

Preface

Friends, you gained understanding about meaning and importance of and programmes and laws for women's empowerment in the previous unit. In this unit, we will get an understanding of social and cultural processes of change.

Change is a process emphasizing variation, shift or alteration. When something different occurs than the existing one and is noticeable, we term it as a change. Change is a law of nature and like nature, changes occur in society in a continuous way. Continuity and change are features of each society. Social and cultural change is a ceaseless event. Sociology is interested in observing social and cultural processes of change because they affect social system in a significant way. Not only this, it is also necessary to understand them as they are an important aspect of social life.

Time was when people used to sit on floor, folding their legs, to eat. The scene is changed with emergence of dining table, spoons, knives and forks. In place of the festival of *Vasant Panchmi*, celebration of valentine day has become more common. Do you want to know which cultural process of change has resulted in such examples? Or do you want to know which concepts are used in sociology to depict above mentioned changes?

Friends, you must be familiar with words like westernization, sanskritization, globalization and liberalization. However, it is necessary to clarify that how these words are useful in sociology, how they are interpreted as a source of change and also as concepts of socio-cultural processes. It is because such processes bring forth important influences in social life, in social relations and in expression of sentiments. We will first learn about the meaning of socio-cultural change and then the processes of westernization, sanskritization, globalization and liberalization.

Meaning of social change : Social change is a continuously occurring universal event. Changes are found in institutions due to changes occurring in social structure. Notable change in the structure of social organizations is termed as social change, for example, the changes which have occurred in caste system.

According to Kingsley Davis, 'social change is the change that occurs in social structure and functions'. For example, prevalence of nuclear families in place of joint families indicates change in structure while the function of recreation, earlier carried out by the family, now taken over by cinema, TV etc. specifies change in functions.

Features :

- (1) Social change is a process.
- (2) It is a universal process.
- (3) It indicates change in social structure.
- (4) It indicates change in social functions.
- (5) Social change is seen as a self-born process and also in the form of an organized process.

Cultural change :

In order to understand social change in Indian society the concept of cultural change assumes much importance. There have been a variety of cultural changes that have occurred in traditional Indian society under the influence of many factors.

Meaning and definition of cultural change :

The concept of cultural change has a vast meaning. It includes all those integrated in culture such as art, science, machinery, philosophy, language, literature and also changes occurring in forms, structures and functions of social organizations.

The changes that occur in material and non-material aspects of culture are known as cultural changes. Material aspect includes furniture, machines, houses etc. Pucca modern house in place of kutchha house or use of cell phone in place of land line phone are examples of changes occurred in material aspect of culture. Non-material aspect of culture contains painting, art of dance, knowledge, language etc. Modern paintings and use of English in writing and speaking are examples of changes in non-material aspect of culture.

Cultural change has a blend of the elements of old and new culture which is mainly caused by inventions and diffusion. When elements of one culture are added to another culture or social structure, it becomes a new culture for the latter. For example, in India, as the constitution has accepted the principle of democracy in place of imperialism, the former has spread and become strengthened in the country.

Thus, cultural change contains changes that occur in different elements of culture and also changes that happen in forms, structures and functions of social organizations. The concept of cultural change is wider than the concept of social change as all social changes can be termed as cultural changes. For example, change in values.

According to MacIver and Page, 'Cultural changes include changes in religion, literature, art, etc. and are less dynamic. Changes do not occur as speedily in art, science, literature, traditions, religion, philosophy etc as they occur in social relations'. For example, change in relation between parents and children.

Social and cultural changes influence each other and both of them have impact on society. For example, changes in group-life and relations affect cultural elements, values and beliefs etc. Similarly, changed cultural atmosphere affects social life. Thus they affect each other. For example, cultural change has caused change in rural life.

Sometimes, changes happen in cultural system without causing any change in social system. For example, pronunciation or sound related changes in language, changes in style of music. Such changes do not have any remarkable impact on society. However, sociology is interested in such cultural changes which emerge from social organizations and which affect the same. It becomes difficult to decide whether given change is social or cultural as there is a very thin line of demarcation between them.

Features of cultural change :

(1) Change in any part of culture :

Change in any part or element of culture is known as cultural change; for example, use of power loom in place of handloom.

(2) Change in materials and means :

Change in materials and means developed by society for fulfilling its needs, such as machines, vehicles, buildings, books, vessels, furniture etc. is also known as cultural change; for example, use of sofa for sitting or dining table for eating.

(3) Change in normative system of society :

In order to maintain the system of social relations, society formulates certain norms which are part of culture. Change in this normative system is also termed as cultural change. For example, change in marriage related laws, laws providing rights to women, change in regime - from imperialism to democracy.

After discussing meaning of socio-cultural change, we will now consider the cultural processes of change.

Sanskritization

In standard 11, we learnt that caste was a closed type of stratification system in traditional Indian society. The caste-based social status of individual remained unchanged for whole of the life. In class system, however, an individual can change his/her status by obtaining education, training or by other means in his/her lifetime. In short, sociologists believed that status related change was not possible in caste system. However, Prof. M.N. Srinivas, based on his research, argued that change is possible in closed type of stratification system such as caste. In this context, he introduced the concept of sanskritization as a cultural process.

Sanskritization is an internal source of change. It has played an important role in bringing about social change in Indian society. This process is commonly found among Hindus residing in different parts of India. It prevails among tribal groups too.

Meaning of sanskritization :

Though the process of sanskritization is age old, the word 'sanskritization' was first introduced by Prof. M.N. Srinivas. First, he had used the word 'brahmnikaran' to explain the changes occurring in caste system in his book 'Religion and Society among the Coorg'. However, after David Pocock and other anthropologists commented that other than Brahmin caste could also become model caste for lower castes to imitate, he used the word sanskritization in place of brahmnikaran.

In sanskritization, it is not only culture that is imitated; but all thoughts and beliefs written in Sanskrit scriptures and adopted by high castes are imitated by low castes.

Definition

M. N. Srinivas : 'Sanskritization is the process in which low caste Hindus, tribals or other groups imitate the customs, rituals, thoughts and life style of castes considered higher than them. By doing this, they make claims for higher rank in caste hierarchy'.

Aspects of the process of sanskritization

M. N. Srinivas has discussed sanskritization in detail in his book titled, 'Social Change in Modern India'. On the basis of this discussion, let us try to understand certain aspects of this cultural process :

- (1) The process of sanskritization is group-oriented. Through this process, not the individual but the whole caste-group acquires vertical mobility. The caste-group makes claims for higher rank. In other words, the low caste-group does not get higher status by just imitating higher caste; it has to make efforts for acquiring higher status by claiming for it.
- (2) Mobility or change through the process of sanskritization brings about change in rank or status of caste in caste hierarchy but no structural change occurs. So, there is no fundamental change in caste system.

- (3) There is no guarantee that the process of sanskritization leads to economic elevation. It has also been found that groups leading economically and politically but lagging behind culturally have attempted to elevate their status through the process of sanskritization.
- (4) Local influential caste has important role in the process of sanskritization.
- (5) The process of sanskritization prevails not only among Hindus; tribal groups also imitate upper castes and make claims for higher status. *Bhils* of western India and *Gond, Ho* and *Urav* of central India are examples. In this context, sanskritization is a cultural process of vertical mobility for groups and communities.
- (6) Conflict and opposition are also visible in the process of sanskritization. According to Srinivas, there are examples when imitating lower castes face opposition from upper castes and the claims of the former are also disapproved by the latter. This leads to conflict between them.
- (7) Certain lower castes claim for higher status by adopting name and surname of upper caste. Of these, certain lower castes had registered themselves by the name of upper castes in the census of 1931. This process is also termed as sanskritization by Srinivas.
- (8) Sanskritization is a two-way process. That is, on one hand, lower castes acquire mobility by acquiring status of upper castes; on the other hand, in the process of doing so they abandon certain good things of their own caste.

The process of sanskritization and influential caste

Local influential caste plays an important role in the process of sanskritization. In order to acquire life style of upper castes, in addition to Brahmins, other castes are also imitated. With the aim of explaining this, Srinivas introduced the concept of influential caste in his article 'The Social System of a Mysore Village' in 1955. According to him, the concept of influential caste is useful to understand rural social life and the pattern of sanskritization.

Srinivas has presented certain criteria to consider a caste as influential :

- (1) It should have the ownership of considerable land of local area.
- (2) It should have considerable population in terms of number.
- (3) In addition to higher traditional status, proportion of literates, services in administration, urban sources of income also add to the authority/respect of certain castes in rural areas and make them influential. In Gujarat, according to these criteria, Patidaar and Khsatriya castes have the status of influential castes in certain areas.

Limitations

The concept of sanskritization has been criticized at many levels, such as,

- (1) It is to be noted that though, through the process of sanskritization, certain castes or groups attain improved place or status in inequality-based social structure, the inequality or discrimination which prevail in society is not eliminated.
- (2) It establishes the fact that life style of higher castes is higher and that of lower castes is lower. Not only this, it also emphasizes the fact that life style of higher castes is imitable.
- (3) There has been no notable change in women's status due to sanskritization.

Westernization

Westernization is an important socio-cultural process of change. It was initiated with the contact of European people; contacts with Britishers who ruled India for 150 years were more influential.

Though westernization is defined in many ways, three following things are included in it :

- (1) Engineering and science
- (2) Institutions, ideology and values
- (3) Commodities, language etc.

The concept of westernization has been explained in detail by M. N. Srinivas in his book, 'Social Change in Modern India'. He has mentioned that 'Westernization has resulted in changes in Indian society and culture at various levels such as mechanics, institutional, conceptual, and value related under the influence of 150 years of British regime'.

Westernization is a vast, complex and multi-layer concept. It covers the vast field, from western technology to modern science and writing of modern history. It should be specified here that the concepts of sanskritization and westernization are meant to understand socio-cultural changes rather than structural changes in India.

New values, ideals and changes caused by institutions can be termed as westernization. In other words, westernization is the process that indicates changes in different fields of Indian social life led by entrance of western values such as humanism, secularism, liberalism, equality, etc. in India during British regime.

Aspects of westernization

M. N. Srinivas has explained the impact of westernization on India through following aspects :

- (1) During British regime, India witnessed extensive changes due to implementation of administrative machinery and certain laws particularly in the field of agriculture. In the last years of eighteenth century, systems like *zamindari* and *rayyatwari* were introduced in the context of land ownership and collection of revenue. This resulted in establishment of new land relations.
- (2) Introduction of new laws and judiciary and reformation of army and police by Britishers for maintaining social order resulted in comprehensive change.
- (3) Introduction of western education system in India by Britishers opened up education for all. Overtime, this education system got extended to rural areas and disseminated new ideas and values.
- (4) Establishment of printing press by Britishers in India led to publication of newspapers, books, journals etc. Modern facilities were made available by printing presses to different sections and groups of society to express their ideas. This led to diffusion of new ideas and values of global level.
- (5) Srinivas examines one of the important impacts of westernization in the context of 'humanism'. The western concepts of equality, freedom, secularism and the ideal of welfare of all without any discrimination on the basis of caste, economic status, religion, age or sex played an important role in creating a humanitarian atmosphere in India. This also led to initiation of various activities of social reform in India.
- (6) In India, trade, industries and education developed under the influence of westernization resulted in emergence of a new middle class. The small educated class, employed by British government in administrative services, overtime developed as an influential class in modern India. From among these people, an intellectual class containing lawyers, doctors, teachers, writers also developed. As an impact of this new class, certain elements of western

culture were accepted in India and modernity developed in its cities.

- (7) National leaders, inspired by the principles of western democracy, liberalism and nationality during the freedom struggle started organizing people. The faith and trust in democracy during the years of struggle for freedom so developed that in independent India acceptance of democratic governance can be termed as an impact of westernization.

Globalization

In 21st century, the discussion on social change will remain incomplete without mention of the processes of globalization and liberalization. Though, the process of globalization is not new to India; three processes began in whole of the world in the last decade of 20th century: liberalization, privatization and globalization. These three processes have impacted the economy, society and culture of the nation. Sociologists and anthropologists felt that due to these processes the ‘world would become one society and an international market’ and therefore got interested in studying them. We will now understand globalization and liberalization as socio-economic processes of change.

Globalization is a complex social, economic and political process found in all countries of the world. This process, according to social scientists, has been instrumental in reducing the distance between countries and states within a country and making them get closer. The world becomes a village. Means of communication and mechanized sources have provided momentum to this process.



Globalization

Meaning of globalization

The simple meaning of globalization is to consider things at global level. When any country thinks in the context of the whole world and not at the level of its politics, economy, society or culture, it is globalization.

From the social point of view, it has happened for the first time in history that people of local and global society have a feeling of proximity. Various processes are at work which affect social relations of the people of the world in a considerable manner and bring them closer. Sociologists view this as globalization.

Definition :

Giddens : ‘The increasing reciprocity between different people and different fields of the world is globalization. This reciprocity takes place in social and economic relations. In this process, both time and space are blended’.

Yogendra Singh : ‘Revolutionary changes have taken place in Indian society after the decade of 1990. Globalization has led to change in the form of social stratification and also in the pace of social change. Moreover, processes of urbanization, industrialization and demographic changes have become fast’.

Malcolm Waters : ‘Globalization is a social process in which the constraints of geography on economic, political, social and cultural arrangements recede, in which people become increasingly aware that they are receding and in which people act accordingly’.

Features of globalization :

The process of globalization is a complex one and it includes modernization, industrialization and capitalism. Revolution in the field of communication has provided momentum to this process. Following

are the features of globalization which will help in understanding the process more clearly.

(1) It is a complex process :

Globalization is a complex process as liberalization and privatization are closely linked with it. As these processes affect each other, they become complex and difficult to understand. Further, globalization influences both as a factor and as a result. Therefore it can be termed as a complicated process.

(2) It holds multiple aspects :

Globalization is a process with multiple aspects such as economic, political, socio-cultural etc. However, sociology is interested in studying its socio-cultural aspects and their results only.

(3) Process indicating invention and diffusion :

This process has been instrumental in inspiring new industries, new machinery and new inventions and in providing momentum to their diffusion. For example, internet and service industry.

(4) Process creating awareness for civil rights and humanity :

The process of globalization has created a pressure in the world for elimination of poverty and spread of education and health. Acts like right to information, food for all etc. have been enacted. It has also been helpful in invoking feelings of rescuing and helping people from natural calamities caused by climate change.

(5) Global culture :

In the opinion of certain scholars, as a result of this process, the world will become a village and a new culture will emerge affecting the institutions of family, marriage, recreation and art and literature. For example, the Valentine Day is a worldwide celebration.

(6) Coordination of cultures :

The process of globalization has resulted in accelerating the processes of tourism, communication, migration etc. and as a result different cultures of the world are coming into contact with each other and becoming homogenous. For example, bhangda, pop and fusion music.

(7) One currency as a means of exchange :

Because of globalization the idea of one currency, as a means of exchange, for the whole world prevails. For example, American dollar.

(8) Dominance of markets :

In the context of today's trades and businesses, markets have become more important with the net of economy scattered over the world. As a result, consumption patterns have become more or less similar in whole of the world. For example, noodle and pizza.

(9) New social movements :

In the opinion of Yogendra Singh, changes in the third world, and particularly in India caused by globalization have created many movements, such as, women's movements, movements related to human right etc.

In brief, the process of globalization has established social, cultural, economic and political relations between different nations and between different states of a nation and has provided momentum to modernization and post modernization.

Liberalization :

After independence, the Indian economy and market were protected from the global competition through different laws. This policy was based on the thinking that the government should play an

important role in insuring public welfare. The constitution of India has also underlined social justice.

In the early part of the year 1991, the Indian economy was facing a critical situation with declining foreign exchange. The government, in order to rejuvenate the economy, declared a new economic policy; in which free trade policy was encouraged in the perspective of foreign trade. Under the long-term policy of import-export, import tariffs were reduced. All these are known as liberalization.

Meaning of liberalization

The policy of liberalization is synonym to policy of privatization. The policy includes more permits for establishment of industries, greater investment and creation of favourable situation for private sector. In brief, it is the policy of the government for establishment and development of industries without any interference. Liberalization is a prerequisite of globalization and privatization is necessary for the process of liberalization.

Definition of liberalization :

Liberalization means relaxing the rules and economic restrictions which regulate the global market in order to make it beneficial for national economy. For example, permitting direct foreign investment in different fields.

Advantages of liberalization :

- Increase in foreign investment and partnership of multi-national companies with Indian companies resulted in use of latest technology and increased production.
- Consumers have access to best products at reasonable price.
- Because of privatization and open competition, producers started selling quality products at reasonable price.
- Increased competition in each field resulted in increased importance of training and education for management technique and skills in order to sustain in global competition.
- Reduction in interest rate on loans reduced the cost of production.
- The process of liberalization has given impetus to TV channels, mobiles, internet companies and online shopping.
- Liberalization has led to consumerism and markets have become a decisive factor.
- A great change has occurred in life style and the pattern of consumption of commodities.
- Socio-cultural exchange has got momentum due to liberalization.

Disadvantages of liberalization :

- Implementation of liberalization and privatization has reduced opportunities of employment. Unemployment has increased.
- Growth-rate in agriculture has declined. Use of B.T. seeds, chemical fertilizers and pesticides of multinational companies has resulted in reduction of fertility of land and increase in pollution.
- Establishment of pollution-prone industries in the countries of third world by developed nations has created environmental imbalance.
- Compliance with the rules of the World Trade Organization and relaxation in import tariffs slowed the pace of export.
- Multinational companies obtain land at cheaper rate in India, pay low wages and remit big profit to their own countries. Thus income goes out of country.

- Gradual reduction in interest rate for deposits and saving schemes by Reserve Bank of India (RBI) in view of banking reforms has affected the middle class and those sustaining on pension.
- The liberalization-led situation, in which all matters are left to market, has resulted in increased inequality and price hike.

Friends, in this unit, we got an understanding of socio-cultural processes of change which helped us in distinguishing between the processes of sanskritization and westernization. We also got acquainted with impacts of globalization and liberalization on society. Now, in the next unit, we will learn about mass media and society.

Exercises

1. Answer the following questions in detail :

- (1) Give meaning and features of cultural change.
- (2) State aspects of the process of sanskritization.
- (3) Describe aspects of westernization.
- (4) Give features of globalization.

2. Give concise answers to the following questions :

- (1) Explain the definition of sanskritization.
- (2) Explain the meaning of westernization.
- (3) Explain the definition of globalization.
- (4) State advantages of liberalization.

3. Answer the following questions in brief :

- (1) In understanding of what, are socio-cultural processes useful ?
- (2) What is meant by social change ?
- (3) What are included in culture ?
- (4) What are the criteria of influential caste ?
- (5) What is liberalization ?

4. Answer the following questions in one sentence :

- (1) What are the major sources of cultural change ?
- (2) What items are included in material culture ?
- (3) What substances are included in non-material culture ?
- (4) Who introduced the concept of sanskritization ?
- (5) When did the process of westernization start ?
- (6) Why globalization is called a complex process ?
- (7) When did the process of liberalization start in India ?
- (8) In which book Srinivas has discussed the concept of westernization ?

5. Choose the right options from the following :

- (1) Social change means _____ ☐
- (a) Change in structure (b) Change in fashion
- (c) Change in diet (d) None of these
- (2) Change in elements of culture means _____ ☐
- (a) Geographical change (b) Cultural change
- (c) Social change (d) None of these

- (3) How many aspects are contained by culture ? ☐
- (a) 1 (b) 2 (c) 3 (d) 4
- (4) What word was used by Srinivas first for sanskritization ? ☐
- (a) Westernization (b) Islamization
(c) Brahamnikaran (d) None of these
- (5) What kind of mobility is indicated by sanskritization ? ☐
- (a) Group-oriented (b) Personal
(c) Downward (d) None of these
- (6) What elements of western thinking entered India ? ☐
- (a) Secularism (b) humanism
(c) Equality (d) All of these
- (7) Which process coordinates different cultures ? ☐
- (a) Globalization (b) Industrialization
(c) Privatization (d) None of these
- (8) What things are emphasized in liberalization ? ☐
- (a) Industry-trade (b) Society-culture
(c) Human welfare (d) None of these
- (9) Which process affects economy, society and culture of different countries ? ☐
- (a) Westernization (b) Sanskritization
(c) Globalization (d) Islamization

Activity

- Observe socio-cultural changes that have occurred in your village and write a note on that.
- Prepare a photo album of the lifestyle of west.
- Organize a group-discussion on advantages and disadvantages of cell phone and internet.
- Organize a group-discussion on social impacts of globalization
- Make a list of items accessible to you because of globalization and liberalization.

