



## Modernization: Impact, Theory, Advantages and Disadvantages

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### Abstract:

*Modernization, Modernization theory A term and approach that came into widespread use in the early 1960s, as a consequence of the efforts by a group of development specialists in the United States to develop an alternative to the Marxist account of social development.*

*In its most sophisticated variants, modernization theory explains modernization by reference to the onset of the process that Talcott Parsons refers to as structural differentiation. This is a process which may be triggered in many different ways, but which is most likely to be initiated by changes in either technology or values (as in Parson's 'pattern variable' schema). As a result of this process, institutions multiply, the simple structures of traditional societies are transformed into the complex ones of modern societies, and values come to bear a striking resemblance to those current in the United States of the 1960s.*

*A good example of the genre is the work of the American comparative sociologist Alex Inkeles, best known for his many studies of the attitudinal aspects of modernization, mostly using survey data and psychological tests to explore 'the process whereby people move from being traditional to become modern personalities'. Here the author presented the part of Modernization and Modernization theory.*

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**Keywords:** *Modernization, Modernization Theory, Socio-Cultural, Society*

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### 1. Introduction

Modernization is a process of socio-cultural transformation. It is a thorough going process of change involving values, norms, institutions and structures. Political dimensions of modernization involves creation of a modern nation state and the development of key institutions political parties, bureaucratic structures, legislative bodies and a system of elections based on universal franchise and secret ballot. Cultural modernization involves adherence to nationalistic ideology, belief in equality, freedom and humanism, a rational and scientific outlook. Economic modernization involves industrialization accompanied with monetization of economy, increasing division of labor, use of management techniques and improved technology and the expansion of service sector. Social modernization involves universalistic values, achievement motivation, increasing mobility both social and geographic increasing literacy and urbanization and the decline of traditional authority.

The secular and scientific education act as an important means of modernization. It helps in the diffusion of modern values of equality, freedom and humanism. The modern school system can inculcate achievement motivation. These values can form the basis of new relations in the society and growth of rationality can enable the development of administrative system. Diffusion of values of equality, freedom and humanism can lay the foundations of a democratic political system. The spread of modern education in the second half of the 19th century led to the emergence of modern political elite in India who provided leadership in the freedom struggle. The diffusion of scientific and technical knowledge by modern educational institutions can help in the creation of skilled manpower to play the occupational roles demanded by the industrial economy. Other values like individualism and universalistic ethics etc can also be inculcated through education. Thus education can be an important means of modernization. The importance of education can be realized from the fact that all modernizing societies tend to emphasize on universalization of education and the modernized societies have already attained it.

## **2 What is Modernization?**

Modernization or modernisation refers to a model of an evolutionary transition from a 'pre-modern' or 'traditional' to a 'modern' society. The teleology of modernization is described in social evolutionism theories, existing as a template that has been generally followed by societies that have achieved modernity. While it may theoretically be possible for some societies to make the transition in entirely different ways, there have been no counterexamples provided by reliable sources.

Historians link modernization to the processes of urbanization and industrialisation, as well as to the spread of education. As Kendall (2007) notes, "Urbanization accompanied modernization and the rapid process of industrialization." In sociological critical theory, modernization is linked to an overarching process of rationalisation. When modernization increases within a society, the individual becomes that much more important, eventually replacing the family or community as the fundamental unit of society.

## **3. What is Modernization Theory?**

Modernization theory is a grand theory encompassing many different disciplines as it seeks to explain how society progresses, what variables affect that progress, and how societies can react to that progress. Modernization theory focuses specifically on a type of modernization thought to have originated in Europe during the 17th century, which brought social mores and technological achievements into a new epoch.

The foundations of modernization theory go back to the Age of Enlightenment, when a number of philosophers began to look at how society changed and progressed. Theories were laid out as to how technological advancement necessarily led to social advancement, which in turn led to an examination of how different facets of advancement were connected. The basic premise of this phase of modernization theory was that humans were able to change their society within a generation, and that this change was often facilitated by advancements in technology, production, and consumption.

In the modern age, modernization theory looks at how new technologies and systems are leading to a more greatly homogenized world. Modernization theory encompasses the world of globalization, where cultural mores and ideas are easily spread throughout the world, leading to a sort of universal culture that serves as a baseline for all cultures. As societies in the world

modernize further technologically, some theorists within modernization theory hold that those cultures will also become more like one another.

#### **4. The Impact of Modernization**

Education plays an essential role in society, creating knowledge, transferring it to students and fostering innovation. Modernization is a process of socio-cultural transformation. It is a thorough going process of change involving values, norms, institutions and structures. According to the sociological perspective, education does not arise in response of the individual needs of the individual, but it arises out of the needs of the society of which the individual is a member. In a static society, the main function of the educational system is to transmit the cultural heritage to the new generations. But in a changing society, these keep on changing from generation to generation and the educational system in such a society must not only transmit the cultural heritage, but also aid in preparing the young for adjustment to any changes in them that may have occurred or are likely to occur in future. The diffusion of scientific and technical knowledge by modern educational institutions can help in the creation of skilled manpower to play the occupational roles demanded by the industrial economy. Other values like individualism and universalistic ethics etc can also be inculcated through education. Thus education can be an important means of modernization. The importance of education can be realized from the fact that all modernizing societies tend to emphasize on the universalization of education and the modernized societies have already attained it. In the ancient days, education was concentrated to one particular group. But with the modernization of education, now everyone has access to education, irrespective of their caste, religion, culture and economic background.

The impact of modernization can be seen in the schools also. The modern day schools are fully equipped with technically sound devices that help children develop their expertise in a more lucid manner. Effective facilities provide barrier-free access for individuals with disabilities, are free from health and environmental hazards, offer adequate space for students and teachers, and are equipped with appropriate technology for classroom and instructional use. Learn more about the issues surrounding school facilities and modernization by tapping into these resources. The useful life for a school building is affected by how teachers and students work together for learning. As teaching methods change, buildings may also need to change to accommodate them. Current teaching models require more flexibility in class spaces than the one classroom model. Students working together in small groups, for example, can use the shared spaces between classrooms in some of the newest elementary schools in the district.

Modernization is usually associated with urban and industrial development. During the 20th century, cities have grown as economic and cultural centers, and new technologies have transformed almost every aspect of life. Although modernization has many advantages, some are concerned about the long term effects it has on countries and people.

#### **5. Advantages & Disadvantages of Modernization**

Modernization is usually associated with urban and industrial development. During the 20<sup>th</sup> century, cities have grown as economic and cultural centers, and new technologies have transformed almost every aspect of life. Although modernization has many advantages, some are concerned about the long term effects it has on countries and people.

##### **5.1 Culture**

On the one hand, modernization has encouraged the development of new forms of creative expression, such as film and television. These forms can be easily exported and viewed all over

the world. However, a loss of culture may result from modernization. The spread of the Western culture has caused young people in non-Western countries to abandon traditional customs and values. Even languages begin to disappear as urbanization encourages people to learn a country's dominant language.

### **5.2 Business**

New technology has revolutionized the speed and accuracy of production. Furthermore, increased global trade allows businesses to sell their products anywhere. But increased global production may hurt domestic business when international companies can offer products at cheaper prices. The production of goods in foreign countries, where labor laws are more relaxed, amounts to exploitation in some people's view.

### **5.3 Environment**

Natural resources such as wood, water and oil are often processed in modernized society, and skyscrapers and factories begin to transform the landscape. Environmental problems, such as climate change, are believed to be the result of industrial development and production. However, in many poorer countries, the discovery of oil and the adoption of new technologies is welcomed for the financial opportunities it presents.

### **5.4 Communication and Travel**

New inventions such as phones, televisions and computers allow people to communicate instantly anywhere on the globe. Increased global travel allows people to visit foreign cultures for business or leisure. Contact with foreign cultures fosters international cooperation, but can also result in further loss of culture as people begin to adopt the foreign cultures and languages they are exposed to.

## **6. Conclusion**

The term modernization conjures images of social change in the direction of general improvement over the past. In contemporary social sciences, the notion has been the basis of a theoretical orientation variously referred to as modernization theory, approach, paradigm, or framework to the study of the development of Third World or underdeveloped societies. The conception of development as a process of modernization gained prominence in the period after World War II, but its popularity ebbed in the 1960s. There were rival definitions of modernization in the social sciences; this entry, however, will be concerned mainly with the use of the term for a general theoretical orientation a set of linked assumptions framing analysis of and debates about the nature and challenges of development. In this regard modernization was a historically unique type of social change, which was inexorable, transformational in its effects, and progressive in its consequences.

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