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# UNIT 4 SOCIAL CHANGE: CONCEPT AND FACTORS INVOLVED IN SOCIAL CHANGE

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## 4.0 OBJECTIVES

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After studying this unit you should be able to:

- know the concept of social change, social progress, social development and cultural lag;
- distinguish between social progress and social development;
- understand the factors of social change;
- grasp social change as a universal and continuous phenomena;
- understand the role of social change in formation of social attitude and social values; and
- understand the effects of social change on day-to-day human life.

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## 4.1 INTRODUCTION

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The word 'change' immediately brings to mind something different from yesterday or past. Change is the irrefutable law of nature. It may be or may not be visible but all things are changing at varying paces. There are changes in physical environment, flora and fauna, water table, so on and so forth. Similarly, social environment which has been created by human beings themselves is continuously in the process of change. A look into the history of society reveals that all social institutions such as family, religion, marriage, political, economic, social values and social attitudes have undergone a drastic change over a period of time. The social life being lived by human being at present during the dawn of 21<sup>st</sup> century was not so about hundred or more years back. Permanence of human society is an illusion. Human society is in an ever-changing process, growing, decaying, renewing and adjusting itself to new-found ideas, inventions and ways of living.

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## 4.2 CONCEPT AND DEFINITIONS OF SOCIAL CHANGE

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The concept of social change was introduced by August Comte, a Frenchman, known as founding father of Sociology. Later on, the concept of social change was further refined and developed by Herbert Spencer, Karl Marx and a number of other sociologists. No human society is static and at the same time it is difficult to predict the forms and directions of social change. The reason is that the factors which cause social change do not remain uniform always. The population changes, expansion of science and technology, ideologies and social values take on new forms, and as a result of that social structure, social system, and social institutions change their functioning. The process of industrialization and urbanization has changed the whole set of social relationships. It is quite visible that the contemporary world is not changing uniformly and is also manifesting complexities in social change. Slow and simple forms of social change may intersect with quick and intricate forms of social change. Migration of illiterate persons from remote rural areas to metropolitan cities will effect the institutions of family life in it, add to stress and strain of daily living due to fast pace of city life and new social values required for industrial and urban living.

From the middle of nineteenth century onwards, a large number of sociologists have tried to define social change. Some often quoted definitions of social change are:

**August Comte:** Societies progress through a series of predictable stages based on the development of human knowledge.

**Anderson and Parker:** Social Change involves alterations in the structure or functioning of social forms or processes themselves.

**Davis:** By social change it is meant only such alterations as occur in social organization, that is, structure and functions of society.

**Gillin and Gillin:** Social changes are variations from the accepted modes of life; whether due to alteration in geographical conditions, in cultural equipment or composition of the population, etc.

**Ginsberg, M.:** By social change, I understand a change in social structure e.g. the size of society, the composition or balance of its parts or the type of its organization.

**Koening, S.:** Social change refers to the modifications which occur in the life-patterns of people.

**Lundberg and Others:** Social change refers to any modifications in established patterns of inter-human relationships and standards of conduct.

**MacIver and Page:** Our direct concern as sociologist is with social relationships. It is the change in these relationships which alone we shall regard as social change.

**Mazumdar, H.T.:** Social change may be defined as a new fashion or mode, either modifying or replacing the old, in the life of people, or in the operations of society.

**Merrill and Eldredge:** Social change means that a large number of persons are engaging in activities that differ from those which they or their immediate forefathers engaged in sometime before.

**Smelser, Neil J.:** Social change is the alterations of the way societies are organized.

The important features that emerge from the definitions of social change are:

- 1) Social change is the effect of certain causes.
- 2) Social change modifies social structure, social organization and social functioning.
- 3) It modifies the life-pattern of people.
- 4) Technological and cultural changes are different from social change.
- 5) Social change is reflected through social attitudes, social values and ways of living.

**Check Your Progress I**

- Note :** a) Use the space provided for your answer.  
b) Check your answers with those provided at the end of this unit.

- 1) Explain social change.  
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### 4.3 CONCEPT OF SOCIAL PROGRESS AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

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Social progress is a relative term in the sense that, to some people, changes in daily living, social functions, social relationships, attitudes and values may mean progress and to others, social change may seem to be an erosion of established social values and social practices. Social progress refers to forces which make human life socially and biologically better. Human beings are continuously making efforts to control the external environment and generate forces which make their life better. Development in knowledge, inventions and use of various technologies and gadgets initiates modified standards of living, social relationships, social functioning, attitudes and values. To start with evolution and social progress were considered synonyms but later on, sociologist made a distinction between evolution, social evolution and social progress. Social evolution is one aspect of evolution and social progress is a further associate of social evolution. Some important definitions of social progress are:

**MacIver and Page:** By progress we imply not merely direction, but direction towards some final goal, some destination determined ideally not simply by some objective considerations at work.

**Burgess:** Any change or adaptation to an existent environment that makes it easier for a person or group of persons or other organized form of life to live, may be said to represent progress.

**Lumley:** Progress is change but it is change in a desired or approved direction, not any direction.

**Ogburn:** Progress is a movement towards an objective, thought to be desirable by the general group, for the visible future.

**Hobhouse:** Social progress is the growth of social life in respect of those qualities to which human beings can attach or can rationally attach values.

**Mazumdar, H.T.:** Social progress is a movement based on following six parameters:

- 1) enhancement of the dignity of man;
- 2) respect for each human personality;
- 3) ever-increasing freedom for spiritual quest and for investigation of truth;
- 4) freedom for creativity and for aesthetic enjoyment of the works of nature as well as of man;
- 5) a social order that promotes the first four values;
- 6) promotes life, liberty, the pursuit of happiness with justice and equity to all.

The above given statements of social progress highlights the following features:

- 1) Social progress is a movement towards ideally determined objectives;
- 2) Social progress is a movement of adaptation for existing environment that makes life easier;
- 3) Social progress is not just a movement in any direction;
- 4) Social progress is a movement that creates a social order based on spirituality, dignity of human beings, liberty, happy life full of moral values;
- 5) Social progress is limitless and social change is inherent in it.

The concept of social development is further improvement of social progress. The concept of social development is based on long history but recent emphasis on it, is mainly due to following three factors:

- 1) Decolonization process which started during twentieth century and got accelerated after the end of Second World War;
- 2) Growing concern with developed countries;
- 3) The desire of people and of newly established governments to achieve the objective of welfare state.

The review of literature on social development reveals two interrelated dimensions. First, the development of capacity of people to work continuously for their own and society's welfare. Secondly, the alteration of institutions so that human needs are met at all levels especially the lowest, through the process of improving the relationships between expression of needs and the means to attain them.

Social development is a comprehensive concept which means structural changes introduced deliberately to transform society. Social change is a value-free, objective description of societal processes, whereas social development is value-laden term which refers to subjective statement of desired direction of social change. Therefore, the goals of social development are:

- 1) To create a society where living conditions of the people are better. They do not suffer from hunger and they are not denied basic necessities of life.
- 2) To remove regional imbalances and rural-urban disparities.
- 3) To create infrastructure where basic needs of the people are met at all levels, including those who constitute the poorest and deprived sections of society.

These views were also endorsed by the General Assembly and the recent World Summit for Social Development (1995) of United Nations. The important highlights of the Summit were:

- 1) To leave no section of the population outside the scope of social development;
- 2) To effect structural change which favours social development and activate all sectors of the population to participation in the social development process;
- 3) To aim at social equity;
- 4) To give high priority to the development of the human resources, including vocational and technical training.

It may be made clear that in order to achieve social development the economic development is necessary which means increase in production leading to high rate of growth as measured through Gross National Product.

Keeping in view the comprehensiveness of social development M.S. Gore has rightly said that social development means social, cultural, economic, political and environment development.

### **Check Your Progress II.**

**Note :** a) Use the space provided for your answer.

b) Check your answers with those provided at the end of this unit.

- 1) Explain how social change is inherent in social progress and social development?

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## **4.4 FACTORS OF SOCIAL CHANGE**

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### **Physical Environment and Social Change**

Physical environment is the most important phenomenon which influences social life. There are slow as well as fast changes in physical environment. Disasters in the form of storms, floods, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, fire, seasonal variations etc. determine the form of social life. The prevalence of flora and fauna creates a social order based on it. Physical environment promotes and limits the growth of civilization. At poles and deserts, there will be a limited social life due to hostile climatic conditions for human living. The forces generated by the physical environment determine the form, growth and change in human society.

Some historians have expressed the view that even great civilizations of Egypt and Mesopotamia disappeared due to unfavourable physical environmental conditions. Availability of natural resources necessary for human life lead to settlement of human society around them. The depletion of natural resources after their exploitation leads to disintegration and change in human settlements. Misuse of physical environment by human beings resulted in green house effect, pollution, shortage of potable water and non-availability of land for houses in urban areas and so on.

In present day India, intensive agriculture operations resulted in green revolution and sufficiency in food production but at the cost of erosion in soil fertility and depletion of water table. Economic and technological developments led to ecological imbalance and damage to it. Physical environmental compulsions such as famines, droughts, floods, earthquakes led to human migration to distant places with a consequence of disruption to settled human life. Physical environmental compulsions effect social life by producing new ways of living and set of social relationships. It is now evident that physical environmental factors induce social change.

### **Demographic Factors of Social Change**

Demography is the study of human population. 'Demos' is a Greek word which means people. Demographic factors that induce social change are fertility, mortality, migration, changing age structure, sex ratio, age at marriage, patterns of marriage, child bearing age, life expectancy, use of contraceptives, levels and types of morbidity. These factors have a far reaching effect on society with the pressure to produce changes in social and political institutions.

In the developed countries of the world, the population growth is negative or stable but in developing countries such as India it is alarmingly high. Both the

trends cause social transformation. The countries where fertility and mortality is low, their standard of living is high and in the countries where it is high, their standard of living is low. The societies with high fertility rate are choked with over-population, infant and maternal mortality rate, child labour, unemployment, rural-to urban migration, shortage of services required for the sustainability of social life, family violence, marital breakdown, criminality and slums etc. In order to check high fertility rate, family welfare and planning measures were introduced. To start with, these measures were opposed and considered as irreligious, immoral and acquired social acceptance only with the passage of time. The social acceptance of family planning measures led to change in social attitudes and social values for forming a new society based on small family. Similarly, improvement in health measures, knowledge and awareness generation resulted in reduced mortality.

Another demographic factor of social change especially with reference to Indian society is the declining sex ratio. In traditional Indian society, female infanticide was a known practice due to preference for male child. The girls were considered a negative property, a burden on the family. The situation has further deteriorated in modern India with the introduction of pre-birth tests. Sex determination tests are being misused to kill the female foetus. The misuse of these tests has spread like wild fire in Indian society despite the ban on it through Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques Act, 1994 (PNDT, 1994). Declining sex ratio will bring in disastrous demographic, social, economic and even political consequences. There will be more violence against women.

Changing age structure in all societies due to longevity and improved health measures will have its own fall out. In the past, it was young who made bulk of the population and there were relatively few old persons. Increase in the population of old persons will require more social and economic support systems. Failing health, loneliness, isolation and marginalization of old persons are creating new social problems. In nutshell, we can say that the whole social life is operationalized through demographic factors and changes in them will lead to social change.

It is an established fact that social and economic life of human beings is integral part of each other. Economic aspect of social life is a primary feature of society. Human society, starting from hunting and gathering stage has passed through various stages to reach the present stage which is being dominated by industrial production, trade and commerce along with agriculture production and its distribution based on latest scientific techniques. Each successive stage brought with it, its own form of social life, social relationships and social functions.

Engels rightly said that "the ultimate causes of all social changes and political revolutions are to be sought not in the minds of men, in their increasing insight into the external truth and justice, but in changes in the mode of production and exchange." Elaborating the idea further Marx said, "The sum total of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society – the real foundation, on which rise legal and political super structures and to which correspond definite form of social consciousness. It indicates that economic influences are powerful and penetrating on social life." The prevailing economic system determines the social relationships and social functions. The agriculture

system of production had a different type of social life as compared to industrial system of production. It has been found that countries with high per capita income tend to have lower fertility rate than those with lower incomes. Since high income is linked to industrial, technological, and educational development, this fact supports the argument that people tend to have fewer children when they are prosperous. The poor, uneducated, people living in slums and rural areas had high fertility rate resulting in population explosion throughout the world.

In subsistence economies, people produced their own household goods, distributed and consumed them as compared to modern market economy where work is something, people carry out to earn money. It means work is not only social activity but also economic activity. In earlier times, village was considered a self sufficient unit but in market economy, total village life is dependent on outside market forces resulting in new social attitude, social values and social relationships. In the modern world, economic disruption brings with it a set of social problems.

### **Technological Factors of Social Change**

Technological changes have converted the world into a global village and produced profound social changes. Industry, agriculture, transportation, communication, sources of energy, food processing, housing, and physical environment are influenced by technological changes. Almost all the technological developments brought about changes in social living, interaction-patterns and social life.

Some of the major influences of technological factors on social life are as follows:

- 1) Changes in the institution of family such as from joint family system to nuclear family system; employment of females outside the household; change in the role and relationship of husband and wife; changes in the patterns of courtship; inter-caste and late marriage; increase in divorce rate; small family size due to the use of technological devices for birth control; reduced role of family in social control and neglect of the elderly due to changes in the social attitudes and social values.
- 2) Changes in the very basis of social stratification; reduced effect of caste system on employment and day-to-day living; development of individualization and decline in community life; commercialization of recreation; problems related to migration and developments of slums in urban areas; stress and strain as a result of competition and fast-paced life; reduced role of superstitions in day-to-day life; emotional instability and occasional economic disruption and insecurity.

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## **4.5 SOCIAL ATTITUDES, SOCIAL VALUES AND SOCIAL CHANGE**

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Social attitudes and social values are invisible though they govern the whole gamut of human life in an important manner. In modern day terminology, social values and social attitudes are software for running the affairs of human

society. Social relationships, social functioning and social behaviour are the outcome of social attitudes and social values. Acceptance and resistance to social change is actualized through social attitudes and social values.

Social attitude is an orientation towards a person, situation, institution or social process that is held to be indicative of underlying values and beliefs. Social attitude is manifested through social behaviour, social relationships, and social functioning. MacIver and Page explained social attitudes as “subtle, complex and changeable modes of consciousness. They are constantly being modified by our training, our reflection, our health, our circumstances of every sort. When we attribute an attitude to a person, we can judge its character only by certain external signs – looks, gestures, words. These signs suggest to us fear, love or pity”. MacIver and Page classified social attitudes in three types which tend to prevent, to limit or to promote social relationships. Accordingly, they named these *attitudes* as *dissociative*, *restrictive* and *associative*. These social attitudes produce a feeling and social interaction reflecting “inferiority, superiority, neutrality, association or dissociation.” The detail of social attitudes as given by MacIver and Page are as follows:-

- 1) Attitudes implying sense of inferiority in the subject with respect to the object of attitude:
  - a) Dissociative: Dread, fear, terror, envy, rashfulness.
  - b) Associative: Gratitude, hero-worship, emulation.
  - c) Restrictive: Awe, veneration, worship, devotion, humility, submissiveness, modesty, snobbishness.
- 2) Attitudes implying sense of superiority in the subject:
  - a) Dissociative: Disgust, Abhorrence, repugnance, scorn, contempt, disclaim, intolerance, arrogance.
  - b) Associative: Pity, protectiveness
  - c) Restrictive: Pride, patronage, tolerance, forbearance.
- 3) Attitudes implying neither sense of inferiority nor superiority but neutrality in the subject:
  - a) Dissociative: Hate, dislike, aversion, distrust, suspicion, spitefulness, malice, cruelty.
  - b) Associative: Sympathy, affection, trust, tenderness, love, friendliness, kindness, courtesy, helpfulness.
  - c) Restrictive: Rivalry, competitiveness, jealousy.

MacIver and Page also expressed the view that the classification of social attitudes is just illustrative not exhaustive. “An attitude is not a static possession of the individual. It is always a change valuation.”

No doubt social attitudes and social values are interlinked but still these differ from each other so far their explanation and application is concerned. Social values are ideas held by the members of society about ethical or appropriate social behaviour. Social values depict what is right or wrong, desirable or

undesirable. Smelser defined social values as “shared beliefs about the goals towards which human should strive. They are at the core of moral doctrines.”

The features of social values are:

- 1) These cannot be proved
- 2) These are held to be desirable.
- 3) These are guides to social behaviour.
- 4) These grow out of personal experience.
- 5) These are modified as experiences and accumulate.
- 6) These are evolving in nature.

In present day society the important social values are:

- 1) Achievement and Success.
- 2) Activity and work.
- 3) Moral responsibility.
- 4) Concern for people who are suffering as a result of some disaster.
- 5) Efficiency and pragmatism.
- 6) Progress, material comfort, freedom and independence.
- 7) Nationalism, patriotism, democracy and worth of a person etc.

### **Acceptance and Resistance to Social Change**

Acceptance and resistance to social change are two sides of a coin. By and large there is a criticism of innovation leading to social change. In modern industrial societies, there is a diversity of social norms and social values which permit the new generation to choose different ways of life or to reorganize the existing social practices which in various ways oppose the social and cultural values of older generation. There is always inter-generation gap. There is historical evidence of resistance to social change from time to time either by individual, groups or both. Generally, resistance to change can be expected when persons or groups of people have different perceptions of the outcome. It is easier for people to use old form, than to get adapted to new ones. People resist social change due to desire for stability, illiteracy, ignorance, economic cost, vested interest, inertia, lack of awareness and fear of new things. People resist social change fearing that it may go against time-honoured values and traditions. Inter-racial, inter-country and inter-religious caste marriages are opposed as this goes against established social values and traditions. Some of the important examples of resistance to social changes can be cited from present day developed world: American's slavery system took a long and devastating war to get abolished. Racial equality is being resisted even today. In England, the introduction of woman suffrage was opposed for a very long time. Similarly in England, the locomotive in the early days of rail road was called a “hell on wheels” and the “devil wagon”.

In India, *Sati Pratha*, child marriage, preference for female child, women education, human rights and democratic ways of functioning are being resisted even today. S.C. Dube's study of India's changing villages is a fine example of resistance and acceptance of social change. Dube shows that whereas, technological innovations, such as improved seeds, fertilizers, improved breed of animals and so on, were accepted fairly, readily, especially where the effects became apparent in a short time, as for example higher cash prices for crops. But, the innovations which had, or were likely to have repercussions on the social structure, or the cultural values, met with resistance. Some new agricultural techniques, co-operative methods of farming, measures to improve sanitation and education ventures, aroused much less interest and in some case opposed. Dube observed that people are slow and extremely cautious in accepting innovations, but these innovations had long-lasting effects which ultimately changed the social life. Another classic example of Indians' resistance and acceptance of social change is adoption of small family norms and technology associated to it.

The development of modern capitalist economy based on liberalization, privatization and globalization brought into existence some social waves and social movements which hit the traditional Indian social and cultural life. These social waves and modernization tend to reform and modernize the Indian society. The traditional social institutions such as joint family system and caste system are incompatible with the rationality, mobility and egalitarianism of a democratic society. Acceptance and resistance to social change is a continuous phenomenon and not a one time affair.

### **Cultural Lag**

Cultural lag concept was introduced by American Sociologist William Fielding Ogburn during 1922. Ogburn studied the impact of technological change on culture and found that various parts of culture changed differently.

Ogburn described culture consisting of two parts; one is material and the other non-material. Material culture includes manufactured goods, factories, houses, cars- in short, all material objects, as well as inventions and technological changes. For non-material culture Ogburn used the term adaptive culture. It includes social institutions, such as family, religion, education, economic and political. The non-material culture also includes value systems based on customs, modes and folkways.

Ogburn's basic thesis is that non-material culture tends to change slower than material culture. The reason for the rate of slow change is based on prevailing social practices being supported by religious groups, social values and social attitudes. Ogburn gave an example of family within which some adjustments are made to material change. With the progress of industry certain manufacturing activities such as weaving, soap making and tanning etc. moved out of the household to the factory system. The factory system required more females to work outside the house. At the same time females were expected to continue to fulfil their traditional domestic responsibilities. This resulted in wide gap between the demand for female workers and the pressure on them to stay back at home. This phenomenon caught the attention of Ogburn to which he coined the term cultural lag, that is the delay between a change in the material culture and response of the adaptive culture.

Ogburn expressed the view that a change in one part of society especially a technological advance requires a corresponding change in other parts. Until such an adjustment is made, the society or at least certain parts of it, will face a number of problems. The reasons for cultural lag are habits and inertia. People would not like to adapt to new changes quickly. Inertia to change also comes from the fact that modern societies consist of different types of pressure groups catering to different interests which resist change. Less rigid immigration laws are desired by people who want to migrate to developed countries but these are being strongly opposed by the people from developed countries who are afraid of losing jobs to new arrivals or being required to provide social support through welfare funds and allowances.

Various technological developments creating cultural lag are latest electronic equipments and their use in transportation equipments, family welfare instruments such as contraceptives etc. These are resulting in a terrific impact on social life. Ogburn concluded that many and frequent technological innovations of our modern age by occurring prior to the social change precipitate the cultural lag. What Ogburn said in the beginning of twentieth century does not merely continue to be applicable instead its relevance has increased even further.

### **Limitations of Social Change**

All available knowledge and information indicates that the material world existed before human beings arrived the scene. Once the human beings came into existence, may be through design or chance or process of evolution, they started manipulating the physical environment for their betterment. In the process, human beings invented the instruments and started developing technology for their material and non-material progress. These developments were out of the compulsions of human beings required for their existence, continuation and making life more comfortable and happy. Human beings manipulated the physical environment for the gratification of their needs. All these actions and interactions constructed and produced a human society which is undergoing changes since its inception. The changes, of which major part is social in nature are not without limitations like any other phenomenon. The major limitations are:

- 1) social change is complex in nature.
- 2) social change is pluralistic.
- 3) social change brings social isolation in certain cases.
- 4) social change brings uncertainties.
- 5) social change in certain situations brings conflict with it.
- 6) sometimes, it may lead to social disintegration, and
- 7) it is difficult to predict the outcome of social change.

### Check Your Progress III

Note : a) Use the space provided for your answer.

b) Check your answers with those provided at the end of this unit.

1) Discuss Factors of Social Change.

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### 4.6 LET US SUM UP

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For the last three hundred years or so social change has been a concern of prime importance for social scientists, especially for sociologists from the middle of nineteenth century onwards. No sociological analysis is complete without reference to social change. It is a change in the institutional and normative structure of society. Social evolution, social progress, social development, changes in physical environment, technological developments, innovations, changes in economic and political institutions are all having bearing on social change. Social change is inherent in all the physical and social environmental changes. To sum up social change, MacIver and Page has said rightly that social structure cannot be placed in a museum to save it from the ravages of time.

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### 4.7 KEY WORDS

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- Adaptive Culture :** W.F. Ogburn's term for non-material culture, including social institutions, value systems and political institutions.
- Fertility :** A number of children a woman bears during her life time.
- Human Society :** A geographic unit bound together by a legal system and having certain national identity.
- Inertia :** Indisposition to action, motion or change.
- Migration :** Movement of persons or groups across symbolic or political boundaries into new residential areas, communities or societies.
- Morbidity :** The rate of disease or proportion of diseased persons in a society or community.

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## 4.8 SUGGESTED READINGS

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## 4.9 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

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### Check Your Progress I

- 1) Social change is a universal and ever-continuing social phenomenon. Rate of social change may be different in different societies at different times but permanence of human society is an illusion. The historical evidence reveals that all forms of social life, social attitude, and social values have undergone drastic changes over a period of time. Human society is always dynamic, in the changing process, decaying, renewing and adjusting itself to new-found ideas, inventions and ways of living.

Social change is a modification or alteration in social structure, social system and life-patterns of people. Social change is reflected through social attitudes, social values and new ways of living, social relationships and social interactions among the members of society. Social change is complex, limitless and value-neutral.

### Check Your Progress II

- 1) To start with it was evolution may be biological or social which caught the attention of human beings. With the development of knowledge and refinement in thought structure the distinction between the two types of evolution was made. During nineteenth century, along with social evolution the concept of social progress was added and during twentieth century there was further improvement in understanding through analysis and interpretation of social life and the concept of social development

was identified. The concept of social development is more comprehensive than social progress. No doubt, through social progress and social development change in a direction is sought but the methodology and fallout is different.

Social progress may be natural outcome of social change but social development is an effort to achieve the pre-planned goals. Like social change, social progress can also be value-free whereas social development is value-laden social phenomenon. Social development is a focused activity for bringing deliberate transformation of society. The goal of social development is to ensure that no one in society suffers from hunger and denied basic necessities of life. Social development is required to create an infrastructure where there is no exploitation, injustice, discrimination, social inequality, rural-urban and regional disparities.

Economic development is an integral part of social progress and social development. Economic development is an increase in all sectors of productions leading to high rate of growth. In order to ensure increased production human resources are to be developed through vocational and technical training. All this indicates a highly inter-linked phenomenon. In the words of M.S. Gore, social development is a social, cultural, economic, political and environmental development. Development in all these areas will ensure better quality of life. Therefore, issues of social changes are inherent in it.

### Check Your Progress III

- 1) Physical environment, technology, economic development and demographic changes induce social change. There are continuous developments in these areas leading to social change. As it is difficult to predict social change, similarly, it is difficult to say which of these factors is most crucial in social change. All these factors individually as well as collectively influence the social life, social structure, social system, social relations, social attitudes and social values leading to social change.

Physical environment promotes and limits the growth of social life as is clear from the patterns of social life at poles, deserts and mountains covered with snow. There is historical evidence that great civilizations of Egypt and Mesopotamia disappeared under the unfavourable physical conditions. Physical environment changes through various forms of disasters, convulsions, eruptions, produces new ways of living, social relationships, social attitudes, social values related to disaster-management sub-culture.

Social and economic lives of human beings are deeply attached to each other. Economic aspect of social life is primary in human society. Development of human society from hunting and gathering stage to latest means of production and distribution brought within, its own forms of social and economic life. This fact has also been highlighted by various social scientists specifically by Engles and Marx. Human beings are what they do and accordingly constitute their social and economic life. The world-wide trends show that economically prosperous persons have low fertility rates. Economic affluence ensues from industrial development based on technological and educational advancement. The

poor and the uneducated people living in slums and rural areas usually have high fertility rates. Standard of living is dependent on economic factors.

Technological factors which accelerated economic development have converted the world into a global village producing tremendous changes in social life. There is no area which has not been touched by technological developments. Technology has transformed the total human social life. Technological developments led to industrialization and urbanization which resulted in fast changes in all social institutions of social life. Technological factors have also led to cultural lag.

Demographic studies have revealed that factors such as fertility, mortality, sex ratio, changes in age structure, age at marriage, proportions marrying and migrating also induce social change. Development of contraceptive technology and its use have had a far reaching effect on society. The societies with high fertility ratio are choked with population, unemployment, child labour, migration, family violence, high marital breakdown along with high infant mortality rate. Increase in the number of old persons requires larger and stronger social and economic support systems to check loneliness, violation and family health of old persons. Small family norm adopted by human beings has changed the demographic and social environment throughout the world.