Chapter I

INTRODUCTION
1. **Meaning of the term Modernization**

In social sciences, the term modernisation is used to designate the process through which a traditional or pre-technological society passes through and is transformed into a society characterized by machine technology, rational and secular differentiated social structures.¹

Modernisation implies changes not only in the external structure of social institutions but also in the internal attitudes and beliefs of the members of the society in correspondence with the external social change. In the complete sense of the term, it means change both at the external social level and at the internal intellectual, emotional and spiritual level of man living in the society.²

At the external social level, the process of change occurs in various areas. For instance, in the agricultural sector, age old implements and methods give way to tractor and fertilizers. In the economic sector, money came to be used as a medium of exchange, replacing the barter system. Salaried employment in Industry and elsewhere started to spread. In the communication sector, distances got shortened by the spread of technology. Societies and communities that were previously separated and independent became more dependent on one another and urbanization started taking place rapidly.³

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³ Cyril Black; Op: Cit, P 14.
Modernisation, thus may be understood as the common behavioural system, associated with the urban, industrial, literate and participant societies. This system is characterized by a rational and scientific world view. It is not only characterized by the growth and ever increasing application of science and technology, but also by adaptation of the institution of society to the imperatives of the new world view and the emerging technological ethos.\(^4\)

Modernisation involves a change of outlook, belief in the possibility of progress and directed change in all aspects of individual and social life.\(^5\) Its essence lies in the awareness of men as self-potent being who have the power to change their lives and transform society.\(^6\)

2. **Characteristics of Modernization**

Most writers on modernization implicitly or explicitly assign nine characteristics to the modernization process. They are: (1)Modernization is a revolutionary process, (2)Modernization is a complex process, (3)Modernization is a systematic process, (4)Modernization is a global process, (5)Modernization is a lengthy process, (6)Modernization is a phased process, (7)Modernization is a homogenizing process, (8)Modernization is an irreversible process and (9)Modernization is a progressive process.

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2.1  *Modernization is a revolutionary process:*

This follows directly from the contact between modern and traditional society. The change from tradition to modernity consequently involves a radical and total change in patterns of human life. The shift from tradition to modernity, as Cyril Black says, is comparable to the changes from pre-human to human existence and from primitive to civilized societies.7

2.2  *Modernization is a complex process:*

It cannot be easily reduced to a single factor or to a single dimension. It involves change virtually in all areas of human thought and behaviour. Its components include: industrialization, media expansion, increasing literacy and education, expansion of political participation.

2.3  *Modernization is a systemic process:*

Changes in one factor are related to and affect changes in the other factors. Modernization, according to Daniel Lerner, is "a process with some distinctive quality of its own, which would explain why modernity is felt as a consistent whole among people who live by its rule."8

2.4  *Modernization is a global process:*

Modernization which originated in fifteenth and sixteenth century Europe has now become a worldwide phenomenon. This has been brought about primarily through the diffusion of modern ideas

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and techniques from the European center, but also in part through the indigenous development of non-western societies. In any event, all societies were at one time traditional; but now all societies are either modern or in the process of becoming modern.

2.5 Modernization is a lengthy process:

The totality of the changes which modernization entails can only be worked out through time. While modernization is revolutionary in the extent of the changes it brings about in traditional society, it is evolutionary in the amount of time required to bring about those changes.\(^9\)

2.6 Modernization is a phased process:

It is possible to distinguish different levels or phases of modernization through which all societies will move. Societies begin in the traditional stage and end in the modern stage and the intervening transitional phase can be broken down into sub phases. While the leadership in the process and the patterns of modernization will differ from one society to another, all societies will move through essentially the same stages.

2.7 Modernization is a homogenizing process:

Modernization produces tendencies toward convergence among societies. It involves movement "toward interdependence among politically organized societies and toward an ultimate integration of societies." The "Universal imperatives of modern ideas

\(^9\) Cyril black, op: cit P 31.
and institutions” may lead to a stage” at which the various societies are so homogenous as to be capable of forming a world state”\textsuperscript{10}.

2.8 \textit{Modernization is an irreversible process:}

While there may be temporary breakdowns and occasional reversal in elements of the modernizing process, modernization as a whole is an essentially secular trend. A society which has reached certain levels of growth through urbanization, literacy, industrialization as such, will not decline to substantially lower levels. The ratio of change will vary significantly from one society to another, but the direction of change will not.

2.9 \textit{Modernization is a progressive process:}

Modernization is not only inevitable, it is also desirable. The traumas of modernization in its early phases are many and profound but in the long run modernization enhances human well-being, culturally and materially.\textsuperscript{11}

3. \textbf{Modernisation Theories}

3.1 \textit{Evolution of Modernisation Theory:}

The 19\textsuperscript{th} century witnessed a widespread socio-economic change. Among other processes, the period saw the rapid expansion of industrial manufacturing, a growth in population and urban centres, and the increasing national importance of the political and bureaucratic activity of the state. These processes were not, of course,


\textsuperscript{11} Ibid.
initiated during the nineteenth century but much earlier, in the British case, for example, as early as the 1600s. Moreover, all European countries did not experience such developments to the same extent. But within some countries, particularly Britain, France and Germany, the pace and extent of change were comparatively massive. This period was a period of great transformation and of acute social dislocation.

The demands of businesses for cheap materials and low labour costs have always existed, but in the nineteenth century such demands were given new meanings, principally, because of the developments of new systems of production entailing large scale factory manufacturing. In addition, labour productivity and new sources of power, along with the growth of national markets, made 19th century capitalists much more effective; hence the so called 'Industrial Revolution'.

The changes brought about were entirely abnormal, judged by the standards of previous centuries. This period saw a major change from the more or less static conception of a world where departure from tradition was considered to be contrary to nature; this period also witnessed the conception of progress as a law of life and continued improvements as the normal state of a healthy society.

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12 Andrew Webster – Introduction to the Sociology of Development (Macmillan Publication), P 43.
13 Ibid.
The interpretation of these processes of social change varied among different scholars. They produced very different theories about the origins, character and future path of industrial society. They also had divergent views about the positive and negative effects of this transition. It is their general theories of social change that inspired the emergence of the ‘sociology of development’ in the 20th century.

Despite their considerable differences, Marx, Durkheim and Weber tried to identify the basic features of societies that promote or inhibited development. They all, more or less, shared the Darwinian thought which challenged the established notion of an unchanging, predetermined, God-given order to the world. Darwin’s idea that one could not only identify but also explain the origin of things raised the possibility that social change could similarly be charted according to some principle of social evolution.14

The twentieth century, thus, witnessed two main schools of thought on development and change. The first, which came into prominence in the 1950s and 1960s, is called ‘Modernisation’ theory. This theory offers an account of the common features of the process of development drawing on the analysis of Durkheim and Weber. The second, which developed in 1970s, is called the ‘Dependency’ or ‘Under development’ theory and draws its ideas from the analysis of the economic system of capitalism developed by Marx.15

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14 Ibid.
3.2 *Influences on the Development of Modernisation Theory:*

Modernisation theory has its roots in the ideas of Durkheim and Weber. In his book, ‘The division of labour in Society’, Durkheim proposes that there are two basic types of society, the ‘traditional’ and the ‘modern’. These two types of society perform the limited tasks of a simple agrarian community based on groups of families or clans in village settlements. In the traditional society, social cohesion was based on the simple common life style and beliefs that prevailed in village settlements and Durkheim calls this form of cohesion ‘mechanical solidarity’ in the sense that the separate groups are very similar to one another, conforming to a rigid pattern of traditional norms and beliefs.¹⁶

According to him, with the increase in number and density of population and limited resources, people started competing for these scarce resources. This, according to Durkheim, led to the social division of labour and new resources were generated by the producers while others specialized in other areas of life outside of material production. Thus, the division of labour became more complex and created an increasing interdependency among people. Social differentiation occurred as specialized institutions were formed by people to deal with particular needs of society. In this way, modern society was created. To him Modern society is more complex and integrated and based on cohesion called ‘Organic Solidarity’.¹⁷

¹⁶ Andrew Webster, op; cit, P 45.
¹⁷ Ibid.
For him the modern system creates a new pattern of morality and a system of norms which are less rigid than those of a traditional society. This means that the ‘modern’ individual has a much greater freedom of action within a set of moral constraints. This idea of Durkheim has influenced the development of modernisation theory.

Like Durkheim, Weber, another sociologist whose work has had a great impact on the development of modernisation theory, also draws a distinction between traditional and modern society. Much of this distinction was based on fundamental contrast of ideas and values which operated in these two societies. According to him the coming of the ‘modern’ era ensures social birth of the ‘individual’ as a relatively free agent not bound by rigid and unquestioning conformity to past tradition.\(^\text{18}\)

Thus, Weber and Durkheim have provided many of the basic themes of present day modernisation theory, by bringing forth the contrast between traditional and modern societies.

### 3.3 Modernisation Theory:

In the 1950s and early 1960s modernisation theory was developed by a number of social scientists, particularly a group of American scholars. Much of the interest in modernisation was prompted by the decline of the old colonial empires and the simultaneous emergence of Third World societies as prominent actors in world politics. The Third World became a focus of attention and

\(^{18}\) Ibid.
intellectuals, politicians took keen interest into the study of the societies of Asia, Africa and Latin America.\textsuperscript{19}

American social scientists, took great interest into the problems of economic development, political stability and social and cultural changes in these societies and the most prominent among these social scientist was Talcott Parsons. His ideas were influenced by the ideas of Weber and Durkheim. However, he further developed the distinction of traditional and modern society by elaborating on the choice of actions on society. For example he argued that in modern society, an achievement orientation is the likely choice of action for people particularly, within the economic sphere. In the achievement oriented society, jobs are allocated and rewarded on the basis of achieved skills and hard work.\textsuperscript{20}

Many of the leading contributions to modernisation theory have come from men such as Lerner, Levy and Eisenstadt who have been schooled in functionalist theory. However, Lerner’s account of modernisation is somewhat different from the simple model of two societies, traditional and modern; since he tries to identify an intervening stage, the ‘transitional society’, a society which has, through the process of cultural diffusion from more advanced sectors of the world, been exposed to modernity. For Lerner, the ‘transitional society’ is the ‘empathetic society’. Empathy involves the ability to ‘rearrange the self-esteem on short notice’, the capacity to ‘incorporate new roles’, and to have a public minded orientation that encourages

\textsuperscript{19} Cyril Black, op; cit P 63.
\textsuperscript{20} Andrew Webster, op; cit P 51.
participation. In general, then, for Lerner, the more a society exhibits empathy the more it will be engaged in the process of modernisation and the more likely it is to be modern.\footnote{Ibid.}

Thus, evolutionary theory and twentieth century functionalism have been particularly influential in the shaping of modernisation theory.

4. **Major Tenets of Modernization Theory**

The following are the major tenets of modernisation theory.

1. Modernisation theory is a clear mixture of sociological, psychological and economic features as reflected in the reference to value systems, individual motivation and capital accumulation.

2. Most accounts on modernisation theory gives greatest priority to the role played by the values, norms and beliefs of people in determining the type of society i.e. traditional or modern and that value changes are the most important condition for social change.

3. The evolution of societies occurs as traditional behaviour patterns give way under the pressures of modernisation while these pressures built up gradually within Western societies, the ‘developing’ countries of the Third World are exposed to it from outside. That is, they can be helped along the road to modernity with the assistance of the developed countries whose ideas and
technologies can be introduced and diffused throughout these poorer countries.

(4) The process of 'modernisation by diffusion' encourages the development of a number of features in the Third World, including urbanisation based on nuclear family households, educational growth for literacy and training, development of mass media to disseminate ideas and encourage increased awareness about society, heightened political awareness and participation in a democratic system, increased business opportunities through providing capital for investment, the replacement of patterns of authority based on traditional loyalties with a rational system of law coupled with representative national government.\textsuperscript{22}

5. Aspects of Modernization

Modernization is a many sided and complex process in which several factors interact. However, we can classify it into four broad aspects. They are (1) the political, (2) social, (3) economic and (4) intellectual.\textsuperscript{23}

5.1 Political modernization:

This involves in the first place, a high degree of role specialization and differentiation of political institutions and the growth of communications media. It is marked by interest aggregation and interest articulation which lead to a pluralist society. Religious

\textsuperscript{22} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{23} Ibid.
organizations, trade unions, political parties and pressure groups and deliberative bodies represent this functional differentiation. Secondly, there is a greater emphasis on rational, scientific and secular techniques of decision-making. Laws become more important. Bureaucratic system develops.

Thirdly, there is a great deal of mass mobilization which may involve participation by the people.\textsuperscript{24}

In short, political modernization implies four major features:

1. The legitimacy of the sovereign authority of the state is derived not from supernatural sanctions but from secular sanctions inherent in the people and based on accountability to citizens.

2. Continual diffusion of “political power to wider groups of society-ultimately to all adult citizens, and their incorporation into a consensual moral order.”

3. “Growing extension of the territorial scope and especially by the intensification of power of the central, legal, administrative and political agencies of the society.”

4. Unlike the rules of traditional societies, the rules of modern societies, whatever may be their nature – totalitarian, bureaucratic, oligarchic or democratic – “accept the reliance of their subjects as the objects, beneficiaries, and legitimizers of policy”\textsuperscript{25}

\textsuperscript{24} Aiyar S.P., op cit., P 6.
\textsuperscript{25} Ibid.
5.2 Social Modernization:

In social modernization, there is a marked shifting of population from the rural to the urban centers under the impact of industrialization which is one of the principle generators of modernization. Apart from this migration to the cities, the growth of technology gradually reduces the percentage of the population engaged in agriculture.

Social modernization brings about a marked change in the outlook and behaviour of groups which are characterized by the functions they perform in society rather than by caste, language, residence and other similar factors.

With the growth of social modernization the individual finds himself in a wider world of freedom in which there are fewer restrictions on his ability to take decisions.\(^{26}\)

5.3 Economic modernization:

Economic modernization is instrumental in bringing about changes in the attitudes of individuals and social groups. It involves the systematic application of science and technology to production processes and to the rationalization of distribution. It involves increasing utilization of inanimate energy in contrast to animal or human energy. Economic modernization implies high degree of specialization in the techniques of production and labour skills. It calls for technical, professional, and managerial skills.\(^{27}\)

\(^{26}\) Ibid, P 7.
\(^{27}\) Aiyar, S.P. op: cit., P 8.
Economic modernization, like political modernization gives rise to functional differentiation and to institutions. There is a diversification of activity as a few simple occupations give way to many complex ones: Agriculture declines in importance compared to commercial, industrial and other non-agricultural activities, and commercial agriculture replaces subsistence agriculture. The geographical scope of economic activity is far greater in modern society than in traditional society, and there is a centralization of such activity at the national level, with the emergence of a national market, national sources of capital, and other national economic institutions.\textsuperscript{28}

5.4 Intellectual Modernization:

Modernization cannot be sustained for long in any society without a self-generating intellectual development which is characterized by a constantly increasing body of verifiable knowledge. This involves the existence of a sufficient number of fact-finding and data-processing agencies, statistical services, research laboratories, universities and the like. It implies the existence of intellectual elite which plays a key role in system-maintenance and in sustaining the growth of technology. Intellectual modernization enables the individual to see himself as a participant in an interacting process. It leads to a belief in the capacity of the individual to control and direct the course of events in so far as they lie in his power to do so through collective action or through the available media of communication. Intellectual modernization leads, in all systems to generate emphasis on secularism and secularization of the processes of government and

\textsuperscript{28} Cyril Black, op: cit, P 29.
bureaucracy where increased emphasis is given on strengthening the material basis of life.²⁹

At the intellectual level, modern society is characterized by the tremendous accumulation of knowledge about man, environment etc. The diffusion of this knowledge takes place through society by means of literacy, mass communications, education etc. It involves much better health, longer life expectancy and higher rates of occupational and geographical mobility. Finally, intellectual modernization implies a widespread belief in progress.³⁰

6. **Major Factors Leading to Modernization in India**

Modernization may be brought about through several factors. Some of the developments which have directly been instrumental in bringing about modernization in Indian are (i) the growth of a universalistic legal superstructure, (2) Expansion of education; (3) Urbanization and industrialization, (4) Increased network of communication, and (5) growth of nationalism and politicization of the society.³¹

6.1 **The growth of a universalistic legal system:**

Diffusion of new legal norms and gradual emergence of a Universalistic form of positive law in India does itself mark the beginning of a new tradition ... a change from status to contract, from hierarchy to universal equity and equality. With the establishment of

²⁹ Ibid.
³⁰ Cyril Black, op: cit P 29.
³¹ Yogendra Singh, Modernization of Indian tradition, (Rawat Publications. N.D. Reprinted 1999), P 94.
the British power in India there came a new turning point in the legal system of the country. Various forms of legal innovations were introduced by the British which were in contradistinction with the traditional Hindu law, and were based on the principles of Universalism, rationalism and individualism.\(^{32}\)

Legislation thus became an instrument of modernization. Establishment of a uniform system of legal rights and its administration which was achieved with the stabilization of the British rule brought about many forms of changes. These laws were based on humanistic values and those social customs which violated the norms of human dignity, personal security and freedom were legally abolished. These legal innovations provide us examples of gradual spread of modernizing cultural norms in Indian society.

6.2 *Education as a factor of modernisation:*

Contemporary education, which is an agent of modernization in various forms, is also of the Western origin. Modern education is based on liberal and modern scientific world view. Freedom, equality and humanism and denial of faith in dogmas are the themes which a modern education espouses. It has professional structure which is not ascribed to any specific group or class but can be achieved by merit by any one in society. Some branches of modern education such as science, engineering and medicine directly focus on a world-view which embodies the core values of modernization and imparts skill to realize the goal of a modern society. The significance of education in

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modernization could be analysed in three areas. First, the cultural context of this education, secondly its organizational structure and thirdly, the rate of its growth. The context of new education was doubtlessly modernizing and liberal in nature. An important element in this education was to give emphasis on contemporaneity and humanistic evaluation of social, political and historical issues.\textsuperscript{33}

Education is one of the most influential instruments of modernization in India. It has led to the mobilization of people’s aspirations for nationalism, liberalism and freedom.

Education, alone has been responsible for the growth of an enlightened intelligentsia which carried forward social and cultural reforms. It has created a sub-culture of students in India which though not fully modern, contains elements of transition from tradition to modernity. Finally, the educational system has contributed to modernization by growth of new forms of rationality. Organized structures in the shape of schools, colleges and universities, which serve as cultural network for the diffusion of knowledge and cultural categories which are modern in ethos.\textsuperscript{34}

6.3 \textit{Urbanization:}

Urbanization has led to the growth of commercialism, monetization of economic relationships, factory and workshop employment for many popularizations of mass media of leisure and entertainment. It has fostered many cultural norms and material

\textsuperscript{33} Yogendra Singh, op: cit., P 102.

\textsuperscript{34} B.V.Shah, Social Change and College Students of Gujarat (The Maharaja Sayajiroa University, Baroda, 1964) P 9.
conditions which are macroscopic and modernizing. New colonies as they expand have a more heterogeneous-ethnic nature and differ fundamentally from caste-neighbourhood of the past. Urbanization has led to the increased use of modern transport, banking and other rational-momentary transactions. It has led to the invention of modern medicine and created a new political culture which broadens cultural foundation of modernization.\textsuperscript{35}

6.4 Communication and modernization:

The media of communication which have accelerated the rate of growth and cultural diffusion of modernization have also been introduced in India through the Western contact; printing was introduced by the Portuguese in the second half of the 16\textsuperscript{th} Century.\textsuperscript{36} During the British period, the first press appeared in Bombay in 1674, and printed newspaper came into existence only after the contact with the west. Similarly, the British also introduced telegraph, railways and modern postal system in India.

There has been a rise in the means of communication such as postal services, movies radio and information media through posters, hand-bills and mobile film-show units, etc.

The expansion and technological upgradation in means of travel and transport and increase in the member and circulation of the newspapers as forms of media-exposure are, according to Daniel Lerner, directly associated with modernization.\textsuperscript{37}

\textsuperscript{35} Yogendra singh, op: cit P 111.
\textsuperscript{36} O’Malley, op: cit., P 223.
\textsuperscript{37} Ibid.