FACTORS OF SOCIAL CHANGE (CAUSES)

Social change is brought about by a large number of causes or factors. Sometimes just one cause or factor becomes responsible for social change. At other times, some factors jointly act as the cause for social change. Idea and ideologies of great leaders like Jesus Christ in the world, Karl Marx in Germany, Rousseau in France, Lenin in Russia, Mao Tse Tung and Dr. Sun Yat Sen in China, Mahatma Gandhi in India, Abraham Lincoln in America and Nelson Mandela in South Africa have played an important role in social changes. The thought-provoking ideas of Rousseau like 'Liberty' 'Equality' and 'Fraternity' gave birth to the French Revolution which immensely changed the French society. Indian freedom movements and the American War of Independence were the outcome of social, political and economic changes. The independence of India and America brought about revolutionary changes in the social life of the people of these countries. Let us see the main factors which cause social changes in the modern age.

Educational factors: Education is the most important factor for creating social changes. It is education that transforms the child from a young animal into a rational human. Education improves the quality and skill of the individuals. Thus, it modifies behaviour in a desirable way and brings about new values and ideas. It is the cause for the invention of new things and also for social, political and economic changes.

Time factors: Time itself is an important factor for social change. Man gets bored of old values, ideas, or culture with the passage of time. So, modifications and alterations are sought. This is possible in the long run. Thus, time is considered to be one of the causes of social changes in the present context. Child marriage, devdasi system, sati, untouchability and prohibition of widows' re-marriage have become old customs.

Biological factors: Social change maybe related to the qualitative aspect of population that is, the powerful and great men in the society. For instance, Jesus Christ, Buddha, Rousseau, Froebel, Lenin, Karl Marx, George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, Mao Tse Tung, Mohamed Nabi, Mahatma Gandhi, Guru Nanak, Martin Luther King, Dr. Sun Yat Sen and Nelson Mandela have played a vital role in social changes.

Environmental factors: Environmental factors like geographical factors influence social change. For instance, excessive rain, floods, tsunami, drought, famine, hurricanes, earthquakes and have a significant effect on social relationships. Thus, social change takes place as a result of the impact of geographical environment upon human society.

Cultural factors: The culture of a country plays an important role in bringing about social change. The basic elements of culture like language, literature, religion, philosophy, religious epics, poetical works and faith give speed and direction to social change. Culture is more effective and powerful. It determines the limits for social change. According to Max Weber, "Social change takes place along with cultural changes".

Psychological factors: Human beings come across a number of new problems everyday. They think and act in divergent ways in order to solve these problems. Thus, the psychology of people itself is the cause for social change. They happen to deviate from the existing pattern by trying to discover new things in every sphere of life.

Technological factors: The style of living also changes due to science and technological development. Ogburn says, "Technology changes our society by changing our environments to which we in turn adapt". This change is usually in the material environments. However, it also changes often our customs and social institutions. The society changed as a result of the inventions of electric, steam and petrol driven machines for production and as the means of transport and communication. In fact, a single invention may have

innumerable social effects. For example, television has influenced our entertainment, education, politics, sports, literature, attitudes and knowledge. Thus, there is a close relationship between technological development and social change.

Demographic factors: The demographic factors like the birth and death rate influences social change. When a country faces population growth to the point of overcrowding, social relationships change both within that society and with surrounding societies having fewer people. Changes in the quality and size of the population have an impact upon the social organization as well as customs and traditions. As a result, the joint family system has totally failed and it causes the emergence of a new family system called **nuclear family**.

Ideological factors: Social change occurs in the society because of ideas and ideological factors. For instance, philosophical, sociological and political ideas such as liberty, fraternity, equality, socialism, democracy, secularism and community feeling and scientific ideas like health is wealth and prevention is better than cure, have led to major social changes in the modern age. Social change is also influenced by the doctrines of Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Jainism and Sikhism.

Communication factors: Communication among various societies brings about a social change. Changes will be possible and high in the society which keeps in contact with other societies and it will be difficult in case of an isolated society.

Political factors: The Government itself maybe a cause for social change. The establishments of women university and women police station have changed the lifestyle of women. Equality in education, human rights, secularism, adult education, family welfare programme etc., implemented by the government, have also had a great impact upon social changes. Thus, any activity undertaken by the government leads to social changes.

Social factors: Social problems such as caste, communalism, prostitution, unemployment, poverty, beggary, dowry, illiteracy, ignorance, superstition etc., involve a good deal of social conflict in society. These problems have become a major cause for social change.

Revolutionary factors: Revolutionary factors like the American Revolution, the French Revolution, the Russian Revolution and the American War of Independence took place due to several factors such as liberty, exploitation, hunger, tyranny, unemployment, corruption, famine, inflation and low wages. These revolutions have brought about far reaching social changes. War is another factor which upsets the whole structure of the society by destroying the established conventions and interpersonal relations.