

Implications of Social Change and modernization

The implications of ideas about social change are multifaceted, ranging from societal progress and empowerment to potential rifts and unintended consequences, impacting everything from worker rights and gender equality to technological innovation and environmental sustainability.

- **Positive Implications:**

Progress and Empowerment:

Social change can lead to advancements in human rights, equality, and social justice, empowering marginalized groups and promoting a more equitable society.

Improved Living Conditions:

Social change can address systemic issues, leading to improvements in areas like healthcare, education, and economic opportunities, ultimately enhancing the quality of life for individuals and communities.

Technological and Scientific Advancement:

Social change can drive innovation and technological development, leading to breakthroughs in various fields and improving human capabilities.

Environmental Protection:

Social movements and awareness can lead to policies and practices that protect the environment and promote sustainable development.

Accountability and Democracy:

Social change can hold governments and institutions accountable, promoting democratic values and citizen participation.

- **Potential Negative Implications:**

Social Division and Conflict:

Radical social change can lead to societal rifts and conflicts, particularly if not managed effectively, potentially leading to economic, environmental, and other problems.

Unintended Consequences:

Social change initiatives can have unintended consequences, such as disempowering certain groups or exacerbating existing inequalities.

Economic Instability:

Rapid or poorly planned social change can disrupt economic systems and lead to instability or hardship for some segments of society.

Resistance and Backlash:

Social change can face resistance from those who benefit from the status quo, leading to backlash and setbacks in progress.

Loss of Tradition and Culture:

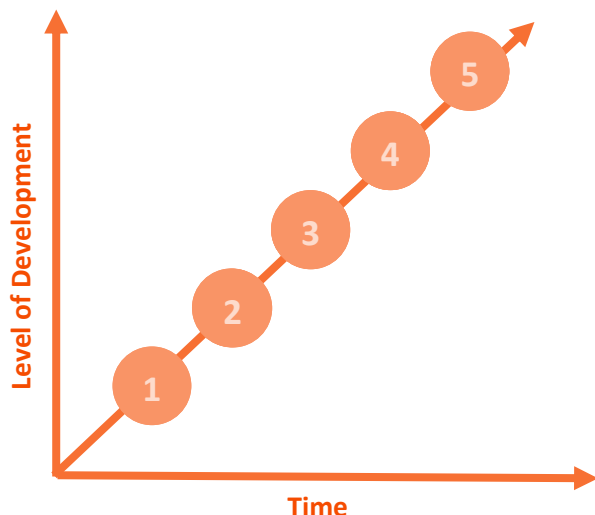
Rapid social change can lead to the erosion of traditional values and cultural practices, potentially causing identity crises or cultural loss.

Modernisation Theory

Definitions

A description and explanation of a linear process countries can make through economic development.

One example of a Modernisation Theory is **Rostow's Economic Stages of Growth**. This model suggests that countries go through a predefined set of five stages before becoming a fully developed nation.



Limitations of Rostow's Model

- The model is largely based on the experience of America and Europe and assumes that all other nations can follow the same pattern.
- Movement between the stages is very mechanical and rigid with little exception made for countries who may fall between stages, have one measure (such as communication) in one stage while others (such as health) in another or who 'leap-frog' a stage.
- There is an assumption that all countries will automatically start at the same stage and with the same capability (such as their availability of raw materials) to progress further through the stages.
- No account is taken for problems that developing countries face (such as debt, being 'locked into' the export of primary products or limited access to markets) which can block further development.
- The model suggests that the end point of development is the same for all countries and is known from the beginning.
- It assumes that all countries will adopt similar policies, something that overlooks the idea that competition between the nations may hold some back.
- Some stages of the model may overlap or merge, with the pace of change happening more quickly in some areas of the world than others.

Stage One: Traditional Society

- Agriculture and other primary industries are the only means of existence. The work is highly labour intensive due to the limited availability of advanced technology.
- Subsistence agriculture dominates this farming, with food being eaten by the producers rather than being sold for profit.
- There is limited scope to develop any raw materials in the country so the development of other industries is restricted.

Stage Two: Pre-conditions for Take-Off

- Mechanisation starts to enter farming and greater yields create more commercialisation of food.
- Secondary industries such as textiles begin to develop as skill and education levels increase.
- Foreign Direct Investment may see the country begin to develop simple communication and transport infrastructures.

Stage Three: Take-Off

- Further industrialisation creates a multiplier effect where businesses use each other to grow and develop.
- Most workers are now employed in secondary industries.
- Development may become largely regional and centred around urban spaces.

Stage Four: Drive to Maturity

- Modern technology has spread across almost all industries in the country and many sectors start to gain an international reputation.
- Workers are highly skilled and start to become specialised within certain industries.

Stage Five: Age of High Mass Consumption

- Employment becomes very much based around service industries and the consumption of high order goods that are made overseas.
- Finance systems are well established with banks able to loan money to other countries.
- Country plays a key role in international organisation

Political Development

One of the important contributions by Gabriel Almond to theory of Political system is his concept of political development. It is on the basis of this concept that he has classified political systems into various types, which we shall presently describe. Political change is one of the most pervasive and fundamental factor in the life of the political systems. Hence, as Almond says, it is necessary that "the study of politics must be a dynamic system-and-process analysis, and not a static and structural one."

By political development Almond Gabriel any situation or challenge which compels a political system to change or re-adjust its culture or structure. Cultural change is due to secularization and structural change due to differentiation of roles. Development can be produced due to problems and challenges for change, which are of five kinds, as under.

1. **State-building:** It is an integrative response to the challenges confronting a political system.
2. **Nation-building:** It is the system-development by promoting the loyalty and commitment of its nation or people.
3. **Participatory Development:** this type of change comes in the form of the pressure from the groups in the society for having a part or share in the decision-making process. It is the participatory development of the political system which tends to make it a democracy.
4. **Economy building:** By using political system to greater production.
5. **Distributary Development:** The pressure from the domestic society to employ the decision-making authority of the political system to redistribute income, wealth, opportunity and honour leads to distributary development. It will make it a welfare state. If we know the demands, challenges or pressures from within the environment, both domestic and international, around a political system and the kind of its responses to them, we can predict how it will develop.

These challenges may not come singly but jointly, which Almond calls "the challenge of cumulative demands or revolutions". He writes further: "it is generally recognized that a major problem in the new nations (of the Third World) today is the cumulative revolutions they have to face. People demand participation, national unity, economic betterment, law and order, simultaneously and immediately." Moreover, development in one part of a political system may give rise to demands or pressure in the other parts. For instance, when the educational system of a country develops, the demand for participation in the decision-making process will also arise. On the other hand, illiteracy lowers the demand of the people for participation. But it will generate pressures in other directions. Illiteracy lowers the productive capabilities of the people and thereby lessen the resources of the political system and thus renders it incapable of meeting the demands and pressures from other directions. The consequent overload of the demands, etc., may cause law and order problem and thus result in the instability of the political system. Almond writes, "The extent to which the political system is loaded or overloaded will vary with the capabilities of other social systems in the domestic society and the international system," That is the reason why the functioning pattern of a political system is itself another factor in its stability. Almond writes,

"Some kinds of political systems can withstand demand and support fluctuations better than others." For instance, a political system with a good administrative services or a strong army can maintain law and order better and resist anomic demands, i.e., riot-causing demands of certain groups or of the people in it.

Similarly, “a system geared to a high level of responsiveness to inputs from many sources can cope with demands from new groups and with loss of support from some old ones. Some systems are geared for change and adaptation; others are not.” These are the problems of political development.

Two Kinds of Developments:

Political development can be, in general, of two kinds: secularization of political culture and differentiation of political structure.

i) Secularization:

Almond defines it as thus: “Secularization is a process of attitude change, whereby people become more oriented to cause-and effect relationships they can see in the world around them.” It results from the spread of education and communication media and from the development of science and technology. In the secular culture, individuals tend to believe in their ability to shape their environment. They also adopt such courses of action as help them in shaping their environment. Take the example of modern political leader and of a tribal chief in a tribal society. A modern political leader carefully studies the demands of the people of his constituency in order to win majority of their votes at the time of election. He gathers information about the constituency, such as the needs of its people, which will help him in winning election. He makes estimates of the distribution and intensity of the demands of one kind or another. He uses his creative imagination and understanding to arrive at such a possible combination of demands which increases his chances of winning a majority of votes in his constituency. The tribal chief needs make none of such efforts. Instead, he relies on the customs and the traditional set of goals coming down to him from generations past. To this he adds his social status or family and clan relations to win support for his decisions. In short, secularization means such a cultural change in which traditional orientations and attitudes give place to more dynamic decision-making processes, involving gathering and evaluating information, collecting alternative courses of action, and selecting a course of action which is better and has greater chances of success and, then testing whether or not a given course of action will produce the intended consequences.

ii) Differentiation:

Differentiation means change in the roles of a structure, the emergence of new roles and the atrophy of the old ones. Almond writes, “In differentiation roles [change and become more specialized or autonomous, new types of specialized roles are established, or new specialized structures and subsystems emerge or are created.” Specialized organisations for collecting taxes, training officers, communicating messages, maintaining order, mobilising support, and the like are introduced or become separate from earlier structures. For Example, courts are separated from other administrative departments and officers.

Civil Bureaucracy

Bureaucracy or the Civil Service constitutes the permanent and professional part of the executive organ of government. It is usually described as the non-political or politically neutral, permanent, and professionally trained civil service.

It runs the administration of the state according to the policies and laws of the government political executive. Upon the qualities and efficiency of bureaucracy depends the quality and efficiency of the state administration. It, however, works under the leadership and control of the Political Executive.

The terms bureaucracy, civil service, public servants, public service, civil servants, government service, government servants, officials of government, officials, permanent executive and non-political executive are used to describe all such persons who carry out the day to day administration of the state. The terms Bureaucracy' and 'Civil Service' are popularly used as synonyms.

In a narrow sense the term Bureaucracy is used to denote those important and higher level public servants who occupy top level positions in the state administration. In the broad sense, it refers to all the permanent employees of the government right from the peons and clerks to the top level officials. Presently, we use the term in its broader dimension.

Definitions:

- (1) "Bureaucracy means the civil servants, the administrative functionaries who are professionally trained for the public service and who enjoy permanency of tenure, promotion within service-partly by seniority and partly by merit." -Garner
- (2) "In its broad larger sense the term Civil Service is used to describe any personnel system where the employees are classified in a system of administration composed of a hierarchy, sections, divisions, bureaus, departments and the like." -Willoughby
- (3) "Civil Service/Bureaucracy is a professional body of officials permanent, paid and skilled." -Finer

Bureaucracy: Main Features:

1. Permanent Character:

The civil servants hold permanent jobs in government departments. They mostly join their services during their youths and continue to work as government servants till the age of retirement which is usually 58 to 60 years.

2. Hierarchical Organisation:

Bureaucracy is hierarchically organised in several levels. Each official is placed at a particular level of hierarchy and he enjoys the privileges and powers which are available to his co-level officials. He is under his immediate higher level officials and is above his immediately lower level officials. The principle of rule of the higher over the lower governs the inter-relations between various levels of bureaucracy.

3. Non-partisan Character:

The members of the Bureaucracy are not directly involved in politics. They cannot join political parties and participate in political movements. They are not affected by the political changes which keep on coming in the political executive. Whichever party may come to power and make the government, the civil servants remain politically neutral and carry out their assigned departmental roles impartially and faithfully.

4. Professional, Trained and Expert Class:

The Bureaucracy constitutes the educated and professionally trained class of persons which helps the political executive in carrying out its functions. The members of civil service are recruited through competitive examinations for appearing in which they have to possess some minimum educational qualifications. Before their appointments, they get special trainings. During the course of their service they attend orientation and refresher courses. They have the knowledge, training and expertise necessary for carrying out their administrative work.

5. Fixed Salaries:

Each member of the Bureaucracy receives a fixed salary. Right at the time of appointment he is allotted a scale of pay, which depends upon the nature and level of his job-responsibility. All the civil servants belonging to a particular class of administrative hierarchy are placed in one scale of pay. Each job also entitles them to some allowances.

6. Bound by Rules and Regulations:

The Bureaucracy always works in accordance with 'rules and regulations'. 'Strict obedience to rules', 'Through Proper Channel', 'Decision-making after satisfying the rules', are the principles which always guide, direct and regulate the working of bureaucracy. Each official works only within the sphere prescribed for him by the rules of his department.

7. Class Consciousness:

The Civil Servants are highly class conscious. They jealously work to protect and promote the interests of their class of civil servants. They are called the white-collar class because of their faith in their 'superior status' as government officials.

8. Public Service Spirit as the Ideal:

Modern Bureaucracy identifies itself with public service spirit. It always tries to project itself as the civil servants devoted to the promotion of public welfare through the satisfaction of public needs. They are expected to behave as 'officers' responsible for public welfare, with service as their motto.

9. Bound by a Code of Conduct:

The civil servants have to follow a code of conduct. They have to act in a disciplined way. Their rights, duties and privileges stand clearly defined. The procedure of work is definite and settled. They can be punished for misbehavior, incompetence or negligence or for a violation of their conduct rules. In short, Bureaucracy is characterised by political neutrality, professional competence, permanent/ stable tenure, fixed salaries and strict obedience to rules.

Role of Bureaucracy: Functions:

Bureaucracy or Civil Service plays a key role in running the Public Administration by performing the following functions:

1. Implementation of Governmental Policies and Laws:

It is the responsibility of the bureaucracy to carry out and implement the policies of the government. Good policies and laws can really serve their objectives only when these are efficiently implemented by the civil servants.

2. Role in Policy-Formulation:

Policy-making is the function of the political executive. However, the Bureaucracy plays an active role in this exercise. Civil Servants supply the data needed by the political executive for formulating the policies. In fact, Civil servants formulate several alternative policies and describe the merits and demerits of each. The Political Executive then selects and adopts one such policy alternative as the governmental policy.

3. Running of Administration:

To run the day to day administration in accordance with the policies, laws, rules, regulations and decisions of the government is also the key responsibility of the Bureaucracy. The political executive simply exercises guiding, controlling and supervising functions.

4. Advisory Function:

One of the important functions of the Bureaucracy is to advise the political executive. The ministers receive all the information and advice regarding the functioning of their respective departments from the civil servants. As amateurs, the ministers have little knowledge about the functions of their departments. They, therefore, depend upon the advice of bureaucracy. As qualified, experienced and expert civil servants working in all government departments, they provide expert and professional advice and information to the ministers.

5. Role in Legislative Work:

The civil servants play an important but indirect role in law-making. They draft the bills which the ministers submit to the legislature for law-making. The ministers provide all the information asked for by the legislature by taking the help of the civil servants.

6. Semi-judicial Work:

The emergence of the system of administrative justice, under which several types of the cases and disputes are decided by the executive, has further been a source of increased semi-judicial work of the bureaucracy. The disputes involving the grant of permits, licences, tax concessions, quotas etc. are now settled by the civil servants.

7. Collection of Taxes and Disbursement of Financial Benefits:

The civil servants play a vitally important role in financial administration. They advise the political executive in respect of all financial planning, tax-structure, tax-administration and the like. They collect taxes and settle disputes involving recovery of taxes. They play a vital role in preparing the budget and taxation proposals. They carry out the function of granting of legally sanctioned financial benefits, tax reliefs, subsidies and other concessions to the people.

8. Record-Keeping:

The Civil Service has the sole responsibility of keeping systematically all government records. They collect, classify and analyse all data pertaining to all activities of the government. They collect and maintain vital socio-economic statistics which are used for the formulation of Public policies and plans.

9. Role in Public Relations:

The era of modern welfare state and democratic politics has made it essential for the government to keep close relations with the people of the state. The need for maintaining active and full public relations is a vital necessity of every state. The civil servants play an active role in this sphere.

They are the main agents who establish direct contacts with the people. They serve as a two way link. On the one hand, they communicate all government decisions to the people, and on the other hand, they communicate to the government the needs, interests and views of the people. Thus, Bureaucracy plays a vigorously active and highly important role in the working of the government.

Control over Bureaucracy:

The rise of modern welfare state and increase in its functions has been a source of big increase in the powers and role of Bureaucracy. It has, therefore, given rise to an additional need for

exercising control over bureaucracy. An effective control system has become essential both for preventing the civil servants from abusing their powers as well as for ensuring their active and positive role. In fact, every state maintains a system of internal and external control over Bureaucracy.

(A) Internal Control:

It means control applied from within the organisation i.e. by the administrative machinery. The administrative organisation is hierarchical and is divided into wings, divisions, branches and sections. There are present some internal controls in its every section. The tools of control are budgeting, accounting, auditing, reports, inspections, efficiency surveys, personnel control, code of conduct, and discipline and leadership control.

In particular, regular internal inspections, auditing of accounts and evaluation of the performance of each civil servant act as main means of internal control over Bureaucracy. Internal control is necessary for keeping the bureaucracy efficient and productive of desired results.

(B) External Control:

External control is that which flows from outside agencies. These agencies are the people, the legislature, the executive and the judiciary.

Social Change

What is Social Change?

Sociologists define social change as a transformation of cultures, institutions, and functions. Most change isn't instantaneous. In society, change is often very slow. There are a variety of parts and forces at work, many of which resist disruptions of the status quo. All societies go through these types of changes at one point. You don't need to be an avid student of history to know that. Consider a modern society and reflect on what it looked like hundreds of years ago. Often, society is unrecognizable.

DEFINITIONS

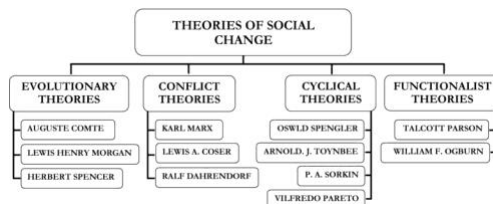
- (i) Jones. "Social change is a term used to describe variations in, or modifications of, any aspect of social processes, social patterns, social interaction or social organisation."
- (ii) Mazumdar, H. T. "Social change may be defined as a new fashion or mode, either modifying or replacing the old, in the life of a people, or in the operation of a society."
- (iii) Davis. By "Social change is meant only such alterations as occur in social organisation, that is, structure and functions of society."

ASPECTS OF SOCIAL CHANGE

- i) Social change is essentially a process of alteration with no reference to the quality of change.
- ii) Changes in society are related/linked to changes in culture, so that it would be sometimes useful to talk about 'socio-cultural change'.
- iii) Social change can vary in its scope and in speed. We can talk of small scale or large scale changes. Changes can take a cyclical pattern, e.g. when there is the recurrence of centralisation and decentralisation in administrative organisations. It can also be revolutionary. Revolutionary change can be seen when there is an overthrow of government in a particular nation. Change can also include short term changes (e.g. in migration rates) as well as long term changes in economic structures.

Theories of social change

While it's inevitable for all societies to go through some changes, why that happens isn't



obvious. Throughout history, sociologists have wrestled with different ideas and models. There are three main theories of social change: evolutionary, functionalist, and conflict.

Evolutionary

The evolutionary theory of social change gained prominence in the 19th century. Sociologists latched on to Darwin's theory of evolution, applying it to society. Auguste Comte, known as the "father of sociology," believed in the evolutionary model. According to this theory, society always evolves into "higher levels." Like organisms evolve from simple to more complex, so do societies. Societies that don't adapt fast enough will fall behind. This led many sociologists to conclude that Western societies must be "superior" because of their "advanced" state.

At first, social evolutionists asserted that all societies must go through the same sequence of progress. Modern theorists believe that change is multilinear. Societies can evolve in different ways and different directions.

Functionalist theory

The functionalist theory of social change teaches that society is like a human body. Each part is like an organ. Individual parts can't survive on their own. Emile Durkheim, a major leader in the social sciences, believed that all parts of a society must be harmonious. If they aren't unified, society is "no more than a pile of sand" that's vulnerable to collapse. When one part suffers, all the other parts must adjust. Why? The functionalist theory believes that society always works

toward stabilization. When problems occur, they're temporary, but they do need attention from the other parts. This means social change.

Functionalism isn't without its critics. Many point out that this theory tends to ignore that society's elite often creates a mirage of harmony and stability. The theory also fails to factor in race, class, and gender. Functionalism reached its peak in the 1940s and '50s, only to decline in the 1960s.

STRUCTURAL-FUNCTIONAL theories

It is strongly advocated by several sociologists, particularly by Talcott Parsons and Morton. According to its advocates, every social system has two aspects, one structural and the other functional. A structure is an arrangement/unit for the performance of functions. Function is the consequent of the activities of structures. Structural functionalists believe that society, like the human body, is a balanced system. Each institution serves a function in maintaining society. When events outside or inside the society, disrupt the social order, social institutions make adjustments to restore stability. They also argue that change generally occurs in a gradual, adjustive fashion and not in a sudden violent, radical fashion. Even changes which appear to be drastic, have not been able to make a great or lasting impact on the core elements, of the social and cultural systems.

Conflict theory

The conflict theory states that society is by nature unequal and competitive. Karl Marx spearheaded this theory. While he did believe in the evolutionary model to a point, Marx didn't think each phase resulted in something better than before. More often than not, the rich and powerful control the rest of society by exploiting vulnerable groups. This sows conflict, provoking people to action. Social change occurs as a result. The conflict model evolved over the years. It's found in other theories such as feminist theory, queer theory, and critical race theory.

Cyclical theories

Cyclical theories of social change hold that civilizations rise and fall in an endless series of cycles. Oswald Spengler wrote a book 'The Decline of the West' in 1918, in which he wrote that the fate of civilisation was a matter of 'destiny'. He saw society moving in continual cycles of growth and decay. The Roman Empire rose to power and then gradually collapsed.

The British empire grew strong, and then deteriorated. Spengler believed that social change may take the form of progress or of decay, but that no society lives for ever. In recent times Arnold J. Toynbee, the noted English historian, has also propounded a cyclical theory of the history of world civilization. He maintains that civilizations pass through three stages, corresponding to youth, maturity and decline.

What triggers social change?

No society stays the same forever, but what specific causes drive it? Social change has three main triggers:

Conflict

It is clear from a glance at our global history that conflict provokes social change. Inequalities based on class, race, gender, religion, and more foster dissatisfaction and anger. To address their situation, groups come together to fight for change. Governments can be overthrown or restructured. Sometimes change happens quickly, but oftentimes it develops over time in stages.

Demographic change

When the demographic makeup of a society changes, social change is inevitable. Society's demographics often change when births increase and/or people start living longer. A bigger population affects the dispersal and availability of resources. An increase in immigration or emigration also affects society.

Cultural change

New inventions, discoveries, and the spread of ideas contribute to cultural changes. Consider the effect of the internet. It's not only changed the culture of individual countries but the entire world. It's transformed how we communicate, as well as the structure of countless industries. Discoveries also impact a society's culture. Consider how much changed when the Europeans "discovered" America. This example shows how social change is not always beneficial to everyone. New ideas about gender, race, religion, work, education, and so on also change a culture.

Examples of social change

Social change often occurs as a result of social movements. There are countless examples throughout history in every country on earth. Some of the most famous (many of which are ongoing and/or evolving) include:

- The Reformation
- The abolition of the transatlantic slave trade
- The Civil Rights movement
- The feminist movement
- The LGBTQ+ rights movement
- The green movement
- Why is Social Change important?

Social change occurs when societal institutions, structures, and cultures undergo a significant shift. Famous examples include the Reformation in 16th-century Europe and the American civil

rights movement. More often than not, social change is slow. This is especially true of a global society. Why does social change matter? Here are 10 reasons:

#1. Social change gets the world closer to gender equality

Looking at the state of gender equality can be overwhelming, even discouraging. It's important to remember that social change starts small. It becomes impactful as more individuals, groups, and institutions get on board. These actors propel the world forward culture by culture, country by country. Actions like closing the gender pay gap; increasing education access; and improving women's healthcare contribute to lasting social change on a large scale.

#2. Social change improves worker rights

Throughout the course of history, greed exploits and endangers employees in every industry. The United States is an example of how social change affects labor and worker rights. Over two centuries, the US experienced the birth of unions, child labor laws, the minimum wage, and laws for family and medical leave. This area of social change is ongoing as workers continue to fight for their rights. They strike for higher wages and push for better legal protections. Consumers also play a part when they boycott businesses with unethical practices.

#3. Social change improves racial equality

Most societies deal with racial inequalities. Based on their race, groups and individuals face discrimination and disenfranchisement. Social movements (like the civil rights movement in the United States) focus on protesting current conditions and changing laws. Social change is also significant when it addresses society's perception of race. Education and awareness can be as important as legislative measures.

#4. Social change helps the environment

No other living thing has affected the environment as much as humanity. Research shows that we're damaging the air, water, and land at unprecedented rates. This affects the wellbeing and safety of everything on earth, including humans. Green social movements have pushed back with earth-friendly initiatives such as supporting endangered species. They also encourage individual responsibility and spread awareness about issues like climate change.

#5. Social change keeps governments accountable

History proves that power can corrupt. Governments often commit human rights violations against their own people. Social change can draw attention to these injustices, dismantle destructive structures, and help societies transition into better systems. These changes can occur quickly and violently through civil war or conflict. Through elections and legislature, the change can be more accountable.

#6. Social change addresses problems at the root

Lasting impact is one of the markers of social change. It isn't enough to treat the symptoms and not the wound. The most effective social movements tackle issues at the root instead of only looking at the effects. As an example, to address homelessness, we must examine why people are homeless in the first place. Only providing short-term solutions won't deal with underlying causes. Long-term measures are also needed. Looking at the roots allows for permanent changes to develop, saving a society's time, energy, and resources.

#7. Social change empowers citizens

Social change often occurs when individuals decide to work towards a common goal. They take note of what's destructive or inefficient in society and take the steps necessary to change it. Most activists can point to a specific movement or person from the past that inspires them. Social change empowers citizens, proving that passion and hard work pays off even when there's significant resistance.

#8. Social change makes life better for future generations

Many social movements lean on the understanding that social change is slow. Those fighting for change now know they might not reap the benefits, but coming generations will. Climate change activists are keenly aware of this fact. They understand that healing the planet takes time. Fighting battles now on behalf of those not even born yet is a selfless act. It sets up a society for future success.

CONCLUSION

No single theory or factor can explain the origin, direction, manner or consequences of social change. Change is such a complex process, that it is difficult to explain its causes, limits and consequences in a definitive specific manner. Sociological research studies in recent years have concentrated on specific process of social change, and its effects on society.

Though, sociologists say that they are trying to look at change in an objective manner, the idea of progress is still very much present in modern social thought. According to Bottomore, it is evident in the serious commitment to economic growth in the industrial countries, and subsequently in the countries of the Third World. More recently, he feels, it has provided the impetus for critical evaluation of unlimited and uncontrolled economic growth.