

CHAPTER 1

Social Change and Social Development

There is a resurgence of interest in social change all over the world. This is particularly evident in those societies described as developing societies. Perhaps, the main reason for this increasing emphasis on social change is the desire of the people in the developing societies to improve their living conditions as quickly as possible. In other words, planned social change in order to bring into existence a new type of society which will provide for better living conditions for the people is a fairly widespread phenomenon.

In recent years, the term social development has come into usage replacing earlier terms like social evolution and social progress. In much of the literature on this theme, social scientists have used a variety of terms like institutional change, social change, national development and social development etc., without always specifying clearly the sense in which these terms are used. It is essential to clarify the meaning of these terms for better communication.

The term 'social change' may be viewed as a neutral term to refer to the movement of the whole society or any unit of it from one state to another state over a period of time. On the other hand, social development is an evaluational concept which refers to movement or change in a particular direction that is considered as desirable. It presupposes a type of society which is thought to be better than or superior to the existing one. When society changes in a desired direction, which is the goal of planned change, it may be called as the upward movement of the society¹. Social change may also be viewed both as a process and as a product. "Change may denote alterations in the state or relations of any object or objects or it may denote the processual context and events in which such alterations develop and are manifested. The first meaning identifies

change as observable modification [i.e. as product] the second as the process through which such modification occurs.”²

The concepts of social structure and social system have been widely used in social anthropology and sociology with varying meaning and scope. Unfortunately, there is no precise and widely accepted definitions of these crucial concepts. Same is the case with the concept of institutional change used frequently in U.N. documents and also by Titmuss. The first two and sometimes all the three terms have been utilised to denote the same idea. Some attempts at clarifying and distinguishing the meaning of these terms have been made by Moore, Smith and Blau. We shall draw upon their contribution for our purpose here.

Broadly speaking, social structure refers to the social arrangement that can be perceived at any given point of time. Moore has aptly remarked: “It is an act of self-assuring bravery on the part of social scientists to use so freely the concept of *social structure* for it implies that there is something solid, indeed stable, out there to observe. The term *structure* invites architectural images, of edifices occupied or awaiting inhabitants. Yet, the term is widely used in all analytical sciences as well as in some, [others] that are mainly taxonomic or descriptive”.³ According to him there are five uses of the term social structure: (1) patterns of action, (2) social systems, (3) social differentiation, (4) statistical, distributive categories like age-structure and (5) orderly sequence.⁴

Both Blau and Smith speak of social structure as consisting of units or components.⁵ This is necessary if social structure is to be viewed as a concrete, descriptive and an empirical entity. For Smith, “Social structure consists in those enduring relations and units manifested in recurrent processes of social action”.⁶ By social system he means “a set of interconnected social processes and the structures they engage and sustain or modify”.⁷ This definition of social structure includes two of the five uses of the term identified by Moore, i.e., patterns of action and social system. We shall use this definition of social structure in the context of a nation society.

Social change may be used as a generic term to refer to change in any unit of social structure or in the whole social structure. It

encompasses change in the structures of major social institutions frequently referred to as the basic, radical or fundamental transformation of society, changes in the structure of a social institution, and changes in the structure of an organization. For the sake of convenience these three types of social changes may be referred to as social structural change, institutional change and organizational change respectively.

Smith has given a clear and precise definition of social structural change. He states that “mere changes in [society’s] number of members or gross domestic product or urbanization ratio need not directly entail modifications in the nature or structure of the system itself”.⁸ The former changes he classifies as extensive changes. “By change then we do not mean merely extensive alteration in the state of a system or the processes by which such alterations occur. Rather ... *those alterations in the structure of the system which involve changes in its characteristic processes and operational condition*”⁹ (Emphasis supplied). Smith recognizes that both the above mentioned processes-extensive change and structural change go together. In his opinion, “the decisive criterion of [structure] change is modification or transformation of the structure”.¹⁰

Social change has also been defined by Moore. “Social change is the significant alteration of social structures (that is, of patterns of social action and interaction), including consequences and manifestations of such structures embodied in norms (rules of conduct), values, and cultural products and symbols”.¹¹ We don’t find it helpful to agree completely with this definition of social change which is very wide in scope, ranging from small scale changes in social groups to basic changes in the whole social structure. We can adopt however, a part of it referring to “significant alteration of social structures”. These social structures can vary in scope and size such as the nation society, regional society and city or village society.

The phrase ‘significant alteration’ needs further elaboration. From the perspective of planned change, significant alteration would mean extensive changes in the components of social structure as defined by Smith earlier which are necessary in order to achieve the

goal. Thus stated, normal changes that go on in any social structure such as replacement of individuals occupying certain social statuses like the offices of Prime Minister and President or changes of government following periodical elections will not be considered as significant. This is merely a simple circulation of personnel through social positions and should not be mistaken for structural modifications. A similar process which involves or generates modification in the *criteria or procedures of allocation* (of statuses) and in the scope, status and relations of the positions concerned would be a significant alteration in the social structure.¹² It also excludes changes which are too small and too inconsequential to have much impact on the direction of change toward the goal, i.e. trivial changes to use Moore's phrase. Life cycle changes of an individual such as marriage or old age, and change of fashions in dress and hair-style of a group are illustrative of trivial changes. In other words, the concept of significant alterations of social structures implies a certain magnitude and speed of change. What should be the magnitude and pace of change is an extremely difficult task to state at a general theoretical level. But we can attempt some further clarification of these ideas.

Let us take the cases of the family and the property system, As a result of several changes that are going on in the Indian society at present the families may be in the process of becoming smaller in size. If the experience of other societies who have passed through such evolution is any guide, a similar development may take place in our society also after two or three decades. Birth-rate may fall to the point that the annual increase in population may be around one per cent as against the present 2.15 per cent. If we want that this should happen during the next few decades and initiate a series of actions with the intention of achieving this fast rate of growth by influencing the voluntary decisions of couples, then the rate and magnitude of change would have to be such as to call it a significant alteration of structure. And the alteration will be at the institutional level of family such as norms and values which influence the size

* The Birth rate has come down and it is now 1.64 (2011 census).

of the family, and the type of family structure (e.g. nuclear rather than extended). The cumulative impact of these changes on the rate of population growth at the national level will produce significant alterations in the social structure.

Property system is considered in sociology and social anthropology as a social institution. It is based on the concept of right of ownership of property. This right may be practiced on the basis of customary law as well as by formal incorporation in the legal statutes. The details of this right vary from one culture to another culture. When land reforms are introduced by the state as part of planned social development, this ownership right may be severely curtailed or modified to a certain extent. Such changes in the property system would be termed as institutional changes or a significant alteration of the institution of property. If the state takes away the complete right of ownership of private property, it will be a structural change of such magnitude involving major social institutions like law, polity and economy, that it is appropriately designated as basic social structural change or radical social transformation. The land reforms introduced in India by several states like the abolition of zamindari, tenancy reform, fixation of land ceiling etc. can only be called as institutional changes. The abolition of property rights and the communization of land in Soviet Russia and China belong to the category of basic social structural change or radical social transformation.

An organisation is a secondary association of people established for a specific purpose such as to provide a societal service like primary education, health care and provision of care service to the needy etc. They may vary in size. Some of them will be geographically limited to a town or a city. Others may extend their operations to larger territories. Some organizations may even be international in scope. Organizations may also vary according to the degree of complexity from a simple one unit organization to complex multi-unit organizations. When a change is attempted or introduced to modify the structure of the organisation in respect of its units and their inter-relationship, in regard to the concentration

or devolution of decision-making power, and the type of beneficiaries of its service as well as the proportional distribution of its resources to various types of beneficiaries such changes are properly described as organizational change.

The above discussion of social structural change, institutional change and organizational change conveys the connections between these three analytically distinct types of change, which is like a larger circle encompassing a smaller circle as we move from organization to institution and then to social structure. This analytical scheme may not always fit the empirical reality, especially with reference to the distinction between organizational and institutional changes. There are organizations in existence which straddle more than one social institution. Family has been defined as an institution as well as a primary association. In the latter sense it is nearer to the concept of organization. In the context of social welfare it is theoretically more convenient to consider family as an informal organization in order to relate it to the empirical social reality. Family like an organization provides certain essential services to its members. It is more concrete and visible as an entity than social institution or social structure which are abstract concepts and invisible.

Persistence and change are characteristics of human societies. Persistence is due to the fact that some units of the social system are autonomous in their functioning. While these units may sometimes respond to change originating in another unit it is also possible that at times they may not do so. In the final analysis, the ultimate units of society are human beings constituting that society. One reason for persistence or social stability is that some people may not change their values and behaviour, even though the social situation has changed. Another explanation is the existence of regulatory mechanisms of society (social control) such as socialization in the family and school, and the use of rewards and punishments to secure conformity in the behaviour of people to the prevalent social norms.

The sources of change are both within the society and outside. In the present day world, where social isolation is breaking down

fast, due to physical mobility, mass communications, and international market system, it will be extremely difficult to state that some sources of change are, strictly speaking, internal to the system. It is because of this that Moore's point about the world as a super-system which includes nation societies becomes a valid concept.¹³ Sources of autonomous or spontaneous change within the society are:

1. Multi-communal and segmental nature of society, i.e., society is not homogeneous.
2. Absence of uniformity in socialization due to differential socialization as well as difficulty in laying down a rigid, uniform role behaviour.
3. Ineffectiveness of the major social control mechanisms in detecting deviance from social norms and enforcing conformity in behaviour.
4. Existence of a variety of value-systems which may differ from each other and may even be in conflict.
5. Scarcity of resources, material resources, power and social statuses. Competition for the limited resources may lead to conflict and change. Civil war and revolution are extreme cases of such conflict.
6. New technology which may be a result of accidental discovery or deliberate research.

The external sources of social change are:

1. Political and/or economic subjugation by another country.
2. Contact with another culture, usually more powerful or superior than the society being influenced. The medium of contact is the elites and this contact takes place through travel, education and exposure to literature.
3. Religious conversion, usually through missionary activities.
4. International aid. This is a less obvious, subtle, but a powerful external source of social change.
5. Introduction of new technology as a consequence of 1, 2 and 4.

The second and the third sources of external change may be the result of the first, the classic example of which is the colonisation of many countries in the world by a few imperialist countries of Europe. The fourth source is a recent phenomenon which includes bilateral treaties between countries freely or not freely entered into, and a variety of economic, educational and technological aid through U.N. system and other international organizations like I.M.F., World Bank and aid consortiums.

In any country's plan for social development, we may notice a combination of internal and external sources (and forces) of change at work-whether in harmony or in conflict with each other. The social reform movement during the 19th century is an illustration of this combination of forces usually working harmoniously, minor undercurrents of occasional tension notwithstanding. Vietnam war graphically typifies the dialectical, conflicting forces of social change right from the French colonization of Indo-China to the American "military aid" and finally its open involvement in the civil war which led to far-reaching social changes in both Vietnam and U.S.A.

II

While there is much talk of planned change and the contribution of the expertise of social scientists to the process of change, it needs to be frankly admitted that there is precious little by way of scientific knowledge and strategies of social change. There are many middle range theories and a few grand theories that discuss and explain the processes of change. There is hardly any social theory which can claim, with reasonable certainty, that it has the capacity to guide practitioners for planned social changes.¹⁴ The evolutionary theories of societies and civilizations which were popular during the 19th century stand discredited. A recent attempt of this variety is the modernization theory. Since the late 1950's there is a rich crop of literature that has been published on this theory, including some ambitious and expensive cross-national studies.¹⁵ The modernization theory as developed by the Harvard group of sociologists led by Parsons, Smelser, Shils, Lerner etc has an odium

of anti-communist bias. It is even claimed that some of the researches based on this theory were sponsored and financed by the State Department of U.S.A. to seek enlightenment for its foreign policy operations. Even if one ignores this guilt by association charge, there is the incontrovertible fact that the theory has no scientific validation as it could not be tested empirically. It is mostly based on the analysis of the historical record of developed western societies.

The developed countries are essentially industrial or post-industrial societies with highly productive market economy, based on most sophisticated, capital-intensive, labour-saving technology. They have reached their present stage of development in a different context. They also had the advantage of time, territory and technology. These advantages are not available to most of the developing countries today.¹⁶ Some modernization theorists, of course, speak of the 'privilege' of backwardness which is a deceptive privilege, created by resort to the conjurer's trick of producing something out of nothing.¹⁷ In fact this 'privilege' is a serious threat to the developing nations, because their population expects much more in much less time, with none of the advantages the industrialised countries had. This is described as the revolution of rising expectations.

Various researches based on modernization theory have yielded some general principles, which have been enriched by theoretical inferences of the structural changes by using "social systems" models. "But, a general theory of social change does not exist".¹⁸ If there is no firm theory of social change, what else do we have? Much of the available knowledge and strategies of change are about organisational change. Even here the successful experiments are those which have been introduced by the top management.¹⁹ A good deal of reported actions for social change in social welfare literature is about some aspects of organizational change. To say this is not to belittle either the complexity or the desirability of working for organisational changes. It is only to clarify, at least conceptually, what we are talking about, so that we are not trapped by our own rhetoric or that we don't mistake the trees of organisational change for the woods of social transformation.

The only other theory of social transformation which originated during the last century and continued to grow in popularity and intellectual appeal is the Marxist theory. It also has the added advantage of having been “tested” with regard to its predictive capacity and analytical soundness, by the attempts of communist parties in Russia, China, Vietnam and Cuba. We shall ignore the case of other communist countries, because of the difficulty of separating the role and influence of the Soviet armed forces from that of the national political movements. Marxist theory of social structural change is *partially* validated on the basis of historical experience in three continents-i.e. Europe, Asia and Latin America. As Moore puts it, “The principle enduring features of Marxist theory are the emphasis on conflict and particularly the role of conflict in producing structural change. To these features one may properly add an emphasis on utopian idealism”.²⁰ There is a recent, successful experiment of the “Marxist” model of social development in China. That is a road paved with conflict and soaked with blood which is detestable to many intellectuals. There is a yearning for socialism with human face which remains an utopian ideal with no empirical example in sight throughout the history of mankind. In the meanwhile, the liberal intellectuals and politicians in the developing countries pay homage to the radical ideal of institutional change, and the goal of improvement of the quality of life of the people. The Marxist theory stands vindicated on the role of conflict in producing fundamental structural changes and that this is essentially a revolutionary political process which may necessitate the use of violence. This is empirically proved not only on the basis of positive historical evidence, but also by negative confirmation, as none of the alternative theories of social transformation has stood the test of time.

At this point it may be instructive to consider the concept of welfare state and the conception of welfare society.²¹ First of all, it should be noted that it is related to the theory of modernization. Secondly, many social scientists and political parties in developing countries have pinned their faith on the goal of welfare state. The

models before them are U.K., the Scandinavian countries, and some of the European countries like West Germany and France. Though U.S.A. is not considered deserving the label, in fact it also belongs here.²² At any rate, we need to include it here because of its dominant role in influencing the acceptance of the modern, professional model of social work in the developing societies.

We may also study the record of achievements of western industrial societies and consider whether we can realistically adopt this model. These countries were spending 12 to 16 per cent of their Gross Domestic Product on social security in 1971.²³ In the case of U.S.A. the expenditure on this score was 20 per cent of the GDP in 1976.²⁴ It is claimed that acute poverty is practically abolished in these countries through income-maintenance programmes. Officially, the population below the poverty line in U.K. was 0.2 p.c. and in U.S.A. it was 12 per cent respectively.²⁵ But, it is claimed that this figure is misleading because it is not inclusive of in-kind (non-monetary) benefits, and that the incidence of acute poverty was around 5 per cent or less.²⁶ On the other hand, the population below the poverty line in the developing countries is between 40 to 60 per cent.²⁷ The size of the GDP is small due to the slow rate of growth, and only a small portion of it is spent on social security.²⁸ Then there is the problem of so-called revolution of rising expectations in these countries. Clearly, time is running out fast for the developing countries and odds are many-low rate of growth, large scale unemployment, high rate of population growth due to the 'privilege' of backwardness, low rate of capital formulation, limited infra-structure for modernization, import of irrelevant technology, and the role of multinationals with surplus investible capital and superior but unsuited technology.

There is another point to consider about the welfare model. While mass poverty is eliminated through comprehensive social security with high rate of expenditure, the social structure of inequality has not changed significantly, i.e., the wide gap between those at the top who take a bigger slice of the national cake and those at the bottom, who are more in number but take a smaller slice of it,

continues almost unchanged during the past fifty years.²⁹ So, if the goal is welfare of all, based on minimum of inequality among classes, (complete equality being unattainable) in the course of time span of a generation, then the road mapped out by the modernization theorists or advocates of welfare state will not take us there.

The other route of social transformation is through organized mass movements within a democratic political framework, which emphasizes the immediate redistribution of benefits of growth, based on social justice, and equality. It is very close to the institutional-redistribution model of Titmuss and is based on the mixed economic system. As yet there is no systematic social theory about this model.³⁰ Nor do we have a successful empirical example based on this model. Even the Titmussian model has not been elaborated fully to justify the use of the term 'model'.³¹

End Note

The main text was written in 1979-80. The observation about the appeal of communist ideology and partial empirical testing of the Marxist theory needs to be amended in the light of the developments since then, particularly after 1989-90 two decades after the writing of the original text. The Berlin wall came down in 1989, East and West Germany became one. Soviet Union broke up in 1990. Russian Federation emerged as the successor to Soviet Union in the U.N. Security Council- one of the big five veto- wielding powers. Yugoslavia broke up after a bloody civil war and new nations Serbia, Croatia and Bosnia emerged. Communist rule collapsed in Vietnam and major changes have taken place in China after Deng Xiao Peng took control of China with the support of the Chinese army- Peoples Liberation Army (PLA). Today there are only three nominally communist countries in the world- China, North Korea and Cuba. In Cuba Fidel Castro survived after ten Presidents of U.S.A tried covertly and overtly to oust him from power. After a long period of one man control, the power was transferred to his brother Raul Castro- a peaceful, orderly change.

In North Korea, there has been dynastic succession, son of the former president has become the President.

China provides a complex picture. After Deng Xiao Peng took over the control of Chinese Communist Party and the government, there have been major changes in the economy- market-oriented, state regulated capitalist economy with limited private ownership rights of property. Billionaires have emerged and there is a high degree of inequality and corruption. There is a peaceful change in leadership at the top after every ten years, a new general secretary of CPC (Communist Party of China) who eventually becomes the President and Chairman of the Military Control Commission, alongwith a new premier. Three such changes have taken place after the death of Deng, Jiang Zamin, Hu Jintao and the latest XI Jinping who became General Secretary of C.P.C. in Nov 2011, became President in March 2013). The CPC ideology is guided by Mao's "Thoughts," Deng's "Theory" and Jiang Zamin's "Three Represents". It is said to be socialism with "Chinese Characteristics" though these characteristics have not been spelled out (ref. for details Mohanty E.P.W 2002).

It looked - after the collapse of the Soviet Union, as though the liberal democratic capitalism has won the ideological battle. But the world economic crisis of 2008 originating in U.S.A and the continuing economic slowdown especially in Europe where Greece, Italy and Spain face severe economic crisis, has put a question mark on the claim of victory of capitalism.

In Latin America Hugo Chavez who recently passed away created history with five consecutive democratic election victory in Venezuela with his brand of socialism, 21 st century socialism as it is described, with two more small nations following his footsteps- Ecuador and one more.

In our own country Communist Party (Marxist) led Left Front Government won seven consecutive elections and was in power for 35 years and recently (2010) lost power in West Bengal. In Tripura, however, CPI (M) won the fourth consecutive election to the state assembly in 2013.

During more than fifty years after the second world war, there have been 50 revolutions overthrowing autocratic- authoritarian regimes. Out of them only in one-third of these countries democratic governments have emerged- some of them rather “weak” democracies. In many Muslim nations from Iran to Turkey and recently Egypt- after the “Arab Spring,” democratic elections have voted into power governments with “Islamic ideology”.

So, it is very difficult to conclude which is the dominant ideology in the world today. Perhaps, tentatively, we can say, some kind of democratic form of governments- with a wide variety of local flavours such as Shariat law in Muslim countries, and socialism with welfare in some Latin American countries.

Notes and References

1. Gunnar Myrdal, Unity of the Social Sciences, Human Organization, Vol-34, No.4. 1975 p-170
2. M.G. Smith, Corporations and Society, Duckworth, London-1974, p.170
3. Wilbert E. Moore, Order and Change: Eassays in Comparative Sociology, John Wiley, New York, 1967, p. 172.
4. Ibid, pp. 175-180.
5. a. Peter Blau, ‘Parameters of Social Structure,’ *American Sociological Review*, October, 1974.
b. Smith, op. cit. p. 171.
6. Ibid. p. 172.
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid. p. 171.
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid.
11. Moore, op. cit. p. 3
12. Smith, op. cit. 172.
13. Moore, op. cit. pp. 274-275.
14. Referring to the common complaint of a lack of theory of social change Cohen has observed: “It may be true that sociology lacks a theory of change. But it is doubtful whether it has a theory of social persistence. If it did have a *single* theory of social persistence then it would also have a theory of social change”. P.S. Cohen, *Modern Social Theory*, Heinemann Educational Books, London, 1968, p. 174. This book by Cohen provides an excellent summary of major theories of social change along with critical comments on them (cf. Chapters 7 and 8). In addition to

this, the following books may be referred to by those not familiar with sociological concepts and theories of social change and social development:

- i. Wilbert E. Moore, *Social Change*, Prentice Hall of India, New Delhi, 1965.
- ii. M.S. Gore, *Some Aspects of Social Development*, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Bombay, 1973.
- iii. S.N. Eisenstadt. Ed, *Readings in Social Evolution and Development*, Pergamon Press, Oxford, 1970.
15. Daniel Lerner, *The Passing of Traditional Society*, The Free Press, Glencoe, 1958, was the first such study. Since then several research studies on various aspects of modernization theory have been conducted, mostly by sociologists from U.S.A.
16. cf. i. Gunnar Myrdal, *The Challenge of World Poverty: A World Anti-Poverty Programme in Outline*, Pelican, 1970;
ii. Havelock, R. Brewster, 'Current Trends in World Trade Development', *Development Dialogue*, No.1, 1974.
17. The phrase, 'privilege of backwardness' is used to refer to the so-called advantages that are available to the developing countries as a result of the experience and achievements of the developed countries, especially in the field of modern science and technology e.g. public health technology which controls and prevents epidemic diseases, and consequently brings down the death rate significantly. It also creates the serious demographic problem of over-population, when these measures are used without substantial development in other areas like education, employment, improvement in the status of women and increase in GNP.
18. Moore, op. cit. p. 18.
19. Sheldon, E.B., Moore, W.E. Eds. *Indicators of Social Change: Concepts and Measurement*, New York, Russell Sage Foundation, 1968.
20. Moore, op. cit. pp. 298-299.
21. For a discussion of welfare state and welfare society cf. to Hans Daudt and William A. Robson in Note 10, *The Welfare State and Voluntary Organization*, Shankar Pathak in social welfare and social work, Niruta 2012, Bangalore.
22. U.S.A. was spending 20 per cent of its GDP in 1976 and 26 p.c. of its Federal Budget on social welfare cf.
i. Edger K. Browning 'Welfare-A Reconstruction', *The Humanist*, Vol. 37, No.2 (1977).
ii. S. Boye, 'The Cost of Social Security', *International Labour Review*, Vol. 115, No.3, (1977).
23. Ibid. cf. to Table No.1 on page 308.
24. Ibid. and Browning, op. cit.

25. Browning, op. cit. and Robson, op. cit. Both of these authors maintain that the incidence of poverty in their respective countries (U.S.A. and U.K.) is about 5 per cent. A recent study in U.K., however, states that the incidence of poverty as estimated on the basis of 1953 National Assistance Level is only 0.2 per cent in 1973. But, when the Supplementary Benefits level was adopted, 7 per cent of the households were in poverty. cf. Poverty and Progress in Great Britain 1953-73, G.C. Fiegenn, P.S. Lansley and A.D. Smith, quoted in *New Society*, 4, August, 1977. Poverty in U.S.A. is 12 p.c in 2012.
26. Ibid.
27. The percentage of the incidence of poverty in the developing countries is estimated by me on the basis of the Report on the World Social Situation, United Nations, New York, 1974. A recent World Bank estimate of absolute poverty is 27 p.c. in 1978.
28. Boye, op. cit.
29. i. Browning op. cit.
ii. Anthony Giddens, *Class Structure of the Advanced Societies*, Hutchinson, London, 1973.
iii. Raymond Boudon, *Education, Opportunity and Social Inequality*, John Wiley & Sons, New York, 1973.
30. Thomas L. Blair has stated that there is no proper theory about the mixed economic system. cf. his book, *The Poverty of Planning*, Macdonold, London, 1973.
31. There is no developing country so far which has successfully attempted to implement this model. Titmuss has not indicated the nature of political structure necessary to implement the model. Those who quote him implicitly assume that it is possible to implement it in a democratic framework. This is very doubtful. Ramesh Mishra has argued that Titmuss was basically an empiricist and a moralist. He did not give much attention to develop a theoretical model. cf. *Society and Social Policy*, Macmillan, London, 1977. Reisman has also referred to the absence of theory in Titmuss' writings. He says that Titmuss "never saw the need to make his underlying intellectual system fully explicit" and that he "stressed integration most ... but left his own model incomplete and unintegrated", D.A. Reisman, *Richard Titmuss: Welfare and Society*, Heinemann, London, 1977, pp. 1-2.

CHAPTER – 2

Social Development

The concept of social development has a long history. It has been part of western social thought for more than 2500 years. Even in India, the ideas of social change and development have been present in rudimentary form at least from the Buddhist period. The work of Manu and Kautilya have a definite bearing on this theme.

Social Change, Growth and Development

Social change, growth and development are inter-related concepts, and frequently they have been treated in social science literature as interchangeable terms. While there is a basically common element in the ideas of growth and development, it is necessary to make a conceptual distinction between social change and social development. While the former is capable of being a value-free, objective description of certain societal processes, the latter is a value-laden term, which refers to a subjective statement of the desired direction of social change and also the constituent elements of the end product.

The concepts of growth and development have their origin in biology. Nisbet states: "When we say that a culture or institution or nation 'grows' or 'develops', we have reference to change in time, but change of a rather special and distinctive type. We are not referring to random and adventitious changes, to changes induced by some external deity or other being. We are referring to change that is intrinsic to the entity, to change that is held to be as much a part of the entity's nature as any purely structural element, such as may require activation and nourishment from external agencies, just as does the growth in a plant or organisation. But what is

fundamental and guiding is nonetheless drawn from within the institution or culture".¹

Some recent writers on the subject have pointed out that there is a semantic difficulty in conveying in English the various meanings implicit in the term development. According to van Nieuwenhuijze, "Development is either achieved or consummated, a state of affairs resulting from the process of development; or it is this process itself, including the action constituting it....Development may be an act, or a process, or an achieved condition".² We may add that it may also be a goal i.e. a condition to be achieved. In the literature on planning, development is frequently viewed as an end and national planning is considered as an act or an instrument to achieve it.

Though the idea of development is very old indeed, the recent resurgence of interest in it is mainly the result of several factors. An important factor is the gradual process of decolonization which began after the end of the Second World War and independence of India. A second factor was the growing interest of the two world powers in the newly independent countries of Asia, Africa and the economically backward countries of Latin America. The third factor was the desire of the people and the governments of the newly independent countries to catch up with the economically advanced countries through a process of planned development with economic as well as cultural aid from the developed countries. Fourthly, the role of international organisations, particularly the United Nations and its affiliates in popularising the idea of development during the last two decades which were declared as the First and the Second Development Decade respectively. The interest of various groups and organisations in aid-giving and aid-receiving countries has also reinforced this trend.

The idea of development as a process of comprehensive and deliberate change is a culmination of the process which began with the dominant ideology of economic growth. The latter drew strength from the belief that what mattered most for the welfare of the people in economically backward countries (most of whom had attained independence but recently) was increase in production as reflected

in GNP and per capita income. Once there was a fast rate of macro-level growth for which inequality was often thought to be a necessary condition, it would be relatively easy to tackle the problem of distribution. The experience over a long period of planning based on this model has shown that levels of living remained stagnant or even deteriorated while benefits of growth were appropriated largely by the top ten or twenty per cent of the population. This had a chastening effect on many people and rethinking on the problem at several levels led first to the idea of a balanced approach, next to an integrated approach, and later to the unified approach to development.

Unified Approach to Development

The U.N. General Assembly endorsed the views of the experts regarding the need for an unified approach to development analysis and planning which would fully integrate the economic and social components. This unified approach was to include as components: “(a) To leave no section of the population outside the scope of change and development, (b) to effect structural change which favours national development and activates all sectors of the population to participate in the development process, (c) to aim at social equity, including the achievement of an equitable distribution of income and wealth in the nation, and (d) to give high priority to the development of the human potentials, including vocational and technical training and the provision of employment opportunities and meeting the needs of children. The above criteria to be borne in mind in development analysis and planning processes, as well as in their implications, according to the particular developmental needs of each country”.³

Basic Needs Approach

Recently, another approach to social development has been formulated which is described as the basic needs approach. It is

gaining considerable popularity in national as well as international discussions on development. It has also been incorporated to some extent in the Fifth and Sixth Plan documents in India under the label of minimum needs programme. The background for this approach seems to be the realization that it is almost impossible to substantially reduce unemployment and poverty within the next two decades even if the country adopts a radically different model of development, emphasising redistribution as a major goal. Griffin, one of the early advocates of this approach, states: "In the case of China, the share of the poorest quintile already is well over 10 per cent and no further redistribution is necessary. In the case of the other medium and low income countries in Asia, however, the basic needs of the population could be met only if a 6 per cent growth were combined with a radical redistribution of income such that the share of the poorest quintile rose from 5.3 per cent at present to 14.3 percent. That is, the share of the poor would have to increase nearly three times and the degree of equality would have to exceed that of China. Evidently such a strategy is not feasible."⁴

According to Streeten, there are two ways of defining a basic needs approach to development. The first definition "embraces the components of previous strategies and approaches such as rural development, urban poverty alleviation, employment creation through small-scale industries, redistribution with growth and other poverty, employment and equity oriented approaches ... If there is anything new in this, it is a shift of emphasis towards social services and transfer payments, designed to help the poor, and an extension of 'new style' projects in nutrition, health and education".⁵ He argues for the second way of defining basic needs approach as one supplementing or complementing existing development strategies. This approach according to him, "focusses on the end or channelling" particular resources to *particular* groups, identified as deficient in these resources (e.g. caloric adequacy by age, sex and activity). It concentrates on the nature of what is provided rather than income". It does not replace the existing growth-related concepts, "but derives from the end of meeting basic human needs

the need for changing composition of output, the rates of growth of its different components and the distribution of purchasing power".⁶

Holistic Approach to Development

It has been effectively argued that development and underdevelopment are two sides of the same coin.⁷ In order to properly understand this complex phenomenon, it is necessary to study it both in a historical and global context. Also, It is necessary to adopt an inter- disciplinary or a trans-disciplinary approach to capture the totality of the subject as an integrated whole with its multiple parts. It is also recognised that there are practical problems in the implementation of this approach. The global context has to be taken into account not only because we are living at a time when there is hardly a nation society which is insulated from the impact of transnational process such as international market, multinational organisations and international political relationships, but also because self-reliant development for the countries of the third world is not possible without significant change in the international power relationship and trade. If use of force is ruled out for achieving a new international arrangement on moral and practical grounds, then some form of international cooperation becomes a necessary condition. The historical perspective helps us to recognise that underdevelopment of some countries is a consequence of the development of some other countries which were the earliest nations to undergo the process of industrialization, preceded or accompanied by other changes nationally, such as renaissance, and internationally by colonization followed by disruption of the economies of the colonies to suit the needs of the imperial powers.

A holistic approach alone can reveal the totality of the process of development which in the past has been viewed fragmentarily and compartmentally based on the primary concern of the particular social science discipline such as economics, sociology, political science, etc. It is now realized that development as a concept is

broader than economic growth or economic development; and non-economic aspects of development do not follow as an inevitable byproduct of economic growth. A meeting of experts on social policy and social planning under U.N. auspices stressed that economic phenomena are, in fact, social phenomena: they are social in nature, are socially conditioned and have social consequences; and any development planning limited to economic interrelationships and neglecting social conditions and social implications is bound to be misleading. It is most necessary to view the “development process as a, complex whole, comprising economic elements *sensu stricto*, but also other social as well as political and administrative elements”⁸

Development or Social Development

This realization, however, is not widespread among social scientists even today. So, we still read about ‘development’ in the writing of many economists and ‘social development’ in the writings of sociologists, while both the groups in fact refer to the same idea. The distinction is made even now by some economists between the economic and the social aspects of development, the latter being treated as the residual of development minus economic development. On the other side, the literature on the sociology of development frequently ignores the economic aspect even when it is mentioned perhaps nominally in the definition of social development. It appears that the developmentally-oriented economists view development as economic development plus social or institutional change, and the sociologists view it as social development of which economic development is a constituent part.

Dudley Seers who, along with Myrdal, is considered as a pioneer among the economists for his efforts which gradually led to a developmental perspective in place of the then prevalent narrow view of economic growth, in a famous article identified elimination of mass poverty, large-scale unemployment and extreme inequality as the three crucial elements of development.⁹ He also mentioned

political freedom, including freedom of speech, as essential elements of development. Redefining the meaning of development recently, in addition to the three elements mentioned above, he added economic, self-reliance i.e. “reducing dependence on imported necessities including expertise which would involve changing consumption patterns and increasing national ownership and control of economic assets. It also implied, reducing cultural dependence on one or more of the great powers”.¹⁰ Gore, who is professionally both a sociologist and a social worker, defines and elaborates the concept of social development as follows: “The concept of social development is inclusive of economic development but differs from it in the sense that it emphasises the development of the totality of society in its economic, political, social and cultural aspects. In this sense social development planning is not concerned with planning exclusively for social services, any more than it is with the exclusive planning of economic growth. There are many areas, apart from social or welfare services, wherein the ‘social’ perspective has a relevance “.¹¹ Social development has been invested with a variety of meanings. In its broadest sense, it “signified all aspects of development that were of a collective nature, that is to say, pertaining to the society as a whole. In a narrower sense, it could be used with reference to the human welfare aspects of development (i.e. the rising levels of living, and more equitable distribution of material and cultural goods); or it may be used in connection with structural transformations in society (e.g. changes in systems of stratification and in degrees of mobility)”.¹²

After a comprehensive survey of the literature on development, Paiva states that “social development has two interrelated dimensions: the first is the development of the capacity of people to work continuously for their own and society’s welfare; the second is the alteration of institutions so that human needs are met at all levels, especially the lowest, through a process of improving the relationship between the expression of needs and the means to attain them.”¹³ According to him, the political will i.e. the government of a country committed to the concept of development, the existence

of an ideology which serves as a driving force toward the accomplishment of the goal of social development (which requires leadership, a national policy and plan) and the involvement of the people and cooperation of all segments of the population despite their diversity of background and interest, are the pre-requirements for social development. He identifies four major concepts as crucial: structural change, socio-economic integration, institutional development and institutional renewal. Two types of structural changes are mentioned-those which are the prerequisites for social development e.g. land reforms, and change's which are the consequences of social development.¹⁴ Paiva fails to note that the two varieties of structural changes may be closely interrelated and they may reinforce each other. Some of these structural consequences may be unintended and unforeseen. They might dilute the essence of social development to the point that the real objective of social development may be undermined. The experience of planning in many developing countries, including India, bears testimony to this fact. To guard against the obsolescence of existing social institutions, it is essential to provide for a social mechanism to engage in a regular process of evaluation of social institutions and to encourage the introduction of innovations which might result in institutional renewal.

What is Social Development?

What then is social development? Social development is a comprehensive concept which implies major structural changes-political, economic and cultural, which are introduced as part of deliberate action to transform society. At a general abstract level, the goal is to create a new society in place of the present, where living conditions of the people are improved so that they do not suffer from hunger and they are not denied the basic necessities of life. Social development aims at removal of the rural-urban and regional imbalance. It aims at meeting the basic needs of the people at all levels, especially those who constitute the poorest and deprived

segments of society. In order to achieve these goals, economic development is essential, which means increase in production leading to a high rate of growth as measured by GNP and which also provides for substantial increase in opportunities for employment.

Rural development is a prominent and an integral part of social development. It implies redistribution of excess cultivable land to the landless and the small farmer and other measures to remove rural inequality. It will not be of the type, as in an earlier notion of the 'Green Revolution', that led to increase in food production without alleviating the hunger of the masses. Rural development for the welfare of the masses should prevent proletarianization.

Social development includes programmes for universal literacy or primary education; comprehensive preventive health measures as well as facilities for control and treatment of diseases affecting the mass of the population like malaria, tuberculosis, leprosy, poliomyelitis etc; facilities for housing, where necessary, through subsidized special programmes for the rural and the urban poor. It also includes population policy and family planning, without which a faster rate of economic development is not possible. Social development implies a substantial investment in social services. More importantly, it means ensuring easy access to these services so that the target population derives benefits of the programmes.

Preservation of ecological balance in the physical environment is also part of social development. Indiscriminate felling of trees in the forests (which are essential for rainfall as well as for the prevention of landslides) for commercial and industrial purposes as part of the process of industrialization in a narrow perspective of economic growth which will create serious problems for the people in the immediate future as well as in the long run. Eco-development is thus an integral part of a comprehensive concept of social development. The concept of eco-development "stresses the need to look for concrete development strategies capable of making a good and ecologically sound use of the specific resources of a given ecosystem in order to satisfy the basic needs of the local population",¹⁵

Social development, as described above, is only possible through the active participation of the people in the process of making political and economic decisions involving their welfare. This requires action for preparing a planned programme of development which can be implemented effectively by the available instruments of administration. It needs to be supported and watched by an organized voluntary movement of the people, passionately committed to the goals of social development. It also requires decentralization of power and decision-making to the extent possible so that the process of planning at the grass-root level is made possible. But, there are some serious problems in translating this idea into practice which have not received much attention. "The important questions relate to the precise combination of central leadership, central coordination and central resources contribution, with decentralized decision-making and mobilisation of local resources which would be most effective".¹⁶

Failure of Western Models

Most of the evolutionary theories of social development during the last century were based on the assumption of unilinear process of change from one type of society to another type. The path was to be traversed in certain specified stages. The modernization theory which was developed in the U.S.A. during the 50's and 60s of twentieth century by sociologists belonging to the structural-functional school and the Marxist theory are also based on these assumptions. The modernization theory which was highly popular among academic and official circles of many countries of the third world is being increasingly subjected to severe criticism for its theoretical defects as well as for its implicit ideological bias, despite the claim to value-neutrality by its proponents. The failure of the development model based on democratic-capitalist planning has added to the intellectual appeal of the Marxist theory, which is similar to the evolutionary theories in some respects.