



SOCIAL STRATIFICATION-II

Types of Social Stratification

- Caste System - Social
- Class System - Economic



Caste system

- ❑ In India, a special type of Social Stratification in the form of caste.
 - ❑ The caste is an inseparable aspects of the Indian Society.
 - ❑ It is peculiarly Indian in origin and development.
 - ❑ Origin of the word – the “Caste” origin into Spanish word ‘casta’ which means “breed, race, strain or a complex of hereditary qualities”.
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Definition of Caste

- **C.H. Cooley** – “When a class is somewhat strictly hereditary, we may call it a caste”.
 - **Willams** – “Caste is a system in which an individual’s rank and its accompanying rights and obligations is ascribed on the basis of birth into a particular group”.
 - **D.N. Mazumdar and T.N. Madan** – “Caste is a closed group”.
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Origin of the Caste System

- Indian Society: Chaturvarna System
- Hindu Society: Brahmins, Kashtriyas, Vaishyas and Shudras.
- The Varna system based on the division of labour and occupation.

Factors which Facilitated the Growth of caste System in India

- Geographical isolation
- Influence of religion
- Existences of many races
- Rural social structure
- Unwillingness of rulers
- Lack of education



Features of Caste system

- ❑ Segmental division of society
 - ❑ Social and religious hierarchy
 - ❑ Restrictions on feeding and social intercourse
 - ❑ Endogamy
 - ❑ Restricted choice of occupation
 - ❑ Civil and Religious disabilities
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□ **Segmental division of society:**

- The society is divided into various castes with a well developed life of their own.
- The status of a person does not depend on his wealth but on the traditional importance of the caste.

□ **Social and religious hierarchy:**

- The Brahmin in India stand at the apex of the social ladder.
- In difference to the high position enjoyed by Brahmins and Sudras were subjected to manifold disabilities.



Conti..

- **Restrictions on feeding and social intercourse:**
 - Caste is the complex of taboos by which the superior castes try to preserve their ceremonial purity.
 - The caste have rules are laid down with regard to the kind of food that can be acceptable by a person and from what castes.

- **Endogamy:**
 - Every caste is sub-divided into sub-castes, everyone of which forbids its members to marry persons outside it.



Conti...

□ **Restricted choice of occupation:**

- Members of a particular caste are expected to follow the caste occupation.
- The caste members did not allow other than own to follow their occupation.

□ **Civil and religious disabilities:**

- The impure castes are made to live on the outskirts of the city. Etc.,
 - The public schools did not admit impure castes person.
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Features of caste in India today

- ❑ Restrictions on food habits have been relaxed.
 - ❑ Caste is not very much associated with the hereditary occupation.
 - ❑ Exogamy (inter-caste or inter-religion marriage).
 - ❑ The constitution of India removed and made all caste are equal.
 - ❑ Caste Panchayat have either become very weak.
 - ❑ Touchable and Untouchable is not felt among literate people.
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Conti...

- ❑ The influence of caste system is slowly decreasing.
 - ❑ Social interaction and social relationships has been **establishing in the society without seeking the caste background.**
 - ❑ **It is not dictating individual's life** or its freedom, it is not barrier for the individual's progress.
 - ❑ Industrialization, urbanization, westernization etc., changed the role of caste system.
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Causes for the Change in Caste System

- Uniform Legal System
- Impact of Modern Education
- Industrialization, Urbanization and Westernization
- Influence of Modern Transport and Communication System
- Freedom Struggle and the establishment of democracy
- Rise of Non-Brahmin Movement



Merits of caste system

- Spirit of co-operation.
 - Define economic pursuits.
 - Racial purity.
 - Influence intellectual make-up.
 - Integration of the country.
 - Provides for various functions. (division of labour)
 - Cultural diffusion.
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Demerits of caste system

- Denies mobility of labour.
 - Untouchability.
 - Solidarity retarded.
 - Wrong man in occupation.
 - Obstacle to national unity.
 - Obstacle to social progress.
 - Undemocratic.
 - Promotes casteism.
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Social Class System & Status

- Status – basic criterion of social class.
 - Each particular social class has its own particular social behaviour, its standards and occupations.
 - It is a culturally defined group, that is 'accorded a particular position or status within the population as a whole'.
 - The relative position of the class in the society arises from the degree of prestige attached to the society.
 - Status is the basic criterion of social class or, in other words class is a status group.
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Definition of Social Class

- **Ogburn and Nimkoff** – “A social class in one or two or more broad groups of individuals who are ranked by the members of the community in socially superior and inferior positions”.
- **Max Webber** – “Class or aggregates of individuals, who have the same opportunity of acquiring good, the same exhibited standard of living”.

Nature & Characteristics of Social Class

- Class- A Status Group
- Achieved Status and not Ascribed Status
- It is Universal
- Mode of Feeling
- Element of Prestige
- Element of Stability
- Mode of Living
- An Open System
- Classification of Social Classes
- Class Consciousness

Difference between Cast & Class

Cast	Class
Particular	Universal
Ascribed Status: by birth	Achieved Status: by achievement
Closed System: It restrict social mobility	Open System: It provide social mobility
Conservative: The caste ridden system tends to become conservative, orthodox and reactionary	Progressive: It give more freedom to the members.
Endogamous Group: Every caste member has to marry within the group	Not endogamous: The members are free to select their partners
Greater Social Distance: Comparatively a greater distance being kept b/w different castes	Less Social Distance: Members are more tolerant than others.
Caste- consciousness: More dangerous to democracy, cannot go together as caste is based on inequality	Class-consciousness: not inimical to democracy, can go together, does not restrict the amount of community feeling.