**Unit- IV**

**Social Stratification**

**Meaning, Types and Characteristics**

**Meaning :** Social stratification is a particular form of social inequality. All societies arrange their members in terms of superiority, inferiority and equality. Stratification is a process of interaction or differentiation whereby some people come to rank higher than others. Social stratification refers to a society's categorization of its people into rankings based on factors like wealth, income, education, family background, and power.

**Definitions:**

1. Ogburn and Nimkoff: ‘The process by which individuals and groups are ranked in more or less enduring hierarchy of status is known as stratification”.

2. Lundberg: “A stratified society is one marked by inequality, by differences among people that are evaluated by them as being “lower” and “higher”

**Characteristics of Social Stratification:** On the basis of the analysis of the different definitions given by eminent scholars, social stratification may have the following characteristics.

(a) Social stratification is universal: There is no society on this world which is free from stratification. Modern stratification differs from stratification of primitive societies. It is a worldwide phenomenon. According to Sorokin “all permanently organized groups are stratified.” (b) Stratification is social: It is true that biological qualities do not determine one’s superiority and inferiority. Factors like age, sex, intelligence as well as strength often contribute as the basis on which statues are distinguished. But one’s education, property, power, experience, character, personality etc. are found to be more important than biological qualities. Hence, stratification is social by nature.

(c) It is ancient: Stratification system is very old. It was present even in the small wondering bonds. In almost all the ancient civilizations, the differences between the rich and poor, humble andpowerful existed. During the period of Plato and Kautilya even emphasis was given to political, social and economic inequalities.

(d) It is in diverse forms: The forms of stratification is not uniform in all the societies. In the modern world class, caste and estate are the general forms of stratification. In India a special type of stratification in the form of caste is found. The ancient Aryas were divided into four varnas: the Brahmins, Kshatriyas, Vaishyas and Sudras. The ancient Greeks were divided into freemen and slaves and the ancient Romans were divided into the particians and the plebians. So every society, past or present, big or small is characterized by diversed forms of social stratification.

(e) Social stratification is Consequential: Social stratification has two important consequences one is “life chances” and the other one is “life style”. A class system not only affects the “life- chances” of the individuals but also their “life style”. The members of a class have similar social chances but the social chances vary in every society. It includes chances of survival and of good physical and mental health, opportunities for education, chances of obtaining justice, marital conflict, separation and divorce etc.

Types of Social Stratification: Social stratification is based upon a variety of principles. So we find different type of stratification. The major types of stratification are

(i) Caste (ii) Class (iii) Estate (iv) Slavery

(i) Caste is a hereditary endogamous social group in which a person’s rank and its accompanying rights and obligations are ascribed on the basis of his birth into a particular group. For example-Brahmins, Kshyatryas, Vaishyas and Sudra Caste.

(ii) Class-Stratification on the basis of class is dominant in modern society. In this, a person’s position depends to a very great extent upon achievement and his ability to use to advantage the inborn characteristics and wealth that he may possess.

(iii) Estate system of medieval Europe provides another system of stratification which gave much emphasis to birth as well as to wealth and possessions. Each estate had a state.

(iv) Slavery had economic basis. In slavery, every slave had his master to whom he was subjected. The master’s power over the slave was unlimited.

**Meaning and Types of Social Mobility**

**Social Stratification and Social Mobility**: Social mobility refers to the movement within the social structure, from one social position to another. It means a change in social status. All societies provide some opportunity for social mobility. But the societies differ from each other to extent in which individuals can move from one class or status level to another. It is said that the greater the amount of social mobility, the more open the class structure. The concept of social mobility has fundamental importance in ascertaining the relative “openness” of a social structure. The nature, forms, direction and magnitude of social mobility depends on the nature and types of social stratification. Sociologists study social mobility in order to find out the relative ‘openness’ of a social structure. Any group that improves its standard will also improve its social status. But the rate of social mobility is not uniform in all the countries. It differs from society to society from time to time. In India the rate of mobility is naturally low because of agriculture being the predominant occupation and the continuity of caste system as compared to the other countries of the world.

**Types of Social Mobility**: In social stratification the movement occurs in three directions.

a. From lower to higher

b. From higher to lower

c. Between two positions at the same level.

Social mobility is primarily of two types: I. Vertical mobility II. Horizontal mobility

(I) Vertical mobility: It refers to the movement of people from one stratum to another or from one status to another. It brings changes in class, occupation and power. It involves movement from lower to higher or higher to lower. There are two types of vertical mobility. One is upward and other is downward mobility.

When an individual moves from lower status to higher status, it is called upward mobility. For example, if the son of a peon joins a bank as an officer, it is said to be upward social mobility but if he loses the job due to any other reason or inefficiency, he is downwardly mobile from his previous job. So downward mobility takes place when a person moves down from one position to another and change his status.

(II) Horizontal Mobility: It refers to the movement of people from one social group to another situated on the same level. It means that the ranks of these two groups are not different. It indicates change in position without the change in status. For example, if a teacher leaves one school and joins another school or a bank officer leaves one branch to work in another or change of residence are the horizontal mobility.

Apart from the above two broad types of social stratification, there are two other types of social stratification in terms of dimension of time. They are:

1. Inter-generational mobility: When changes in status occur from one generation to another, it is called intergenerational mobility. For example, if the son changes his status either by taking upon occupation of higher or lower rank with that of his father, there inter-generational mobility takes place.
2. Intra-generational mobility: When changes in status occur within one generation, it is called intra-generational mobility. For example, the rise and fall in the occupational structure of a family which leads to change in its social status within one generation is called intra-generational mobility.

**Education and Social Mobility**

Social mobility refers to the ability of individuals or families to move up or down the social ladder in terms of their socioeconomic status. It represents the opportunity for individuals to improve their lives, achieve upward mobility, and overcome disadvantages they may have inherited. [Education](https://www.longdom.org/peer-reviewed-journals/education-26444.html) has long been recognized as a vital catalyst for social mobility, providing individuals with the necessary skills, knowledge, and opportunities to improve their socio economic standing.

**Equalizing access to education**

In many societies, access to quality [education](https://www.longdom.org/peer-reviewed-journals/education-26444.html) has historically been unequal, perpetuating existing social hierarchies and limiting social mobility. However, efforts have been made to address this issue by providing equal educational opportunities to all individuals, regardless of their background. By ensuring that [education](https://www.longdom.org/peer-reviewed-journals/education-26444.html) is accessible to everyone, regardless of socioeconomic status, gender, ethnicity, or geographical location, society can level the playing field and create a fairer system. Policies such as affirmative action, scholarships, and educational reforms aim to bridge the gap and empower disadvantaged individuals to pursue [education](https://www.longdom.org/peer-reviewed-journals/education-26444.html) as a means of upward mobility.

**Acquiring knowledge and skills**

Education equips individuals with knowledge, skills, and competencies that are essential for personal growth and success in the modern world. By imparting literacy, numeracy, critical thinking, problem-solving, and communication skills, [education](https://www.longdom.org/peer-reviewed-journals/education-26444.html) enhances individuals' employability and equips them to adapt to changing economic conditions. A well-rounded [education](https://www.longdom.org/peer-reviewed-journals/education-26444.html) provides the foundation for individuals to pursue higher education, vocational training, or entrepreneurship, thus increasing their chances of upward mobility and breaking free from intergenerational poverty.

**Empowering individuals and fostering self-esteem**

Education plays a transformative role in empowering individuals by instilling self-confidence, ambition, and a sense of self-worth. By expanding individuals' horizons and exposing them to new ideas, perspectives, and opportunities, [education](https://www.longdom.org/peer-reviewed-journals/education-26444.html) enables individuals to envision a better future for themselves. This empowerment is crucial in encouraging individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds to dream big, set goals, and strive for success, thereby promoting social mobility on a personal level.

**Social and cultural capital**

Education not only imparts knowledge and skills but also cultivates social and cultural capital, which can significantly impact an individual's social mobility. Social capital refers to the networks, relationships, and social connections that individuals build through their educational experiences. These connections can open doors to job opportunities, mentorships, and valuable social resources, enabling upward mobility. Similarly, [education](https://www.longdom.org/peer-reviewed-journals/education-26444.html) exposes individuals to cultural capital, such as art, literature, music, and other forms of cultural expression, providing them with the tools to navigate various social settings and interact with people from diverse backgrounds.

**Breaking the cycle of poverty**

Education serves as a powerful tool in breaking the intergenerational cycle of poverty. Children from low-income families often face numerous obstacles that hinder their educational attainment. However, by investing in early childhood education, providing remedial support, and offering scholarships and financial aid, societies can empower these children to overcome their circumstances and achieve social mobility. When individuals from disadvantaged backgrounds receive a quality education, they are better equipped to secure stable employment, increase their earning potential, and improve their overall quality of life, subsequently reducing poverty rates and promoting social mobility at a societal level.

**Education and social mobility in the digital age**

In the digital age, the role of [education](https://www.longdom.org/peer-reviewed-journals/education-26444.html) in promoting social mobility has expanded further. Technological advancements have transformed industries, creating new job opportunities while rendering certain skills obsolete. Individuals who have access to digital [education](https://www.longdom.org/peer-reviewed-journals/education-26444.html) and training can acquire the skills necessary to thrive in the digital economy, leading to increased social mobility. However, the digital divide, where certain individuals or communities lack access to technology and digital resources, remains a challenge. Addressing this divide through initiatives that provide digital literacy and access to technology is crucial to ensuring that [education](https://www.longdom.org/peer-reviewed-journals/education-26444.html) remains a catalyst for social mobility in the digital era.

**Meaning and Nature of Social Inequality**

In all societies people differ from each other on the basis of their age, sex and personal characteristics. Human society is not homogeneous but heterogeneous. Apart from the natural differences, human beings are also differentiated according to socially approved criteria. So, socially differentiated men are treated as socially unequal from the point of view of enjoyment of social rewards like status, power, income etc. That may be called social inequality. The term social inequality simply refers to the existence of socially created inequalities.

Social inequality refers to the unequal distribution of power, privilege, and resources among individuals and groups in a society. It is a concept that has been debated by philosophers and scholars throughout history and is often characterized by differences in social class, status, and poliSocial inequality is the condition of unequal access to the benefits and rights of society. In a purely equal society, every citizen is equally able to contribute to the overall wellbeing of that society. Natural inequalities are those that emerge between people as a result of their different capabilities and talents. Social circumstances, situations and conditions help the individual to grow and develop her/his talents and capabilities.

**What is natural and social inequalities ?**

For example, individuals may have different heights, strengths, or intellectual capabilities due to natural variations. On the other hand, social inequalities are disparities or differences that arise due to social factors, such as socioeconomic status, education, occupation, gender, race, or ethnicity.

**Equality of Educational opportunity**

“DEMOCRACY ONLY PROVIDES THAT ALL MEN SHOULD HAVE EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF THEIR UNEQUAL TALENTS”-- DR. S. RADHAKRISHNAN

The notion that there should be equality of opportunity in education, where everyone has fair and equal access to a good quality education regardless of social background, race, gender or religion, and where people achieve success in education according to their efforts and ability, free of any form of discrimination.It is unfortunate that the phenomenal growth in educational facilities after independence is not accompanied by equalization of opportunities for all. Education is one the effective means through which any society can strive for social equality or at least make an effort to reduce social inequalities among their members. This will only be made possible, if there is a provision for equalization of educational opportunities to all its members irrespective of caste, religion, gender, location, creed, language, socio-economic status etc.

The report of the Indian Education Commission, 1964-66 also stated regarding the equalization of educational opportunities, “One of the important social objectives of education is to equalize opportunity, enabling the backward or underprivileged classes and individuals to use education as a lever for the improvement of their condition. Every society that values social Justice and is anxious to improve the lot of the common man and cultivate all available talent must ensure progressive equality of opportunity to all sections of the population. This is the only guarantee for the building up of an egalitarian and human society in which the exploitation of the weak will be minimized”.

**Need of Equality in Education**

FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF AN EGILITARIAN SOCIETY BASED ON SOCIAL EQUALITY AND JUSTICE

NEED OF EQUALITY IN EDUCATION CONTRIBUTES TO THE SEARCH FOR TALENTS AMONG ALL THE

PEOPLE OF A NATION. FOR THE SUCCESSFUL FUNCTIONING OF A DEMOCRACY.

ESSENTIAL TO ENSURE THE RAPID ADVANCEMENT OF A NATION.

EDUCATED AND ENLIGHTENED PEOPLE ALONE CAN ENSURE A MEANINGFUL DEMOCRACY. HELPS TO DEVELOP A CLOSER LINK BETWEEN THE MANPOWER

NEEDS OF SOCIETY AND AVAILABILITY OF SKILLED PERSONNEL.

IMPORTANCE OF EQUALITY IN EDUCATION HUMAN RIGHTS

ESSENTIAL FOR DEMOCRACY EGILITARIAN SOCIETY

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT NATIONS ADVANCEMENT

SEARCH FOR TALENT CLOSER LINK MODERNIZATION

ACHIEVING EQUALITY AND EQUITY IN EDUCATION

DIFFERENCE IN ECONOMIC STATUSPROBLEMS CONCERNING EQUALITY OF EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES GENDER DISPARITIES REGIONAL IMBALANCE

PHYSIOLOGICAL DIFFERENCES DIFFERENCE IN HOME CONDITIONS NON AVAILABILITY OF ADEQUATE OPPORTUNITIES

DIFFERENCE IN MENTAL AND PHYSICAL AVAILABILITIES DISPARITY BETWEEN FORWARD AND BACKWARD CLASSES

Measures taken for equalization of educational opportunities

To provide equal opportunity to all children, primary education has been made free, compulsory and universal as per the constitutional provisions. Scheduled caste and scheduled tribes with the provision of reservation of seats and different types of scholarships for promoting equality in education. The NPE 1986 stressed on the removal of disparities and attainment of equalization of educational opportunities for SC, ST and other backward sections specially for girls. Initiatives to be taken to send their children to school regularly till they reach the age of 14 years.

NATIONAL POLICY OF EDUCATION 1986

Reservations for SC/ST children in educational institutions at all levels of education. UEE,Operation Blackboard, Non-Formal Education, DPEP etc. accord priority to the education of SC and ST children. ‘Lok Jumbish’ and ‘Shiksha Karmi’ projects have a specific focus on SC and ST inhabited areas. Grant-in-aid to voluntary organizations working to promote education among SC and ST children

Reservation in recruitment of teachers from SCs and STs

Provision of a primary school or non-formal education centre in every scheduled tribe habitation.

TO OVERCOME LANGUAGE BARRIER BEING FACED BY STUDENTS, MASSIVE OPEN ONLINE COURSES (MOOCs) ARE BEING NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY 2020 TRANSLATED IN INDIAN LANGUAGES.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO DIFFERENT DEPRIVED SECTIONS OF SOCIETY. MAULANA AZAD NATIONAL FELLOWSHIP FOR MINORITY STUDENTS.

PG SCHOLARSHIPS FOR SC/ ST CANDIDATES.

POST DOCTORAL FELLOWSHIP FOR SC/ ST CANDIDATES.

NATIONAL FELLOWSHIP FOR OTHER BACKWARD CLASSESBACK TO CONTENT PAGE.

CONSTITUTIONAL PROVISIONS “The State shall promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people, and, in particular, of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes, and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation.”

ARTICLE 30 (1) states “All minorities, whether based on religion or language, shall have the right to establish and administer educational institutions of their choice..”

ARTICLE 14 states “The State shall not deny to any person equality before the law or the equal protection of the laws within the territory of India.

ARTICLE 29 (2) states “No citizen shall be denied admission into any educational institution maintained by the State or receiving aid out of State funds on grounds only of religion, race, caste, language or any of them.”

ARTICLE 17 states “The State shall provide free and compulsory education to all children of the age of six to fourteen years in such manner as the State may, by law, determine.” “Untouchability” is abolished and its practice in any form is forbidden. The enforcement of any disability arising out of “Untouchability” shall be an offence punishable in accordance with law.” ARTICLE 15(1) states “The State shall not discriminate against any citizen on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth or any of them.”

**Meaning of Social Control**

Social control is the use of social pressure by parents, police, and other authority figures in society to influence the actions, beliefs, and movements of individuals. It is the process by which a group regulates itself according to the beliefs and values which most of its individuals hold. Social control is the process whereby society seeks to ensure conformity to the dominant values and norms in that society. This process can be either informal, as in the exercise of control through customs, norms, and expectations, or formal, as in the exercise of control through laws or other official regulations.

**Need of Social Control** :

Every society has a system of regulating the behaviours of the individual and group. This system is called social control. Mac Iver and Page are of the view that the organization of the whole social system and the method of its obedience are called social control. According to them, by social control we can understand the mutual relations between the whole society and its unit, the individual. Thus, social control channelizes the behaviours of individuals in society so that they conform to the accepted social norms and code of conduct. Social control helps to develop a sense of co-existence amongst individuals by seeing to it that individuals are not allowed unrestricted freedom which may lead to a kind of anarchy and disorder in the society.

**Role of Education as a means of social control**

Parents are legally required to either send their children to a state or independently run school. Put another way, pupils are expected to attend school, and truant officers are employed to catch those who are not attending. Parents can be fined if their students have unauthorised absences.

1. The 90% of pupils who attend state schools will spend at least six hours a day in formal education. Many will spend more time in school because the school day has been getting longer in recent years, through the addition of both morning classes or breakfast clubs and after school clubs.
2. Students who attend state schools will be taught the National Curriculum, having limited choice over what they study until they make their GCSE choices at 14. From 2013 young people are required to remain in some form of education or training until the age 18, raised from the previous ‘education leaving age’ of 16.
3. Schools and colleges are required to teach pupils about ‘British Values’. This might be regarded as indoctrination by the State.
4. Schools are responsible for prevent – they have to report to the police anyone they believe to be involved with terrorist activities, and they have to work to prevent students being attracted to terrorist organisations.
5. Schools engage in physical surveillance of pupils, most obviously through the increasing use of cameras, but also by using staff at school gates, in playgrounds and walking the corridors during lessons.
6. Schools have clear codes of conduct and use isolation units and detentions to regulate deviant behaviour.
7. Schools increasingly involve parents in monitoring students and keeping them on track, using ‘parenting contracts’ with deviant cases.
8. Schools keep databases of student’s academic progress and report back to parents regularly. This means students know they are being watched, and most of them ‘self-regulate’ because of this.
9. Schools may require certain students to work with learning support staff or attend further supported learning, which means such students will be under higher levels of surveillance.
10. Schools may keep confidential records of student discussions about mental health and well-being and work with medical professionals to require students to attend further ‘support’ as necessary.