Indicators of Social Mobility: Education, Occupation, Income
Indicators of Social Mobility

An indicator is meant to indicate something beyond the property. Education, Occupation and income are considered to be the main indicators of Social Mobility.
Education

Education is the prime means of social mobility. Education offers a chance to make up for the various wrongs suffered by one’s previous generations. But it is also important to know that it cannot be considered as channel to acquire bureaucratic jobs. Education only increases one’s ability to take advantage of the opportunities. Education may provide the know how which is valuable in business or profession but there are other skills required to grab opportunities. For instance, a Phd holder is just as poor as unemployed illiterate if he/she is jobless.
1. Education is a gateway to the professions. The education which provides professional credentials give some assurance of prestigious and a moderately well paid career.

1. Education aids mobility in the modern promotion process from the position of a labourer to that of management personnel. In other case, an intelligent worker might start as an executive and might be steadily promoted through supervisory levels until the presidency is reached. One may move from unskilled to skilled jobs and eventually become a foreman, but beyond that point lie barriers which are difficult to pass without proper educational qualifications. Thus we have two occupational ladders: One stops with the foreman; the other begins with the professional degree and a job in the executive class and ends with the presidency. To move from top rung of the first to the bottom rung of the second is rarely possible.

2. Education provides access to highly paying governmental positions.
Effects of Education

1. It is clear that the more years one spends in education, the greater are one’s chances of high income and upward social mobility.

2. Education not only provides the credentials required to pursue many occupations but it also helps people understand beyond the traditional stereotypes.

3. For example, the more years of schooling people receive, the more likely they are to understand the importance of practicing contraception.

4. The quality of education does affect the life chances of students.

5. For instance, students’ course selections at both high school and college have been found to affect their later earning power (Griffin and Alexender, 1978)

Over all, we can say that education is not a direct channel of mobility but it may prepare people to take advantage of changes in the occupational structure. Education is only helpful to mass social mobility when expansion and changing technology create more high level jobs.
Social mobility offers society the ability to fill its occupational positions with the ablest people. It offers the individual a chance to attain his or her life goal. Occupation has been the most common indicator of social stratification and mobility both in closed and open societies.
Social Mobility in Closed Society with Occupation as an Indicator

1. After the industrialization of the country, particularly after the two world wars, a significant change has come to be observed in the traditional occupations of different castes.

2. Restrictions on the change of occupation have been weakened and occupational mobility has become possible.

3. For instance, sub caste if khatik caste (caste of butchers) of U.P are engaged in different occupations of butchery, masonry, rope making and selling of fruits.
Social Mobility in Open Society with Occupation as an Indicator

1. In an open society also lot of importance is given to occupation.

2. Occupational groups are however not rigid because of the internal heterogeneity of the strata. One can freely change one’s position in the system of stratification by changing one’s occupation.

3. There are more avenues for upward mobility with the increase of occupational opportunities.

4. For instance, the multiplication of service sector has increased employment in service, retail, sales, marketing sectors.
1. Income and economic conditions play a very important role in changing the status of an individual. In other words, income is an important indicator of social mobility.

2. On the basis of income, individuals can achieve a high status in society.

3. Even in caste system, one’s status improves because of improved economic condition.

4. Srinivas in the concept of Sanskritization illustrates many examples where the lower caste groups, with the change in income adopt life styles of high caste people.

5. In open societies as well, money is the important determinant of social class.
6. It has also been found, that the ‘new rich’ have the money but they lack the life of upper class people. They buy luxuries like them but it takes longer to adopt the mannerisms of the upper class people.

7. Money has other subtle overtones like income from investments is more prestigious than income from welfare payments.

8. Income from the professions is better than wages.

9. Money from the speculation on stocks is better than the money earned from gambling on horses.

Therefore, the nature and source of one’s income carry suggestions as to one’s family background and probable way of life.
Thus, the three indicators, education, occupation and income help us in developing better understanding of the phenomenon of Social Mobility.

Hence, we can put forth that education is helpful to create opportunities which further facilitate social mobility. Occupation is an important indicator of mobility, The Government and the expanding industry and service sector is opening more avenues for social mobility and finally, Income indicates one’s way of life.
THANK YOU ...

Veenat
Dept. of Sociology
PGGCG- Sec 11
Chandigarh