

BA II Sem (CBCS) Paper: 2016

Education (Honours)

Social Change: its factors

Society is an ever changing phenomenon. It identifies itself with the changing nature of human needs and interest with the changes of time and situation. So change is inherent in the very nature and function of society. If we study history we find nothing but this truth. To take example America was an underdeveloped land which has become one of the richest and highest developed countries of the world today. Russia has been radically changed after the great revolution of 1917. Indian history and culture have undergone tremendous changes after the British came to India. Such changes in our cultural, social and political history have led to continuous development of Indian society.

A social change is inevitable in every sphere of society. It may be caused in the economic, political, educational as well as in scientific and technological field of activity. It may also be caused due to environmental or geographical factors. It is therefore necessary to identify the powerful factors that result in such social change. Some of the factors responsible for social change are described below-----

- **Voluntary acts of individual:** Social changes are mainly caused by the personal influence or contribution to society. All important social and cultural changes are brought about by men of genius of that society. Personal power and influence, his intellectual creativity, artistic talent, religious, moral and political leadership etc are bringing about radical changes in thought, activity and behavior of the society. Lenin in Russia and Gandhiji in India are the glaring instances of this truth. Their own personality and its contribution have been able to create historic changes in the society.
- **Influence of material factors:** Material production and creativity are also bringing about changes in society. It influences economic productivity which results in high standard of living and thinking of the people. Progressive economy of a country always creates a sound economic life of people. We find in the

society the broad classification of “haves and have-nots”. Economy therefore brings about changes and improvement in our life style.

- **Influence of ideas and ideologies:** The worlds of ideas are capable of bringing about social changes without the people being aware of it. Ideas are capable of changing the mind and attitude of the people towards goodness as well as badness. Here also history may be the guide to us. The present ideas of liberty, equality, fraternity and justice have been able to exercise good effect of our social changes. Similarly the political ideologies like fascism, communism, socialism, capitalism etc. have their respective impact on the changing pattern of society.
- **Influence of physical environment:** By physical environment we mean geographical situation or topographical condition of a country. Such environments are capable of bringing about changes in society or in the country. The great volcanic eruption of Yokokoma was chiefly responsible for development of a new kind of architecture in Japan. Fertility of Nile region has been responsible for growth of Egyptian culture. So climatic condition, fertility of the land, topographical condition, communication facility etc. of our physical environment are going to have their respective control over the life and activity of society.
- **Effect of cultural diffusion:** Social changes are at present mainly due to cultural diffusion among different group of people in society. A society which is usually isolated from other society is more or less static and unchanged. On the contrary the society which has inter-relationship with other improved societies may adopt desirable cultural traits and avoid the undesirable one. To take example in India in the recent years the religious doctrines and ideals are gradually leaning towards secularism in our social life. Religious minded Indian people are now in favour of such changes due to diffusion of culture and knowledge in India.
- **Impact of science and technology:** Science and technology at present have become highly instrumental in bringing about social change and development. These two factors are rapidly modernizing our thought, activity and the way of our life. With the advancement of science and technology the life of the urban society has undergone radical changes. As a result people have moved from the farm to the factory, from the countryside to the big industrial cities and towns.

Similarly the discovery of the steam engine, power and petrol, generation of hydro-electric power, use of wireless, broadcasting, computer and the electronic equipments have brought about unconceivable changes to our modern society.

- **Change through collective activity:** Social changes are also taking place through collective effort of the govt. and the legislators by their making of laws and rules. It has been able to exercise powerful control of social behavior and activity which are considered harmful for social progress. The govt. in parliament house is passing certain Acts to modify and change the behavior of society. It is through such collective activity of the govt. that in India ban has been imposed on the dowry system, prohibition has been made on child labour and early marriage of girls and so on. Some of the labour laws have also been inacted in order to bring about economic changes in society.

So the concept of social change is by nature more comprehensive that is going to be affected through variety of factors in society.
