**MODERNIZATION**

The term ‘Modernization’ is a broader and complex term. It is a process by which modern scientific knowledge is introduced in the society with the ultimate purpose of achieving a better and more satisfactory life in the broadest sense of the term accepted by the society concerned.

Modernization refers to an attempt on the part of the people particularly those who are custom-bound to adapt themselves to the present-time, conditions, needs, styles and ways in general. It indicates a change in people’s food habits, dress habits, speaking styles, tastes, choices, preferences, ideas, values, recreational activities and so on.

Modernization or modernization refers to a model of an evolutionary transition from a ‘pre-modern ‘or ‘traditional’ to a ‘modern’ society. The teleology of modernization is described in social evolutionism theories, existing as a template that has been generally followed by societies that have achieved modernity. While it may theoretically be possible for some societies to make the transition in entirely different ways, there have been no counterexamples provided by reliable sources.

Sociologists of the present age use the concept of modernization in the analysis of social change. It means the development of modern approach and outlook and adoption of modernity in everyday life. Modernization refers to the deeper change in man’s way of thinking and feeling, a change in his whole attitude to life’s problems, the society and the universe. As such, modernization appears to be a complex phenomenon involving the development of rational outlook and acceptance of realities and facts in the context of scientific value.

Modernization is a process of socio-cultural transformation. It is a thorough going process of change involving values, norms, institutions and structures .It implies an inherent change in the mode of life in a particular direction for attaining modernity. Hence, man’s attitude, idea, outlook and approach are oriented towards change in that direction. The term modernization is used not only to describe the changes in the material culture of a nation but also in its belief system, values and way of life on the whole.

In the modern age, modernization theory looks at how new technologies and systems are leading to a more greatly homogenized world. Modernization theory encompasses the world of globalization, where cultural mores and ideas are easily spread throughout the world, leading to assort of universal culture that serves as a baseline for all cultures. As societies in the world

It is a process which brings desired types of changes in the social structure, value orientation, motivations and norms. It is a process of transformation of a society from its backward framework to a forward looking, progressing and prospering structural build up.

Modernization refers to a common behavioral pattern characterized by a rational and scientific world view, based on growth and ever increasing application of science and technology. It is an adaptation of new institutions emerged in the society to cope with the new situation dominated by science and technology.

C.E. Black defined modernization as, ”Modernization is a process by which historically evolved institutions are adopted to the rapidly changing functions that reflect the unprecedented increase in man’s knowledge permitting control over his environment, that accompanies the scientific revolution”.

Modernization is not a process which has emerged out just recently. The Western people have been undergoing this process for some five centuries and people in the least developed regions of the world for less than a century. In fact, the process of modernization has been slow in the initial stage but was accelerated after 1945. After World War Two it has been sped up and broad-based.

The foundations of modernization theory go back to the Age of Enlightenment, when a number of philosophers began to look at how society changed and progressed. Theories were laid out as to how technological advancement necessarily led to social advancement, which in turn led to an examination of how different facets of advancement were connected. The basic premise of this phase of modernization theory was that humans were able to change their society within a generation, and that this change was often facilitated by advancements in technology, production, and consumption.

**Tenets of Modernization**

Although there are many versions of modernization theory, major implicit or explicit tenets are that

(1) Societies develop through a series of evolutionary stages;

(2) These stages are based on different degrees and patterns of social differentiation and reintegration of structural and cultural components that are functionally compatible for the maintenance of society;

(3) Contemporary developing societies are at a premodern stage of evolution and they eventually will achieve economic growth and will take on the social, political, and economic features of western European and North American societies which have progressed to the highest stage of social evolutionary development;

(4) This modernization will result as complex Western technology is imported and traditional structural and cultural features incompatible with such development are overcome.

**Conceptual formulations of modernization:**

In social sciences, modernization is conceived through four conceptual formulations .

(i) **Psychological formulation-** Motivation and orientations of the individual, his mode of thinking, beliefs, opinions, attitudes and actions are all conceived in the psychological formulation .

(ii) **Normative formulation**, – The normative approach to modernization emphasizes norms and values like idealism, humanism, rationalism, individualism, pragmatism, liberalism and secularism.

(iii) **Structural formulation**- Structural conceptualizing of modernization stresses structural components of society such as bureaucracy, democratic associations and complex economy. Simultaneously it recognizes the importance of psychological as well as normative formulations.  -

(iv) **Technological formulation**-  Technological approach to modernization emphasizes the economic resources and the utilization of inanimate power in production system.

**Ways of response to modernization:**

As the process of modernization is not responded in an uniform manner in all social systems.  Herbert Blumer in his writing, “Industrialization and the Traditional Order” has mentioned five different ways through which a traditional society can respond to the process of modernization.

(i) **Rejective response-** When a traditional society  reject modernization and maintain traditional order due to powerful groups, landed aristocracy, oligarchy, religious fanaticism, vested interests, social prejudices, special interest and firm attachment to given forms of traditional life.

**(ii) Conjunctive response-** In  this response pattern, there occurs the co-existence of traditionalism and modernity without threatening the old order.

(iii) **Assimilative response-** It comprises of an absorption of the process of modernization by the traditional order. But simultaneously the traditional organizational pattern and life pattern are retained.

(iv) **Supportive response**- Here new and modern things are accepted on the ground that they strengthen the traditional order. The traditional groups and institutions utilize the scope provided by modernization to pursue the traditional interests in a more effective manner.

**(v) Disruptive response-**When modernization undermines the traditional order at many points while making adaptation to the changing situation. These five responses are controlled by values, interest or preferences and occur at different stages of the traditional order and in different combinations.

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**Dimensions of Modernization**

**In Economic sphere a modern society is characterized by:**

Specialization in economic role. Scope for saving and investment, expansion of market (from local to international). Modernization involves industrialization accompanied with monetization of economy, increasing division of labor, use of management techniques and improved technology and the expansion of service sector.  In the realm of technology, a developing society changes from simple and traditional techniques towards the application of scientific knowledge. In agriculture, the developing society evolves from subsistence farming towards the commercial production of agricultural goods. In Industry, the developing society undergoes a transformation from the use of human and animal power towards industrialization, or men working for wages at power-driven machines, which produce commodities marketed outside the community production. As regards the ecological conditions, the developing society moves from the farm and village towards urban concentrations.

New technology has revolutionized the speed and accuracy of production. Furthermore, increased global trade allows businesses to sell their products anywhere. But increased global production may hurt domestic business when international companies can offer products at cheaper prices.

**In Political sphere modernization of a society expects:**

Declining of traditional rulers, formulation of ideology for the rulers to handle the power and decentralization of power among the members of the society. Scope must be provided to all to participate in the decision making process. Modernization involves creation of a modern nation state and the development of key institutions political parties, bureaucratic structures, legislative bodies and a system of elections based on universal franchise and secret ballot.  The existence of a legal structure. The broadening of popular participation in the polity. The capability of maintaining national integration through orderly accommodation of various divisive forces. The capacity to blend administrative expertness, responsibility and rationality along with the popular will into an effective amalgam.

**In the Cultural  sphere a modernizing society is characterized by:**

Cultural modernization involves adherence to nationalistic ideology, belief in equality, freedom and humanism, a rational and scientific outlook. Owing differentiation among the major elements of culture like religion, philosophy and science. . Development of new cultural elements based on, progress and improvement, expression on ability and emphasis on dignity of the individual and his efficiency. ) In the religious sphere traditionalistic religions are gradually replaced by secularized belief systems.

On the one hand, modernization has encouraged the development of new forms of creative expression, such as film and television. These forms can be easily exported and viewed all over the world. However, a loss of culture may result from modernization. The spread of the Western culture has caused young people in non-Western countries to abandon traditional customs and values. Even languages begin to disappear as urbanization encourages people to learn a country’s dominant language.

**In the Social sphere a modernizing society is characterized by:**

Spread of literacy and secular education. Introduction of complex institutional system for the advancement of specialized roles. Expansion of media communication. Social modernization involves universalistic values, achievement motivation, increasing mobility both social and geographic increasing literacy and urbanization and the decline of traditional authority.

**In the Educational spheres a modernizing society is characterized by:**

The importance of education can be realized from the fact that all modernizing societies tend to emphasize on universalization of education. The secular and scientific education act as an important means of modernization. Education can be an important means of modernization. The importance of education can be realized from the fact that all modernizing societies tend to emphasize on universalization of education and the modernized societies have already attained it. The modern school system can inculcate achievement motivation. It helps in the diffusion of modern values of equality, freedom and humanism. Other values like individualism and universalistic ethics etc. can also be inculcated.  These values can form the basis of new relations in the society and growth of rationality can enable the development of administrative system through education

**In the Environment spheres a modernizing society is characterized by:**

Natural resources such as wood, water and oil are often processed in modernized society, and skyscrapers and factories begin to transform the landscape. Environmental problems, such as climate change, are believed to be the result of industrial development and production. However, in many poorer countries, the discovery of oil and the adoption of new technologies is welcomed for the financial opportunities it presents.

**In the Information technology spheres a modernizing society is characterized by:**

New inventions such as phones, televisions and computers allow people to communicate instantly anywhere on the globe. Increased global travel allows people to visit foreign cultures for business or leisure. Contact with foreign cultures fosters international cooperation, but can also result in further loss of culture as people begin to adopt the foreign cultures and languages they are exposed to. The media helps create knowledge of desirable things faster than these things themselves produced. Ideology also plays a significant role in changing mass behavior and attitudes. Attitudinal and value changes are pre-requisites of the creation of modern society, economy and political system. The growth of knowledge and its application will enhance man’s control over nature. Science has provided the information needed by people to increase the strength of their own impulse to modernize.

**Modernization in India:**

In India, modernization depends on three factors as it constitutes a multi-dimensional process.

Firstly, the nature of the choice that our society has made on the preference of the people in accepting modern elements like acceptance of scientific innovation. Introduction of new institutions like banking, mass media communication etc. Introduction of large scale industries.

Secondly, interest of the people in using modern elements also counts much for that expresses the nature of our response to the changes due to modernization. Increase in the standard of living. Emergence of the middle class.  Introduction of structural changes in social institutions like marriage, family, caste etc. Emergence of new forms because of synthesis of old and new elements. For example, nuclear family in structure but functioning as joint.

Thirdly, the role of the cultural tradition based on history is important as value system controls our behavior in using and interpreting modern elements. Adoption of new cultural traits such as new election system. Introduction of new value systems such as equality, justice, individualism, secularism etc. There are some eliminative changes like disappearance of cultural traits, behavior pattern, values etc. Example, abolition of feudal power. There is shifting of attitude from sacred to secular.

**The impact of Modernization on our social system**

The impact of Modernization on our social system can be described  in terms of four types of changes:

**The Eliminative changes**

The Eliminative changes are those which cause the disappearance of culture traits, behavior patterns, values, beliefs, institutions, etc.  Many reform movements came into being. Several traditional beliefs and practices dysfunctional to society were discarded and many new customs, institutions and social practices were adopted. The introduction of the new values, the rational and secular spirit, and the ideologies of individualism, equality and justice assumed great importance.

**The additive changes**

The additive changes refer to the adoption of new culture traits, institutions, behavior patterns and belief systems covering diverse aspects of life. These additions were not present earlier in the culture of people. Introducing divorce in the Hindu society, giving share to daughters in father’s property, introducing election system in panchayats, etc., are a few examples of this type of change.

**The supportive changes**

The supportive changes are those which strengthen the values, beliefs or behavior patterns present in society before contact with the West.  Modern education broadened the outlook of the people who started talking of their rights and freedom. The introduction of the modern means of communication, such as railway and bus travel, postal service, air and sea travel, press, an radio and television have affected man’s life in varied respects.  Modern institutions like banking system, public administration, military organization, modern medicine, law, etc., were introduced in our country.

**The synthetic changes**

The synthetic changes result in the creation of new form from existing elements plus adopted ones. The most simple instance is the creation of residentially nuclear but functionally joint family which continues to fulfill social obligations to parents and siblings. Continuing dowry system but putting restrictions on amount to be given or taken, and associating children along with parents in mate selection are some examples of synthetic change.

In certain areas of life, the positive impact of the modernization is worth appreciable. Modern medical science, modern technology, modern methods of combating natural catastrophes, etc., will go down in Indian history as incontestable contributions of the West. But India is using at the same time its traditional institutions, beliefs and practices for the uplift of the masses.

So except the technological inputs, even economic exploitations under free trade or repressive regimentation under government that came from the so called modern west, have least served the society to achieve equality. Social impacts have been worse.

Aggressive modernization, deserved respect, but not fit for absorption into our own way of life. Apart from an initiation into new unfolding findings of secular science and technology – which was absent in our nation under colonial subjugation – we had gained least in other spheres, particularly in the social and ethical qualities. We became divided, in the names of religion and castes losing the force of harmony that united us under the princely states!

The increasing divorce culture, night clubs and pub culture, promiscuity and desertions etc. among youth, the divide and rule policy among the politicians are major impacts in the social domain.

The breakdown of joint family system due to new life styles, uncontrolled deviancies in the name of liberty etc. have made youth defy control of society and family in a big way . It is observed any change made in any aspect of social sphere – agriculture or medicine or arts or whatever – may end up in unexpected ”side effects” as well. Thus, even after the impact of the West, and after the modernization of various systems, India will remain India. Indian culture will subsist and survive in eternity.