

## Social Change via Social Mobility

In the sociology of education, **social change** refers to transformations in educational structures, values, and institutions that reshape society, while **social mobility** refers to the movement of individuals or groups within the social hierarchy facilitated by education. **Social change = systemic transformation through education; social mobility = positional movement enabled by education.**

### Difference in Sociology of Education

#### ◆ Social Change

- **Definition:** Social change in education involves shifts in the role, structure, and function of schooling that transform society.
- **Scope:** Collective and systemic.
- **Examples:** Expansion of mass education, introduction of inclusive policies, digital learning revolutions.
- **Academic Source:** Havighurst (1961, p. 3) notes that “education is both a cause and a consequence of social change, as it reshapes socio-economic structures while responding to them”.
- **Key Point:** Education acts as a driver of social change by altering cultural values, political participation, and economic opportunities.

#### ◆ Social Mobility

- **Definition:** Social mobility in education refers to the upward or downward movement of individuals in the social hierarchy through access to schooling and credentials.
- **Scope:** Individual or group level.
- **Examples:** A working-class student becoming a professional through higher education; disparities in mobility due to unequal access.
- **Academic Source:** Comparative studies show that “equitable access to quality education demonstrates higher levels of social mobility” (IJRAR, 2023, p. 5).
- **Key Point:** Education provides the mechanism for mobility, but structural inequalities can limit its effectiveness.

### Comparison Table

Aspect	Social Change (Education)	Social Mobility (Education)
Definition	Transformation of educational structures & values	Movement of individuals/groups via education
Scope	System-wide, collective	Individual or group level
Focus	Institutions, policies, cultural shifts	Status, class, occupation, income

Aspect	Social Change (Education)	Social Mobility (Education)
Examples	Mass schooling, inclusive reforms, digital learning	Student from low-income background becoming a doctor
Impact	Alters society through education	Alters position within existing hierarchy
Drivers	Policy reforms, technology, globalization	Access, quality, equity in education

## References

1. Havighurst, R. J. (1961). *Education, Social Mobility and Social Change in Four Societies*. *American Journal of Sociology*, 67(3), p. 3. JSTOR link.
2. IJRAR (2023). *The Role of Education in Social Mobility: A Comparative Study*. *International Journal of Research and Analytical Reviews*, p. 5. PDF link.
3. IJSSR (2022). *The Influence of Education on Social Stratification and Mobility*. *International Journal of Social Science Research*, p. 4. Available here.