

Reflection Questions

Session 3: Human Development and the Capabilities Approach

Post-Lecture Reflection

Now that you've learned about **Amartya Sen's** and **Martha Nussbaum's** approaches to capabilities, reflect on the exercise we did at the beginning of class.

Question 1: Comparing Your List to Nussbaum's

Martha Nussbaum's 10 Central Capabilities:

1. Life (being able to live a normal lifespan)
2. Bodily health (including nourishment, shelter)
3. Bodily integrity (freedom of movement, security, reproductive choice)
4. Senses, imagination, and thought (education, expression)
5. Emotions (being able to love, grieve, feel)
6. Practical reason (being able to form conception of good life)
7. Affiliation (being able to live with others, social respect)
8. Other species (being able to live with concern for nature)
9. Play (being able to laugh, enjoy recreation)
10. Control over one's environment (political and material)

Your reflection:

What overlaps between your list and Nussbaum's?

What did you include that Nussbaum didn't?

What did Nussbaum include that you didn't?

Question 2: The Sen-Nussbaum Debate

Which philosopher's approach resonates more with you?

- ☐ **Martha Nussbaum's approach:** We need a clear, universal list to hold governments accountable and protect human dignity
 - ☐ **Amartya Sen's approach:** Each society should democratically deliberate and decide which capabilities matter most in their context
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Question 3: Explain Your Position

Why does this approach resonate with you?

Can you think of a concrete example where your position would lead to different development policy than the alternative position?

Question 4: Critical Reflection

What are potential problems or limitations with the approach you chose?

Question 5: The Exercise Experience

Did your thinking about universal versus context-specific approaches change during the class discussion? If so, how?

Additional resources and readings

See the course website

Optional: Submit your reflections to the Moodle forum or keep them for your own study notes.