



Mains Practice Question

Q. Distinguish between 'care economy' and 'monetized economy'. How can care economy be brought into monetized economy through women empowerment? (Answer in 250 words, UPSC Mains 2023)

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Approach

- Start the answer with briefly defining the care economy and monetized economy.
- Discuss the main differences between the care economy and the monetized economy.
- Conclude by emphasizing the significance of integrating care economy to monetized economy.

Introduction

The care economy and the monetized economy are two different aspects of economic activity that affect societies and livelihoods. The care economy involves unpaid or underpaid work that provides care, nurture, and domestic services to individuals and communities. The monetized economy involves formal paid work that produces goods and services for the market.

Body

The main differences between the care economy and the monetized economy are:

Aspect	Care Economy	Monetized Economy
Nature of Work	Activities such as childcare, eldercare, education, healthcare, and household chores. Often performed by women without monetary compensation or recognition.	Activities such as manufacturing, trade, services, and technology. Performed by workers who receive wages or salaries.
Participants	Often performed by individuals within households, including caregivers, often females.	Involves a wide range of participants in the formal economic sector, including workers, businesses, etc.
Compensation	Generally absent or very meager compensation for activities like caregiving. Highly undervalued.	Received in terms of monetary value (wages, salaries, etc.) for work done and goods produced.
Evaluation	Often undervalued despite supporting human development and social cohesion.	Assessed by its contribution to GDP; used as a measure of economic growth.
Impact on Society	Crucial for individual and societal well-being, family structures, and community cohesion. Supports human development and social capital.	Drives economic growth, income generation, infrastructure development, and technological advancement. Supports the material and productive capacity of a nation.

Ways to integrate care economy into monetized economy through women empowerment

- Social protection measures are required that provide income security for women in caregiving roles. For example, pension insurance for women engaged in such roles.
- Development of skills for better transformation and incorporation of women into formal sector should be emphasized.
- Supportive government policies should be there to promote gender-neutral reforms and collaboration between government and civil society organizations in care giving economy.
 - For example, National Creche Scheme for the Children of Working Mothers, enhancing of maternity benefits, etc.
- Technological solutions for care sector that reduces time and frees up women for formal sector employment can be considered.

Conclusion

Integration of care economy into monetized economy will not only enhance economic opportunities for women but also contribute to a more inclusive and equitable society.

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