

SOCIAL MOBILITY

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5.1 Objectives of the Lesson: After doing the study of this lesson, the students will be able to appreciate the following points:

- (i) He will be able to clarify the concept of social mobility.
- (ii) He will be able to understand the concept of social mobility
- (iii) He will be able to understand the role of education in social mobility
- (iv) He will be clear in his mind about the merits of social mobility

5.2 Introduction

In simple words Social Mobility is the movement of individuals, families, households or other categories of people within and between social status relative to other social locations within given society. Social Stratifications are those in which at least some value is given to achieved status, characteristics in a society.

Social Mobility is shifting from one social status to an other, commonly to a status i.e. either higher or lower. For example, a child of a labourer or a peon or sweeper becomes a P.C.S Officer, he achieves a upward social mobility. In terms of sociology, social mobility explains enhancement (or lack thereof) in social

status. In some cases socialisation organised by social class, rather than caste like India usually allows greater social mobility in such societies, One's ability to achieve a higher social status can depend upon factors such as social connections, wealth, efforts and education. Gender and race can limit upward social mobility and many socialisation behave social mobility depends more on social structure such as the opportunities offered to different groups of people rather than individual efforts.

5.3 Types of Social Mobility : It has a number of types. It may be in downward or upward direction. It will be towards the downward direction if a son of a senior army officer joins as non-commissional officer in the army or the son of a Deputy Commissioner joins as a clerk in some office. In the same way if a son of a primary school teacher becomes a university professor or son of some police constable officer becomes an I.P.S. Officer, it will be upward social mobility. Both these situations may be rare but exists in so many cases in so many societies in the world. Upward mobility not commonly takes place in most of the closed society while it is more common in democratic societies in the world. It will be in existence when the son of a school teacher joins as a professor in some university or his son or daughter becomes either IAS or IPS or PCS job. It has happened in Indian situation but only rarely. I am reminded of a news in the newspaper about two years ago when the daughter of a peon in Punjab becomes an I.A.S officer. The motivation of the girl was that she used to observe that when the officer came to the office of his father who was a peon used to stand up and salute him. The daughter of the peon devoted so much time and energy that she was selected as a IAS officer and starting getting salute from other junior.

An other type of distinction can be between Absolute Social Mobility or Relative Social Mobility. Absolute Social mobility occurs when there is only a small movement so that the movement may seem to be horizontal within given layer of stratification. It may happen when a clerk of a bank is transferred to another bank. The relative Social Mobility occurs when there is a vertical movement between one or two layers of stratification. The fact however, remains that relatively at least some social mobility can be important in providing path ways to greater equality in societies with high social inequality.

There is another type of mobility i.e. intergeneration mobility i.e. when a lower class family person graduates from a medical school. It also takes up when an individual works his way up the corporate ladder. It also needs to be understood that mobility is mostly quantitatively measured in terms of change in economic mobility such as change in income or wealth. Occupation is another measure used in research methodology which usually involves both quantitative and qualitative analysis of data. Social class is also an important ingredient in it. Mobility can be intra generation i.e. within the same generation or inter generation, i.e. between one and more generations. Intra generation mobility is

less frequent, representing rags to riches case in terms of upward mobility. Inter generation of upward mobility is more common where in children or grand children are in economic circumstances better than those of their parents or grandparents.

In USA this type of mobility has been a fundamental feature of the "American Dream".

If and when we study social classes, the question naturally arises: Is it possible for people to move within a society's stratification system? Is there possibility of social mobility or progression from social level to an other? Yes, but the degree to which this is possible varies from one society to other society.

5.4 Social Mobility in Open and Closed Societies : The fact remains that in open societies like U.S.A., without caste system, mobility is easy and is so frequently achieved. The position in the stratification system depends more on achievement status, like education, than on ascribed status, like gender. For example, in U.S.A., Social Stratification of this type, meaning movement between social strata is easier and occurs more frequently i.e. one can move in the social system up and downwards with his own efforts rather than family or ancestral system.

On the other hand, in a closed society like India with caste system mobility can be difficult or impossible, Social position in a caste system, mobility can be difficult. Social positions in a caste system is decided by assignment rather than attainment. This means that people are either born into or marry within the their family caste, changing caste system occurs toady in some parts of India, Where people born in the lowest caste (the untouchable) can not become member of higher castes. To a greater extent South Africa is also caste ridden.

India is a caste ridden and male dominated society in which caste system is so strong that generally people try to stick to their caste, or religion at the time of settlement. All this is so deeply rooted that this system is breaking at a snail's speed and is rather less frequent. Take for example the case of high castes, who do not want to mix up with scheduled caste, scheduled tribes and go in for social mobility similar is the position of minority communities. India being a male dominated society, the men do not want to loose their dominance, while women in their own way want to go in for independent type of life. All these factors stand in the path of social mobility. On the other hand ours is a democratic country, with bases of which is equalisation of all types of opportunities, which will be possible if the deprived sections of the society are lifted upward to become equal to upper cases. No doubt one can find some isolated examples in India where sons and daughters of upper castes get married in lower castes. This process is just in the initial stage.

On the other side there is a popular saying that those foreigners who migrate to U.S.A. generally start behaving like them in all aspects of life and are completely absorbed in them.

5.5 Social Mobility in India :-

5.5.1 Scheduled Castes :- India is comparatively a closed society. It is a man dominated caste ridden and multi religious society, the roots of which are laid in Manu Simiriti, which divided the masses into four castes, Brahamn, Kashtries, Vaish and Shudar, which continued to dominate the scene for centuries. So much so that not to talk of untouchables if a shuddras listened a shalok of Sanskrit he was made deaf by pouring hot led in his ears. This type of behaviour was strengthened by Brahamans in their own interest. Although some religious leaders like Kabir, Ravi Dass and Guru Nanak tried to improve upon the situation. The result was a little change Mahatam Gandh also tried to fight for their status and called scheduled castes Harizans. However, when India become independent in 1947 it adopted to improve upon the lot of scheduled castes who were a depressed lot for centuries laid down special priviliges in our constitution to provided them reservation in jobs, schooling process, higher, professional and technical education. It lead to their improvement which was limited to a few who could grasp it in terms of social mobility as from untouchable to studentship with all high castes and get jobs of the status, which was earlier denied to them. It further improved their social mobility as because of reservations laid down in the constitution they got out of lure promotions. In the sphere of education also they were admitted even at some lower than the fixed term of admission. No doubt, it lead to their improvement their upward mobility, but some new problems have cropped up. All these benefits are being grabbed by a few who got these benefits earlier and are passing on these privileges to their own wards. The most of such low castes still are not getting much benefits of it. In this way an elite class have been established amongst them.

However, there are few examples when such castes have become and becoming ministers, chief ministers, central minister and even president in India. A deep look into the limited upward social mobility of scheduled castes will show a silver lining that the increase in social mobility can be attributed to the factor of education, while some political, economic and administrative factors have also played some role in it for upward social mobility provisions their representation is to be fixed in accordance with their percentage of population, but such actions are not being taken by some of the state government in this regard. For example, it was fixed at 20% in the beginning it continues to be same in 2014, when their population in the province has crossed 30% of the population of the state.

However, the fact remains that in may Indian states still inter caste marriages are so much hatred that in most of cases it leads either to honoured killing or even suicide. It is mostly in these areas wherein education is not well

organized. It may be true that many other factors which leaves its impact on social mobility but the fact remains that education is the most important tool to play its role in it. It is hoped that with the strengthening of the process of education the thing will further improve, but total equalisation is the possibility of the distant future.

5.5.2 Social Mobility of Scheduled Tribes :- The size of the country is so large that at time people call it sub continent. Some tribes live in hilly, and in the sea shores. Most of these are primitive and have their own culture, language and social set up. Some of these have their own mode of living. A good many have polygamy while some other believe in polyandry system which is not respect in civilised societies. The problem is to bring them in the main stream of people and in value them in the process of social change and upward mobility so that they get the benefits of democratic way of life in an open society with class system mobility. Concrete efforts are being made in this direction. Special coverage has been made to uplift them as laid down in our constitution. They form about 8% of Indian population. The tribes mostly live in their own pockets and seldom mix up with other people of India. In order to uplift them reservation have been made in our constitution for them in government jobs and also in the process of schooling, higher education, technical, professional and training institutions. As mostly they try to stick to the area of their tribes so special efforts are made to open schools, colleges, I.T.I's and professional institutions and to appoint teachers of these tribes so that people get enlightenment with education and socialize with the masses. There was a time when in Himachal Pradesh Rampur Bushar, Government College 22 teachers were in position and there were only 45 students studying in it. It was an attempt to make them come out of their cells and expose them to the socialisation process. In the same way schools were opened in small habitants and appointed teachers of their own class so as to make them enlightened with education and become mobile and go in for socialization process and become involved in social mobility. Because these tribes were located in such difficult areas and at home some of these areas were cut off from the main population, so in order to educate them non-tribal teachers were given special allowances to work in those areas. For example when Lahor and Spiti areas was in Punjab these teachers who opted to serve those were given doubt, the salary along with many others facilities. Having reservations in all types of educational institutions, they get early promotions and also easy entry into jobs. In this way an effort has been made to involve them in the process of social mobility.

The fact remains that a good many of them got benefits of these sections of the constitutions. However, the fact remains that in this process, an elite class amongst the scheduled tribes have come up who have grabbed most of the privileges and continue to block it extend on these to the common man who

continue to be isolated. However, with the enlightenment process by the spread of education some consciousness is becoming a part of it. However, a lot yet needs to be done in this direction to socialise them and involve them towards the upward social mobility in a systematic way. Many of them now have become high ranking administrative job, a political and other positions. Their society was so conservative that they did not marry out of their tribes, which has now not so strongly opposed.

A good many inter caste marriages are taking place. In the same way many of them have shifted to urban areas and mixed up with higher caste and influence the masses by way of visits to their tribes and motivating them to come out of their cells.

With the help of constitutional provisions and spread of education the system of polyandry and polygamy is being done away with, but roots are so strong that it will take a long time to socialise them in the main stream. All this goes to indicate that some upward social mobility has been adopted in these sections of the society mainly because of expansion of education. It is but natural that the spread of social mobility of each kind will be picked up. However, their total socialisation is the thing of the long future.

In addition, the government is undertaken more development property i.e. construction of roads. The highlight their own cottage industries to provide them jobs in their own areas so that they get employment in their own areas also so that they are developed and linked with the main stream of peoples.

5.5.3 Social Mobility and Fair Sex :- The democratic way of life adopted by India after independence demands that there should be no discrimination between the education social status, economic status and employability of the men and women. However, as the things existed a good deal of discrimination of the women existed at that time. People were not in favour of their education and especially in co-education institutions. Child marriage was celebrated, girls were discriminated with boys on all fronts. So much so that at times the girls were killed just after their birth. Women were not encouraged to go in for jobs outside their homes except school teacher or nurses etc. which too was rare and accepted later on.

In order to involve them in the process of socialisation so that their position be strengthened around efforts were made to provide them all type of education so much so in the beginning separate schools were opened them and mass media was used to create atmosphere for their schooling.

By and by the trend was changed with the policy and liberalisation. They started getting not only primary education, but secondary and higher education too. So much so that now the things have changed that they are getting education in all types of professional, technical and vocational institutions of education. Now in our institutions some times they out number the boys and also

grab many of the employment higher positions in the examinations and they can now be located in all types of jobs, even in jobs which were the monopoly of men. They drive buses, trucks, and aeroplanes. They have been recruited in police, army, navy and air force i.e. the situation in some parts like Haryana, a province of India in school that even in 20th One of the panchyats has passed a resolution that the girls in their area will not wear modern western clothes and the mobile which shows their prejudices towards the fair sex. Almost daily cases of eye teasings, Sexual exploitation are reported which in some areas and in honoured killing. The situation in many other provinces is no good. The latest trend is that girls in high, higher secondary colleges and universities to teach self defence techniques to save them from the road elements. An other happening of utmost gravity has come up in the month of November, 2014 but the Vice Chancellor of Alligarh University has disallowed the entry of girl students in the Maluana Azad Library of the university. This type of behaviour of the high ranking administrative and academic officer shows the discrimination of the women folk which needs to be condemned.

This social change no doubt is the giving of social, political and economic areas also but major change in the contribution of education which enlightened them a lot to go in for getting equal opportunities in all spheres of life. All this has lead to the speeding of the process of social mobility of the fair sex.

However, the position as it exists in many types of people is to get the sex determination of the pregnancies and drop it while the child in the womb is a girl. Even when a very strong law has been framed to perform such tests of sex determinations yet it is going on at most of the places. Similarly still in some areas there is a bias against the education of the girls. More enlightenment needs to be managed through the media of formal, non formal and informal education to cover it. One more factor against the girls is that a lot of dowry is needed and demanded at their marriages which spoils the budget of parents. However, with the highly educated girls this menace is also decreasing. In many communities, it is being illegally practised.

In gist, it can be said that after independence there has been a lot of social mobility in the fair sex. The employment and economic gains has strengthened it further. The policy of the government, democratic way of life, politicising process etc. has helped a lot in the upward female social mobility. However, th strongest part played is of education etc. diversification expansion and vocationalisation of it. It is helped as the policy of the government is to expand education a lot, but the stage of fair social motivation and equalisation is a distant dream.

5.5.4 Social Mobility and Minorities :

In India, in addition to scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, there are some minority groups like backward classes, low income groups, religious groups etc. who also needed to be merged in the stream of equalisation. A long with other political, social, economic factors, education also plays a dominant role to involve

them in social mobility. The policy of providing special concession to them also motivate them to go in for upward social mobility. In most of the occupations they can be found working at high positions and are becoming a part of social mobility. Broadly these are divided between other backward classes and backward classes, which fall in the preview of all India basis and backward classes which are further dealt with at provincial level. Their reservations are fixed by the respective government. For example, Jats in Haryana are included in backward classes in the province while it is not so with other provinces.

5.6 Role of Education in Social Mobility :

Education is a social process. An educated person is recognized and respected in the society. Education abolishes social rigidity of structure, removes discrimination based on birth and destroy rigid stratification. It also strives to achieve higher ideal obtain higher position of prestige from good habits and inculcate permanent values. It can thus be said that education develops ability and capacity in the individual to gain higher status, position of prestige and promotes effective social mobility of teachers and students.

No doubt the making of laws, their application and implementation has very important role to play in the gains of upward social mobility, but maximum role is to be played by the education. Many of them who are illiterate do not come to know about their rights and facilities provided to them. The result is that a creamy layer of scheduled caste and scheduled tribes has been created which grabs all the facilities leaving the real describing peoples dry.

Some of the educational factors to accelerate social mobility are teachers mobility, social mobility of students, level of education, content of education, research degrees in specified areas and recognition of colleges and universities.

5.7 Merits of Social Mobility :

- (i) It leads to full development of individuals
- (ii) It goes in for growth of social efficiency and social progress.
- (iii) It provides high position to deserving students.
- (iv) It provides remedy of mal-adjustment
- (v) It leads to welfare and happiness
- (vi) It leads society towards stability
- (vii) It results in the promotion of national solidarity and plenty.
- (viii) It strengthens the democratic way of life.
- (ix) It strengthens humanitarian aspects of life.
- (x) It strengthens the national integration
- (xi) It establishes international values.

5.8 Limitations of Social Mobility :

- (i) It leads to disorder in rural and urban societies.
- (ii) At times it leads to pride and snobbery in individuals.
- (iii) Some times it creates constant discontentment of individual with social order.
- (iv) It divide people different lines and create jealousy.

5.9 Summary :-

Social mobility is a world wide problem but in India, it has different dimensions. It has the problem of scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, women minorities etc. The problem is to bring them at par with the mainstream of people. Indian constitution has mostly laid down the different steps to be undertaken in this regard. Proper actions are being taken in this regard by the government. However, still education is to play a dominant role in motivating the social mobility.

5.10 Questions for Self-Evaluation :-

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| (i) Social mobility amongst scheduled castes is increasing | Yes/No |
| (ii) Education helps in improving social mobility | Yes/No |
| (iii) Social mobility provide remedy for the mal-adjusted students | Yes/No |
| (iv) Social mobility leads to the process of internationalism | Yes/No |
| (v) Our constitution aims at improving social mobility | Yes/No |
| (vi) Social mobility decreases jealousy | Yes/No |

5.11 Suggested Questions :-

- (1) What do you understand by social mobility? Describe different types of social mobility.
- (2) How does the social mobility differ in open and close societies? Discuss social mobility in India in the light of it.

5.12 Suggested Books :-

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| 1. | Dr. T.S. Sodhi and
Harinder Kaur Sodhi | : | Philosophical and Sociological
Foundations of Education |
| 2. | Dr. Swaroop Saxena | : | Philosophy of Education |