



**Syllabus Revision Program by Islamic Jamiat Talba,**

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**Subject: Sociology (LLB Part-I)**

**Topic no: 3**

**Social Stratification**

Social stratification refers to a society's categorization of its people into rankings of socioeconomic tiers. People are sorted, or layered, into social categories. Many factors determine a person's social standing, such as income, education, occupation, as well as age, race, gender, and even physical abilities.

Stratification: refers to a system by which a society ranks categories of people in a hierarchy. Social stratification is a matter of four principles:

- (a) Social Stratification is a characteristic of society
- (b) Social Stratification persists over generations
- (c) Social Stratification is not universal but variable
- (d) Social Stratification also involves beliefs

**Sociologists views:**

**Social stratification is the hierarchical arrangement of large social groups based on their control over basic resources**

(Feagin and Feagin)

**Social Stratification is a system by which a society ranks categories of people in a hierarchy**

(John J. Macionis)

**Social stratification refers to arrangements of any social group or society into a hierarchy of positions that are unequal with regard to power, property, social evaluation, and/or social gratification.**

(Malvin M. Tumin)

**Classes of social stratification:**

In modern Western societies, social stratification is typically defined in terms of three social classes:

1. **The upper class** (the upper-stratum, the middle-stratum, and the lower stratum)
2. **The middle class**( the upper-stratum, the middle-stratum, and the lower stratum)
3. **The lower class**( the upper-stratum, the middle-stratum, and the lower stratum)

**Dimensions/Factors of social stratification:**

Factors that define stratification vary in different societies. The following are factors in different societies:

**1. Wealth**

In most societies, stratification is an economic system, based on wealth, people are regularly categorized based on how rich or poor they are.

**2. Social standing**

In some cultures, wisdom and charisma are valued, and people who have them are revered more than those who don't.

**3. Age**

In some cultures, the elderly are esteemed; in others, the elderly are disparaged or overlooked.

**4. Occupation**

One of factors is a society's occupational structure. Teachers often have high levels of education but receive relatively low pay. Many believe Teachers should do their jobs for the love of their profession and the good of their students . Yet no successful businessman would embrace such attitude in business.

**5. Power**

Power gains one respect. In Pakistan, following characteristics could be important: Outspoken in public, educated, well off in financial resources, interest in solving people's problems, active, religious oriented etc.

**6. Caste**

Caste system in Pakistan is an important element in social stratification. Some castes are considered high, some are low.

Characteristics of Social Stratification:

The following are the characteristics of social stratification:

**1. Rankings**

The ranking applies to social categories of people who share a common characteristic. It is necessarily interacting or identifying with one another.

**2. Experiences and opportunities**

People's life experiences and opportunities depend heavily on how their Social Category is ranked. Being male or female, black or white, upper class or working class makes a big difference in terms of your life chances.

**3. Stratification is social**

Stratification is social in the sense that it does not represent inequality which are biologically based. It is true that factors such as strength, intelligence, age, sex can often serve as the basis on which the states are being distinguished.

**4. Stratification is ancient**

The stratification system is very old. Stratification was present, even in the Small wondering bond. Age and sex were the main criteria of stratification. Difference between the rich and poor, powerful and humble, freeman and slaves was there in almost all the ancient civilization.

**5. stratification is universal**

Social stratification is universal. The difference between rich and Poor the have or have notes is evident everywhere. Even in the non literate Societies stratification is very much present.

**6. Diverse form**

Social stratification has never been uniform in all societies. The ancient roman Society was stratified into two strata:

- The patricians
- The plebians

**7. Stratification is consequential**

The stratification system has its own consequences. The most important, most desired and often the sorest things in human life are distributed unequally because of stratification.

## **Systems of Stratifications:**

There are four basic systems of stratification: slavery, estates, caste and class according to view point of sociologist.

- **Slavery**

The most closed system is slavery which has been quite common in human history. Slavery is thought to have begun 10,000 years ago, after agricultural societies developed. Many of the ancient lands of the Middle East, including Babylonia, Egypt, and Persia, also owned slaves, as did ancient China and India. Slavery especially flourished in ancient Greece and Rome, which used thousands of slaves for their trade economies.

Today's slaves include :

- Men first taken as prisoners of war in ethnic conflicts
- Girls and women captured in wartime or kidnapped from their neighborhoods and used as prostitutes or sex slaves
- Children sold by their parents to become child laborers
- Workers paying off debts who are abused and even tortured and too terrified to leave

- **Estate Systems**

Estate systems are characterized by control of land and were common in Europe and Asia during the Middle Ages and into the 1800s.

Two major estates exist in this system:

**The landed gentry or nobility** (the landed gentry owned huge expanses of land on which serfs toiled)

**The peasantry or serfs** (the serfs had more freedom than slaves had but typically lived in poverty and were subject to arbitrary control by the nobility )

- **Caste Systems**

A caste system is a system of social inequality in which people's status is permanently determined at birth based on their parents' ascribed characteristics.

**•Permanent and ascribed status determined at birth.**

**•Close system where individuals live out their lives in the rigid categories assigned to them, without the possibility of change for the better or worse.**

### **IN A CASTE SYSTEM**

- Endogamy, people are allowed to marry only within their own group.
- There is Limited Choice of Occupation
- Cultural beliefs and values sustain caste systems. Hinduism reinforced the caste system by teaching that people should accept their fate in life and work hard as a moral duty.

### Indian Caste System:

A caste (jati in Sanskrit) is a social class to which a person belongs birth and which is ranked against other castes, typically on a continuum of perceived purity and pollution. (Philip Oldenburg)

It is Divided into four (4) Castes (Varna)

1. **BRAHMAN**: Priests / earthly gods (Head)
2. **KASHATRIYA**: Warriors (Arms)
3. **VAISHYA**: Farmers and Merchants (Belly)
4. **SHUDRA**: Laborers/ servants of other castes (Foot )

- **Class System**

Class is a group of people with similar level of wealth, influence and status. The class system is a type of stratification based on the ownership and control of resources and on the type of work people do. The status is achieved than ascribed. Though individuals born in wealthy families and influential families have better access to resources, and opportunities. It is an open system with increased social mobility. may The individuals become members of a class other than that of their parents.

Class is **Economic Group**. A class is group of people who have similar level of wealth and income ,**Feelings**: Equality, Inferiority, Superiority, **Exogamy**- the custom of marrying outside a community, clan, or tribe ,compatibility is more important.

### Types of classes in Pakistan :

There are three types of classes according to wealth in Pakistan.

#### UPPER CLASS

These are elite families with great wealth who dominate the economic system of every society. There is a concept of ‘**old money**’ those with vast inherited wealth and ‘**new money**’ a group of people who recently have achieved success and wealth. They are few and far between in any society, and makes **about 1% of the whole population**. They have their own norms which are distinct from the other groups. They enjoy all luxuries of life. The upper class of Pakistan has **landlords ,politicians, and business tycoons**.

#### MIDDLE CLASS

The members of the middle class earn their money by working (**small business owners**) or doing professional jobs( as **managers, doctors, lawyers, professors, and teachers**). Some of the individuals are highly educated professional people with high incomes, such as **doctors, lawyers, while some may be less educated people with lower incomes, such as small business owners, and clerks**.

They earn enough to live well than lower class, but are financially weaker than upper class. Holding a relatively secure job is the single most important characteristic of the M-class. Social mobility is found highest in this class.

This class is the best example of **DEFERRED GRATIFICATION PATTERN** , which means, postponing immediate enjoyment in order to gain a big goal! Most parents ignore their needs and spend their saved money for their children's college fee.

## **LOWER CLASS**

The members of lower class have a low educational level, are not skilled, and work at minimum-wage jobs.(**factory workers, daily wagers, seasonal laborers, etc.**) They do not have enough earning to support themselves, some may depend on public assistance (social safety nets) or lend money from others for their survival.

Social mobility is the lowest in them as they are engaged in manual labor that is underpaid so they have no opportunity for career advancement. Rate of deviance is high in them. Most of the Members of this class are living below poverty line. They lack the means to meet their basic needs for food, clothing, and shelter The term social mobility refers to the movement of individuals and groups between different socio -economic positions. Vertical mobility means movement up or down.

## **COMPARISON**

<b>CLASS</b>	<b>CASTE</b>
1. Social ranking based primarily on economic position . Class is not inherited, but acquired through ability.  2. Open System ;It is possible for individual to change his class  3. Marriage outside class is allowed without being thrown out of the society  4. There is no restriction on members in a class	1. Caste is acquired by birth that determine their way of life, opportunities, and social customs.  2. Closed System; It is not possible to leave the caste  3. Impossible for a person to marry out of caste without social annoyance  4. Caste imposes many restrictions on its members.

**Social mobility:**

Social mobility refers to the ability to change positions within a social stratification system. When people improve or diminish their economic status in a way that affects social class, they experience social mobility.

**Types of social mobility:**

- horizontal mobility
- vertical mobility
  - a. upward mobility
  - b. downward mobility
- intergenerational mobility
- structural mobility

**Horizontal mobility**

A mobility involves a change in position, especially in occupation, but no change in social class, for example would be a person who moves from a managerial position in one company to a similar position in another.

**Vertical mobility**

A mobility in which involves a change in social class. If an industrial worker who becomes a wealthy businessman moves upward in the class system it is called **upward mobility**, and if a landed aristocrat who loses everything in a revolution moves downward in the system this will be called **downward mobility**.

**Result of social mobility:**

The social results of mobility are difficult to measure particularly of vertical. Some believe that large-scale mobility breaks down class structure thus rendering a culture more uniform. Those who attempt to rise or maintain a higher position actually strengthen the class system, for they are likely to be concerned with enforcing class differences. Some sociologists have suggested that class distinctions might be reduced not by individual mobility but by the achievement of social and economic equality for all.

One **positive consequence of mobility** has been a better use of individual aptitude. This has been aided by the expansion of educational opportunities in modern industrial nations.

**On the negative side**, a high rate of vertical mobility may produce individual and **societal anomie**. The individual experiencing anomie feels socially isolated and anxious; in a larger, societal context, generally accepted beliefs and standards of conduct are weakened or disappear.

### **intergenerational mobility**

it describes a difference in social class that between different members of the same generation. For example, the wealth and prestige experienced by one person may be quite different from that of his or her siblings.

### **Structural mobility**

It happens when societal changes enable a whole group of people to move up or down the social class ladder. Structural mobility is attributable to changes in society as a whole, not individual changes. In the first half of the twentieth century, industrialization expanded the U.S. economy, raising the standard of living and leading to upward structural mobility. In today's work economy, the recent recession and the outsourcing of jobs overseas have contributed to high unemployment rates. Many people have experienced economic setbacks, creating a wave of downward structural mobility.

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Sciologist views from different websites

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**BEST OF LUCK...!!**