

СОЦІОЛОГІЧНІ НАУКИ

THE PROBLEM OF SOCIAL INEQUALITY IN SOCIETY: CAUSES AND CONSEQUENCES

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In modern Ukraine and other countries of the world inequality is becoming extremely widespread. This leads to lower in the quality of life of people, increasing in the number of poor people, decreasing in life expectancy and deterioration of economic development. In order to overcome all the types of inequality, it is necessary first of all to understand the nature of inequality, its causes and manifestations.

The problem of inequality was studied by such researchers as E. Libanova, O. Chupryna, O. Kutsenko, L. Klevchik, O. Nazarova, T. Kalashnikova, I. Osypova, P. Shvets, L. Lisogor, M. Kholod and others.

At present many countries of the world are characterized by the existence of the problem of inequality in society. Inequality is a social phenomenon that is typical for any society and is a major factor in its instability and social conflicts [2, p. 48]. Inequality characterizes the political and legal rights of the individual, reflects his social status and position in society. In general, there are economic, social, political and ethnocultural inequalities. But it is possible to describe a broader classification,

which also includes educational, informational, environmental and health inequalities [1, p. 84].

The greatest amount of public dissatisfaction and conflicts is caused by social inequality. Social inequality is a state of society when certain social groups have different social statuses, which determine their opportunities and grant special privileges or, conversely, deprive them. Social inequality, in turn, is divided into class, age, gender and race inequality.

The French sociologist Emile Durkheim identified two causes of social inequality: different levels of personal qualities and talents in people and the need to encourage the best ones in their work. It is referred to those who are very helpful to society. The protection of government privileges is another reason of social inequality which was put forward by Robert Michels. He states that when the number of the community exceeds a certain number of people, they nominate the main member, or a whole group, and give him more power than everyone else [2, p. 49].

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Class inequality means the differentiation of society into classes, segments and groups of population, depending on social status, income, level of education [2, p. 49].

Gender inequality is characterized by inequality in the guarantee and realization of fundamental human rights and freedoms depending on gender. It is more evident in the labor market in limited women's access to certain occupations and in the wage's differential.

Age inequality is due to human development, maturation, socialization and experience. Traditionally, the most common phenomenon of age inequality has been the dominance of older people. For a certain period of time they were the main repositories of knowledge and experience. But with the changes of scientific and technological progress, their authority in society decreases. The role of youth, in turn, increases, but respect for the elders remains like an element of culture [1, p. 133].

Intergenerational inequality is considered as a separate type of age inequality. Generational change is uneven. The birth rate is increasing and decreasing all the time.

This creates tensions in access to educational and social infrastructure. Consequently, there is an excess or shortage of places in educational institutions and in the labor market.

The level of education influences social inequality in society. Education is one of the factors shaping a person in society. It determines a person's future income and competitiveness in the labor market. Inequality of access to quality education leads to an increase in the proportion of uneducated people who cannot find work. As a result, the poverty rate is increasing [1, p. 169].

Social inequality is caused by economic inequality, namely, income inequality, because of which there are poor and rich segments of the population. Income inequality also leads to unequal access of people to such social goods as education, quality health care, comfortable accommodation, which in turn affects the health and life expectancy of certain segments of the population, leads to their poverty [1, p. 6]. Economic inequality is also characterized by discrimination in employment and inequality of opportunities. The following groups of the population such as young people looking for work for the first time, women of active child-bearing age, persons older than 40 years, people employed in the informal sector, residents of villages, fringes of society, etc. have unequal opportunities for access to the labor market most significantly [1, p. 371].

The main consequences of social inequality include an increase in the proportion of poor people, economic instability and stifling the development of economies of countries, the distribution of corruption, an increase in social stress, discontent and social conflicts.

Conclusions. Social inequality is the social division of society into classes with different rights, responsibilities and social opportunities. Social inequality is also characterized by an uneven distribution of resources between individual members of society. The main manifestations of inequality in modern society are inequality in socioeconomic status, age groups, gender, health, education, professional area, place

of residence, regions, and so on. Today social inequality is identified as a major problem of our time, which causes social and economic instability.

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