



EDO UNIVERSITY IYAMHO



Department of Sociology

SOC 213: Social Change I

Instructor: *Anthony O. Ogette*, email: ogette.anthony@edouniversity.edu.ng

Lectures: Monday, 1pm – 3pm, LC2, phone: (+234) 8039179218.

Office hours: Tuesday, 10am to 11am, Office: Floor1 Rm 12

General overview of lecture: Change is an integral part of human existence as evidence in the evolution of every human society in history going through different stages of growth and development. These growths are results of Man's interaction with the environment in order to improve his living condition brought significant transformation to cultural norms and values which in turn alter the behavioural patterns of individuals and groups in every given human society with profound social consequences. This course is designed to explore the concept of social change by examining the changes and development of human societies, relevant theoretical perspectives, role of social movement in the change cycle as well as institutional analysis of the phenomenon of social change. It is aimed to increase students' ability to understand individual troubles in the context of public issues thereby, preparing them to live in an increasingly changing world.

Learning outcomes: At the completion of this course, students are expected to:

1. Understand the meaning of social change
2. Describe the changes and development of human societies.
3. Explain the theoretical perspectives on social change.
4. Describe types, causes and resistance to social change
5. Describe the connection between social movement and social change
6. Describe the levels, types and stages of social movement
7. Describe the impact of industrialization and the changes in the marriage & family institutions.

Assignments: We expect to have 1 individual homework assignment, 1 group assignment throughout the course in addition to a Mid-Term Test and a Final Examination. Home works in the form of individual assignments, and group assignments are organized and structured as preparation for the Mid-Term Test and Final Examination. The goal is to have the students prepare adequately for the final examination.

Grading: We will assign 10% of this class grade to individual homework assignment, 10% for group assignment, 10% for the mid-term test and 70% for the final examination. The Final examination is comprehensive.

Textbook: The recommended textbook for this course are as stated:

Title: *Issues and Perspectives in Sociology*.

Author(s): Agbonlahor, F.I, Olutayo, A.O. *et al.*
Publisher: Nigeria: Sam Bookman Educational and Communication Services.
Year: 1995

Title: *Social Change and Social Problems*. In Abasiokong, E.M, Sibiri, E.A, Ekpenyong, N.S (eds.) *Major Themes in Sociology: An Introductory Text*. pp 491-526
Author(s): Akujobi, C.T and Jack, Jackson T.C.B
Publisher: *Benin City, Mase Perfect Prints*.
Year: 2017

Title: *Introduction to Sociology*
Author(s): OpenStax College
Publisher: OpenStax College
Year: 2012

Main Lecture: Below is a description of the contents:

❖ **Introduction:**

Sociologists use the term social change to refer to any significant transformation or alteration in cultural norms and values which in turn alter the behavioural patterns of individuals and groups in a given society over a period of time. The word significant implies changes yielding profound social consequences which could be either positive or negative. Hence, sociologists have identified the industrial revolution, the abolition of slavery, and the feminist movement as significant social changes with long-term effects in human society. However, the vital role that social movements play in inspiring discontented members of a society to bring about social change have been the focus of Sociologist as they study social change. Social Change can be defined as alteration in the social order which usually includes changes in nature, social institutions, social behaviours or social relations.

❖ **The Development of Human Societies**

Society is a web of social relationships and hence social change means changes in the system of social relationships. These changes can best be understood in terms of changes in social processes, interactions, organization and structure which have led to the development of human societies from pre-industrial to industrial to post-industrial societies such as the Hunting and Gathering Society, Pastoral Societies, Horticultural Societies, Agricultural Societies, Feudal Societies, Industrial Society, Post-industrial Society; Information societies,

❖ **Theoretical Perspectives on Social Change**

Social scientists and philosophers have propounded different theories to explain social change in society. Some of these theories are: the Evolutionary Theory which views social change as

natural and inevitable feature of any human society; Diffusion Theory which views social change as a consequence of diffusion of cultural patterns and practices as individual members of different society interacts; Cyclical Theory maintains that change is usually cyclical in nature as every society known in human history goes through cycles of growth and decay. Functionalist Theory pay more emphasis on what make a society to be stable than what changes it; Conflict Theory argued that change occurs as a result of conflict that emanates from the struggle for available limited resources between social classes or among competing groups in society.

❖ **Types of Social Change**

Social change can be broadly categorized into two; The Progressive/Positive Social Change which adds value to the lives of individuals and groups while the Digressive/Negative Social Change on the other hand is often unplanned and unintentional. They are usually negative consequences of change/development.

❖ **Characteristics of Social Change**

Social change has the following characteristics; 1. A Universal Phenomenon 2. Social change is not uniform, 3. Variations in the Speed of social change, 4. Social Change create conflicts, 5. Social change is Unpredictable.

❖ **Sources of Social Change**

Social change can be as a result of discovery, education and invention. Discovery is an addition to existing knowledge, Education is the process of transmitting ideas and impacting knowledge and values to individuals or group in order to bring about a change in their behaviour and in the society while Invention is the combination of different existing elements of culture in order to produce something new.

❖ **Resistance to Social Change**

Central to the concept of social change amongst sociologists is the tendency for individuals or groups to resist change especially when potential change threatens their vested interests. Several reasons for resisting change have been advanced Ekpenyong and Anele (1999) as follows: Cost of Change, Utility and Compatibility with Existing Culture, Attitudes and Values, Vested Interests and Maintenance of Status Quo, Technical Difficulties of Change.

❖ **Causes of Social Change**

Basically, social change is caused by one or combination of factors such as changes to technology, social institutions, population, and the environment. These factors according to social scientists are often referred to as agents of social change.

❖ **Social Movement and Social Change**

Social movements are purposeful, organized groups striving to work toward a common goal. These groups might be attempting to create change (MEND, BBOG, IPOB), to resist change (Occupy Nigeria) or to provide a political voice to those otherwise disenfranchised (Civil rights movements). Social movements, along with technology, social institutions, population, and environmental changes, bring about significant social changes. Sociologists look at the role of social movement in the change cycle through the lenses of three major perspectives, which are; The functionalist perspective, the conflict perspective and the symbolic interactionist perspective. There are equally different levels, types and stages of social movement.

❖ **Industrialization and Transformation in Social Institutions**

Industrialization as well as new technological inventions has profoundly altered our modes of life through significant transformation of the marriage and family institutions among others. The institutions of marriage and family have been greatly altered to the extent that marriage is losing its sanctity. Hence, it is now treated as a civil contract than a sacred bond. Marriages are becoming more and more unstable. Instances of divorce, desertion and separation are on the increase. Education has elevated the status of women as well as contributed to the stresses and strains in the relations between men and women at home as more educated women now challenged the age long patriarchal oriented values (status quo). Modern technological inventions have taken away industry from the household thereby radically changing the family organization. Traditional functions of the family have been taken away by other agencies.