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status positions
increases.



The amount or the extent of mobility which a society can support depends on how many different statuses there are in the society. If more statuses exist, then, greater opportunities are available for the people to avail them off. In traditional agricultural societies, for example, a very limited number of statuses [say, of the skilled workers, owners of the landed property, aristocrats, and so on.], were in existence. If the eldest son inherited the property and also of the high status of the father, the younger sons had to seek their fortunes elsewhere, may be in the military or in the Church.

Or, if the property of the father was evenly divided among the children, each was left with a low status than the father enjoyed. In these societies there were very few high statuses for people of low status to move into. Hence, upward mobility was virtually absent. Industrial societies, on the contrary, offer greater opportunities for mobility. The level of economic development and condition of the economy influence the range of social mobility in these societies. (i) The example of a rapidly expanding economy: In such an economy, new high-status positions are constantly available.

The demand for workers to fill these positions causes a general trend towards social mobility. (ii) The example of an economy in a condition of depression: In such an economy, the proportion of high-status positions decreases and the proportion of lower-status positions increases. This results in a downward trend in mobility. People here tend to lose their jobs and the new entrants to labour market are not able to get jobs. (b) Conditions of Mobility: The conditions under which the people allowed to be mobile also influence social mobility.

It has been observed that some societies impose greater restrictions on changes in status than other societies do. In pre-industrial societies, there was very little upward mobility, because of the prevalent restrictions a peasant could hardly become a member of the land owning class: once a peasant, always a peasant. On the contrary, in industrial societies, which place high value on individual merit, the rate of mobility is very much greater. ' In these societies, some categories of people suffer from some disabilities which stem out of ascribed status. For example, the mobility of women is relatively lower than that of men. In a country like India, some lowest caste people still suffer from disabilities, while in America and South Africa, the Blacks are found in that condition.