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Q7(a)

"Instead of promoting equality in society , the present system of education itself has contributed to increased socio economic disparities" Comment .

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2022 · Sociology GS 2 · 20 marks · Challenges of Social Transformation

Challenges of Social Transformation: Crisis of development: displacement, environmental problems and sustainability; Poverty, deprivation and inequalities; Violence against women; Caste conflicts; Ethnic conflicts, communalism, religious revivalism; Illiteracy and disparities in education.

Core demand of the question

- "Instead of promoting equality in society, the present system of education itself has contributed to increased socio economic disparities" Comment

Revision summary

Private English and weak government tracks sort children by class.

Credentials and coaching convert money into apparent merit.

Caste networks and gender ideology shape who uses the school.

Reservation and public colleges still open a limited ladder.

The quote is a fair critique of the present system, not of schooling as such.

Introduction

- **The statement is largely true for India's present education system, with a limit:** schooling also remains the main legal ladder. The system sorts children by class, caste, and English more than it equalises them.

Body**How education widens disparity**

- **Dual tracks:** high-fee private English schools and under-resourced government schools produce two childhoods. **NEP 2020** names this gap even as it promises a common foundation.
- Credential inflation means degrees rise while informal jobs absorb most youth, so the poor pay for certificates that the market discounts.
- Caste and urban networks convert the same marksheets into different internships. Untouchability's modern form is the closed campus group.
- Gender and Seed-and-Earth kinship still pull girls out or into 'safe' courses, so household ideology uses the school.
- Coaching markets and English gatekeeping, which Yogendra Singh would call heterogenetic capital, reward those who already have it.

The other side of the comment

- Reservation, scholarships, and public universities did create a first-generation elite, visible in **BAMCEF** professionals and BSP's educated cadre.
- Literacy and midday meals expanded the floor. Disparity grew mainly at the top and in quality, not only by denying entry altogether.
- **Ambedkar** treated education as annihilation-of-caste equipment. The betrayal is unequal provision, not the idea of school.

Sociological comment

- **Beteille's disharmonic order is clear:** equality is the creed of the textbook; hierarchy is the map of who owns the good school.
- Desai would add that education under capitalism supplies skilled cheap labour and legitimates inequality as merit.

Verdict on the quote

- Agree that the present system has increased socio-economic disparities through quality gaps and market credentials.
- Do not conclude that closing schools would equalise. Equalising the system is the democratic task.

Flow diagram

Education system -> Two-track quality
Two-track quality -> Wider disparity
Reservation public university -> Limited mobility
Education system -> Merit ideology

Conclusion

The present education system has contributed to disparity by running two qualities of childhood and selling merit as a mask. It has also produced some mobility for reserved and first-generation students. The comment holds as a critique of structure, not as a brief against education.

Facts & figures

NEP 2020

Policy that admits foundational and quality gaps while redesigning stages and language; implementation will decide equality.

Ambedkar

Education as a weapon against caste; unequal schools betray that programme.

BAMCEF

Shows how educated Dalit employees became a political-professional stratum.

Beteille

Disharmony of equal opportunity talk versus ranked access to good institutions.

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