

Theories of Social Change

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Description of Module

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Introduction

According to Sociologist the social change means progress toward something better and Societies should reach new and higher levels of **civilization**. A variety of reasons have been offered throughout history to explain why social change occurs. The five theories of social change are as follows: 1. Evolutionary Theory 2. Cyclical Theory 3. Economic (Mandan) Theory of Social Change 4. Conflict Theory 5. Technological Theory.

Evolutionary Theory:

- 1. Evolution of Society and Cultural:** The concept of evolution of society and culture came into social sciences from the Darwin theories of biological evolution. The Charles Darwin (1859), the British biologist, who discussed the theory of **biological evolution**,
- 2. Information:** Human culture is information transmitted from person to person via teaching and reproduction, (means as genes are information transmitted from person to person in the course of reproduction.)It was developed that society and culture were subject to the **biological growth**.
- 3. Change :**The basic assumption of this theory is that change is the feature of human society.

In Unilinear theory.

All these assumptions can be summarized as under:

1. That change is predictable and natural
2. That change is gradual and continuous.
3. That change is sequential.

4. That all successive stages of change are better over preceding stage.
5. That stages of change are non-reversible.

2. Cyclical Theory:

1. **Cycles of Rise:** According to Spengler(1918) and Arnold J. They argued that societies and civilisations change according to cycles of rise, decline and fall just as individual persons are **born, mature**, old age, and death. Cyclical change is a variation on unilinear theory.

2. **Original Stage:** According to German thinker Spengler, every **society has a life cycle**—birth, growth, maturity and decline. Society, after passing through all these stages of life cycle, returns to the original stage and thus the cycle begins again. He has studied the history of various civilisations and has found that every civilisation has its rise, development and fall such as the civilisation of Egypt.

3. Economic (Mandan) Theory of Social Change:

i. **Change Economic Infrastructure:** the economic theory of change is also known as the Marxian theory of change. The Marxian theory's fundamental assumption is that changes in the economic 'infra-structure' of society are the **prime factors of** social change.

ii. **Forces of production:** The 'infra-structure' consists of the 'forces of production' according to Marx, productive forces constitute 'means of production' (natural resources, land, labour, raw material, machines, tools and other instruments of production) and 'mode of production' (techniques of production, mental and moral habits of human beings) both and their level of development determines the social relation of production of all **social development or social change.**

4. Conflict Theory: 1956

Opposing Interest: Individuals and groups with opposing interests to each other are bound to be at conflict. Since the two major social classes the **rich and poor** or capitalists and the working class have mutually unfriendly interests they are at conflict.

Equilibrium Theory: Whereas the equilibrium theories highlight the **stabilizing processes** at work in social systems. So-called conflict theories highlight the forces producing instability, **struggle and social disorganization**.

Every moment to Change: The conflict theories assume that - every society is subjected at every moment to change, every society experiences at **every moment social conflict**, and Change has a crucial significance, since it is needed to **correct social injustices and inequalities**.

Struggle of Conflicting Group: Conflict theorists do not believe that societies **smoothly develop** to higher level. Instead, they believe that conflicting groups struggle to ensure progress.

Cause of Change: Conflict theorists declare that **conflict is a necessary condition** for change. It must be the cause of change.

5. Technological Theory:(1992)

Science and Technology: When the average person speaks of the changes of the society brought about by ‘science’, he is generally thinking of ‘technology’.

Human Civilization: Technology is not only one of them but an important factor of social change. When it is said that almost whole of human civilization is the **product of technological development**,

Computers: Computers have affected almost all aspects of our life from reservations at the railway ticket window or registration for hospitals or colleges to the maintenance of accounts in banks and large business corporations.