Social stratification and mobility in Guatemala

Guillermo Díaz

ABSTRACT

This article deals with two vital components of a country's social structure: social stratification and social mobility. It examines the social structure of Guatemala, adapting for this purpose two approaches to social class that are often used in studies dealing with the issue. The aim is to delineate the Guatemalan social pyramid, showing not so much classes as rough strata based on employment data. Statistical analysis of data from a living conditions survey is used to provide information about social mobility with a view to illustrating educational and occupational mobility in the country. The results indicate a pyramid-shaped social structure and low educational and occupational mobility when children are compared with their parents. They also show that mobility opportunities differ between the sexes and between ethnic groups.

KEYWORDS

Social class, social mobility, measurement, education, employment, equality of opportunity, indigenous peoples, women, Guatemala

JEL CLASSIFICATION

J6, N0, O5

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I
Introduction

Little work has been done in Guatemala on the combined analysis of social stratification and social mobility, and there are few published studies on stratification in Guatemalan society. There are even fewer studies on social mobility in the country, and those that do exist have dealt with educational mobility. The aim of the present article is to look at the subject in a way that encompasses both issues, which are closely related.

Social stratification in Guatemala is approached by analysing the occupational structure. In today's society, occupation is the main determinant of well-being, i.e., it is the factor that decides people's life chances. Occupation also represents one of the main roles individuals play in society and influences not only their lifestyles, but their social standing as well. A practical reason for using occupation to construct social classes is the availability of information, which is deployed here to construct the class structure of Guatemala on the basis of the two schemata most widely used at present, those of Wright (1997) and of Erikson and Goldthorpe (1993), with the aim of furnishing knowledge about the composition of social classes in Guatemala at the outset of the present century.

There have been major changes in the economic and social structure of Guatemala in the last two decades. Economically, there is the country's increased participation in the world economy as a result of free trade agreements (FTAs) and inflows of foreign investment, rising international emigration and the strong role of remittances, and the increasing share of services in the production structure. Social developments have included poverty reduction, improving education levels and the rise of the middle strata. Changes like those described have been creating the conditions for a more favourable distribution of access to greater well-being for individuals; in other words, they have favoured greater social mobility. To ascertain the scale of this phenomenon, the present study carries out estimates of educational and occupational mobility and of differences in mobility by sex, age and ethnic group.

The results indicate that Guatemala has a very hierarchical social structure (with a small social elite and an incipient middle class, both urban) and a low level of educational and occupational mobility. Educational mobility is greater among men than women, and in the non-indigenous ethnic group than in the indigenous one. In the case of occupational mobility, the opposite applies. People aged 40 and under have greater educational and occupational mobility than those over 40.

This paper is organized as follows. Section II discusses social stratification and the way Guatemalan social classes are constructed. Section III deals with social mobility and its quantification. Section IV examines the structure and mobility of social classes, and section V offers conclusions.

II
Social stratification

1. Social class

Sociological theory dealing with social class is extensive, with a multiplicity of approaches and studies covering a whole variety of subjects. Indeed, the subject of social class was among those given most attention by sociologists throughout much of the second half of the last century, and it remains the focus of attention and debate at the beginning of the present one, especially in advanced societies, where discussion turns on whether social classes still exist there. Numerous theories have been formulated to define social classes and account for their existence, prominent among them being Marxist theory, also known as conflict theory, and functionalist theory.

In the framework of Marxist theory, Lenin (1919) offered the following concepts: "Classes are large groups of people differing from each other […] by their relation […] to the means of production, by their role in the

social organisation of labour, and, consequently, by the dimensions of the share of social wealth of which they dispose and the mode of acquiring it."

The famous phrase "the whole history of mankind […] has been a history of class struggles" (Marx and Engels, 1910) summarizes the central idea of the theory of social class delineated by Marx. This had not been fully articulated in writing by the time of his death, but the author did leave behind him the fundamental pillar of the sociological tradition of class conflict theory. In the Communist Manifesto, Marx argues that in capitalist society there are two antagonistic classes in conflict with each other, the bourgeoisie, which owns the means of production, and the proletariat, which lacks means of production.

Marx's ideas were reinterpreted by Dahrendorf (1959) in the light of the changes experienced in industrial society in the last century. That author argues that, in industrial society, shareholders have no direct contact with the firms they own, as there is a "division of the twofold function of the employer-capitalist into two separate functions, that of the capitalist and that of the manager who, while legally just an employee, actually controls the process of production". He also maintained that this new form of production created a new form of stratification. First, there was the functional production hierarchy comprised of managers, which was totally different from that of the firm's owners. Second, there were changes affecting social standing in the working class owing to the appearance of skilled workers, whose education or training gave them a special position and differentiated them from unskilled workers. Also, and contrary to what Marx claimed, there was a broadening of the new middle class.

According to Dahrendorf (1959), class conflict was changed by the separation of company ownership and control, and by social mobility. Furthermore, he considered that in a democratic system the dominated class took the form of a variety of interest groups competing with one another or acting together, while the dominant class was differentiated from the dominated one by the existence of the bureaucracy. The action of the bureaucracy came between dominators and dominated, so that the exercise of power was broken down into multiple processes. On the basis of this consideration, the author held that the Marxist definition of classes based on private property needed to be replaced by one based on participation in authority or in domination (Dahrendorf, 1959). For that author, consequently, class conflict was ultimately rooted in the way authority or power was distributed in associations of domination (Dahrendorf, 1959).

Another influential author within the tradition of Marxist conflict theory is Touraine (1977), who sets out from the idea that society not only reproduces itself and adapts to a particular environment, but is actually self-producing, a phenomenon he terms historicity. The production of society is made possible by knowledge, accumulation and the ethical model. This last term defines the reflection society carries out upon itself, which helps to define the field of social relations, in the sense of establishing whether these are relations of production, distribution or consumption. Touraine sets out from what he calls the double dialectic of social classes, represented by the clash of interests between two classes that are also acting on the construction of society. The dominant ruling class controls the cultural model and uses it to exercise its power, while the discontented dominated class adopts a defensive position towards the cultural model. In Touraine's perspective, social classes are the contending actors that construct history.

The crux of Marxist theory is the class struggle, which, as may be seen from the arguments of the authors mentioned above, can centre on the struggle for ownership of the means of production, authority and control over the production process or the construction of history. However, Veblen (1915) rejected this class conflict approach and argued that relations between the classes were imitative. According to Veblen's theory, the lower class does not seek the destruction of the higher class, but accepts its unequal status and tries to imitate the social behaviour of that class.

In contemporary sociological theory, there is a widespread view that social classes are not defined solely by their relationship with the ownership of the means of production, as Marx posited. González-Anleo (1981) considers that the primordial characteristic of individuals sharing the same social class is not their relationship to the means of production but the function they play in the production process. Belmeni (1996) uses a definition that incorporates both the elements mentioned, arguing that a social class is a set of individuals who differ among themselves in terms of ownership and the role they play in the social organization of the production process. This definition is considered helpful for the purposes of this study as a way of understanding the social stratification mechanism in Guatemala, where ownership of material goods and position in the production process are the main markers of class.

One of the main criticisms of the Marxist analysis of social class is the emphasis it places on the division of society into two antagonistic classes, as this makes it difficult to place the intermediate class, which has

a substantial presence in industrial societies. Wright (1997) has developed a theory that seeks to overcome the constraints involved in placing the middle class. The three main situations in the class relations of capitalism are: the bourgeoisie, which owns the means of production and the output produced by the workforce; the proletariat, which lacks means of production; and the petty bourgeoisie, which owns means of production and the product of its own labour. To these three main class situations, Wright adds a further three contradictory class locations: managers and supervisors, who exercise control in practice over the means of production and the workforce; semi-autonomous workers, who lack means of production but control their own labour; and small employers. Figure 1 illustrates the relationship between these class locations.

This first class analysis schema of Wright's was criticized by the theorists, leading the author himself to conclude that it was unsuited to the analysis of class in capitalism (Crompton, 1998). Wright proposed a new framework of class analysis, going on the theory of exploitation and class put forward by John Roemer (1989), who argued that ownership of the means of production did not necessarily prevent exploitation.

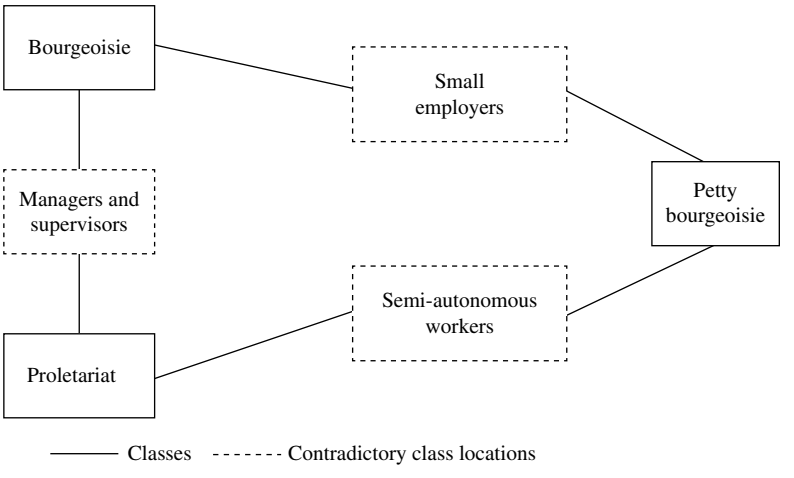
This author considered that, in the capitalist production system, capitalists not only owned the means of production and recruited workers to exploit these, but also "dominated" workers in the production process. This is crucial to an understanding of Wright's theory, as he treats authority as a dimension of class relations in capitalism. In this system, it is managers and supervisors delegated by the owners who exercise control over the means of production. This immediately poses the problem of whether they should be considered capitalists or workers. Wright calls this situation a "contradictory class location", referring to the duality of these actors within the capitalist production system. However, he notes that managers and supervisors are distinguished from workers by sharing in the distribution of the economic surplus, and calls this a "privileged appropriation location within exploitation relations".

The second important dimension in Wright's analysis of class within capitalism is expertise, which constitutes an axis of class differentiation among workers. Expertise brings to light strata within an inequality structure rather than a position in the class structure (Wright, 1997, p. 16). With this argument, the author sets out to differentiate himself from the service class approach of Goldthorpe who, in Wright's view, fails to take account of the problem of exploitation and antagonistic interests in his analysis and does not deal with authority in terms of domination. Another crucial difference between the two authors, as noted by Crompton (1998), is that Wright distinguishes between class and occupation, the latter being defined by technical relations of production while the former is defined by social relations of production.

Wright's theory sought to deal with the contradictory position of managers and supervisors in the Marxist class model, as already noted, by creating the concept of the "contradictory class location", on the basis of which the author developed an elaborated class typology by grouping classes into a positioning matrix, illustrated in table 1.

FIGURE 1

Main classes in capitalist society



Source: E. Wright, *Class Counts*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1997.

Wright (1997) divides positions within this class structure into two: the first is the "direct class location", determined by people's relationship to the process of exploitation through the work they do, and the second is the "mediated class location", which is related to family ties.

This schema is shown in table 2, but expanded from the perspective of the interplay of forms of appropriation and domination depending on whether capitalist relations or small commodity relations apply, i.e., whether relations involve more (+) or less (-) appropriation and domination or some intermediate level (+/-).

An important aspect of this author's theory is that he identifies class relations with the unequal distribution of rights over the means of production. On the basis of this conception, he defines the class structure as the sum total of the class relations in a given unit of analysis; it is thus possible to speak of the class structure of a firm, a city or a country (Wright, 1999, p. 7). The importance of this concept in the author's analysis is that the class structure means the structure of social relations for individuals (or families, in certain cases) determining their class interests; the class structure can also be said to define the set of empty places or positions occupied by individuals or families (Wright, 1985, p. 10). A final element which the author adds to his analysis is the temporary character of class positions, which opens up the possibility of examining intragenerational social mobility. Likewise, another important element, especially where this study is concerned, is that the class structure provides a way of describing social changes over time.

Weberian theory distinguishes three dimensions in society: the economic order, represented by social class; the social order, represented by status; and the political order, represented by party. Each of these has its own stratification criterion: income and property, in the economic dimension; prestige and honour, in the social dimension; and power, in the political dimension. According to Frankel (1971), Weber identified status as an alternative to the concept of class. Status is connected

TABLE 1

Wright's elaborated class typology

Relation to means of production

Number of employees	Owner	Employees			Relation to authority
Many	Capitalists	Expert managers	Skilled managers	Non-skilled managers	Managers
Few	Small employers	Expert supervisors	Skilled supervisors	Non-skilled supervisors	Supervisors
None	Petty bourgeoisie	Experts	Skilled workers	Non-skilled workers	Non-management
		Expert	Skilled	Non-skilled	

Relation to scarce skills

Source: E. Wright, *Class Counts*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1997.

TABLE 2

Class relations by forms of appropriation and domination

	Capitalist relations		Small commodity relations	
Class	Appropriation	Domination	Appropriation	Domination
Bourgeoisie	+	+		
Top managers	+/-	+/-		
Lower supervisors	-	+/-		
Workers	-	-		
Petty bourgeois			+	+
Semi-autonomous employees	-	-	-	+
Small employers	+	+	+	+

Source: E. Wright, *Class Counts*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1997.

to lifestyle. According to Giddens (1973), lifestyle is the way the members of a particular group with the same status express their desire to differentiate themselves from the others.

Following Weber's argument with regard to power and status, Goldthorpe proposes a class schema based on occupation and the status associated with this, allowing him to group occupational categories of individuals with similar income levels and working conditions (Atria, 2004). Likewise, Erikson and Goldthorpe's schema takes the individual's position in the production process into account, which allows the element of authority to be incorporated. A basic schema of three class positions is developed: employers, (own-account) workers and employees. In a later version, Erikson and Goldthorpe (1993) kept the three major classes but expanded to 11 the number of social class categories, combining criteria of ownership and control of means of production, more or less autonomous service provision and manual work with different skill levels. Table 3 illustrates the expanded version.

2. The construction of social classes

In constructing social classes, it needs to be considered that "society is a product of man" (Berger, 1969, p. 3), although "individuals produce society […] as historically located actors, and not under conditions of their own choosing" (Giddens, 1976, p. 160). These words are meant as a reminder that any schema for building a class structure will be conditioned by the historical and social context of whoever develops it.

Some authors set out from the idea of social class as a form of social interaction. This is the perspective of the work done in Spain by Mora (2002) in studying the production relations of employees at two firms in Catalonia, and it is also the approach of the Cambridge Social Interaction and Stratification (CAMSIS) scale. The basis for the former is that human beings produce in society. As Marx (1891) puts it:

> "In the process of production, human beings work not only upon nature, but also upon one another. They produce only by working together in a specified manner and reciprocally exchanging their activities. In order to produce, they enter into definite connections and relations to one another, and only within these social connections and relations does their influence upon nature operate—i.e., does production take place."

In consequence, Mora (2002, p. 12) argues that "social classes are, first and foremost, forms of social interaction".

The theoretical basis for the CAMSIS approach is the concept of "selective association". Thus, people with a similar social position as members of a social class are considered to have a tendency to interact more with individuals from that class, mainly when it comes to establishing relations of friendship and marriage. This approach is a departure from the traditional one, in which the class structure is defined first and then the way its members interact is studied. Accordingly, it is "close to the interactional approaches and the concept of social distance developed by Bourdieu. Actors who share similar positions within the social system also share similar experiences, including relations of friendship, affinity and marriage, as well as cultural patterns" (Francés, 2009).

Other authors consider that "occupation plays a role as an intermediate variable in the operationalization of

TABLE 3

Erikson and Goldthorpe's typology of classes

Service classes	I	Higher-grade professionals, administrators and officials, managers in large industrial establishments, large proprietors
	II	Lower-grade professionals, administrators and officials, higher-grade technicians, managers in small and medium-sized industrial establishments, supervisors of non-manual workers, employees
Intermediate classes	III a	Executive employees
	III b	Service workers
	IV a	Small proprietors and self-employed workers with employees
	IV b	Small proprietors and self-employed workers with no employees
	V	Lower-grade technicians, supervisors of manual workers
Working classes	VI	Skilled industrial manual workers
	VII a	Unskilled industrial manual workers
	VII b	Agricultural manual workers

Source: R. Erikson and J.H. Goldthorpe, *The Constant Flux: a Study of Class Mobility in Industrial Societies*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1993.

the different models of social stratification" (González, 1991, p. 35) and consequently construct the class structure on the basis of the occupational structure. Even in social interaction models such as CAMSIS, occupation is used as a measure of stratification. After all, "occupation is generally a good and economical indicator of position in social space" (Bourdieu, 1987, p. 4).

A third approach relies on asking subjects where they are situated in the class structure, something that is questioned by many authors, including Goldthorpe and Lockwood, who consider such studies to be of very little sociological value (cited in Bourdieu and others, 1986, p. 256). Bourdieu (1987, p. 2) takes issue with this stance when he says:

> "In reality, agents are both classified and classifiers. But they classify according to (or depending on) their position within classifications. To sum up what I mean by this, I can comment briefly on the notion of point of view: the point of view is a perspective, a partial, subjective vision (subjectivist moment); but it is at the same time a view, a perspective, taken from a point, from a determinate position in an objective social space (objectivist moment)."

To this may be added, paraphrasing Lenoir (in Champagne and others, 1989), that the object of class sociology is not to draw boundaries between classes in order to define them but, in this case, to describe how individuals perceive themselves in their situation as members of a particular social class.

A number of studies on social stratification have been published in Latin America. The social stratification of Buenos Aires was studied by Jorrat (1997), using the approaches of Wright and Goldthorpe. León and Martínez (2001) addressed the subject of social stratification in Chile at the end of the last century from the perspective of socio-occupational categories, using data from the 1995 employment survey. The structure of some Latin American countries was described by Portes and Hoffman (2003), who defined social classes by employing the criteria of control of the means of production, control of others' labour and control of scarce intellectual resources. In Central America, Rodríguez (2002) made use of data on the working population gathered by the 2000 census in Costa Rica to develop a class model adapted from the one proposed by Wright, which has been the most used. In Guatemala, Pérez and others (2003) used data from an income and expenditure survey to develop a stratification index based on income, education and household living conditions.

The present study presents two structures for social class in Guatemala, following the schemata of Wright and of Erikson and Goldthorpe already presented (the composition of each class in each schema is described in the annexes). In the first case, the class structure is also developed for the different regions making up the country, with the object of contrasting the class structure of urban areas, represented by the capital and adjoining municipalities, with that of rural areas, constituted by the rest of the country.

The data used to produce the class structure are from the 2006 National Living Conditions Survey (ENCOVI) (INE, 2007). A sample of almost 27,000 people over 18 was selected from the database, on the basis of occupation and ownership of factors of production.

III
Social mobility

Quantifying social mobility

Social mobility is defined as any transition by an individual from one social position to another (Solares, 1989). Another way of looking at social mobility is as the ability of an individual or stratum to improve their position significantly (Miller, 1968, cited in Cachón, 2001, p. 217). Generally speaking, most authors, such as Bendix and Lipset (1972) and Mayer (1976), understand social mobility as the process whereby people move from one social stratum to another.

Mobility may be horizontal or vertical. Horizontal mobility occurs when an individual moves from one position to a different but equal one, while vertical mobility means the transition from one social stratum to another. This movement may be upward or downward. Sorokin (1956) considers that both individual and group social mobility can occur, and that this may happen in the economic, occupational, political or some other field.

An individual's social mobility can take place across generations, more specifically from parents to children, in the form of a change of occupation, social

class or some other variable, and it can also take place over the lifetime of the individual, in which case it is intragenerational mobility. Mention should also be made of the difference between absolute mobility and relative mobility. The former alludes to the absolute number, usually expressed in relative terms, of people from one social class who move to another, i.e., it concerns a change in the distribution of the population between the different social classes. Relative mobility means the likelihood of people moving from their social class of origin to a different class (Sorokin, 1956).

There are a variety of theories to explain the causes of social mobility. One of the most popular is the so-called liberal theory, which maintains that there is a close connection between industrialization and social mobility. Liberal theory states that there is greater equality of opportunities for social mobility in industrial than in non-industrial societies. Economic development, and the growth of the service sector in particular, generates the conditions for an increase in technical and professional occupations (Echeverría, 1999).

In sociology there are numerous approaches, both quantitative and qualitative, for quantifying and studying social mobility in a given society. Barber (1964) illustrates the use of occupational transition matrices relating parents' situation to that of their children in different studies. Cachón (2001) describes the form and content of the transition matrix and the analysis that can be based on it. Figure 2 provides a graphic representation of the transition or mobility matrix.

The variable t_o denotes the starting categories and t_1 the final categories. In both cases, the categories, their number and their order are the same. The initial categories often relate to the occupation, education or social class of the parent, while the final categories use the same variables for the children.

Figure 3 illustrates how the matrix is interpreted. The variable identified by the letter "a" shows the total number of individuals. The rectangle identified by the letter "b" shows the total number of individuals in the category of origin, and the one identified by the letter "c" shows the total number of individuals in the destination category. The name of each category is represented by the letters "A" for the parents and "Z" for the children. The letter "n" indicates the row and column vector, the total for which is on the right, while "N" indicates the total value of the different rows and columns. The diagonal containing the letter "d" shows the total number of individuals remaining in the position of origin, while the triangle with the letter "e_1" identifies upward mobility and that containing the letter "e_2" identifies downward mobility.

According to Cachón (2001), the basic matrix can be used to construct three matrices with proportional distributions. The first matrix, known as the rotation matrix, shows the proportion of individuals who were in a category of origin at a given time and in a destination category at another time. The second matrix is the relative distribution matrix for the rows, and is called the transition matrix, while the third matrix is the relative distribution matrix for the columns.

FIGURE 2

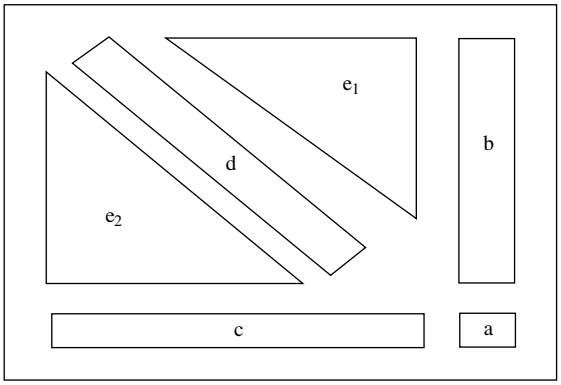
Transition matrix

t_o \ t_1	Z_1	Z_2	. . . .	Z_k	Marginal totals A
A_1	n_{11}	n_{12}	. . . .	n_{1k}	n_1
A_2	n_{11}	n_{22}	. . . .	n_{2k}	n_2
.	. .		. . . .	.	.
.	. .		. . . .	.	.
A_k	n_{k1}	n_{k2}	. . . .	n_{kk}	n_k
Marginal totals Z	n1	n2		nk	N

Source: L. Cachón, *¿Movilidad social o trayectoria de clase?*, Madrid, Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas, 2001.

FIGURE 3

Composition of the transition matrix



Source: L. Cachón, *¿Movilidad social o trayectoria de clase?*, Madrid, Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas, 2001.

The matrix can be used to calculate indices like the following, suggested by Cachón (2001):

I. Gross stability index: $GSI = \sum_{i=1}^{k} n_{ii}$

II. Gross mobility index: $GMI = \dfrac{N - \sum_{i,j=1}^{k} n_{ij}}{N}$

III. Upward mobility index: $GMI = \dfrac{\sum_{i,j=1}^{k} n_{ij}}{N}$, when j > 1

IV. Downward mobility index: $GMI = \dfrac{\sum_{i,j=1}^{k} n_{ij}}{N}$, when j < 1

The relative distribution matrices for the rows and that for the columns can be used to obtain the indices of upward mobility (inflow) and downward mobility (outflow). Table 4 shows the case of a dichotomous manual/non-manual occupation matrix (Cachón, 2001).

TABLE 4

Matrix of relative distribution of occupations

		Child	
		Manual	Non-manual
Parent	Manual	a	c
	Non-manual	b	d

Source: L. Cachón, *¿Movilidad social o trayectoria de clase?*, Madrid, Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas, 2001.

The stability vectors correspond to the letters "a" and "d" and the mobility vectors to the letters "b" and "c", the first being downward mobility and the second upward mobility.

I. Downward inflow mobility matrix:

$$I = \frac{b}{a+b} * 100$$

II. Upward inflow mobility matrix:

$$II = \frac{c}{c+d} * 100$$

III. Downward outflow mobility matrix:

$$III = \frac{b}{a+c} * 100$$

IV. Upward outflow mobility matrix:

$$IV = \frac{b}{a+c} * 100$$

The mobility index proposed as part of the Shorrocks (1978) index can also be obtained from the transition matrices:

$$M(P) = [n - Trace(P)]/n\text{-}1$$

where:

$0 \leq M(P) \leq 1$

n = number of ranges

$Trace(P)$ = sum of the diagonal elements of the matrix

An index value of 1 (one) denotes total or perfect mobility, while a value of 0 (zero) means that there is no mobility, implying a closed society.

Another way of obtaining a mobility index is by calculating regressions. Solon (1992) used this statistical technique to measure intergenerational income mobility in the United States. This regression was adapted by Mediavilla (2004) to measure educational mobility in Brazil, as follows:

$$E_{c,i} = \beta E_{p,i} + \varepsilon$$

where the terms $E_{c,i}$ and $E_{p,i}$ represent the education levels of children and parents, respectively, measured in logarithms and as deviations from the respective means. β indicates the degree of intergenerational educational persistence. Consequently, 1 - β expresses the degree of educational mobility between generations.

IV

Social class and social mobility

1. The social class structure

Following Wright's schema, the class structure reveals that the country's social elite, comprising the dominant class, is small and constitutes just 5% of the population, as shown in table 5. The "employers" class fraction, which includes those employing one or more workers, makes up the bulk of the dominant class and represents 3.1% of the whole population. The "executive" class fraction, comprising administrators, managers and executive staff in private-sector firms and public institutions, represents 1.8% of Guatemalan society.

The middle class is only now developing in the country and accounts for just 9.2%, meaning that just under 1 in 10 Guatemalans is a member of this social class, composed in virtually equal proportions of university-educated professionals, both employed and self-employed, technical workers and clerical workers with secondary education.

The working class, termed the lower class in the functionalist approach, forms the broad base of the Guatemalan social pyramid, comprising just over four fifths of the population (85.9%). The "skilled workers" class fraction is a minority within the working class, representing a quarter of this or 19.3% of the population. This class fraction is mainly composed of artisans and workers with some level of skills. The "non-skilled workers" class segment forms the great bulk of the population: 66.5%, or two out of every three Guatemalans. Half the country's population is poor, according to ENCOVI data for 2006 (INE, 2007).

The analysis of the class structure by regions of the country, which is presented in table 6, reveals that the dominant class mainly resides in region 1, the department of Guatemala, which includes the capital. The "employers" and "executives" class fractions are urban, particularly the latter. The North region is where the dominant class is least present, particularly the "executives" fraction. The middle class is an urban social phenomenon and accounts for almost a fifth of the population in the department of Guatemala, double the national average. The middle class is also observed to live mainly in the Centre region, which includes departments close to the capital, the centre of economic and political power in the country.

The working class has the largest presence in all five of the country's regions, with the East region having the largest concentration of this class and the Guatemala department the smallest. The working class represents two thirds of the population in the latter, whereas in the other regions it represents about four fifths. The "skilled workers" class fraction has the largest presence in the Guatemala and Centre regions. The "non-skilled

TABLE 5

Social class structure in Guatemala, 2006. Wright's schema

Social class	Number	Percentage
Dominant class	**1 332**	**5.0**
Employers	843	3.1
Executives	489	1.8
Middle class	**2 470**	**9.2**
Professionals	1 162	4.3
Technical and clerical workers	1 308	4.9
Working class	**23 089**	**85.9**
Skilled workers	5 195	19.3
Non-skilled workers	17 894	66.5
Total	*26 891*	*100.0*

Source: prepared by the author on the basis of National Institute of Statistics (INE), 2006 National Living Conditions Survey (ENCOVI), Guatemala City, 2007.

TABLE 6

Percentage structure of social classes in Guatemala, by geographical region, 2006. Wright's schema

(Percentages)

Social class	Guatemala	North	Centre	East	West
Dominant class	**11.0**	**3.2**	**5.5**	**5.6**	**6.0**
Employers	6.3	2.1	3.9	3.9	3.5
Executives	4.8	1.1	1.6	1.7	2.6
Middle class	**22.5**	**9.4**	**12.9**	**9.3**	**9.3**
Professionals	7.0	5.6	5.6	4.6	5.2
Technical and clerical workers	15.5	3.8	7.3	4.8	4.1
Working class	**66.5**	**87.2**	**81.6**	**85.0**	**84.7**
Skilled workers	29.1	14.5	25.4	17.8	19.9
Non-skilled workers	37.3	72.8	56.2	67.3	64.8
Total	*100.0*	*99.8*	*100.0*	*100.0*	*100.0*

Source: prepared by the author on the basis of National Institute of Statistics (INE), 2006 National Living Conditions Survey (ENCOVI), Guatemala City, 2007.

workers" fraction is most strongly represented in the North region, dominated by a poor indigenous majority.

It is useful to compare the class structure described here with that presented in other studies for certain countries or cities of Latin America, since while the methodological criteria are not the same, they are similar in their theoretical underpinnings. The purpose of the comparison is to be able to envisage the situation of Guatemala in relation to other Latin American societies. The idea is rather to highlight similarities in class structures than to carry out a statistical comparison.

Because of their geographical proximity and historical and social similarities, the comparison will be made first with Costa Rica, El Salvador and Mexico. According to the study by Portes and Hoffman (2003), around the beginning of this century the dominant class in Costa Rica (which includes capitalists, executives and professionals) represented 7.3% of the working population, as against figures of 5.0% for El Salvador and 5.7% for Mexico. The dominant class was in the minority in all three countries, as in Guatemala, while the petty bourgeoisie, composed for the purposes of this study by own-account professionals, represented between 10% and 12%, or almost double the Guatemalan figure. The working class, called the proletariat in the Portes and Hoffman study, represented between 82% and 83%, which is similar to the percentage obtained in the present study (82%). It should be noted that the authors cited made a distinction in their research between the formal and informal sectors, on the basis of employment conditions. The informal sector represents the majority in all three countries. The data used for stratification did not allow this division to be made in the present study, although it would have provided further data for understanding and interpreting the pyramid of urban society in Guatemala.

León and Martínez (2001) developed a class structure for Chilean society in 1995, and two facts are worth highlighting about it: first, the employers class was also small (3.3%), and second, the middle class was about a third of the population. In Guatemala, on the other hand, the middle class constituted only a little over a tenth of the population. In both countries, the class structure stands upon a broad base of workers and is still a long way from being onion- or diamond-shaped, with a large middle class, as it characteristically is in more advanced societies. The same may be said of the class structure in Buenos Aires, according to the study by Jorrat (1997).

In accordance with Erikson and Goldthorpe's schema, the class structure is developed following the system put forward by Rivas (2008), which is presented in the annex, but modified in respect of the self-employed, whom it was thought better to include in the non-skilled worker class. Table 7 shows the structure developed for Guatemala, from which it can be seen that the service class, which is characterized by being composed of professionals and employees with executive functions, represents almost a tenth of the Guatemalan population, while the intermediate class, whose distinctive feature is that it has some degree of authority, but under the direction of others, represents about a fifth. Small agricultural proprietors are 12.8% of this class, something that highlights their importance in the Guatemalan

TABLE 7

Social class structure in Guatemala, 2006. Erikson and Goldthorpe's schema

Social class	Number	Percentage
Service class	**2 984**	**11.1**
Intermediate class	**4 959**	**18.4**
Routine non-manual workers	1 168	4.3
Smallholders	3 438	12.8
Petty bourgeoisie	353	1.3
Working class	**18 948**	**70.5**
Skilled manual workers	3 203	11.9
Unskilled manual workers	6 327	23.5
Self-employed workers	9 418	35.0
Total	*26 891*	*100.0*

Source: prepared by the author on the basis of National Institute of Statistics (INE), 2006 National Living Conditions Survey (ENCOVI), Guatemala City, 2006.

social structure, particularly in rural areas, where it is common for people to describe themselves as farmers rather than as campesinos, because they cultivate their own small plots.

With this schema, the base of the social pyramid is also constituted by the working class, mainly consisting of self-employed workers (35.0%) and unskilled manual workers (23.5%).

There are few studies of social class in Latin America based on Erikson and Goldthorpe's schema. One of the best-known is that carried out by Jorrat (1997) in the city of Buenos Aires, Argentina, which revealed the existence of a pyramid-shaped class structure with a service class representing 19.7% of the population at the top and a working class constituting 41.7% of the population at the base. Another study is the one applied in Chile by Torche and Wormald (2004). This also yielded a pyramid shape, with a service class representing 15% of the population. These data ought to be used for reference purposes rather than taken as a strict comparison, given the differences in social and economic structure between Guatemala and these countries.

Class relations in Guatemala can be summed up as relations of subordination and exclusion. Following Touraine (1977), it may be said that the dominant class has been controlling the country's economic, political, social, cultural and any other resources in order to wield power and ensure the reproduction of a social, political and economic system favourable to its interests. These domination relationships were challenged by armed movements in some periods of the country's history. The most recent ended with the signing of the Agreement on a Firm and Lasting Peace in 1996, which brought almost four decades of armed conflict to a close. The class dispute in Guatemala is being waged politically on the electoral stage by the conquest of government and economically in the distribution of the wealth generated. The two most visible forms of this conflict are the setting of minimum wage and tax rates.

2. Educational and occupational mobility

Social mobility is estimated in its aspects of educational mobility and occupational mobility. The data used in both cases were obtained from the 2006 ENCOVI (INE, 2007). That survey gathers data on the education level and occupation of almost 34,000 individuals living throughout the country.

The variables selected from ENCOVI were age, kinship, education level of household head, education level of respondent, sex, age and ethnic group. The next step was to select only persons aged over 25, and this yielded a sample of 20,360 observations. The average years of education of parents and children were calculated for this sample, the figures being 2.5 and 3.6 years, respectively. The deviation from the mean was then calculated for both parents and children. Following Solon (1992), these data were used to estimate a regression in which children's education is determined by their parents':

$$E_{c,i} = \beta E_{p,i} + \varepsilon$$

The terms $E_{c,i}$ and $E_{p,i}$ represent the education level of children and parents, respectively, measured in logarithms and as deviations from the respective means. The β indicates the degree of educational persistence across generations. Consequently, 1 - β expresses the degree of educational mobility between generations.

First an overall estimate of mobility was carried out. Gender, ethnic and age cohorts were then taken. Two age cohorts were used: 26 to 40, and over 40.

The results obtained in the different regressions, which are summarized in table 8, indicate that the parents' education determines the education level of the children by between 13% and 23%. The degree of determination is lowest among indigenous people and highest among women. For the "age" variable, the results indicate that the best fit is in the over-40 cohort.

The country-level results reveal that educational mobility is low, with a figure of 0.55. Males present slightly greater educational mobility than females: 0.57, as against 0.53. Similarly, the data reveal inequality of educational mobility between the indigenous and non-indigenous ethnic groups. Educational mobility is slightly lower in the former group (0.50) than in the non-indigenous group (0.52). The data for the "age" cohort

TABLE 8

Intergenerational educational mobility among over-25s, as of 2006

Variable	Beta*	Mobility	R^2
Country	0.45	0.55	0.25
Male	0.43	0.57	0.23
Female	0.47	0.53	0.27
Non-indigenous	0.43	0.57	0.24
Indigenous	0.50	0.50	0.28
Over 40	0.47	0.53	0.27
40 and under	0.41	0.59	0.23

Source: prepared by the author on the basis of National Institute of Statistics (INE), 2006 National Living Conditions Survey (ENCOVI), Guatemala City, 2007.

* Significant at 5%.

indicate that mobility is greater among those aged under 41 than among those aged 41 and over.

By ethnic group, the results shown in table 9 indicate that the Chuj and Ixil groups have the lowest level of educational mobility, while the Achí and Poqoman groups have the highest. These groups, along with the Poqomchí, Mam, Xinka, Q'eqchí, Tz'utujil and Kaqchikel ethnic groups, register educational mobility above the average for the country.

The data from the transition matrix for parents' and children's education were used to calculate the immobility, upward mobility and downward mobility indices, as described in the theory section. The calculations reveal a low level of upward mobility in Guatemala (42.5%) and likewise of downward mobility (5.8%); immobility is the difference. Upward educational mobility is greater among males than among females: 50.5% against 35.5%. By ethnic group, the non-indigenous population shows greater upward educational mobility than the indigenous population: 47.6% against 33.6%. Going by the "age" cohort, people aged 40 and under are more likely to have upward educational mobility than people over this age: 51.0% against 35.5%.

The transition matrix for males in table 10 shows retention rates greater than the averages for the population. The matrix also shows that the likelihood of a son of uneducated parents being able to study at university is low (1%). A son of parents with primary education has eight times as great a chance of studying at university as a son of uneducated parents. At the other extreme, the likelihood of a son of university-educated parents being illiterate is nil, and the likelihood of such a person going no further than primary education is low (3%).

In the transition matrix for females, contained in table 11, there is a higher retention rate in the "illiterate" box than for men, and a lower retention rate for higher education. This reveals the existence of patterns of female marginalization and exclusion where education is concerned, something that impacts a number of social dimensions of their activities as human beings, since it

TABLE 9

Adults over 25 by indigenous ethnic group

Ethnic group	Beta*	Mobility	R^2	Number of observations
Chuj	0.87	0.13	0.10	53
Ixil	0.84	0.16	0.17	156
Ch'orti	0.54	0.46	0.13	150
K'iche	0.51	0.49	0.14	2 246
Poqomchí	0.50	0.50	0.09	139
Mam	0.47	0.53	0.12	809
Xinka	0.46	0.54	0.12	105
Q'eqchí	0.45	0.55	0.07	920
Tz'utujil	0.45	0.55	0.11	243
Kaqchikel	0.44	0.56	0.13	1 694
Achí	0.40	0.60	0.06	357
Poqoman	0.35	0.65	0.06	39

Source: prepared by the author on the basis of National Institute of Statistics (INE), 2006 National Living Conditions Survey (ENCOVI), Guatemala City, 2007.

* Significant at 5%.

TABLE 10

Matrix of intergenerational educational mobility, sons over 25, 2006

(Percentages)

Parent/son	Illiterate	Primary	Secondary	Higher	Total
Illiterate	**42.3**	49.5	7.4	0.8	*100.0*
Primary	9.2	**54.2**	28.9	7.7	*100.0*
Secondary	0.8	10.3	**52.4**	36.5	*100.0*
Higher	0.0	2.6	34.0	**63.2**	*100.0*

Source: prepared by the author on the basis of National Institute of Statistics (INE), 2006 National Living Conditions Survey (ENCOVI), Guatemala City, 2007.

TABLE 11

Matrix of intergenerational educational mobility, daughters over 25, 2006

(Percentages)

Parent/daughter	Illiterate	Primary	Secondary	Higher	Total
Illiterate	**60.4**	34.7	4.4	0.5	*100.0*
Primary	19.4	**52.4**	23.3	4.9	*100.0*
Secondary	3.5	15.5	**55.0**	26.0	*100.0*
Higher	1.7	3.5	51.3	**43.5**	*100.0*

Source: prepared by the author on the basis of National Institute of Statistics (INE), 2006 National Living Conditions Survey (ENCOVI), Guatemala City, 2007.

limits their prospects of finding employment, participating in the political sphere and owning material goods in the economic sphere.

A comparative analysis of the educational transition matrices for males and females reflects the unequal distribution of educational opportunities that affects women. Consequently, from a gender perspective it can be seen that Guatemalan women are subordinate to men where education is concerned. According to Parkin (1979), it may be said that this exclusion is not accidental but is intentionally inflicted by the male sex for the purpose of creating a privileged social position for themselves as a social group at women's expense. As long as women are excluded from education, the pattern of subordination to men is reproduced, to put it in the terms used by Bourdieu (2000).

To quantify occupational mobility, use was made of a sample of just over 2,200 people aged over 25, obtained from the 2006 ENCOVI (INE, 2007). The occupational data presented by the survey were reclassified in the case of some occupations in the "skilled manual" and "unskilled manual" categories. Table 12 shows the frequency distribution of parents and children for each occupation.

The table 12 data show that children's occupations are highly dependent on their parents' in the case of unskilled manual occupations. In that of skilled manual occupations, parental occupation is also a strong determinant of the child's occupation. The immobility index value is 0.74, reflecting the high degree to which children's occupations are inherited from their parents, particularly in the case of unskilled manual occupations. The upward mobility index value is low (0.16), but higher than the downward mobility value (0.09). The Shorrocks index reveals that intergenerational occupational mobility is low, with a value of 0.45. This index has a higher value for women than for men: 0.67 and 0.48, respectively. Furthermore, it shows that the indigenous ethnic group, with an index value of 0.69, has greater occupational mobility than the non-indigenous group, whose index value is 0.58. It also reveals that the occupational mobility of people aged 40 and under is almost twice that of those above this age: 0.83 against 0.46.

The transition matrix, illustrated in table 13, indicates the degree to which parents' occupations are reproduced in their children. In unskilled manual occupations, such reproduction occurs in almost four out of every five cases. In skilled manual occupations, the reproduction

TABLE 12

Matrix of intergenerational occupational mobility. Frequency distribution. Children over 25, 2006

Occupation of parent/child	Unskilled manual	Skilled manual	Technical and clerical workers	Professionals	Executives	Total
Unskilled manual	1 244	158	58	60	25	*1 545*
Skilled manual	81	231	24	24	6	*366*
Technical and clerical workers	6	5	36	5	2	*54*
Professionals	7	3	12	35	2	*59*
Executives	45	24	8	16	89	*182*
Total	*1 383*	*421*	*138*	*140*	*124*	*2 206*

Source: prepared by the author on the basis of National Institute of Statistics (INE), 2006 National Living Conditions Survey (ENCOVI), Guatemala City, 2007.

TABLE 13

Matrix of intergenerational occupational mobility. Children over 25, 2006
(Percentages)

Occupation of parent/child	Unskilled manual	Skilled manual	Technical and clerical	Professionals	Executives	Total
Unskilled manual	**80.5**	10.2	3.8	3.9	1.6	*100.0*
Skilled manual	22.1	**63.1**	6.6	6.6	1.6	*100.0*
Technical and clerical	11.1	9.3	**66.7**	9.3	3.6	*100.0*
Professionals	11.9	5.1	20.3	**59.3**	3.4	*100.0*
Executives	24.7	13.2	4.4	8.8	**48.9**	*100.0*

Source: prepared by the author on the basis of National Institute of Statistics (INE), National Living Conditions Survey (ENCOVI-2006), Guatemala City, 2007.

rate is a substantial 63%. Much the same happens with low-skilled non-manual occupations (technical and clerical workers), where the reproduction rate is close to 67%. The rate for professionals and executives is also considerable.

The transition matrix reveals that the children of parents with manual occupations, both skilled and unskilled, have only a small likelihood (just under 2%) of becoming executives. The children of parents with skilled non-manual occupations have almost the same prospects of becoming executives, with a likelihood of between 3.7% and 3.4%.

To enhance the analysis of the connection between parents' and children's education and occupations, a path analysis was carried out. Two regressions were calculated for this purpose. The first regression has the child's education as a dependent variable and the parent's education and occupation as independent variables.

The parent's education and occupation variables have a large influence (27.5%) in determining the child's education. The model indicates that for each extra year of education the parent has, the child's education increases by 0.40 years. This figure is similar to the one obtained in a study done in Chile in 2001 (0.428) and greater than the one calculated by a study conducted in the United States in 1994 (0.341), which means that this last society is more open than the first two (Torche and Wormald, 2004). The incidence of the parent's occupation on the child's education is also substantial, although only half as great as the influence of the parent's education.

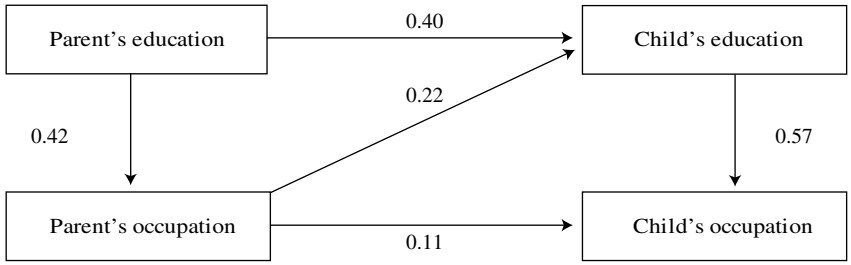
The second regression calculated has the child's occupation as its dependent variable and the parent's education, parent's occupation and child's education as explanatory variables. The findings indicate that the latter two variables accounted for children's occupation to the extent of 39% in 2006. The regression calculated indicates that the child's education has a greater incidence on the child's occupation than the parent's education does. Figure 4 summarizes the relationships.

The incidence analysis provides an opportunity to ascertain the direct and indirect effect of each pair of related variables, as summarized in table 14.

Decomposing the total effect of the parent's education on the child's education indicates that the direct effect bulks largest, with each extra year of education for the parent being associated with an increase of 0.40 years of education for the child. The direct effect of the parent's occupation on the child's education can also be seen to be large, at 0.22, as can the indirect effect, at 0.17. It is striking that after the parent's education,

FIGURE 4

Incidence analysis



Source: prepared by the author.

TABLE 14

Decomposition of effects for each pair of related variables

Effect of the first variable on the second	Total effect	Direct effect	Indirect effect	Spurious effect
Parent's education on parent's occupation	0.42	0.42		
Parent's education on child's education	0.49	0.4	0.09	
Parent's occupation on child's education	0.39	0.22	0.17	
Parent's occupation on child's occupation	0.33	0.11	0.01	0.21
Child's education on child's occupation	0.62	0.57		0.05

Source: prepared by the author.

the parent's occupation has a substantial direct effect on the child's education, equivalent to just over half the total effect (0.22 as compared to 0.39). This reveals mechanisms of intergenerational transmission of cultural capital endowment from parents to children. Where occupation is concerned, the direct effect of the parent's occupation on the child's is substantial and accounts for a third of the total effect (0.11 out of 0.33). When the effect of education on occupation is compared, it transpires that the direct effect is greater in the case of the child than in that of the parent, which indicates a significant intergenerational social change where the function of education in employment prospects is concerned.

V
Conclusions

The class structure elaborated in this paper is an approximation of the social structure of Guatemala, which should be seen more in terms of strata than of classes. The social structure stands upon a broad base constituted by the working class and is still far from being onion- or diamond-shaped, with the large middle class that characterizes the most advanced societies. The dominant class mainly consists of employers, with only a small presence of executive employees in this class. The Guatemalan middle class is still small, is urban in character and is composed in almost equal proportions of university-educated professionals and administrative employees with secondary education. The working class mainly consists of unskilled workers, which is indicative of how few opportunities for social mobility there are in the country.

In Guatemala, children's education is determined to a considerable extent by that of their parents, with little educational mobility. Males have greater educational mobility than females. Similarly, the educational mobility of the non-indigenous ethnic group is greater than that of the indigenous group. In the latter case, the Chuj and Ixil groups have the least educational mobility and the Poqoman and Achí groups the most. The rate of reproduction of parents' educational level by their children is considerable, with children reproducing their parents' educational level in just over half of all cases.

The likelihood of a son of uneducated parents studying at university is low. A son of parents with primary education is eight times as likely to study at university as a son of uneducated parents. At the other extreme, the likelihood of a child of university-educated parents being illiterate is nil, and the likelihood of such a child attaining only primary education is low.

There is little occupational mobility in Guatemala. Women have greater occupational mobility than men, and the same can be said of the indigenous ethnic group relative to the non-indigenous group and of people under 41 relative to those aged 41 and over. In skilled manual occupations, the parent's occupation is an important determinant of the child's. The immobility index has a high value, especially for unskilled manual occupations.

The incidence analysis indicates that parents' education and occupation have a substantial effect on their children's education, indicating the inheritance of cultural capital from parents to children. The effect of education on occupation is greater in the child's case than the parent's, which reveals a major change where the function of education in determining employment opportunities is concerned.

(Original: Spanish)

ANNEX

TABLE A-1

Occupational categories under the one-digit isco-88 and employment situations forming each social class, on the basis of Wright's schema

	Class	Occupation	Employment situation
1	Employers	All	Employees
2	Managers	1	Wage worker Own-account worker Unpaid family member
3	Professionals	2	Wage worker Own-account worker Unpaid family member
4	Technicians and clerks	3 and 4	Wage worker Own-account worker Unpaid family member
5	Skilled workers	7 and 8	Wage worker Own-account worker Unpaid family member
6	Non-skilled workers	5, 6 and 9	Wage worker Own-account worker Unpaid family member

Source: prepared by the author.

ISCO: International Standard Classification of Occupations.

TABLE A-2

Occupational categories under the two-digit isco-88 and employment situations forming each social class, on the basis of Erikson and Goldthorpe's schema

	Class	Occupation	Employment situation
1	Service class	21 22 23 24 11 12 13 31 32	All
2	Routine non-manual workers	41 42	Wage worker Domestic service worker Unpaid family member
		52	Wage worker Domestic service worker
3	Petty bourgeois	33 34 51 52 71 72 73 74 81 82 83 91 92 93	Employer
4	Self-employed workers	33 34 51 52 71 72 73 74 81 82 83 91 95 93	Own-account worker Unpaid family member
		41 42	Own-account worker
5	Smallholders	61 62	Own-account worker Employer Unpaid family member
6	Lower-grade technicians and armed forces	01 02	All
		33 34	Wage worker Domestic service worker
7	Skilled manual workers	72 73 74 81 82 83 51	Wage worker Domestic service worker
8	Unskilled manual workers and agricultural labourers	71 91 93 61 62 92	Wage worker Domestic service worker

Source: R. Rivas, "Dos enfoques clásicos para el estudio de la estratificación social y de las clases sociales", *Espacio abierto*, vol. 17, No. 3, Maracaibo, 2008.

ISCO: International Standard Classification of Occupations.

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