

Unit 2

Change, Modernisation and Development

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Learning Objectives

This unit will help you analyse:

- the various concepts of change, modernisation and development;
- perspectives of change, modernisation and development;
- conditions and barriers of change, modernisation and development; and
- developmental experiences of India.

2.1 Introduction

In the earlier unit of this block we have discussed development from the perspective of progress, evolution and growth. In this unit we shall discuss development from the perspective of change and modernisation. In the earlier unit, you must have noticed that along with the processes of evolution, progress and growth we have also touched upon change and modernisation linked to the issues of development in human society. In this unit we will specifically learn in greater detail how the processes of change and modernisation have been linked to the question of development.

This unit begins with a discussion on the major characteristic features of social change and its causes. Sociologists and anthropologists have perceived the process of change from diverse perspectives. We have presented a glimpse of these perspectives on change here. In comparison to change, modernisation is a relatively new concept. It is also a new process. Besides describing features and perspectives of modernisation we have also presented a critique of this concept. The last section of this unit deals with the process of development, various conditions that facilitate and hinder the process of development. This unit also presents a few developmental experiences.

2.2 Social Change: Concept, Characteristics and Causes

One of the central concern of the sociology of development is change. In societies of all times there is change affecting every realm of life – social, economic, cultural, technological, demographic, ecological and so on. Social scientists have underlined social change in terms of a change in relationships, organisation, culture, institution, structure and functioning of the social system.

According to Maclver and Page (1949), social change is a change in social relationship. It is a process responsive to many types of changes, to changes in man-made conditions of living, to changes in attitudes and beliefs of men and to changes that go beyond human control to the biological and physical nature of things. To Lundberg, "Social change refers to any modification in established patterns of inert-human relationships and standards of conduct." In a similar vein, Judson R. Landis (1960) writes, "Social change refers to change in the structure and functioning of the social relationships of society." Koenig feels "Social change refers to the modifications which occur in the life patterns of people." According to M.E. 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."

By social change, Kingsley Davis (1949) meant only such alterations that affect the organisation, structure and functions of society. Robert A. Nisbet (1969) views social change as a succession of differences in time within a persisting identity. To John J. Macionis (1997) social change is "the transformation of culture and social institutions over time."

There are few identifiable characters of social change. Some of them are as follows: that social change happens everywhere, but the rate of change varies from place to place; that social change is sometimes intentional but often unplanned; that social change may generate controversy; that some changes matter more than others do. For example, the invention of personal computers was more important than, say, patch dolls (Macionis 1997).

Causes of Social Change

Social change is caused by various factors. Let us highlight some of these causes here.

- i) **Cultural Change:** A large part of change in society is caused by change in culture. Culture is a system that constantly loses and gains components. Invention, discovery and diffusion are considered to be the main sources of cultural change. Inventions produce new products, ideas, and social patterns. It is a new combination or a new use of existing knowledge. Inventions may be classified into material (telephone, aeroplane) and social inventions (alphabet, language, government, etc.). Each invention is new in form, function and meaning and has long-term possibilities of impact.

Discovery is finding something that has never been found before, or finding something new in something that already exists. A discovery adds something new to the culture and becomes a factor in social change only when it is put to use.

Diffusion is a process of the spreading of ideas, culture and objects to other societies. It operates both within societies and between societies involving trading, migration, and mass communication. It is indeed a two way process.

- ii) **Ideas and Change:** New ideas and modification of old ideas in a new context bring wide-scale changes in society. For example, Max Weber established that rationalisation of religious ideas brought about phenomenal change in Protestant world.
- iii) **Demographic Change:** Demographic change is caused by an increase in birth and decline in death, and migration of populations. Change occurs from the demographic transition in society.

- iv) **Conflict and Change:** Social change is also caused by tension and conflict. Structural strain, deprivation, cultural revitalisation have been the major causes of conflict. Again social division based on class, caste, gender, ethnicity, estate, etc. have also been important sources of conflict in society.
- v) **Social Movements and Change:** Social movements are organised efforts of groups of people to bring about deliberate change in the values, norms, institutions, culture relationships and traditions of the society. They also generate new identities and a new perspective.

Reflection and Action 2.1

Social change is caused by so many broad social processes like urbanisation, industrialisation, modernisation, westernisation, globalisation, spread of education and literacy, enactment of new laws, penetration of mass media and communication networks and so on. Many of these process are interrelated. Select anyone of these social processes and try to explain its impact on change in your society.

2.3 Perspective of Social Change

In the previous unit, we have discussed the perspectives on developments in greater detail. Change represents a broad canvas or contour for development, progress, transformation, growth, modernisation and so on. We have specifically explained these processes in the previous unit. Let us now examine briefly how these perspectives have been used to explain change.

i) Evolutionary Perspective

In the second half of the nineteenth century, the concept of evolution assumed a central place in explanations of all forms of human development in both the social and biological sciences for example, Morgan's three epochs of humanity i.e., savagery, barbarism and civilisation and Auguste Comte's ideas of human intellect. Comte argues, human intellect passing through three historical phases of sophistication: the theological, the metaphysical and the positive. Spencer's view is that of human societies passing through a course of natural development, from relatively simple patterns of organisation to more complex structures, characterised by an increasing specialisation of parts.

ii) The Conflict Perspective

The conflict perspective can best be understood in terms of tension and conflict between groups and individuals and here change is viewed as an intrinsic process in society. To Karl Marx, social changes take place based on the antagonistic class relations based on ownership of the means of production; between the haves and the have-nots and that this class struggle culminates into a revolutionary change in society with its progression from ancient to feudal and finally from feudal to capitalist stage of development in society. According to Coser, conflict is an inevitable part of the socialisation process and no social groups can be completely harmonious as individuals have a predisposition for love as well as hate. Thus conflict acts as a creative force that stimulates change in society, constructive or destructive.

While Karl Marx has identified class and class conflict based on unequal distribution of material resources, Dahrendorf has identified the same in terms of unequal distribution of authority. According to Dahrendorf, all groups in society are divided into those who have authority and those who do not and conflict arises because of unequal distribution of authority in society. This conflict on unequal distribution of authority leads to change in society.

iii) The Structural-Functional Perspective

To structural-functional theorists, society consists of interrelated parts that work together for the purpose of maintaining internal balance. It perceives roles as locating individuals in social positions, and providing them with articulated sets of expectations specifying the rights and duties of occupants. This perspective is oriented towards order and stability and preservation of the status quo. Let us examine how various scholars have perceived change in this perspective.

Durkheim has observed change in terms of change in the nature of division of labour in society. He believed that the change in labour from traditional society to modern society was the cause for social change. According to Talcott Parsons, society is a system surrounded by three other systems – personality, the organism and culture. There is social equilibrium when the boundaries of the three systems are maintained, and social change results from boundary breaking. Ogburn's theory reasons that societies operate as homogeneous mechanisms and that changes that upset the equilibrium in one part tends to produce compensating changes to restore that equilibrium. To him all aspects of culture, i.e., material or non-material do not change at an equal rate. This creates the phenomenon of cultural lag that ultimately leads to change in society.

iv) Social-Psychological Perspective

These theories posit that activities of people constitute the essence of change in society and modifications in the behaviour can facilitate change and play an essential role in social development.

Max Weber thought that modernity was replacing traditional views with a rational way of thinking. In pre-industrial societies traditional views obstructed change, things were the way they were because that is what everyone believed and no one questioned it. In modern societies, things were questioned and answers were calculated.

According to Everette E.Hagen, traditional societies are characterised by fixed status levels and the personalities of the members are authoritarian, uncreative and noninnovational. On the contrary, in modern society, the predominant personality type is innovational, characterised by attributes such as creativity, curiosity and openness to experience. Change takes place when members experience what he terms withdrawal of status respect. This is nothing but disregard for one's role in society or for one's beliefs and aspirations.

David McClelland focused his study on what he called **need for achievement**, symbolized by '*n*' achievement. According to him, the greater the development of the '*n*' factor the greater the economic development in any society. Consequently, there are certain behaviour characteristics exhibited by people with this '*n*' factor, such as individualism, energetic innovative activity, drive for success and so on. In simple words, individual economic achievement produces economic growth.

Reflection and Action 2.2

What do we sociologically mean by change? Compare and contrast between the evolutionary and structural functionalist views on social change.

2.4 Modernisation: Concept and Features

Modernisation is a conceptual framework that articulated a common set of assumptions about the nature of developed societies and their ability to transform a world perceived as both materially and culturally deficient. Specifically, Modernisation theorists posited a sharp distinction between traditional (read poor) and modern (read Western) societies. They took for

granted that economic development, from traditional to modern, proceeded along a single, straight, unambiguous line. Modernisation advocates expected that contact with vital modern societies would accelerate progress in stagnant traditional societies.

a) Concept of "Modernisation"

According to scholars, the process of modernisation sums up the changes that combine to convert an agricultural or underdeveloped society with a weak state into an industrialised society with a relatively efficient, active government. The modernisation process embraces changes that leads up to this industrialisation and urbanisation.

According to Wilbert Moore, "modernisation is a 'total' transformation of a traditional or pre-modern society into the types of technology and associated social organisation that characterizes the advanced, economically prosperous and relatively stable nations of the Western World". Similarly, Daniel Lerner defined modernisation as "the process of social change in which development is the economic component".

In his major work *The Passing of Traditional Society* (1958), Daniel Lerner examined the process of modernisation in several Middle East countries, carried out a sample survey in other underdeveloped societies and supplemented all this with his observations of village society.

Lerner's premise is that Modernisation is a global process occurring in a similar manner the world over, and the role of indices of development like mass media, urbanisation, increase in literacy, etc. are responsible for the emergence of a new economic order. According to Lerner, modernity is result of not merely institutional changes in society but also due to changes in the personality of people. He had illustrated this with his account of the grocer and the chef in the village of Balgat situated in Turkey.

For Lerner one of the crucial aspects of modernisation is the development of a "mobile personality" which is characterised by rationality and empathy. Empathy is the capacity to see oneself in the other person's situation, and this enables people to operate efficiently in a changing world. Modernisation, then, is characterised by a high degree of literacy, urbanism, media participation and empathy. To him, compared to the "traditional" individuals, the "modern individual" are happier, better informed and relatively young, and the people placed in the "transitional" category are inclined to be discontented and liable to extremism, especially their progress is blocked by a lack of suitable political institutions.

But Lerner was aware of the fact that although the people placed in the "modern" category seemed happier, there were difficulties in development, for example, strains may be put on the government, there are problems of social control, etc. Similarly, there are personal problems at an individual level, for example, individuals placed in the "transitional" category may have to adjust traditional Arab and Muslim beliefs to a "modern" setting.

b) Features of Modernisation

Based on this line of thinking, the main feature of modernisation may be summed up as follows:

- i) It emphasises a high degree of structural differentiation and specialisation.
- ii) It is based on a mode of production that has come to be known as the capitalist mode of production. It is implied from this that social order is constituted around two important classes – Capitalist, which owns the means of production, and the Working Class, which sells its labour in this process.

- iii) It is essentially a wage labour economy. It highlights the growth of a market economy in which both buyers and sellers are seen as individuals capable of engaging in a rational choice and operating within a framework of voluntarism.
- iv) It highlights the growth of bureaucratic institutions, which themselves are constructed on principles of rationality and role differentiation. It is these bureaucratic organisations that are seen as being the foundations of this theory. The entire gamut of institutions that maintains and regulates social order are seen as bureaucratic.
- v) It emphasises the growth of a political system based on the principle of right as crystallised within the notion of state and mediated through a set of constitutional principles.
- vi) The powers of the state are absolute and there is a democratic process based on the principle of political representation and adult franchise.
- vii) This process of democratisation of society has led to the existence of various interest groups within the political process who represent various competing ideologies that highlight the different ways in which the affairs of the state are to be managed.
- viii) Modernisation process also emphasises the growth of individualism, wherein the individual and individual rights are seen as being at the center of all social, economic and political development.
- ix) Finally, the modernisation processes also emphasise the idea of social progress and through the process of democratisation it is possible for societies to achieve higher levels of individual and social emancipation.

2.5 Perspectives On Modernisation

From the sociological point of view, the process of modernisation has yielded a vast amount of writing. There is no unified perspective on modernisation. We will analyse the following perspectives:

- a) The Ideal-Typical
- b) The Diffusionist
- c) The Psychological
- d) The Marxist

The first three perspectives have dominated American thought and received immense support and patronage all over, especially in the nineteen fifties and sixties. The fourth approach has emerged as a challenge to the other three approaches and offers a critique of their main tenets.

Similarly, the Marxist perspective has also contested the other four perspectives.

a) The Ideal-Typical Perspective

This approach has manifested itself in two major variants, namely:

- i) The Pattern Variable Perspective
- ii) Historical Stage Perspective

i) The Pattern Variable Perspective

This perspective is derived from Max Weber's concept of "ideal type" which was later systematised by Talcott Parson. According to this perspective, characteristics of development and underdevelopment must be identified and

then programmes and schemes of development should be made whereby underdeveloped countries discard the pattern variables of underdevelopment and adopt those of development.

Inspired by the work of Talcott Parsons, Smelser elucidated that the modernisation process was made up of four sub-processes:

- i) The modernisation of technology, leading to a change from simple traditionalised techniques to the application of scientific knowledge;
- ii) The commercialisation of agriculture, which is characterised by the move from subsistence to commercial farming, leading to a specialisation in cash-crop production and the development of wage-labour;
- iii) Industrialisation, which depicts the transition from the use of human and animal power to machine power;
- iv) Urbanisation, which brings about the movement from farm and village to the large urban centers.

These processes sometimes occur simultaneously and sometimes at different times. For example, in many colonial situations, agriculture becomes commercialised without industrialisation. Nevertheless, these four processes affect the social structure of traditional society in similar ways.

Firstly, as a result of these changes taking place simultaneously or at different rates, traditional societies became more structurally differentiated. For Smelser, a developed economy and society is characterised by a highly differentiated structure, whilst an underdeveloped one is relatively lacking in differentiation. By "differentiation" Smelser meant the process by which more specialised and more autonomous social units were established. He saw this as occurring in several different spheres of traditional society, in the economy, the family, the political system and religious institutions.

So, structural differentiation is the process whereby one social role or organisation differentiates into two or more roles or organisations which function more effectively in the new historical circumstances. The new social units are structurally distinct from each other, but taken together are functionally equivalent to the original unit.

Secondly, as these differentiated units merge into larger units of the modern type, new relationships, which are not based on kinship, develop. This, Smelser calls, the process of integration.

Thirdly, Smelser shows that through such differentiation, social disturbances, such as mass hysteria, outbursts of violence, religious and political movements may occur, which reflect uneven processes of change. This can lead to conflict between the old and new orders of society. In other words, it produces what Durkheim called "anomie" or normlessness — a state of conflicting norms in society and a culture of discontent, where people are unable to realise their aspirations and may turn to violence, crime and other anti-social behaviour or to self-destructive acts such as suicide. As Weber also showed, at the religious level the process of secularisation causes disenchantment, fragmentation between competing or partial world-views, social and private worlds become meaningless and there is a sense of despair and hopelessness. One of the reactions to modernisation has been the emergence of fundamentalist movements that reject modern values and preach a return to traditional ones.

ii) Historical Stage Perspective

In this perspective apart from identification of the gap between characteristics of development and underdevelopment, it also specifies the intermediate stages and their characteristics. This perspective is mainly associated with Rostow and his economic model developed in 1960.

Walt Rostow was an economic historian who served as an adviser to the American government. His book, entitled *The Stages of Economic Growth: A Non-Communist Manifesto* (1960) was pre-capitalist and neo-evolutionary in nature and derived from the idea of an earlier evolutionary theory that change and development take place according to a set of ordered sequences.

According to Rostow, the processes of change are simpler and self-sustaining. Economic growth could be achieved by following a five-stage model of growth. He suggested that "all societies can be placed in one of five categories, or stages of economic growth".

The first stage; The Traditional Society: The essential feature of this society is that output is limited because of the inaccessibility of science and technology. Values are generally "fatalistic", and political power is non-centralised. Large number of people are employed in agriculture, which has very low productivity because of the factors mentioned above. In such a society, family and clan groupings are emphasized in the social organisation.

The second stage; The Preconditions for Take-Off: This second stage of growth is one of transition. A traditional society does not move directly into the process of industrialisation; first certain preliminaries need to take place. There are clusters of new ideas favouring economic progress arising and therefore new levels of education, entrepreneurship, and institutions capable of mobilising capital like banks, etc. Investment increases, especially in transport, communications and raw materials, with a general direction towards commercial expansion. But, in accordance with Rostow, traditional social structures and production techniques remain the same. There is the presence of a "dual society".

The third stage; The Take-Off: In this stage finally the old, traditional order and resistances are overcome. New forces, which trigger economic growth, expand and dominate the society. Agriculture is commercialised, there is a growth in productivity because that is necessary if the demand emanating from expanding urban centers is to be met. New political groups representing new economic groups push the industrial economy to new heights. In Britain, Canada and the United States, the proximate stimulus for take-off was mainly, though not entirely, technological. The take-off period began in Britain after 1783, in France and in United States around 1840, in Russia in about 1890 and in countries like India and China around 1950.

The fourth stage; The Drive to Maturity: In this stage, the growing economy drives to extend modern technology in all its economic activities. Between 10 and 20 per cent of gross domestic product is invested and the economy takes its place in the international order. Technology becomes more complex, refined and there is a move away from heavy industry. Now production is not the outcome of social necessity but of the need of maximising profits to survive in a competitive capitalist market.

The fifth stage; Mass Consumption: In this final stage, the leading economic sectors specialise in durable consumer goods and services. At this stage, economic growth makes sure that basic needs are satisfied and more resources are allocated for social welfare and social security. The emergence of the welfare state is an example. Durable consumer goods and services are diffused on a mass basis.

Rostow thought of his theory as a dynamic one i.e. "that deals not only with economic factors but also with social decisions and policies of governments".

Reflection and Action 2.3

What do you mean by modernisation? How is the ideal-typical perspective on modernisation different from historical stage perspective as suggested by Rostow?

b) The Diffusionist Perspective

This approach views development as a process in which there is a diffusion of cultural elements from the developed to the underdeveloped countries. The underlying assumption is that the underdeveloped countries cannot overcome their backwardness without assistance from the developed countries. There is diffusion of capital, technology, knowledge, skills, institutions including values and so on. These scholars perceive this aid as a sacrifice on the part of the developed countries for the benefit of the backward and suffering underdeveloped countries. If still a society does not reach the level of modernity and development as projected by them, then it is blamed on the inherent weaknesses present in the underdeveloped-backward societies, like demographic factors, presence of traditional institutions, beliefs, values, etc.

c) The Psychological Perspective

This approach is mainly associated with McClelland, Kunkel, Hagen and others. According to McClelland as mentioned earlier in this unit, a society with a high level of achievement will produce energetic entrepreneurs who, in turn, will produce more rapid economic development. This is because a high level of achievement among people makes them behave in ways which help them fulfill their entrepreneurial roles successfully. Therefore, the crucial factor for economic and cultural development, according to this approach, is the presence of achievement motivation among members. This leads to planned and concentrated growth and development.

d) The Marxian Perspective

This approach accepts the fundamentals of the Marxist philosophical and sociological postulates. According to this approach, the underdevelopment of some countries and the development of others is linked to the emergence of the modern capitalist system on a global scale. So the causes of underdevelopment and the problems arising out of this are blamed on the growth of capitalism.

According to this theory, the relationship between the developed capitalist countries and the underdeveloped countries is not one of harmony and cooperation, instead there is a subtle and indirect subjugation of the latter under the guise of "aid". It is argued that the developed world is transforming the underdeveloped societies into their neo-colonial dependencies and the entire image of "aid", "assistance", "support" and diffusion of skills, techniques, capital and modernised institutions and values is false and deceptive. The aid itself is seen as the basic obstacle to overcome backwardness.

Followers of this approach further state that the policies and schemes for development pursued by the ruling class of the advanced capitalist countries are based on a theory of development which relies on strengthening and furthering the interests of the propertied class and the rich.

Therefore it is postulated that a policy of development will only be successful if it is based on achieving the reliance of the working class.

2.6 Critics of Modernisation Theories

In analysing the assets of the modernisation theories, it should be understood that this school of thought emerged in the early years of the 1950s, and began

to disappear in the 1970s when belief in it started to wane. In the light of this, it could be presupposed that the weaknesses of modernisation theories outnumber its strengths; otherwise the theories would still be relevant today.

a) The Strengths

The main quality of the modernisation theory is its simplicity – the objective is already visible in the image of the West, and the path to follow is laid out by the history of Western evolution. All that remains is for the traditional society to recognise what is needed, from examination of other “take-offs” to modernity, for their own culture to evolve. Having already achieved their goal, the modern societies can assist in the evolution of the traditional society (although in reality this is far from the truth), by reference to their own history, and so essentially modernisation becomes a form of mimicking – a case of “what works for them should work for us”. The same concept was already covered in the term “Westernisation” (effectively referring to the mimicking of the West), but the word “Modernisation” has far less geocentric connotations, and as a result gains much more affection from developing societies who are keen to retain some sense of their own history.

b) The Weaknesses

However, the strengths of the modernisation theory also lead to its weaknesses. A few of them are presented below:

- i) The straightforward approach of advancing a society by way of itself evolving internally is, though easy to grasp and as such having strong exterior appeal, far too basic to incorporate into the world system we see today. The very fact that there are modernised societies to “look up to” entails that a communication and possible co-operation between North and South already exists, and that there are therefore links and ties already in place – not necessarily to the extent that dependency theorists would go, arguing that the South cannot grow without the severing off the North’s stranglehold, but nonetheless significant ties in the organisation of society, which mean that the target society cannot be solely regarded as an internal entity; there is little hope of avoiding international factors in today’s global village.

To resolve this, some thinkers have developed the theory of diffusionism (already dealt with earlier), which bears many of the characteristics of modernisation, but accepts the diffusion of ideas, products, and workforce between both modernised and traditional societies.

A culture can be changed sub-consciously and indeed overnight, in ways that may not be intended or in accordance with planned evolution. Modernisation may be revolutionary in that it replaces the traditional with the modern, but it must also be considered that revolutions can take some time – they are not an instantaneous event.

- ii) Another criticism put forth is that while the developing countries struggle to update its social, political, and economic structures to those of the developed countries, it is extremely likely that the modernised country will continue to grow at the same or possibly faster rate that the developing country will find it difficult to catch up.

Though global evolutionary equality is not a particular goal of the modernisation theory, it is surely one of the aims of development as a whole, and something that is worth pursuing. If this “closing of the gap” cannot be easily achieved by the performance of an established theory, such as seems to be the case with modernisation, then it is clearly not a comprehensive cure for the problem of development.

- iii) It is also argued that since the modernisation theory is typically a Western phenomenon, its roots obviously must lie around capitalist society – the developing world is to be a mirror image of the civilised world which generally embraces capitalism. For example, it is automatically assumed by thinkers like Rostow that this is the correct way for an underdeveloped society to develop, without considering the implications or alternatives (See Critique of Rostow).
- iv) Rostow has been criticised by many on the basis of the teleological approach. Teleological approach is one where the purpose, which is not explicitly intended by anyone, is fulfilled while the process of fulfillment is presented as an inevitable sequence of events. In Rostow's model, policies are the result of development and not vice versa, and this is unacceptable to many, as policies of a state should be chosen and not just merely adopted. It is felt by many scholars that the characteristics of stages identified by Rostow might overlap or spill into the other stages. For example, the pre-conditions stage things may continue in the take-off stage and could also get carried further beyond this stage. Critics feel that Rostow plays down all the obstacles and never discusses them. Therefore, it is felt by many that his approach is conceptually vague and empirically superficial. In the take-off stage, it is felt that merely a shift from agriculture to other sectors is not enough. For example, while Denmark, Canada and France attained this shift, in other countries like Russia, Sweden, Germany, etc. it did not take place to the extent conceived by Rostow. Similarly, it has also been pointed out by experts that Rostow failed to take into consideration other aspects, like the "bumps, crashlandings and nosedive crashes" in his take-off stage.

Rostow also failed to consider that an economy could reach the fifth stage without going through all the stages or a particular stage. For instance, it has been pointed out that countries like Canada and Australia entered the stage of mass consumption even before reaching the stage of maturity. This was happening, in recent times, with the oil rich countries also. There are limits to a particular country's growth. As there might be instances when a particular country should be regarded as "fully developed" even though it might not have reached the standards of the Western countries like the U.S.A, because it might have exhausted all its natural resources, manpower and capital, which set the limit of growth. With respect to the less developed countries, it is felt that Rostow did not take into account crucial factors like unemployment, underemployment, poverty, lack of infrastructure, nature of the government, etc.

- v) The most well known reaction to theories of modernisation is that of its antithesis, the **Theory of Dependency**. The dependency theory takes a far more global view and postulates that the difficulties in development are not due solely to the internal workings of the country or region in question, but have more to do with the global structures imposed by the developed onto the less developed. This is best illustrated by Andre Gunder Frank's conceptualisation of international relations as a chain of "metropolis-satellite" relationships. Frank (of the socialist tradition) suggests that there is an unseen hierarchical structure to world relations: the chain begins with the first metropolis (usually attributed to the USA) that has no satellites i.e., that has no strong dependencies on any other region and continues downwards; the next layer consists of still strong metropolises, but still require the USA or other well-developed Western societies in some way; until much further down we reach the ultimate satellite, which is dependent on everything above it for existence. Frank argues that these dependence links are both the key and the problem when an inability to develop arises. The sanctions imposed, often consciously, by the metropolises to which the satellite is dependent, strip the freedom of the

satellite society to evolve and grow, because all of their output is effectively consumed by the upper society.

This theory is actually visible in reality, with the situation revolving around aid to the Third World, where the interest rates and terms are so harshly imposed that the recipient country will always be at the mercy of the donor. Frank feels that it is the dismantling of these dependency relations that is the solution to the problem of development: notably, though, this is a very socialist perspective, since the release of such restrictions allows for much freer and potentially diverse global system, one which does not fit well with traditional capitalist characteristics.

The connection this has with modernisation theory is simple: both have equal merits, even though they are completely opposed in attributes, but the question of which is most suitable is dependent on the belief of the observer – those brought up and embroiled in a capitalist society, and who believe in the benefits of capitalism, may be more likely to prefer modernisation theory. On the other hand, a neo-Marxist will almost certainly stick with theories of dependency. Clearly it is only the completely impartial spectator that can truly judge the pros and cons of both concepts.

- vi) Finally, it has been pointed out that modernisation theory itself has produced nothing truly visible yet. This is not because there has been no development in the past 50 years. There has been evolution related to both fields of thought, but the theories themselves are so indistinct and vague. Modernisation theory does not paint a very precise picture of what should be happening, and more particularly, how it should be occurring. As a motivational aid, this theory is an excellent boost to the drive of a developing society, but it is not the solution. What is, remains to be seen.

Reflection and Action 2.4

Write a critique of modernisation based on your understanding of the dependency theory of development.

2.7 Development: Conditions and Barriers

Now that we have covered the concepts of social change, modernisation and the theories of modernisation, let us move on to the last sub topic of this unit, i.e., development.

There is no definite definition of development. It is inescapably a normative term, which at times has meant economic growth, structural economic change, autonomous industrialisation, capitalism or socialism, self-actualisation, and individual, national, regional and cultural self-reliance. Notwithstanding such variations there has been a large agreement on the fact that human beings are at the center of development and that economic growth is a means to an end, i.e., human development.

Development is a function of society's capacity to organise human energies and productive resources to respond to opportunities and challenges. Scholars often trace the emergence of higher, more complex, more productive levels of social organisation through the stages of nomadic hunting, rural agrarian, urban, commercial, industrial and post-industrial societies. And in the process try to examine ways by which new activities were introduced by pioneers, imitated, resisted, accepted, organised, institutionalised and assimilated into a culture. Organisational development takes place on a foundation of four levels of infrastructure – physical, social, mental and psychological. All these four types of resources contribute to development, of which only the most material are inherently limited in nature. The productivity of resources increases enormously

as the level of organisation and input of knowledge rises. The human resource is recognised as the driving force and primary determinant of development.

The evolution of social institutions acts as a powerful stimulus for development by increasing the frequency, intensity and efficiency of social interactions. This evolution has moved through three successive but overlapping stages of development – physical, vital, and mental - which can be described in terms of the type of organisation predominant during that stage.

Box 2.1: Role of Urbanisation, Money and Internet in Development

Cities till today are physical organisations where people, activities, fields of life, resources and infrastructure are accumulated at high levels of concentration and interact in complex ways. The growth of population and urban population density increases the intensity of these interactions, creating the critical mass needed for the emergence of markets and in the process generates sufficient demand to spur mechanisation of production.

Money plays a parallel role at the social level as a medium for urbanisation and multiplies economic activities by several orders of magnitude. The establishment of a money economy frees individuals from dependence on land as an essential resource for production and frees commerce from the double coincidence needed for barter trade. Money increases the frequency and speed of transactions in virtually every field of activity by making it possible for people to convert the fruits of their labour into a common currency that can be exchanged for any products or services. Money also provides incentives for people to produce more than they can consume, releasing greater energy and creativity. It serves as a medium for conservation and storage of what each person produces and permits easy transfer over any distance, thereby overcoming limitations imposed by time and space and dramatically increases the efficiency of transactions.

The internet plays a similar role at the mental level of information and knowledge and acts as a medium to organise globalisation. Today, the internet is increasing the frequency, speed and efficiency of information exchange in every field – commercial, industrial, educational, scientific, political, religious, recreational, etc. The Internet also overcomes the limits of time and space by enabling instantaneous access to information around the world. It increases enormously the number, intricacy and complexity of interactions made possible between individuals, organisations, facts, activities and fields of knowledge. It is acting as an organised medium for bringing all existing social organisations into greater contact to release the maximum energy of society and thus lead to unprecedented levels of social productivity and development.

i) Suggested Conditions For Development

Surplus energy, awareness of opportunities and the aspiration for advancement are pre-conditions that prepare society for new development initiatives. This is not a linear process. The three factors interact with one another in complex ways to generate a growing pressure and ground swell of new activities. Accomplishment at a previous level helps release energy and aspiration for further accomplishment. Energy makes for greater alertness and awareness. Awareness of what others are doing evokes greater aspirations and provokes energetic responses. The process spirals back on itself, constantly reinforcing the forward momentum, while at the same time each new level of achievement brings a certain measure of satisfaction and security that relieve the pressure for further effort. Alternations between rising urge and rising satisfaction are one reason for the modulating rhythm of progress and stagnation that is often observed.

When these three factors are present in requisite measure, the society is subconsciously prepared for change. Let us try to understand each of them.

a) Energy

Excess energy is an essential condition for development. The onset and speed of physical and biological reactions depends on seed crystals, catalysts, essential nutrients, the frequency and intensity of interaction between elements, and conducive environmental conditions. So also, the onset and speed of social development depends on the seeding of new ideas in society, awareness of new opportunities, social aspirations and attitudes to change, the catalytic role of individuals, the presence of essential resources and instruments, the frequency and intensity of social interactions, social preparedness and support for new activities.

Development is an expression of social creativity. It requires immense investment of creative energy for society to experiment with new modes of activity, take the risks associated with change, break the active resistance and passive inertia of fixed habits, raise standards of functioning to higher levels, acquire new skills and build higher order organisations. Moving from one level of social organisation to another requires the accumulation of surplus energy as in the conversion of matter from a liquid to a gaseous state. Development is the result of surplus energy moving vertically and being organised at a higher level, rather than merely being spent in horizontal expansion at the same level. The higher-level organisation is able to utilise the energy more productively.

Indomitable energy has been an outstanding trait of great political leaders such as Napoleon, Churchill and Gandhi and business leaders such as Andrew Carnegie, Henry Ford, and Tom Watson of IBM. Inventor Thomas Alva Edison was known to work for days on end without sleep in the process of developing 1,100 patentable inventions and founding the General Electric Company. Organisations that are growing rapidly share the same characteristic, which is apparent even to casual visitors to high tech companies in Silicon Valley. Energy is highly visible in progressive urban centers around the globe, from New York and London to Hong Kong and Tokyo. It is, therefore, not surprising that this characteristic is found abundant in societies that have achieved high levels of development or that it becomes increasingly pervasive as societies enter the take-off phase.

The importance of surplus energy is most dramatically illustrated by two conditions under which it is unable to accumulate or express itself - war and dictatorship. War destroys infrastructure and interferes with production and trade. It physically saps the energy and resources of a country. The threat of war keeps those energies perpetually directed towards self-defense, rather than self-development. Dictatorship, on the other hand, can spur development efforts up to a point, using the threat or pressure of coercion to channel initiative in desired directions. But dictatorship also blocks the free emergence of new ideas and fresh initiatives, which are the seeds of social innovation. It can ensure obedience to authority but does not spur entrepreneurship and innovation. The end of feudalism in Western Europe was an important contributor to the onset of the mercantile era and the founding of the great European commercial empires. The further transition from monarchy to democracy stabilised the internal order and provided the social foundations for the Industrial Revolution. It stimulated innovation by encouraging the free exchange of ideas and provided incentives for greater individual effort by legally safeguarding property from arbitrary confiscation.

b) Awareness

Surplus social energy collects as potential beneath the surface, accumulating until it acquires sufficient force to burst out in new activities. But the mobilisation of this energy for action depends on fulfillment of a second essential condition – awareness of new development opportunities and

challenges. Societies that are fully consumed by the struggle for survival have little time or inclination to direct their attention outward to observe what other societies are accomplishing or forward to envision new possibilities. When life reaches a certain level of stable comfort, societies become increasingly interested in and aware of what is going on in the world around them. This awareness may also be thrust on a society by the unwanted intrusion of an external influence. The influx of English manufactured goods into the pre-industrial economies of Europe and the arrival of a modern armed American fleet in Tokyo harbor in the 19th century both had the effect of awakening societies to the opportunities and challenges of development and stimulating them to respond.

The increasing pace of development is directly linked to an increase in the speed and reliability of information about what is taking place in other parts of the country, region and world due to improvements in communication and transportation. The proliferation of books and newspapers following the invention and diffusion of the printing press, and the growth of international shipping following the invention of navigation aids beginning in the 15th century, the growth of railways, telegraph, and telephones in the 19th century, and the impact of radio, film, television, computers and satellite technology in the 20th century have exponentially multiplied the dissemination of information and the general level of social awareness. Today more than 60,000 newspapers are published around the globe, including 8000 dailies, with a combined circulation of 500 million and an estimated readership of 1.5 billion people.

c) Aspiration

Society must also feel a strong aspiration or felt need for achievement at a higher level that will spur efforts to convert a perceived possibility into a material reality. Social development is an expression of social will seeking to elevate the performance of the collective. As society becomes more conscious of the external environment and its own internal potentials, its aspiration and will for progress increases. The greater the knowledge of its potentials, the greater the aspiration.

Failures to respond to opportunities arising out of a sense of social superiority or social inferiority are expressions of a common principle. People respond to the example of those with whom they identify socially. When there is awareness of a developmental achievement by one belonging to the same social and cultural context, it can evoke a powerful urge for accomplishment in society. When the achievement is by one who lies outside the context, it is often ignored. Thus, the adoption of new crops and cultivation practices by a wealthy farmer may not lead to similar behavior by smaller farmers in the same community. Age, social status, class, caste, wealth, occupation and other factors help define social identity. But this trend seems to drastically change in the contemporary period.

There was a time when different societies, classes and groups within societies differed widely in the extent to which they manifested an aspiration for development. This is no longer true. Over the past five decades, both awareness of the possibility and the release of the aspiration for development have been spreading rapidly from one country and level of society to another. Harlan Cleveland coined the phrase "revolution of rising expectations" to describe this phenomenon which he observed in Eastern Asia in the early 1950s. Since the end of colonialism and the diffusion of democracy this revolution has circled the globe and ignited a clamor for education, higher levels of consumption and opportunities for advancement among billions of people. The universal awakening of this urge for progress is another compelling reason why the speed of development is increasing so rapidly.

This principle has important implications for planned development efforts. It implies that efforts by government to initiate development will only be successful in areas where the necessary social urge and preparedness already exist. Many well-conceived development initiatives fail to catch on or go awry because the leaders try to accomplish what the population has not yet come to aspire for. In these instances, the planned initiative can only contribute to preparing the society for readiness at some future date, but will not generate immediate results.

ii) Barriers to Development

Consequently, there are certain barriers to development. Observation of social progress reveals three recurring types of obstacles to development - limited perception, outdated attitudes and anachronistic behaviors. Let us briefly look at each of them.

a) Perceptual Walls and Apparent Dead Ends

One of the most striking characteristics of development discernible in all periods, countries and fields of activity has been the inability of society to envision or foresee its own future destiny. This attribute is usually accompanied by the contrary tendency to perceive opportunities as insurmountable obstacles. Innumerable times in history, humanity has come face to face with what it believed was a dead end to progress, only to discover sooner or later a way around or through the dead end to open up a wider field of opportunities.

Today, powerful perceptual barriers exist with regard to employment, technology, trade, environment, corruption, inflation and population that represent very real barriers to development the world over. Malthus, the great demographer was not the only one to foresee imminent doom where in fact there was enormous opportunity. In 1950 Holland's population exceeded 5 million, reaching a density that many believed approached the ultimate limits that this tiny landmass could support. Today the Netherlands has 15 million people, almost three times the population density, yet it ranks among the most prosperous nations in the world and is a major food exporter. In the mid 1960s, India suffered from two successive years of drought and was on the verge of severe famine. An expert team sent to India by the Food and Agriculture Organisation of United Nations estimated that the country's food grain production would rise only by a maximum of 10% before 1970. Many of our Indian scientists shared this pessimistic view. Actually grain production rose 50 percent during this period and doubled within a decade to make our country self-sufficient in foodgrains. Had our leaders shared the view of the experts, the Green Revolution may never have been attempted!

Errors in assessment of future possibilities occur when we make projections of future performance on the basis of historical trends, even though changing circumstances have radically altered the environment. Looking forward, we often see apparently insurmountable obstacles to future progress. Looking backwards, we discover continuity and progress. History has shown time and again that there are no dead ends, only people who are unable to see the opportunities and solutions concealed behind the immediate obstacles.

b) Outmoded Attitudes

The most persistent obstacles to human development are not physical barriers, but out-dated attitudes. Fifteenth century China possessed a navy unparalleled in size, skills and technology, but their expeditions led only to dead ends. The purpose of these expeditions was to display the splendor and prowess of the Chinese emperors. They obstinately resisted foreign ways of life and discouraged trade. The Chinese developed a traditional immunity to world experience. A Great Wall of the mind separated China from the rest of the planet for centuries. Fully equipped with technology, intelligence and national resources to become

great discoverers, their attitude doomed them to become the discovered. But with the end of cold war and opening up of economies and rapid globalisation in the past two decades forced Chinese society to have more interaction with world community and also for outsiders to have more accessibility to Chinese society.

Another example would be the fact that the science of medicine developed very slowly in Europe due to the reluctance of physicians to share their successful remedies, until the establishment of the Royal Society of Physicians in the 18th century led to more open exchange of information, support for research and medical education.

One of the deepest and most widespread of human prejudices has been faith in the unaided, unmediated human senses. When the telescope was invented for seeing at a distance, prudent people were reluctant to allow the firsthand evidence of their sight to be overruled by some dubious novel device. The eminent geographer Cremonini refused to waste his time looking through Galileo's contraption just to see what "no one but Galileo had seen.... and besides, looking through those spectacles gives me a headache".

Distrust of the new was, for long, an obstacle to the development of science. Today outmoded attitudes bar social advancement in every field. The expansion of world trade after 1950 has been a tremendous force for stimulating job creation and raising living standards around the world. Yet, fear and resistance to expansion of trade persists among Americans and Canadians to the North American Free Trade Association, among Europeans to closer economic and monetary union, and among people in every country to freer international trade under the World Trade Organisation.

c) Anachronisms

Development is also retarded by a plethora of anachronisms which have no other reason than the momentum of past habits that refuse to die. High rates of childbirth have been traditionally practiced by the poor all over the world to compensate for high rates of infant mortality. Yet even after the introduction of modern medical technology in developing countries drastically reduced infant mortality rates in the 1950s, rates of child birth remained at high levels and have taken decades to decline to a degree commensurate with improved infant survival rates. Traditional behaviors have been slow to change until the population became more educated.

Gold was originally a popular form for saving personal wealth and a hedge against inflation in many countries prior to the establishment of reliable banking systems. The safety of banks and the higher returns available from other forms of investment have gradually diminished the importance of gold as a form of savings. But till today in many Asian countries, India being in the forefront, the traditional habit of saving and paying dowry in the form of gold jewellery has continued unabated, even after more secure and financially attractive forms of savings became widely available. In our country we possess nearly 30,000 metric tons of gold valued at \$300 billion, an amount roughly twice the value of the public deposits held by the Indian banks. Because the gold has to be imported, this form of savings removes liquidity from the national economy and prevents the reinvestment of personal savings in productive activities within the country. At a time when hundreds of billions of dollars are desperately needed for investment in roads, power plants and telecommunications infrastructure, an anachronistic habit forces the country to depend on foreign investors while we continue to sit on a huge hoard of untapped wealth.

We end with another example, UNDP has calculated that \$40 billion a year approximately would be sufficient to eradicate global poverty within ten years. Yet long after the end of the Cold War and at a time when there is not even

a serious potential enemy in sight, world military expenditure remains at \$850 billion a year. The war is over, but a costly, wasteful, unproductive anachronism persists.

Reflection and Action 2.5

Observe the overall economic condition of a particular community (caste, religious, tribal, etc.) living in your neighborhood. Now based on your observation write a note on the causes of their socio-economic well being or deprivation in the society.

2.8 Observations About Recent Development Experience

From the perspective of 10,000 years of history, human progress over the past 200 years has been extraordinary and the achievements of the past five decades are nothing short of miraculous. In two centuries social productivity has increased to the extent that the global community is now able to sustain a population 12 times as large as in 1800. From a rural-based, agrarian society in which less than three percent of the people lived in towns and cities, the human community has evolved into an urban-centered, industrial society in which the urban population now exceeds 40 per cent of the total. This change has brought with it and aggravated a host of problems – overcrowding, pollution, crime, etc.— but it has also brought political freedom, economic security, education and modern conveniences to billions of people.

What is more remarkable is that this social movement continues to expand and accelerate. The 1997, UNDP *Human Development Report* observes that over the past 50 years the world has made greater progress in eradicating poverty than during the previous 500. Around the globe, life expectancy is climbing, infant mortality is declining, epidemic diseases are receding, famine is becoming extinct and education is becoming more widespread. Since 1950, average per capita income has trebled, in spite of unprecedented population growth, and average real per capita consumption in developing countries has doubled. These achievements raise the possibility and the hope that unprecedented levels of prosperity could soon spread to all humanity.

These accomplishments still leave more than one billion people in poverty. But there is growing evidence to suggest that today's least developed countries could match and perhaps even exceed the achievements of the most advanced industrial nations within a much shorter time than it took for the original achievements. Beginning in 1780, it took the United Kingdom 58 years to double output per capita. The United States did it in 47 years, beginning in 1839. Japan accomplished the feat in only 24 years, beginning in the 1880s. But after the Second World War, Indonesia did it in 17 years, South Korea in 11, and China in 10. From 1960 to 1990 real per capita standards of living based on purchasing power parity multiplied twelve-fold in South Korea, seven-fold in Japan, more than six-fold in Egypt and Portugal, and well above five-fold in Indonesia and Thailand.

While the possibilities for increasing the velocity and expanding the scope of development to all countries are encouraging, it is by no means clear how quickly or to what extent they will be realised. Nor is there a consensus regarding the policies, strategies and actions most conducive for that realisation. Countries and regions are distinguished by vast differences in performance that are not easily explained or eliminated.

Among developing countries, between 1965 and 1990 per capita GDP rose by 5.5 per cent annually in high performing East Asian countries compared to less than 2 per cent in South Asia and about 0.25 per cent in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Similarly, if one looks at the experience in Eastern Europe since 1990, one will see that the transition strategies implemented by 25 East European countries were unable to prevent widespread economic decline and social distress. Production in all 25 countries fell significantly, from a minimum of 18 per cent in Poland to 45 per cent in Russia, 60 per cent in Ukraine and 75 per cent in Armenia. Even in East Germany, where the German government and industry have pumped in more than \$1.1 trillion since reunification, the expected results have not been achieved. Unemployment in East Germany has grown from very low levels to more than 25 per cent, while productivity remains at one-fifth, the level prevalent in the western part of the country.

So there are many questions regarding strategy and wide disparities in performance all over the world. The experience of the past two centuries has given rise to at least five major categories of development theory. Applying these theories to explain the development of 23 countries during the period 1850-1914, Morris and Adelman found that each major theory adequately explains the experience of a range of countries and periods, but none of the theories applies universally to the 19th century experience of all the countries. These findings suggest the need for a more comprehensive approach. Realisation of this need had prompted the then Secretary-General of the United Nations, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, to call for thoughtful reflection on development “as the most important intellectual challenge of the coming years”.

Reflection and Action 2.6

Look into the latest *Human Development Report* (UN) or *Human Development Report* of any of the states of India. Based on your reading develop a chart showing the changes that have taken place in various indicators of human development in our country or in a state in recent years.

2.9 Conclusion

Development today is not merely an economic phenomenon. It encompasses more than the financial side of people's lives. Development should be perceived as a multi-dimensional process involving the reorganisation and reorientation of the entire economic and social system. In addition to improvements in institutional, social and administrative structures as well as in popular attitudes and, in many cases, even customs and beliefs. To conclude, development must be conceived as a multi-dimensional process involving major changes in social structures, popular attitudes and national institutions, as well as the acceleration of economic growth, the reduction of inequality, and the eradication of absolute poverty.

Development is a process. This process has been taking place in societies since time immemorial, but it has acquired greater intensity and velocity during the past five hundred years and has accelerated rapidly over the past five decades. In the broadest terms applicable to all societies and historical periods, development can be defined as an upward directional movement of society from lesser to greater levels of energy, efficiency, quality, productivity, complexity, comprehension, creativity, mastery, enjoyment and accomplishment. To highlight all these issues, we have discussed in this unit the concepts and perspectives of change and modernisation, criticism of the perspective of modernisation, scope, conditions and barriers of development. We have also presented a few developmental experiences in this unit.

2.10 Further Reading

Desai, A.R. (ed.) 1971. *Essays on Modernisation of Underdeveloped Societies*. Vol 1. Thacker and Co. Ltd.: Mumbai

Dube, S.C. 1988. *Modernisation and Development*. Sage Publication: New Delhi