuasion in the successful management of any pandemic. (150 Words)

31 Dec, 2021 GS Paper 4 Theoretical Questions

### Approach

- Define social influence and persuasion
- Discuss its significance in society
- Examine the role of social influence and persuasion in the successful management of a pandemic
- Give a brief conclusion

### Answer

Our thoughts and actions are influenced by other people, whether we are passively observing their behavior or actively complying with their requests. Persuasion is a form of social influence in which someone is intentionally encouraged to adopt an idea, attitude, or course of action by symbolic means.

Social influence is the change in behavior that one person causes in another, intentionally or unintentionally, as a result of the way the changed person perceives themselves in relationship to the influencer, other people, and society in general.

Conformity, compliance, and obedience are the three essential components of social influence. Conformity and obedience enable a sense of cohesion within a society. It also promotes cooperation and norm orientation in any society.

Social influence and persuasion play an important role in attitude change and behaviour and it works as an agent of change during a crisis like the Covid 19 pandemic. For example, Social media, print media, and visual media appeal by celebrities and leaders can help in improving hygiene habits during Covid 19 infection in India. Persuasion and social influence can be used to encourage people to donate to charitable causes, to volunteer to distribute food, and to engage in healthy behaviors. It also helps in curbing rumours through community and social support.

Social influence and persuasion create an effective communication channel between the public and the government. In the time of any pandemic, it can help in the successful management of the crisis.

Sometimes emotional appeals and messages and advertisements that are framed in a way that suggests that certain behavior can harm the self, as well as the family members, are more effective.

E.g. Emotional appeal by Prime Minister Narendra Modi to stay at home during lockdown and police personnel dressed as Yamraj and coronavirus in public.

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