


# PUB 1270: Socio-Political Environment

## Session 06

# Social Change

Department of Public Administration  
Faculty of Management Studies and Commerce  
University of Sri Jayewardenepura  
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How does the contemporary  
society look like?



**Over 1.1 million Sri Lankans left country in 2022**



# Learning Outcomes

- Define the term social change
- Elaborate the theories of social change
- Identify main causes of social change
- Explain the reasons for resistance to social change
- Assess how 'social change' influences the business environment



No man ever steps in the same river twice, for it's not the same river and he's not the same man.

— Heraclitus

— AZ QUOTES —

## **‘Social Change’ in Greek Philosophy**

# Meaning of Social Change

Social change refers to 'a process' responsive to many types of changes;

1. Changes in the man-made conditions of life
2. Changes in the attitudes and beliefs of human
3. Changes that go beyond the human control to the biological and the physical nature of things

*(Machver and Page ,1950)*

# Meaning of Social Change cont'd.

‘Social Change’ is a term used to describe variations in, or modifications of, any aspect of social processes, social patterns, social interactions or social organization.

(M.E. Jones, 1962)

Therefore, social change means;

- Changes of **social interactions and relationships**
- Changes of **social processes**
- Changes of **social functions**
- Changes of **social organizations**



# Meaning of Social Change cont'd.

- Change is the law of nature.
- Similarly, society is not a static, it is a dynamic entity.
- Social change may be intentional or random, man-made or natural.
- Society is influenced by many forces and factors that cause changes.

E.g. Demographic Factors,  
Environmental Factors,  
Government Rules,  
Foreign Invasions,  
Populist Groups,  
Natural Disasters



# Why do we need theories?

- To explain situations
- To understand complex things
- To predict the future

## Theories of social change

- Evolutionary Theory
- Cyclical Theory
- Conflict Theory
- Structural Functionalist Theory
- Modernization Theory

# Theories of Social Change

## *Evolutionary Theory*

- Social change is evolutionary; it is gradual yet progressive
- Society moves from simple beginning to more complex forms
- This takes through a linear path

## *Cyclical Theory*

- Social change takes a cyclic form
- Societies may grow, reach peak stage of development, may stagnate and finally collapse, with the potential for rising again.

# Theories of Social Change cont'd.

## ***Conflict Theory***

- Social changes are the results of class conflicts in the social system for the better or worse.
- Ex: Karl Marx described class conflict based on unequal distribution of material resources.

## ***Structural Functionalist Theory***

- Change disrupts the orderly functioning of the system.
- It affects the order and equilibrium of the social system and thus the system has to bring itself back to the equilibrium, to smooth functioning of the system.

# Theories of Social Change cont'd.

## *Modernization Theory*

- Modernization is the process that increases the amount of specialization and differentiation of structures in societies
- This explains the change that is being experienced by most societies by imitating or copying the values, experiences, and models of already modernized societies.

# Causes of Social Change

- Conflicts and revolutions
  - (French revolution, Russian revolution, Ethnic conflicts)
- Unsolved social problems
  - (Poverty, Inequality etc.)
- Cultural changes
  - (Changes of values, norms, beliefs etc.)
- Social movements
  - (Feminist movement, Green movement, LGBT movement)
- Impact of non-social environment
  - (Climate Changes, Technology, Influence of international environment)

# Resistance to Social Change

- Though social change is universal, societies and cultures are relatively permanent.
- The social and cultural functions do not rapidly change.
- Resistance to change is inevitable.
- In no society, all the changes are welcomed by the people without questioning and resistance.

# Why do people resist to social change?

- Behavior of people towards new inventions
  - ✓ Lack of interest
  - ✓ Non-acceptance
  - ✓ Fear
  - ✓ Intellectual laziness
- Traditional attitudes and habits
- Ignorance of people
- Economic disparity and difficulty
- When self-interests are challenged



# How does 'social change' influence the business environment?

- Social change creates **new business opportunities** (new products and services, new business units, new markets)
- Social change poses **threats to the business environment** (increased cost, high risks, unpredictability in operations)
- Social change **provides signals on future business trends** and prospects for managers
- Managers can **develop new business strategies** (restructuring of organizations, promotional strategies)
- Social change **leads to innovations** in the business environment.

2001



2017



# The End !

Generation Gap! 😂



Son

Dad