

UNIT – IV

Social control and social change

Control · Formal / informal · Change · Theories of change

Explanatory Lecture Slides

Invitation to Sociology · Minor-II-1 · Semester I

INVITATION TO SOCIOLOGY

Topics covered in this unit

01

Define social control and its need

02

Distinguish formal and informal agencies

03

Define social change and its factors

04

State cyclical and linear theories

05

Place law as both control and change

06

Use Indian illustrations

How this unit is organised

01

Social control

02

Informal agencies

03

Formal agencies

04

Social change

05

Factors

06

Theories

Social control

The means by which a society brings members back to the pattern. Without it, Durkheim's anomie.

- Need: order, predictability, protection of the weak, continuity of culture.
- PYQ: informal agencies — folkways, morals, public opinion (2025).
- Over-control is tyranny; under-control is a riot. Law tries to sit in the middle.

Social control

POSITIVE

- Praise.
- Inclusion.
- Awards.

NEGATIVE

- Ridicule.
- Ostracism.
- Punishment.

Informal agencies

Folkways, mores, custom, religion, public opinion, propaganda, rumours.

- Public opinion: PYQ 6-mark (2021).
- Religion as control: powerful in India; limited by Art. 25–26 and by criminal law.
- A panchayat can control more tightly than a police station in some facts — living law.

Informal agencies

SOFT

- Gossip.
- Shame.
- Honour.

HARD INFORMAL

- Social boycott — sometimes an offence (PoA Act, 19(1)(a) limits).

Formal agencies

State, law, police, courts, prison, bureaucracy, school as a formal organisation.

- This is the rest of your degree.
- Formal control must still look legitimate (Weber) or it multiplies deviance.
- Criminology / penology paper later will return here.

Formal agencies

STATE

- Law.
- Police.
- Court.
- Prison.

OTHER FORMAL

- School.
- Hospital.
- Workplace codes.

Social change — meaning and factors

A significant, lasting alteration of social structure or culture.

- PYQ: define social change, factors (2024); progress v development (2022).
- Factors: technology, economy, demography, education, law, ideology, media, environment, contact (Sanskritisation is paper II).
- Progress is value-laden; change is not. Development is planned change with a welfare face.

Social change — meaning and factors

DEMOGRAPHIC

- Fertility.
- Migration.
- Age structure.

TECHNOLOGICAL

- Phone.
- Transport.
- Agri-tech.

Theories of social change

Linear / evolutionary (Comte, Spencer, Marx) v cyclical (Spengler, Toynbee, Pareto, Sorokin).

- PYQ: cyclical and uni-linear theories (2021); cyclical 6-mark (2024).
- Linear: history has a direction (progress, or classless society).
- Cyclical: rise and fall; no guaranteed up-elevator.
- A lawyer need not pick a metaphysics; name two of each family.

Theories of social change

LINEAR

- Comte's stages.
- Marx's modes.
- Spencer's simple → complex.

CYCLICAL

- Toynbee challenge-and-response.
- Sorokin's ideational/sensate.

Law as an instrument of social change

Pound's social engineering. Indian exhibits: sati abolition, widow remarriage, temple entry, Hindu Code, RTE, criminalisation of triple talaq, decriminalisation in Navtej.

- Limits: law cannot run too far ahead of living law (Ehrlich) or it stays on paper (dowry).
- A mature 16-mark holds both: law changes society, society limits law.

Law as an instrument of social change

SUCCESSSES

- Untouchability as a crime.
- Child marriage ages.
- Smoke in public places.

PAPER TIGERS

- Dowry.
- Female foeticide.
- Manual scavenging — still.

Social change — meaning and factors

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Cases a KSLU answer should name

CASE

Vishaka v State of Rajasthan

(1997) 6 SCC 241

Court-made control (guidelines) where society and statute lagged — now POSH Act.

CASE

Navtej Singh Johar

(2018) 10 SCC 1

Law withdrawing a colonial control to let society breathe.

CASE

Olga Tellis

(1985) 3 SCC 545

Urban change, pavement dwellers, Art. 21.

Provisions & materials to quote

Art. 17

Abolition as legal social change.

Dowry Prohibition Act

A statute that ran ahead of living law.

POSH Act 2013

From Vishaka to Parliament.

PoA Act 1989

Formal control against caste violence.

Environment laws

Control of a technological change.

10 / 16-mark frames from this unit

Q1

Define social control. Explain informal agencies with examples.

Q2

Define social change. Explain the factors responsible.

Q3

Write in brief about cyclical and uni-linear theories of social change.

Q4

Can law change society? Illustrate from India.

Unit recap

- 1 Control = bringing members back to pattern.
- 2 Informal: folkways, mores, opinion. Formal: State and law.
- 3 Change $\neq$ progress.
- 4 Linear v cyclical is the theory pair.
- 5 Law is a lever, not a magic wand — dowry is the exhibit.