

## Abstract

The process of modernization involves change in technology and in political and economic institutions. It also involves change in the attitudes, values, and behavior of people. While the economic and political aspects of modernization have received widespread investigation, less attention has been directed to the role of attitudes and values. There have developed, however, two opposing schools of thought with respect to social change: One holds the priority of technological change to change in attitudes and values, whereas the other sees attitudinal change as a necessary condition for technological and economic change. A common assumption among those who hold the primacy of attitudinal change is that the educational process will take care of inducing the attitudes and behavior to accompany technological modernization. That this is questionable is shown by the fact that a relatively high level of education can be attained without a corresponding improvement in the level of living of a people, as is the case in the Philippines.

From several studies comparing traditional societies with modern societies—among them, Hagen (1962), McClelland (1961, 1965), Foster (1967), Lewis (1951), and Banfield (1958)—it is clear that the personality patterns and interpersonal behavior of members of traditional societies differ from those of members of industrial societies. The relative importance of these differences is not clear, however, nor is it clear to what degree change is possible in the behavior patterns of members of traditional communities.

The goal of the research reported here was to focus more closely on the psychological factors of social change, and to determine to what degree attitudes and values are crucial in modernization. More specifically, the research attempted to discover differences in outlook associated with proximity to a modern industrial city, with sex, and with social class. Selected for study were four similar communities in the Philippines which were located 50, 100, 200, and 400 kilometers from the capital city, Manila. Within each community 18 men and 18 women from each of three social levels were interviewed, yielding a total of 432 respondents. Such a design would enable the researchers to determine the contributions of distance from Manila, sex, and social class to differences in attitudes, as well as test whether these three independent

variables combined to produce significant effects. The method of research was an interview which gathered demographic data from the respondent and posed questions on the following areas: the respondent's view of change in the recent past and his expectations of future change; his attitudes toward family control, political and social life, education, and other factors which have been considered significant in social change; and his agreement with either a traditional or modern opinion expressed on selected issues.

After the data were analyzed with various statistical techniques, it was discovered that there were few differences in attitudes which were associated with either distance from Manila or sex. However, consistent differences appeared between the attitudes of the educated and wealthier people and those of the less educated and poorer classes. In spite of these differences, however, there was a tendency for most interview subjects to give or select the modern response to questions posed in the interview. A great emphasis was placed by all groups on the importance of education, hard work, and modern ideas.

The stress of nearly all respondents on modern attitudes was contradicted, however, by their traditional style of life. This led the researchers to suspect that the problem in modernization may not at all be the resistance of traditional values and attitudes, but may lie in the social organization of the community. Introducing an interpretation of social change based on the principles of operant conditioning derived from the experimental work of B. F. Skinner (1938, 1948, 1953, 1957), the authors see as decisive the systems of rewards and reinforcements which accompany the expression of either traditional or modern values and attitudes. The social organization of the industrial city reinforces modern behavior, whereas that of the rural areas inhibits it and reinforces instead traditional behavior. That social change is a matter of which set of reinforcements prevails may be indicated by the fact that rural people who migrate to the city and assume industrial jobs do not have much difficulty adjusting to urban behavioral norms. The same is true of rural Filipinos who go to the United States and perform efficiently as doctors and nurses.

The authors then propose a social action program for rural societies which would utilize the theory of operant conditioning. This would involve identifying those conditions in rural life which are potential reinforcers of or rewards for modern behavior and utilizing them. Among the best reinforcers for modern behavior is money, and an action program can ensure that farmers receive prompt monetary reward for innovative efforts rather than undergo a protracted period of sacrifice with the hope of obtaining remote future benefits. At the same time, action workers would have to see to it that activities which reinforce traditional behavioral characteristics—such as the trading of votes for pork-barrel allocations, which reinforces dependency and discourages autonomy—are minimized. Such a program of selective reinforcement could speed up the modernization process.