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Q8(b)

Human development approach affirms that education and health-care growth are more important than economic growth. Discuss this issue in the light of post-liberalized Indian society.

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2015 · Sociology GS 2 · 15 marks · Perspectives on the study of Indian society

Perspectives on the study of Indian society: Indology (G.S. Ghurye); Structural functionalism (M.N. Srinivas); Marxist sociology (A.R. Desai).

Core demand of the question

- Human development approach affirms that education and health-care growth are more important than economic growth. Discuss this issue in the light of post-liberalized Indian society
- Use [Amartya Sen](#), HD reports, and Indian outcomes

Revision summary

Human development ranks education and health as ends, growth as means.

Sen and Haq made this the policy language of capabilities.

Liberalisation delivered growth and a private social market.

The poor still face weak public school and clinic systems.

India's post-1991 record supports HD caution, not growth-alone.

Introduction

The human development approach, after Mahbub ul Haq and [Amartya Sen](#), treats education and health as freedoms that growth may miss. Post-liberalised India grew fast in GDP and unevenly in those freedoms.

Body

The claim

- Income is a means. Literacy, longevity, and dignity are the ends. [Kerala](#)'s earlier path was the Indian exhibit.
- Growth without capability leaves informal workers, Adivasis, and women as Sen's unfreedoms.

Post-1991 India

- Liberalisation expanded private hospitals and schools. This raised options for the middle class and raised exclusion for those without cash, a Beteille disharmony in social policy.
- Public health and government school quality often lagged even as software and malls grew.
- Nutrition, anaemia, and learning outcomes showed that growth was not automatically human development.

Balance

- Growth can fund teachers and clinics. The approach says sequence and public provision matter more than trickle.

Flow diagram

Post-1991 growth -> Private school hospital
Education health capability -> Freedom
Post-1991 growth -> uneven Education health capability

Conclusion

- **Post-liberal India confirms the HD claim:** growth is not enough when education and health remain class goods. The republic still needs public capability, not only a larger GDP.

Facts & figures

Amartya Sen

Capability approach: what people can be and do, not only what they earn.

Kerala

High HD with modest early growth, used as an Indian contrast case.

1991 reforms

Liberalisation that raised growth and privatised much social consumption.

ASER / NFHS type findings

Learning and nutrition lags that GDP headlines do not erase.

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