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QUESTION No;6

what is Social stratification? Differentiate between caste and Class system. Also explain factors caused for social stratification in different societies.

ANSWER No;6

INTRODUCTION:

The phenomenon of social stratification has been prevalent in many societies for centuries. It is often driven by certain factors including caste and class system which divides the society on a parameter of hierarchies. Different schools of thoughts have given diverse opinions on the existence of social stratification. However, the prevalence of social stratification gives rise to numerous economic, health, and educational disparities that limits a society's social mobility.

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2. The CONCEPT OF SOCIAL STRATIFICATION:

It refers to a framework provided to understand the hierarchical divisions in society. Social stratification enumerates different layers of society based on class, caste, and gender. Thus, the phenomenon of social stratification addresses how different social categories such as class, caste, and gender contribute to the inequalities and challenges as well as opportunities in people's lives.

THEORIES OF SOCIAL STRATIFICATION

FUNCTIONALISM → Render it as necessary and beneficial for the smooth functioning of society.

CONFLICT THEORY → Inspired by Karl Marx, it argues the social stratification gives rise to conflict between classes and favours the elite.

SYMBOLIC INTERACTIONISM → micro-level analysis examining how social interactions reflect and reproduce social hierarchies.

3. CASTE AND CLASS SYSTEM - drivers of Social Stratification in Society:

The phenomenon of social stratification runs deeply through a society and is often passed through one generation to another, often through the proclaimed caste or class of families or individuals.

4. DIFFERENCE BETWEEN CASTE AND CLASS SYSTEM:

(i) Caste System: It refers to the hereditary status passed from one generation to another based on family lineage.

a- Remains Constant: It often remains the same for a family due to the unchangeable nature of a family lineage.

b- Runs through heredity: Social stratification based on caste system runs through genes and blood lines and is considered a privilege.

c- Example: The caste system of Hindus in India known as Brahmin,

Kshatriyas, Vashyas, and shudras and those of being prevalent in Pakistan, such as the Sayyids - known as pure and leaders, renders as an example.

(iii) Class System: This type of social stratification of society is based on economic well-being of a family or individual rather than the bloodline.

a- Flexible: Class system allows social mobility through education and hardwork and it can be flexible. One can earn the status of a higher class over decades of hardwork or earning money.

b. based on Economic Condition:

Unlike Caste system, it runs through the economic might of families or individuals. It transfers on the basis of level of finance and living conditions of a family.

c. Example: In South Asia, the class system is mainly divided into three classes; Upper class, Middle Class, and lower class.

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Upper Class

High Occupational Status

Political leaders and business owners.

Middle Class

Medium Occupational Status.

Professionals

Lower Class

Low Occupational Status

Manual Workers

5. FACTORS CAUSED BY SOCIAL

STRATIFICATION: Social stratification brings as well as limits a variety of opportunities for individuals based on their status in society.

(i) Economic Disparities: Social stratification causes economic disparities among individuals due to the nature of the group they belong to. According to the conflict school of thought, it creates a conflict between different hierarchies of the society and works as a favour to the upper class.

(ii) Health Opportunities: In a capitalistic society, the lower segment of the society often does not have access to proper healthcare services due to their low economic status as better healthcare services are often expensive. This leads to poor health among individuals with low opportunities.

(iii) Limiting access to education:

Social Stratification also hinders individual's access to better education as private schools demand huge amount of fees. Thus, the intellect of the an individual with lower status is compromised due to the lack of access to good educational institutions.

(iv) Gives Rise to Privileged behaviours and injustices:

Individuals with higher class status often feel privileged either to abuse or violate the rights of the vulnerable groups of the society leading to injustice.

6- CONCLUSION: Social stratification, being a hierarchical division of different groups in society, is mainly driven by the class and caste systems. These systems running on economic well-being and family lineage, respectively, in turn create various economic, educational

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and health disparities in society. Thus, due to the volatile ~~rate~~ and subjective nature of this phenomenon, different theorists have attempted to describe its nature distinctively.
