

Stratification in a Modern Society

Stratification, Poverty & Wealth in the World

What is Social Stratification?

Sociologists like to rank individuals based on objective criteria, such as wealth, power or prestige. This is known as _____. All forms of society have ways to rank, or stratify, the members of their populations, but the level of _____ can vary a great deal between societies. Sociologists also tend to use _____ to stratify people into _____: the more money you have, the higher your status. Still others use _____ and _____ as a means to divide people; certain families regarded as “_____” hold privileged positions.

Wealth versus Income

Whether it's the pay check you get every two weeks or the dividends you receive from your stock investments, the money you receive regularly is considered _____. _____, on the other hand, refers to all of your _____, including _____.

Income Distribution

In the United States, there is a diverse group of income earners. The entire income of the country can be divided into five groups each with the same number of households. Lowest fifth _____ of the population. Second-lowest fifth _____ Middle fifth _____ Second-highest fifth _____ Highest fifth _____

Wealth Distribution

The change in income only worsens the wealth disparity in the United States. When _____, _____, and many other items are included, it turns out that the top _____ of wealthy Americans control more total wealth than the _____. This means a relatively small group of people control most of the country's money and assets.

How does the US define poverty?

Sociologists have several different ways of defining poverty.

- _____ is a temporary state of poverty that occurs when someone loses a job for a short time.
- _____ is a state of poverty that occurs when a person lacks stable employment.
- _____ is chronic and multigenerational poverty.
- _____ is poverty so severe that one lacks resources to survive.
- _____ is a state of poverty that occurs when we compare ourselves to those around us.

Sociologists sometimes talk about a group known as the _____. Definitions may differ, but the term generally refers to people who live above the _____ line but close to it.

Power

Another measure of stratification is _____—the ability to carry out your will and impose it on others. Example: Members of Congress have _____ when they represent people who elected them.

Mills on Power

_____ suggested that within the US, a small groups called the power elite holds immense power. The _____ come from three distinct but related groups:

- High ranking _____
- _____ leaders
- _____ leaders

Power Elite Examples

The power elite decide what _____ and _____ to share with the rest of us, and they use their _____ and _____ to direct the country's decisions. Example, the five _____: Time Warner, Disney, News Corporation, Bertelsmann of Germany and Viacom. They control programming and essentially the news for millions and millions of people.

Prestige

_____ refers to the level of _____ associated with our _____ and social _____. Most of us want others to hold us in high regard, but various types of jobs hold differing levels of prestige. _____, _____ and _____ are the basis for _____ system used to characterize the population.

Class Structure in the US

Sociologists have varying opinions on how many classes there SHOULD be and what constitutes each class. For our purposes, let's look at 5 different social classes in the US:

- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____
- _____

Upper/Elite Class

The _____ or _____ class is very small in number and hold significant wealth. Only about _____ of the population belongs to this group. Sociologist _____ has done extensive work studying the upper class.

G. William Domhoff

According to Domhoff's findings, _____ to the upper/elite class comes from attending an exclusive _____, belonging to exclusive _____ and being born into a wealthy powerful _____. Domhoff suggests that such a club allows the upper class to _____.

Upper Middle Class

The _____ consists of high-income members of society who are _____ but do not belong to the elite membership of the super wealthy. These people occupy _____ and have achieved a level of income that makes their lives comfortable. They own _____, have high occupational _____, and often hold positions of _____ within their jobs. This group makes up about _____ of the population. Two primary components of this group are: _____ and _____. Owning a small _____, having a professional _____, or holding a high-status _____ often propels a person into this group.

Middle Class

Almost _____ of Americans claim that they are members of the _____. In general, middle class people have _____. They may be lower paid _____ workers such as _____, or well-paid _____ workers like _____. The middle class members have at least a _____ and many have _____ or _____. Such attainment affords them a moderate level of occupational _____. Incomes for the middle class range a great deal, typically from _____ to _____ a year.

Working Class

The working class is generally made up of people with _____ and _____ of education. This group makes up about _____ of the US workforce, and its members hold jobs that usually require _____ or _____. _____ or _____ make up most of the working class.

Lower Class

Finally, a notch below the working class are the members of society who truly feel the effects of poverty: the _____. Thanks to the skyrocketing costs of tuition, food and rent, many college students might think they understand what it means to be poor. In the US, _____ people live in _____. Members of the lower class often live _____, if they have a _____ at all. Those people who do not work are often one hospital bill or layoff away from financial ruin. More than _____ of _____ in the US are near or below the poverty line. _____ of _____ live near or below the poverty line. About _____ of _____ live at the poverty line while almost _____ of the _____ are poor or near poor.

Urban Underclass

The _____ and _____ are also usually impoverished. Members of this group often live in _____ and may be

receiving _____. They rarely have _____ coverage, and often lack a _____. When they do find a job, it's usually minimum-wage position that propels them no higher than the working poor class. Many in this group make up what sociologists call the _____. The _____ lives in _____ that are characterized by four components:

- _____
- _____
- _____
- Lack of individuals in _____

William J. Wilson

Sociologist _____ stated that these components could trigger a cycle of undermining _____. Wilson discusses the urban underclass further in his book where he notes that US urban poor are increasingly living in neighborhoods with few _____, poor _____, weak _____, large amounts of _____ and rampant _____.

Neighborhoods & Social Class

Recently, sociologists have observed how _____ influence _____. Their findings have determined an increase in the _____ of poverty and affluence in the US. Overtime, poor people are living in neighborhoods densely populated by other poor people. The concentration of poverty in a single geographic area is correlated to various issues such as high _____, increased _____, and increasing numbers of _____ homes. Children who grow up in such neighborhoods are at increased risk for lower _____, poorer _____, lower levels of _____ attainment, and higher _____ rates.

Education and Social Class

In a two-year study of more than 25 different communities, _____ observed _____ in the US and noted that _____ are created _____. _____ saw that urban schools frequently lacked _____ necessary to teach.

Kozol's Findings

- Playgrounds often had little or no equipment
- Chemistry labs were missing beakers and test tubes
- Students had to share textbooks
- Suburban schools often had a surplus of supplies and staff.

Kozol's Conclusions

Kozol pointed out that while these two systems often turned out different qualities of education, the major cause for this disparity rested in the _____ that

_____ the educational systems. _____ and _____ are higher in the _____, so their schools receive more funding than urban schools.

Social Mobility

Wherever we are in life, there's always the chance that something could happen to us that would change our status. _____ is a term that describes this ability to change social classes. If social class is a _____, social mobility occurs when we climb either up or down it- _____,

_____, _____ and _____.

_____	→ refers to moving within the same status category.
_____	→ refers to moving from one social status to another.
_____	→ occurs when an individual changes social standing, especially in the workforce.
_____	→ refers to the change that family members make from one social class to the next through generations.
_____	→ occurs when social changes affect large numbers of people
_____	→ is a concept suggesting that, within the US, each social class contains a relatively fixed number of people.

What is social stratification then?

- The _____ of people and the _____ they receive based on objective criteria, often including _____, _____, and/or _____.

What are the theories behind Social Stratification?

- _____ → stratification is the result of some kind of functional balance, is inevitable, and aids in smooth functioning of society.
- _____ → social inequality is rooted in a system that is more likely to reward you based on where you start than based on your abilities
- _____ → a person's particular social class affects how he or she discusses class in general

What social policies have been created to ease poverty?

- US welfare program
- Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF)
- Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC)
- Minimum wage