



Mains Practice Question

Q. What does this quote convey to you in the present context -

“The superior man is modest in his speech but exceeds in his actions.” – Confucius (150 Words)

16 May, 2024 GS Paper 4 Theoretical Questions

Approach

- Introduce the essence of the quote briefly.
- Elaborate upon the quote with a special focus on keywords like: ‘modest in his speech’, and ‘exceeds in his actions’
- Discuss the relevance of the quote in today’s society.
- Conclude Suitably.

Introduction

Confucius, a Chinese philosopher, offers a valuable insight into ethical conduct with this quote. It conveys the idea that a truly admirable and virtuous person (the "superior man") demonstrates humility and restraint in their words but is distinguished by their actions. In the present context, this can be interpreted as a call for integrity, where one's deeds speak louder than their words.

Body

- **Modesty in Speech:**
 - **Humility:** Boasting about intentions or achievements undermines genuine accomplishment. True nobility lies in **quiet confidence** and **understated pride**.
 - **Thoughtful Communication:** Leaders who are modest in speech take time to consider the impact of their words. They choose clarity and conciseness over empty pronouncements.
 - **Example:** Nelson Mandela, after spending 27 years imprisonment, he emerged from prison as a global icon. Yet, he remained grounded, signifying reconciliation and collective effort in rebuilding South Africa. His focus was on action, not self-promotion.
- **Exceeding in Actions:**
 - **Results-Oriented:** A superior leader prioritizes achieving positive outcomes. They translate words into concrete actions that benefit the greater good.
 - **Integrity:** Actions speak louder than words. Ethical leaders ensure their actions align with their stated values and commitments.
 - **Example:** Mother Teresa's life exemplifies exceeding in actions. She dedicated herself to serving the poorest of the poor, her actions reflecting a deep commitment to compassion and social justice.
- **Relevance in the Present Ethical Context:**
 - In today's fast-paced, image-conscious world, Confucius' message remains relevant. Social media platforms can be breeding grounds for self-promotion and empty pronouncements. With the rise of social media platforms like Instagram, and Facebook Confucius's message is more important than ever.

- People who are modest in their pronouncements and focus on delivering results foster trust and inspire confidence.
- Leaders who over-promise and under-deliver erode public trust. Focusing on public perception through rhetoric without taking concrete action undermines ethical leadership.

Conclusion

Confucius's quote reminds us that true leadership lies in action, not mere words. It's a call for ethical leaders who prioritize results, value humility, and translate their vision into tangible benefits for the people they serve. By embodying these principles, leaders can navigate the complexities of the present and build a more just and equitable future

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