

# MODERNIZATION

## MODULE 3

# INTRODUCTION

- **Modernization theory** is used to explain the process of modernization within societies. Modernization refers to a model of a progressive transition from a 'pre-modern' or '[traditional](#)' to a 'modern' society. Modernization theory originated from the ideas of German sociologist [Max Weber](#) (1864–1920), which provided the basis for the modernization paradigm developed by Harvard sociologist [Talcott Parsons](#) (1902–1979). The theory looks at the internal factors of a country while assuming that with assistance, "traditional" countries can be brought to development in the same manner more developed countries have been. Modernization theory was a dominant paradigm in the social sciences in the 1950s and 1960s, then went into a deep eclipse. It made a comeback after 1991 but remains a controversial model. [\[1\]](#)

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# INTRODUCTION

- Modernization theory both attempts to identify the social variables that contribute to [social progress](#) and development of societies and seeks to explain the process of [social evolution](#). Modernization theory is subject to criticism originating among socialist and free-market ideologies, [world-systems](#) theorists, [globalization](#) theorists and [dependency](#) theorists among others. Modernization theory stresses not only the process of change but also the responses to that change. It also looks at internal dynamics while referring to social and cultural structures and the adaptation of new technologies.

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# WHAT SUGGEST?

- Modernization theory suggests that traditional societies will develop as they adopt more modern practices. Proponents of modernization theory claim that modern states are wealthier and more powerful and that their citizens are freer to enjoy a higher standard of living. Developments such as new data technology and the need to update traditional methods in transport, communication and production, it is argued, make modernization necessary or at least preferable to the status quo. That view makes critique difficult since it implies that such developments control the limits of human interaction, not vice versa. And yet, seemingly paradoxically, it also implies that human agency controls the speed and severity of modernization. Supposedly, instead of being dominated by tradition, societies undergoing the process of modernization typically arrive at forms of governance dictated by abstract principles. Traditional religious beliefs and cultural traits, according to the theory, usually become less important as modernization takes hold.[\[2\]](#)

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# WHAT WERE THE CONCEPT?

- Today, the concept of modernization is understood in three different meanings: 1) as the internal development of Western Europe and North America relating to the European New Era; 2) as a process by which countries that do not belong to the first group of countries, aim to catch up with them; 3) as processes of evolutionary development of the most modernized societies (Western Europe and North America), i.e. modernization as a permanent process, carried out through reform and innovation, which today means a transition to a postindustrial society.<sup>[3]</sup> Historians link modernization to the processes of [urbanization](#) and [industrialization](#) and the spread of education. As Kendall (2007) notes, "Urbanization accompanied modernization and the rapid process of industrialization."<sup>[4]</sup> In [sociological critical theory](#), modernization is linked to an overarching process of [rationalisation](#). When modernization increases within a society, the individual becomes increasingly important, eventually replacing the family or community as the fundamental unit of society. It is also a subject taught in traditional Advanced Placement World History classes.

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# FACTORS

- [Globalization](#) can be defined as the integration of economic, political and social cultures. It is argued that globalization is related to the spreading of modernization across borders.
- Global trade has grown continuously since the European discovery of new continents in the [Early modern period](#); it increased particularly as a result of the [Industrial Revolution](#) and the mid-20th century adoption of the [shipping container](#).
- Annual trans-border tourist arrivals rose to 456 million by 1990 and almost tripled since, reaching a total of over 1.2 billion in 2016.<sup>[8][9]</sup> Communication is another major area that has grown due to modernization. Communication industries have enabled capitalism to spread throughout the world. Telephony, television broadcasts, news services and online service providers have played a crucial part in globalization. Former U.S president [Lyndon B. Johnson](#) was a supporter of the modernization theory and believed that television had potential to provide educational tools in development.<sup>[10]</sup>
- With the many apparent positive attributes to globalization there are also negative consequences. The dominant, neoliberal model of globalization often increases disparities between a society's rich and its poor.<sup>[11]</sup>[\[citation needed\]](#) In major cities of developing countries there exist pockets where technologies of the modernised world, computers, cell phones and satellite television, exist alongside stark poverty. Globalists are globalization modernization theorists and argue that globalization is positive for everyone, as its benefits must eventually extend to all members of society, including vulnerable groups such as women and children.
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# FACTORS

- New [technology](#) is a major source of social change. (Social change refers to any significant alteration over time in behaviour patterns and cultural values and norms.) Since modernization entails the social transformation from agrarian societies to industrial ones, it is important to look at the technological viewpoint; however, new technologies do not change societies by itself. Rather, it is the *response* to technology that causes change. Frequently, technology is recognized but not put to use for a very long time such as the ability to [extract metal from rock](#)<sup>[[citation needed](#)]</sup> Although that initially went unused, it later had profound implications for the developmental course of societies. Technology makes it possible for a more innovative society and broad social change. That dramatic change through the centuries that has evolved socially, industrially, and economically, can be summed up by the term modernization. Cell phones, for example, have changed the lives of millions throughout the world. That is especially true in [Africa](#) and other parts of the [Middle East](#), where there is a low-cost communication infrastructure. With cell phone technology, widely dispersed populations are connected, which facilitates business-to-business communication and provides internet access to remoter areas, with a consequential rise in literacy.<sup>1</sup>
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# FACTORS

- **2. Development of Industrial Civilisation:**
- It is most important to industrialise a backward country in order to lead it on the path of modernisation. That is the reason Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the first, Prime Minister of India established many steel plants in the public sector. He started a factory for making railway coaches at Perambur (Tamil Nadu).
- He started Chittaranjan Locomotive Works. He established Bhopal Heavy Electricals. He built many dams in order to” provide more facilities for irrigation and generate electricity. Like U.S.S.R., India has also launched many Five Year Plans in order to accelerate the growth of economy.
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# FACTORS

- **1. Development of Science and Technology:**
- There cannot be two opinions in this respect that the development of science and technology play a major role in the process of modernisation. Due to this factor a mad race is going in various countries of the world for development of science and technology.
- If some latest development takes place in the field of science and technology in nuclear or space field just like Star Wars, then it becomes a prestigious question for the U.S.S.R. also. China first of all was not recognised by U.S.A. as a great power but when China developed nuclear device, then Mr. Nixon, President of U.S.A. went himself to seek the hand of friendship of China.
- India also exploded her first nuclear device on the 18 May, 1974 at Pokhran in Rajasthan in order to prove to the world that she does not lag behind the other countries in this respect. Thus India entered as six in member of nuclear club.
- In the field of technology, China has caught up with U.S.A. and U.S.S.R. She has developed intermediate range ballistic missiles. In the air, she has now developed inter-continental ballistic missiles capable of delivery at longer distance. India is also going ahead with its research programme in space with a greater speed.
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