



Welcome to Rural Sociology and Educational Psychology

Session 3

SOCIAL STRATIFICATION
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The Indian Caste System





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- **Social stratification** is the division of population into **two** or **more** layers, each of which is relatively **homogeneous** and between which there are differences in privileges (opportunities), restrictions, rewards and obligations – **Lundberg** 1968.
- A pattern of superimposed categories of differential privilege is termed as **social stratification** – **Cuber** 1954.



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- A Social class is one or two broad groups of individuals who are ranked by the members of the community in socially superior or inferior positions.-Ogburn and Nimkoff
- Social class is in 3 forms
- Upper class, Lower class and Middle class
- Social stratification comes in four types, Slavery, Caste, Clan, Social Class



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- The movement of individuals or groups from one **stratum** of society to another is known as **social mobility**.



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- According to **Maclver** a **social class** is any portion of a community marked off from the rest of social status.

A **social class** has been defined as an abstract category of persons arranged on levels according to **social status** they possess. There are no firm lines dividing one category from another - **Rogers 1960**



- **Caste:** The term '**Caste**' was derived from the **Portuguese** word '**casta**' meaning lineage or race.

- **Characteristics of Caste System in India;**

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- **Hereditary**

Caste status of an individual is determined strictly by his heredity.

- **2. Endogamous**

It endogamous character strictly prohibits inter-caste marriages.

- **3. Hierarchical**

Caste system has a system of superiority and subordination.

- **4. Fixed Occupations**

- Members of any caste are obligated to adopt the professions of their caste.



. Untouchability:

In Indian caste system out castes are considered to be untouchables.

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Absence of Vertical mobility:

- In a caste system, there is no mobility or movement of its members, up or down, the social status ladder. A person's status at birth is his life time status.
- **8. Reinforcement by religious beliefs:**
- Religious beliefs have played a significant role in making caste system unavoidable.



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• Restricted food habits

A Brahmin should eat the satwik food e.g

Fruits, Milk, butter, whole grains, nuts





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• Kshatriya and Vaishyas will take royal food

Examples include: caffeinated drinks (such as coffee, tea (both black and green), cola drinks, and energy drinks), brown or black chocolate, paan,, overly spicy food, salty food.





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• Sudra takes tamsi food





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- Meat of an animal, fish, the fertilized egg, onion, garlic, alcoholic beverages, opium, and any food which has been kept overnight before consumption.

