

---

# UNIT 1 CHANGE: AN OVERVIEW

---

## Structure

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Change - Meaning and Characteristics
- 1.3 Types of Change
- 1.4 Theories of Change
- 1.5 Approaches to Change
- 1.6 Social Change and Cultural change
- 1.7 Steps in Social Change
- 1.8 Dimensions of Social Change
- 1.9 Factors of Social Change
- 1.10 Let Us Sum Up
- 1.11 References and Selected Readings
- 1.12 Check Your Progress - Possible Answers

---

## 1.1 INTRODUCTION

---

If you look around, you will find that ten years ago the face of India was quite different from what we are familiar with today, and ten years from now, India will be totally different from what it is today. The same principle is applicable to each and every being. This is because change is a natural, universal, and inevitable social phenomenon. In our present hi-tech scenario, society is changing very fast. If one wants to know at what rate society is changing, I think the correct answer is - at the click of the mouse. In this techno-philic society, social change is happening exponentially. What is important to note is whether change is leading towards a positive end or not. Is change helping society in extension or development, or is the outcome just the reverse.

After reading this Unit, you will be able to

- explain the meaning and characteristics of change;
- differentiate between different types of change;
- distinguish between social change and cultural change;
- discuss steps in social change; and
- discuss the dimensions and factors of social change.

---

## 1.2 CHANGE – MEANING AND CHARACTERISTICS

---

### 1.2.1 The Meaning of Change

Your elders might tell you that things were not easy during their time. This is so because every thing has become very easy now, due to telecommunications, internet, technological evolution, etc. I'm sure you might have experienced the luxury of booking tickets *via* the internet sitting comfortably at home which is

very different from the traditional way of going to a counter, standing in a queue, and getting tickets booked. The same is true for paying bills, or, for any sort of inquiry, or information. In this changing scenario, even our relationships are under constant flux. The way we are bonding with each and every other person is also changing. We are moving very fast from informal, personal face-to-face relationships, to formal impersonal distant relationships. This suggests that change is universal and omnipresent. Change, since time immemorial, has affected each and every aspect of our life, whether it is lifestyles, food habits, thought processes, language, art, relationship, religion, family, marriage, systems of society (Political, economic, legal, administrative), etc.

Here, we need to understand that there are two types of processes which work in society – one which sustains the social system, and, the other, which brings about change in the system. The first process may be termed, conformity, or, status quo. The latter may be called the process of cultural and social change. In simple terms, change denotes a difference in anything observed over a period of time. Similarly, social change means observable differences in any social phenomenon over a period of time, and cultural change means observable differences in any cultural phenomenon over a period of time. Broadly speaking, there are two types of social change processes: (i) a process which sustain the social system; and (ii) a process which brings about change in the system, and a change of the system.

### **1.2.2 The Characteristics of Change**

After understanding the concept of change along with social change and cultural change, now it is important to understand the nature and characteristics of change. The main characteristics of change are given below

- a) Change is universal. No society is static, whether it is the primitive society, or the most civilized one. The speed and rate of change is relative, it differs from society to society, and from time to time.
- b) Social change is community change. It does not refer to the change in the life of an individual, or life patterns of several individuals. It is a change, which occurs in the life of the entire community.
- c) The speed of social change is relative. It is not the same throughout society. Social change in urban areas is faster than in rural areas. The speed and rate of social change is relative, because the nature and speed of social change is affected by, and related to the time factor. The speed of social change differs from time to time, because the factor which causes change does not remain the same with the change of time. In India, industrialization started after 1947. Hence, the speed of social change is faster after 1947 than before 1947. In 1991, the policies of liberalisation, globalization, and privatization were introduced and they revamped the Indian economy, affecting each and every aspect of India. Hence, there is a difference in the rate of change before 1991 and after 1991 in India.
- d) Change is a law of nature. It is natural. It can occur either in natural course, or, as a result of planned efforts. It is also a natural tendency, that our needs keep changing. To satisfy our desire for change and our changing needs, social change becomes a necessity.

- e) It is difficult to predict the exact form of social change. There is no inherent law of social change according to which it assumes definite form. For example, it is assumed that industrialization will increase the speed of urbanization, but we cannot predict the exact forms, and which social relationships will be impacted in future, on account of industrialisation.
- f) One change leads to many changes in a chain-reaction sequence. For example, technology has changed the domestic system of production. The changed domestic system of production brought women from the home to the factory and the office. The employment of women resulted in their independence from the bondage of man, and it brought about a change in women's attitude and ideas. It meant a new social life for women. It, consequently, affected every aspect of the family life.
- g) Social change is multi-factorial. Many factors work together to induce a change. This is because, social phenomenon are complex and mutually interrelated, and interdependent.
- h) Social change may be broadly classified as modifications or replacements. As for example, the joint family system is changing to nuclear family. The Gurukul system has changed to the centralized school system. Society's ideas about women's right, religion, government, and citizen's right to information and education stand modified today.

### 1.3 TYPES OF CHANGE

Change is a complex phenomenon. Its direction can be forward or backward, towards progression or regression. There are different manifestations, or types of changes which are going on around us. All change is not planned change. How is planned change to be distinguished from and interrelated to other forms of human change? A paradigm in which eight species of change may be identified, may help to answer this question (Table 1.1). Along the vertical axis of the paradigm we have shown two variables of dichotomized for convenience: mutual goal setting, and deliberateness of change. Along the horizontal axis, power distribution among the parties to the change is shown: 5/5 indicates a fairly equal distribution of power, and 1/10 indicates a one-sided power situation. We have omitted the element of 'valid knowledge' from the paradigm, since we are assuming that valid knowledge with respect to change is not possible where mutual goal setting is not undertaken.

**Table 1.1: Paradigm for Change Processes**

| Power Ratio | Mutual Goal Setting   |  | Non mutual Goal Setting (or goals set by one side)     |  |
|-------------|---|--|--|--|
|             | Deliberate on the part of one or both sides of the relationship | Non deliberate on the part of both sides | Deliberate on the part of one side of the relationship | Non deliberate on the part of both sides |
| .5/.5       | Planned change  | Interactional change                     | Technocratic change                                    | Natural change                           |
| 1/10        | Indoctrinational change   | Socialization change                     | Coercive change  | Emulative change                         |



## 1.4 THEORIES OF CHANGE

Having discussed the meaning, characteristics, and types of change, let us now discuss various theories of change. The main theories of change are discussed below.

- a) **Theory of Deterioration:** some theorists identify social change with deterioration. They are of the opinion that man lived in perfect state of happiness in the golden age. However, deterioration began to take place, and now, man has reached an age of comparative degeneration. A similar notion is available in ancient Oriental and Indian mythologies, among others. According to Indian mythology, man has passed through four ages – *Satyug*, *Treatayug*, *Dwaparyug*, and *Kalyug*. The *Satyug* was the best age. In *Satyug*, man was honest, truthful, and perfectly happy. Thereafter, degeneration began to take place. The modern age is the age of *Kalyug*, in which man is deceitful, false, dishonest, selfish, and, consequently, unhappy. The claims of these theorists are understandable, as we can observe deterioration in every walk of life today.
- b) **Cyclical Theory:** according to this theory, human society goes through cycles. According to Spengler, society has a predetermined life cycle which includes birth, growth, maturity and decline. Modern society is in its last stage. It is in its old age. But since history repeats itself, society, after passing through all the stages, returns to the original stage, and the cycle begins once again.
- c) **Linear Theory:** there are a group of theorists who subscribe to the linear theory of social change. According to them, society advances in a linear fashion moving actually to an even higher state of civilization, and in the direction of improvement. This can be witnessed in the institution of marriage which in the course of time has passed from promiscuity to group marriage to polygamy to monogamy. Similarly, society has taken a linear course of development transcending the primitive hunting and food gathering state to the settled agrarian state to capitalist industrialism. Similarly, the institution of family has taken a linear course of change from the extended joint family system to joint family to nuclear family. Hence, as per linear theory, society changes in a linear direction.
- d) **Theory of Social and Cultural Dynamics:** this theory was propounded by P. Sorokin. Sorokin has attempted to include both cyclical and linear change. In his view, culture may proceed in a given direction for a time, and, thus, appear to conform to a linear formula. But, due to internal forces within the system, there will be a shift of direction, and a new period of development will be ushered in. The new trend may be linear or oscillating or may conform to some particular type of curve. At any rate, it also reaches limits, and another trend takes place. However, Sorokin identifies two types of culture, one sensate culture, and the other as ideational culture. In sensate culture, human interaction and symbolic expression are primarily designed to gratify the senses. Its philosophy is based on what can be learned, or perceived through the sense. The other cultural type is ideational, appealing most to the mind, or, the soul. Ideational art is abstract. Its philosophy is based on faith and religion. Sorokin believed that all societies alternate between sensate and ideational culture. The alternation is not regular or cyclic but it occurs

repeatedly. Hence, sensate culture begins to develop as an inevitable reaction to a highly organized ideational culture and *vice versa*. As, for instance, Indian society, which is spiritual in nature, is now becoming materialistic; and western society, which is materialistic, is bending towards spiritualism. The theory is questioned by those who ask: why is it natural for a society to change from its main cultural theme, and, why is the change between only two alternatives, sensate and ideational. Despite the criticism this work stands as a landmark.

- e) **Theory of Cultural Lag:** Ogburn suggested that technology is the primary engine of progress, but tempered by social responses to it. Thus, his theory is often considered a case of technological determinism. Ogburn posited four stages of technical development: invention, accumulation, diffusion, and adjustment. *Invention* is the process by which new forms of technology are created. Inventions are collective contributions to an existing cultural base that cannot occur unless the society has already gained a certain level of knowledge and expertise in the particular area. *Accumulation* is the growth of technology, because new things are invented more rapidly and old ones are forgotten, and some inventions (such as writing) promote this accumulation process. *Diffusion* is the spread of an idea from one cultural group to another, or from one field of activity to another, and, as diffusion brings inventions together, they combine to form new inventions. *Adjustment* is the process by which the non technical aspects of a culture respond to invention, and any retardation of this adjustment process causes cultural lag.
- f) **Lewin's Three-Step Change Theory:** according to Lewin, the first step in the process of changing behaviour is to unfreeze the existing situation, or status quo. The status quo is considered the equilibrium state. Unfreezing is necessary to overcome the strains of individual resistance and group conformity. Unfreezing can be achieved by the use of three methods. First, increase the driving forces that direct behaviour away from the existing situation, or status quo. Second, decrease the restraining forces that negatively affect the movement from the existing equilibrium. Third, find a combination of the two methods listed above. Some activities that can assist in the unfreezing step which includes: motivate participants by preparing them for change, build trust and recognition for the need to change, and actively participate in recognizing problems and brainstorming solutions within a group.
- g) **The Lippitt Seven-Step Theory of Change:** the Lippitt seven- step theory focuses on the role of the change agent throughout the evolution of the change. The seven steps are listed below.
- 1) Diagnose the problem.
  - 2) Assess the motivation and capacity for change.
  - 3) Assess the resources and motivation of the change agent. This includes the change agent's commitment to change, power, and stamina.
  - 4) Define progressive stages of change.
  - 5) Ensure the roles and responsibilities of change agents are clear and understood. Examples of roles include the motivator, facilitator, and subject matter expert.

- 6) Maintain the change through communication, feedback, and group coordination.
- 7) Gradually remove the change agents from relationship, as the change becomes part of the organizational culture.
- h) **Prochaska and Diclemente’s Theory of Change:** the Stages of Change Model was developed by James Prochaska and Carlo DiClemente. The idea behind the SCM is that behavioural change does not happen in one step. Rather, people tend to progress through different stages on their way to successful change. Also, each of us progresses through the stages at our own rate. In each of the stages, a person has to grapple with a different set of issues and tasks that relate to changing behaviour.

In this section, you studied about change-its meaning and characteristics, types of change and theories of change, now answer the questions in Check Your Progress 1.

**Check Your Progress 1**

**Note:** a) Write your answer in about 50 words

b) Check your answer with possible answers given at the end of the unit

1) Explain a few important characteristics of change.

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

2) Briefly narrate the cyclical theory of change.

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

---

**1.5 APPROACHES TO CHANGE**

---

After studying the theories of change, let us now discuss about the approaches to change.

The various approaches to change are:

- a) **Conflict Resolution Approach:** there is much discussion in both the academic and practitioner literature about conflict resolution as an important vehicle for social change and the role of interveners in either fostering social control (status quo) or social transformation. Most ethnic conflict interventions have explicit goals of creating some form of social or systemic change, though their pathways for change differ considerably.

- b) **Empirical-Rational Approach:** some practitioners implicitly base interventions on assumptions of rational, self-interest focusing on providing the right information, education or training to allow people to change of their own volition, ensuring the right people are in the right place to bring about much needed, practical changes, clarifying or re-conceptualizing ‘the problem’ to enhance overall understanding and promoting visioning to stimulate creativity and best-case scenarios.
- c) **Normative-Re-educative Approach:** many others in the field, focus on the socially constructed nature of conflict and the non cognitive resistances and supports for change such as cultural values and norms. Perhaps the most widely used approach in current conflict interventions, these efforts focus on working collaboratively with parties to identify problems and facilitate solutions. It aims to improve problem solving capacities, forums, and mechanisms within a system, and foster new attitudes, values, skills, and norms for interaction among people who make up the system.
- d) **Power-Coercive Approach:** at times, practitioners also focus on the role of moral, political and economic power to address asymmetries and injustices in conflict situations. For example, they work with disempowered parties to introduce non-violent action strategies and foster local peace movements. Social justice and peace building is also promoted through institutional, legislative, and policy change as well as influencing or changing leadership or power elite. Because they often create change through processes of confrontation and conflict enhancement, however, these strategies are used more circumspectly for certain conflict stages or conditions.
- e) **Critical Mass Approach:** drawing implicitly on diffusion of innovation theory, many practitioners discuss the importance of developing a ‘critical mass’ of individuals who have adopted constructive conflict resolution knowledge and skills in initiating positive social change. When this critical mass of individuals exists, change spreads rapidly and crystallizes to become self-sustaining in society.
- f) **Ripple Effects Approach:** in understanding how small-group conflict interventions can create large-scale social change, many practitioners discuss the impact that participants can have on those within their personal and professional spheres of influence. Often referred to as a ripple effect or transfer effect, programme’s suggest that the individual and relational changes that occur during small-group interventions will have ever-widening circles of impact as participants take their new learning back into their respective communities and organizations.
- g) **Overcoming Resistance Approach:** although their methods address such issues practically, practitioners rarely focus explicitly on the importance and difficulties of dealing with resistance to change. Lewin’s model of unfreezing-movement-refreezing is useful in focusing on the processes of overcoming resistance to change such as basic conservative tendencies and system justification.

---

## 1.6 SOCIAL CHANGE AND CULTURAL CHANGE

---

In this section you will study about the social and cultural change, the two important categories of change.

### 1.6.1 Social Change

Social change is any change that basically alters the established forms of social relationships, thus transforming in some measure, the social structure. It is a change that reflects in all aspects of social life, i.e., family, neighbourhood, play group, work group, religion, economic, political spheres, and leisure activities. Social change may be partial or total, though mostly it is partial, a change resulting from enacting a law prohibiting untouchability might be called a partial change in society. Social change can be defined as “a process by which alteration take place in the structure and function of a social mechanism”. Evolution, invention of new techniques, adaptation of new ideas are examples of social change. Alteration, both in the structure and function, of a social system occur as a result of such a thing. Social change and development takes place in societies. The wheel of social change cannot be stopped. The process of social change starts when an innovation spreads in a society. Social change is accepted easily in some societies, while others show rigidity in acceptance.

There is a great confusion about social and cultural change. Some have made a distinction between social change and cultural change, while others have considered these two terms as one and the same thing.

For Gillin and Gillin and Davison and Gettys, there is no difference between social and cultural change, since all culture is social in its origin, meaning and usage.

Gillin and Gillin write, “Social changes as variations from the accepted modes of life, whether due to alteration in geographic conditions in cultural equipment, composition of population or ideologies”. For these writers, social change is a part of cultural change. Cultural change is broader than social change which envelopes social change also in its fold. For them, society is the product of culture. However, there are sociologists who see a difference between the two. Maciver and Page write: “Social change is a distinct thing from cultural or civilisational change. Cultural change includes change in ideology, administrative system, technology, etc. Cultural change indicates changes in the accepted mode of life, habit patterns, and lifestyle, e.g. invention of T.V., new forms of music, art, dance, etc”.

Fairchild defines social change as a “variation or modification in any aspect of social process, pattern or form. It may be progressive or regressive, permanent or temporary, planned or unplanned, unidirectional or multidirectional”.

Lundberg, Schrug and Larson have defined social change as “any observable difference in any social phenomena over a period of time”.

Robert MacIver and Charles H. have defined social change as “changes in social relationship”. Wilberg F. Moray defined social change as “significant alteration in social structure, i.e., patterns of society including consequences and manifestation of such structure and body mean - norms, values, cultural products and symbols”.

For Davis, “Social change is only a part of a broader category of change called ‘cultural change’. Cultural change refers to all changes occurring in any branch of culture including art, science, technology, philosophy, etc, social change refers

to change in the social structure, e.g., changes in the social institutions, modifications, family relations, etc., whereas cultural change refers to change in material and non material elements”.

## 1.6.2 Cultural Change

Before going on to discuss cultural change, let us discuss the term, culture. Culture, according to Herskovitz is the man made part of the environment. For instance, it may be very hot outside, but inside, the house is air cooled. This air cooled part of the house is man made, hence, it is a part of the culture. Similarly, everything inside your house which is man made is part of culture. Culture manifests itself in two forms – material culture and non material culture. Material culture is the concrete part of culture, i.e., anything which is man made and is visible, can be touched and sensed, e.g., table, chair, refrigerator, chalk, pen, etc. The non material aspect of culture includes anything which is man made, but is abstract, e.g. language, belief system, morality, etc.

According to Tylor, culture is that part of a complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and capacities acquired by man as member of society. In this definition, the phrase ‘any other capabilities and capacities acquired by man as member of society’ is very important. So, what ever we learn as a member of society is our culture, whether it is in concrete form, the dressing style, cuisine, etc., or, in the abstract form, i.e., language, conception of God, truth, etc.

Any change in the material or non material aspects of culture is cultural change. According to David Dessler, cultural change is the modification or discontinuance of existing ‘tried’ and ‘tested’ procedures transmitted to us from the culture of the past, as well as the introduction of new procedures, e.g., inventions and popularization of automobiles, addition of new words in language, changing concept of property, morality, new form of music, art, dance, new styles in architecture and sculpture, new rules of grammar or meter, the general trend towards gender equality, etc., all of which represents cultural changes.

Almost all important changes involve both social and cultural change. Change in one aspect affects each and every other aspect. This is because one change may lead to many other changes. For instance, basic change like a change in the ways in which a society earns its living, or conducts its economic activity, and exploits the environment can affect almost all the other components of society. This is because, society and culture are an integrated whole. For example, as the population changes, technologies expand, material equipment changes, ideologies and values take on new components and institutional structure, and functions are reshaped. Since culture is a part of society, cultural change is part of social change. Cultural change is narrow, while social change is wider in approach.

In these two sections, you studied about approaches to change, social and cultural change. Now, answer the questions given in Check Your Progress 2.

### Check Your Progress 2

**Note:** a) Write your answer in about 50 words

b) Check your answer with possible answers given at the end of the unit

1) What do you mean by society, and culture?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

2) Identify any five social changes and cultural changes occurring around you.

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

---

## 1.7 STEPS IN SOCIAL CHANGE

---

Change has a few steps as given below

- a) Discovery.
  - b) Invention.
  - c) Innovation.
  - d) Diffusion of innovation.
  - e) Social change.
- a) **Discovery** is a shared human perception of an aspect of reality which already exists. Discovery becomes a factor of social change only when it is put to use. A discovery adds something new to the culture because although this reality may always have existed it becomes part of the culture.
- b) **Invention:** new combinations of existing things (discoveries) is called invention. It is a long process to invent anything. There are two types of invention.
- i) Material invention.
  - ii) Social invention.
- c) **Innovation** is more developed and refined form of invention. One of the greatest pains of human nature is the pain of new idea. It makes you think, e.g., your firmest belief may be untrue. It is natural that people resist new ideas, and disposes more or less to will. When we have an innovation, then it is time to diffuse it in society.
- d) **Diffusion of innovation:** There are a lot of ways to diffuse innovations in a society. The most effective and popular ways are listed below.
- i) Channels of communication
  - ii) Mass media.
  - iii) Interpersonal communication.

- e) **Social Change:** After successful diffusion of innovation, we can see and feel the social change in the following order.

Discovery → Invention → Innovation → Social change.

---

## 1.8 DIMENSIONS OF SOCIAL CHANGE

---

Three major dimensions for analysis of social change are given below

- a) The Structural Dimension
- b) The Cultural Dimension
- c) The Interactional Dimension.

### a) The Structural Dimension

Changes in the structural dimension refer to changes in the structural forms of society that involve changes in roles, emergence of new roles, changes in the class or caste structure, and changes in social institutions such as the family, the government, the school or educational systems. Some changes in the structure of the rural family, village council, or *Panchayat* (in India), have been discussed earlier. What is also involved is a shift in the location of roles, a modification of number and type of functions performed by various components of society, and a modification of channels of communication among roles.

### b) The Cultural Dimension

Changes in cultural dimension refer to changes that take place in the culture of a society, such as through discovery, invention, new technology, contact with other cultures involving diffusion, and cultural borrowing. It involves the integration of new elements into the culture, replacement of old forms, and rejection of some new elements and forms. At the same time, it is not implied that all that comes to a culture is diffused, and all that is subjected to the process of diffusion is finally integrated into a culture. New forms and elements may be rejected or modified. However, cultural innovation, diffusion, and integration are all involved in the process of social change in its cultural dimension. Both, the material and non material aspects of a culture are involved.

### c) The Interactional Dimension

The interactional dimension of social change refers to changes in social relationships in society as identified under five dimensions, such as frequency, social distance, instrumentality, directionality and interactive. Modification and change in structure of the components of society, together with alterations in its culture bring about changes in social relations. Frequency, social distance, instrumentality, directionality, and interactive form constitute a schematic arrangement of specific dimension of change in social relationships, in terms of which social change in respect of social interaction can be analyzed. For example, social change in a village as a result of urbanization can be analyzed in terms of variation of frequency of social contacts and relations within the village, of the shift from primary to secondary group relationship, from *gemeinschaft* to *gesellschaft* types of relationships, of the shift from interaction among equal status lives to contractual interaction that cuts across these lives, of the shift from cooperative forms of relations to those that are more divisive and competitive, and of the shift from the value of individuals as persons to personal

---

## 1.9 FACTORS OF SOCIAL CHANGE

---

A group of theorists focus on the causal factors behind social change, rather than the direction of change. According to them, there are certain forces, social or natural, or both, which bring about social changes. They point to the presence of certain forces and circumstances which determines the course of social change. Each and every theorist has pointed out different factors underlying change. A brief discussion on the main factors of change has been given below.

- a) **Biological factors:** the biological factors of social change include flora, fauna and human beings. The human biological environment includes the factors that determine the numbers, the composition, the selection, and the hereditary of the successive generations. The human element in society is always changing, thereby, continuously inducing regular changes. For example, a change in the population, both in number and composition, affects society at large. In societies where the number of female children is greater than the number of male children, one can observe the existence of polygamous marriages (one man with two, or more, wives). In societies where there are more males than females, polyandrous marriages (one women with several husbands) are prevalent.
- b) **Physical factors:** the physical factors of social change include floods, famines, earthquakes, natural disaster, etc. You might have observed the impact of these physical factors in changing the life of a community. Physical factors govern social conditions because every culture develops in some sort of physical setting. If the physical setting changes, a society is bound to change. For example in poles and in deserts there is not much scope for art and learning as all the available time is spent in arranging materials to keep oneself alive. The situation is just the opposite in areas where there is ample scope for development of art and culture due to a settled lifestyle and agrarian economy.
- c) **Technological factors:** the technological factors of social change include changes in production technology, the means of communication, and transportation, etc. The technological inventions in the form of factory machines, home appliances, multimedia, online business, banking, shopping, etc., have dramatically changed our working and life. We can see how the internet has revolutionized society. With the help of technology we now perform age old activities in less time, with better efficiency, and effectiveness. Hence, technological factors are one of the important sources of social change.
- d) **Economic factors:** the economic interpretation of social change has been explained by Karl Marx. Marx heavily emphasized the importance of economic factors in his theories of Historical Materialism and Economic Determinism. According to him, the sub structure (economic system) of society determines the super structure (religion, legal framework, political system, etc.). Marx stated that the character of a society depends on economic activity, and the means and modes of production which transforms itself in to the norms of society, i.e., the norm of barter, trade, exchange, property, etc. The change in these norms introduces further changes throughout the

fabric of society. According to him social revolution takes place when there is a conflict between the existing relations of production, or the existing property relations and the new modes of production. He is of the opinion that, throughout history, there have been two conflicting classes in different epochs of history, i.e., masters and slaves in primitive societies, feudal lords and serfs in feudal societies; and, now, factory owners and workers in capitalist societies. He pointed out that the inherent weaknesses of one system gives birth to a new system. This way social change is a continuous phenomenon because it is based on the dialectic principle of thesis (opinion), antithesis (contra-opinion) and synthesis (a mix of opinion and contra-opinion). Hence, society keeps changing on account of this dialectic process and changes in economic system.

- e) **Cultural factors:** the influence of cultural factors on social change has been explained by Ogburn in his Cultural Lag theory. According to him, the various elements of culture do not change at the same rate. Some parts change more rapidly than others, and, that since there is a correlation and interdependence of parts, a rapid change in one part of our culture requires readjustments through other changes in various correlated parts of culture. He stated that nonmaterial culture is often slow to respond to rapid inventions in material culture. This is easy to witness as people are reluctant to give up old values, customs, and beliefs in favour of new ones. When nonmaterial culture does not adjust itself readily to the material change it falls behind the material culture, and the result is a lag between the two. This lag between non material and material culture has been called Cultural Lag. Ogburn concluded that the problem of adjustment in modern society is to enable the non material aspect of culture to catch up with the material aspect. That means that man, in order to remove the gaps between the two parts of culture, should adopt his ways of thinking and behaving to the state of his technology.
- f) **Legal factors:** law is an important formal means of social change. Legal regulations either may, or may not, confirm to the pattern of society. If the law does not conform with society, it faces opposition. But if the law is stringently upheld, it induces a change in social organization. For example, child marriages have been a customary practice in many communities in India, but after the introduction of the Child Marriage Restraint Act, child marriages have reduced, and the same happened with the sati system, now almost unheard of in India, after the introduction of Sati Prohibition Law. The law relating to marriages, widow remarriages, girls share in property, right to information, etc., has changed society.

In these three sections, you studied about the steps in social change, dimensions of social change and factors of social change. Now, answer the questions given in Check Your Progress 3.

### Check Your Progress 3

**Note:** a) Write your answer in about 50 words

b) Check your answer with possible answers given at the end of the unit

- 1) Based on your understanding of this unit, give some examples for the following factors of Social Change.

Technological Factors : .....

Economic Factors : .....

Physical Factors : .....

2) Discuss structural dimension of change.

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

---

## 1.10 LET US SUM UP

---

In this unit, we discussed the meaning and characteristics of change, and found that change is an integral part of society. One change may lead to a sequence of changes. We then took a closer look at two aspects of social change: (1) changes in the social structure itself which bring about changes in the pattern of social relations (social change); and, (2) the changes in attitudes and motivations, or changes in the values themselves (cultural change). Then, we discussed the characteristics, types, theories, and approaches to social change. Based on theoretical input we learnt that social change takes into consideration causes and consequences, their nature, and differential impact on various sections of society.

Hence, in this unit, we learnt that the term change implies that the object to which it is applied becomes different over time. This means that social change suggests no law, no theory, no direction, and no continuity. Change is a broad concept. It includes both progression and regression. Evolution, revolution, development, progress, and social movements are all concepts of social change.

---

## 1.11 REFERENCES AND SELECTED READINGS

---

Bennis, Warren G.(1976), *The Planning of Change*, Holt, Rinehart and Wiston, Inc.,New York.

Bhushan Vidya & Sachdeva D.R. (2004), *An Introduction to Sociology*, Kitab Mahal, Allahabad.

Bruce Steve, (2000), *Sociology –A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford University Press, London.

Giddens, A. ( 2005), *Sociology*, Polity Press, Blackwell Publishers Ltd.

Gupta Dipankar, ( 2000), *Social Stratification*, Oxford University Press, New Delhi.

Haralambos M. & Heald, (2000), *Sociology: Themes and Perspectives*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Inkeles Alex , (2001), *What is Sociology*, Prentice Hall Of India Ltd, New Delhi.

MacIver, R. M., Charles H. Page, (1999), *Society: An Introductory Analysis*, Macmillan India Ltd., London.

Majumdar D.N. and Madan T.N.(2001), *Social Anthropology*, Mayoor Paperbacks, Noida.

Sharma , R.N. (2001), *Principles of sociology*, Media Promoters & Publishers Pvt. Ltd., Bombay.

Sharma, K. L. (2004), *Indian Society*, NCERT, New Delhi.

Singh Yogendra, (1993), *Social Change in India – Crisis and Resilience*, Har Anand Pub. Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi.

Srinivas, M.N. (2000), *Social Change in Modern India*, Orient Longman, New Delhi.

---

## 1.12 CHECK YOUR PROGRESS - POSSIBLE ANSWERS

---

### Check Your Progress 1

#### 1) Explain a few important characteristics of change.

**Answer.** Change is universal. No society is static, whether it is the primitive society or the most civilised one. Social change is community change. It does not refer to the change in the life of an individual, or life patterns of several individuals. It is a change, which occurs in the life of the entire community. The speed of social change is relative. It is not the same throughout society. Social change in urban areas is faster than in rural areas.

#### 2) Briefly narrate the cyclical theory of change.

**Answer.** According to cyclical theory, human society goes through cycles. According to Spengler, society has a predetermined life cycle which includes birth, growth, maturity and decline. Modern society is in its last stage. It is in its old age. But since history repeats itself, society, after passing through all the stages, returns to the original stage, and the cycle begins once again.

### Check Your Progress 2

#### 1) What do you mean by Society and Culture?

**Answer.** Society is a complex of groups in reciprocal relationships, interacting and intercommunicating with each other so as to enable individual members to carry on their life activities, and helping each person to fulfil his wishes and accomplish his interests in association with his fellows. Culture is that part of complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and capacities acquired by man as member of society.

**2) Identify any five social changes and cultural changes occurring around you.**

**Answer.** This has to be answered by the student from personal experience and observation.

### **Check Your Progress 3**

**1) Based on your understanding of this unit give some examples for the following factors of Social Change: technological factors, economic factors, and physical factors.**

**Answer.** Technological factors: the use of a computer in place of type writer.

Economic Factors: changes brought about through the use of credit cards, the use of technology which leads to very quick results of products.

Physical Factors: include changes which take place due to floods, famines, earthquakes, natural disaster, etc.

**2) Discuss the structural dimension of change.**

**Answer.** The structural dimension of change refers to changes in the structural forms of society that involves changes in roles, emergence of new roles, changes in the class or caste structure and changes in social insitutions such as the family the government, the school or educational system.