

Social Stratification and its Implications for Social Justice

Robert Aldere*

Department of Criminology, Law and Society, University of California, Irvine, USA

ABOUT THE STUDY

Social stratification refers to the hierarchical arrangement of individuals or groups of people within a society based on various factors such as wealth, power, and social status. It is a fundamental aspect of human societies and is prevalent in most societies, whether modern or traditional. This essay will discuss the concept of social stratification, its characteristics, and its various forms. One of the key features of social stratification is that it is a system that assigns different positions or statuses to individuals based on their social class, race, gender, and other factors. Individuals in higher positions enjoy more privileges and have greater access to resources, while those in lower positions have less access to resources and fewer opportunities. Social stratification is therefore a form of inequality, and it often results in the creation of a social hierarchy.

There are various forms of social stratification, and these differ based on the criteria used to determine an individual's position within the hierarchy. The most common forms of social stratification include class, caste, and race-based stratification.

Class-based stratification refers to a system where individuals are placed into different classes based on their economic resources, such as income, wealth, and occupation. In this system, those in higher classes have greater access to resources and opportunities, while those in lower classes have limited access to resources and opportunities. The class-based system is prevalent in many societies, including capitalist societies.

Caste-based stratification, on the other hand, is a system where individuals are born into a specific caste, and this determines their social status and occupation. The caste system is prevalent

in many traditional societies, particularly in India, where individuals are assigned to different castes based on their birth.

Race-based stratification, as the name suggests, is a system where individuals are placed into different social positions based on their race. In this system, individuals who belong to the dominant racial group have greater access to resources and opportunities than those from minority racial groups. This form of stratification is prevalent in many societies, particularly in societies with a history of colonialism and slavery.

Regardless of the specific form of social stratification, it is often associated with various negative outcomes, including poverty, inequality, and social conflict. Those in lower positions within the social hierarchy often face significant barriers to social mobility and may struggle to access basic resources and opportunities. This, in turn, can lead to social unrest and conflict, particularly when individuals feel that the system is unjust or unfair. In addition to these negative outcomes, social stratification also has various positive effects. For example, it can provide individuals with a sense of identity and belonging within their social group. It can also serve as a motivator for individuals to work hard and achieve success, as they strive to move up the social ladder.

One of the primary features of human society is social stratification. It refers to the hierarchical arrangement of individuals or groups of people based on various factors such as wealth, power, and social status. While social stratification has both positive and negative effects, it is often associated with inequality, poverty, and social conflict. Therefore, it is important to understand the different forms of social stratification and work towards creating more just and equitable societies.

Correspondence to: Robert Aldere, Department of Criminology, Law and Society, University of California, Irvine, USA, E-mail: Alderet99@yahoo.com

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