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اسم المادة باللغة العربية : التغير الاجتماعي

اسم المادة باللغة الإنكليزية : social change

اسم المحاضرة الثاني عشر باللغة العربية: التحديث

اسم المحاضرة الثاني عشر باللغة الإنكليزية **Tension and adaptation**

## Tension and adaptation

In structural [functionalism](#), social change is regarded as an adaptive response to some tension within the social system. When some part of an [integrated](#) social system changes, a tension between this and other parts of the system is created, which will be resolved by the adaptive change of the other parts. An example is what the American sociologist [William Fielding Ogburn](#) has called [cultural lag](#), which refers in particular to a gap that develops between fast-changing technology and other slower-paced sociocultural traits.

### Diffusion of [innovations](#)

Some social changes result from the [innovations](#) that are adopted in a society. These can include technological inventions, new scientific knowledge, new beliefs, or a new fashion in the sphere of leisure. [Diffusion](#) is not automatic but selective; an innovation is adopted only by people who are motivated to do so. Furthermore, the innovation must be compatible with important aspects of the [culture](#). One reason for the adoption of innovations by larger groups is the example set by higher-status groups, which act as reference groups for other people. Many innovations tend to follow a pattern of diffusion from higher- to lower-status groups. More specifically, most early adopters of innovations in modern Western societies, according

to several studies, are young, urban, affluent, and highly educated, with a high occupational status. Often they are motivated by the wish to distinguish themselves from the crowd. After diffusion has taken place, however, the innovation is no longer a symbol of distinction. This motivates the same group to look for something new again. This mechanism may explain the succession of fads, fashions, and social movements. (See social class, social status.)

## **Planning and institutionalization of change**

Social change may result from goal-directed large-scale social planning. The possibilities for planning by government bureaucracies and other large organizations have increased in modern societies. Most social planning is short-term, however; the goals of planning are often not reached, and, even if the planning is successful in terms of the stated goals, it often has unforeseen consequences. The wider the scope and the longer the time span of planning, the more difficult it is to attain the goals and avoid unforeseen or undesired consequences. This has most often been the case in communist and totalitarian societies, where the most serious efforts toward integrated and long-term planning were put into practice. Most large-scale and long-term social developments in any society are still largely unplanned, yet large-scale changes resulting from laws to establish large governmental agencies, such as for unemployment insurance, old-age pensions, or guaranteed medical care, have produced significant institutional changes in most industrial societies.

Planning implies institutionalization of change, but institutionalization does not imply planning. Many unplanned social changes in modern societies are institutionalized; they originate in organizations permanently oriented to innovation, such as universities and the research departments of governments and private firms, but their social repercussions are not controlled. In the fields of science and technology, change is especially institutionalized, which produces social change that is partly intended and partly unintended.