

What social divisions  
are and why  
interrelationships  
amongst them are  
significant...



This essay aims to examine what social divisions are and why interrelationships amongst them are significant. Then I will choose one of the articles which are given in sociology module handbook and then explain how the interrelationship of social divisions was demonstrated in my chosen article. First of all I want to present my knowledge and understanding of social divisions. A social division is a principle of social organisation resulting in a society wide distinction between two or more logically interrelated categories people, which are socially sanctioned as substantially different from one another in material and cultural ways (Geoff Payne, 2006, pp. 348). In our society there are four major social stratification systems: socio-economic, ethnic, gender and age. Stratification by gender and age is found in all societies (Anthony Giddens, 2003, pp. 04 ). The stratification systems which will be discussed further in this essay is gender and ethnic because I chose article ' Navigating Queer Street: Researching the Intersections of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans (LGBT) Identities in Health Research', which explore how the meanings of being lesbian may be permeated by class and gender and how racism and heterosexism intersect in the lives of black and minority ethnic gay men and women.

All those stratification systems which I mentioned have their own social classes, which will be presented. Socio-economic stratification nowadays has three main classes: upper class, middle class and lower class, all these classes can be subdivided into smaller classes. The upper class consists of a small minority of individuals who have both wealth and power, and are able to transmit their privileges to their children. The upper class can be roughly identified as the top 1 per cent of wealth holders. Below that class is the

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middle class. Middle class covers a broad spectrum of people working in many different occupations, from employees in the service industry to school teachers to medical professors.

Middle class now encompasses the majority of the population in Britain and most other industrialized countries (Anthony Giddens, 2003, pp. 290-294).

And the last class is lower class or working class. People who belong to this class are employed in lower tier jobs usually they work in manufactures, their incomes are lower than average.

Another one social stratification system is ethnicity. Ethnicity is a shared cultural heritage. Members of an ethnic category have common ancestors, language or religion that, together, confer a distinctive social identity, for instance the forebears of Pakistani, Indonesian, Caribbean, Hong Kong or Chinese Europeans and so on (John J. Macionis and Ken Plummer, 2005, pp.

276). Gender stratification is society's unequal distribution of wealth, power and privilege between men and women. For instance, according to electronic newspaper 'Telegraph' statistic men's average hourly pay was £16. 25 in 2009 while women hourly pay was £13.

71 (The telegraph). So it means that men's get more money than women's.

Looking back in history four basic systems of stratification have existed in human societies: slavery, caste, estate and class, most of them are extinct now. For instance, caste system in traditional India, Hindu society was divided into five main strata: four varnas or castes, and a fifth group the outcaste, whose members were known as untouchables. Each caste was

subdivided into subcastes, it was occupational groups- there were carpenter caste, goldsmith caste, potter caste, and so on.

Castes were ranked in terms of ritual purity. The Brahmins or priests, members of the highest caste, personified purity, sanctity and holiness. They were the source of learning, wisdom and truth. They alone performed the most important religious ceremonies.

At the other extreme, untouchables were defined as unclean, base and impure, a status that affected all their social relationships. They had to perform unclean and degrading tasks such as the disposal of dead animals. They were segregated from members of the caste system and lived on the outskirts of village or in their own communities. The Brahmins were custodians of the law, and the legal system they administered was based largely on their pronouncements.

Inequalities of wealth were usually linked to those of prestige and power (Holborn, Haralambos, Heald, 2004, pp. 1-2 ). In other hand, people who belong to lower social groups have a common identity, similar interests and a similar lifestyle with people who belong to higher social groups. The main different between social groups are social inequality which usually occurs in social life. George Orwell said: ' All animals are equal but some animals are more equal than others'. This quotation describes main differences between social divisions.

The example of caste system displays how interrelationships amongst social divisions influence society. Interrelationship is a logical or natural association between two or more things. Interrelationships between social divisions are <https://assignbuster.com/what-social-divisions-are-and-why-interrelationships-amongst-them-are-significant-essay/>

very significant. For example I could mention the infamous Titanic catastrophe. During this event the people who should be saved were divided in groups which had different priority.

This decision was influenced by 3 different social divisions, which are gender, age and socio-economics. Aboard the ship there were a total of 2. 223 people of whom only 706 were saved. There were saved 73% of all women, followed by 51% of children and 18% of men who were on board. Another very important condition was passengers travel class.

There were priorities to leave more space in rescue boats for people who were traveling in higher travel classes. In total there were saved 62% from 1<sup>st</sup>, 41% from 2<sup>nd</sup> and 25% from third class. This statistic displays the benefits of gender, age and wealth. The highest priority was to save women then children and finally men. This decision was affected by social divisions such as gender and age.

Priority was given to gender followed by age. Furthermore, another important social division which affected survivors count was social economics. People who were traveling in higher class had increased chance of survivability and to be taken on board the lifeboat, because they had priority to people who were in lower classes (U. S. Senate inquiry stats). Interrelationships amongst social divisions are very significant and may greatly influence such major decisions of life and death.

The article which I chose to analyse is ' Navigating Queer Street: Researching the Intersections of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Trans (LGBT) Identities in Health Research'. In this research paper will be looked at two <https://assignbuster.com/what-social-divisions-are-and-why-interrelationships-amongst-them-are-significant-essay/>

social divisions: gender, ethnicity and interrelationship amongst them.

Health researchers engaged in the project of identifying lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans (LGBT) health as a distinct topic for study have often emphasised the differences in health and health care from heterosexuals and similarities among LGBT people. This work has sometimes rendered invisible the experiences of disabled, black and minority ethnic and other groups and has contributed towards the homogenisation of LGBT communities.

In this paper, intersection theory is used to explore how diverse identities and systems of oppression interconnect. As a theory, intersectionality requires complex and nuanced thinking about multiple dimensions of inequality and difference. Author use three types of intersectionality: methodological, structural and political to explore how the meanings of being lesbian may be permeated by class and gender and how racism and heterosexism intersect in the lives of black and minority ethnic gay men and women (Julie Fish). This research paper displays differences between social divisions.

Lesbians appear to be more likely than white lesbians to maintain strong involvements with their families, to have children, to have continued contact with men and their heterosexual peers and to depend on family members for support, they may also be more likely to identify as lesbians and to have had sexual experiences with women. Furthermore the linguistic ease and communicative competence of the middle-classes distinguish them from working-class lesbians (Julie Fish). These differences between social divisions display relevance of interrelationships and also improves that <https://assignbuster.com/what-social-divisions-are-and-why-interrelationships-amongst-them-are-significant-essay/>

interrelationships are very significant between social divisions. In conclusion I would like to say that there are a lot of social divisions and most of them have something in common, also all people belong to particular divisions. Furthermore interrelationships amongst social divisions are significant and it may greatly influence our society. Titanic catastrophe showed that belonging to one group or another group can even cost a life.

The article about LGBT reveals that race may influence sexual deviation. In my opinion, it is very important to understand the importance of social divisions and interrelationships.