CHAPTER I

THE CONCEPT OF POLITICAL SOCIALIZATION

In the era of scientific enquiry for political knowledge, the concept of political socialization has been acquiring gradually, a special importance as a device for understanding people's orientations to the political ideas and issues within their political system.

Orientation is usually regarded as the pattern of outlook of an individual which helps him in sorting out, emphasizing and evaluating the stimuli coming from the world around him and is more important than his attitudes or opinion. Individual's outlooks may be either general in nature or focused on a limited aspect of his surroundings. Ultimately this outlook pattern or aggregate of political orientations becomes a political culture. The attitudes and orientations towards politics may be value oriented or value free in a political system. Political behaviour is governed by values and norms. Political behaviour of human race has to be understood not only from the analyst's frame of reference but from the political actor's own frame of reference as well. Thus, it is inevitably true that a normative political system may be build up with the value oriented political attitudes only if the political actors wish to act in that direction.

Moreover, Easton and Hess are of the opinion that without the proper inculcation of a certain shared political attitudes, norms and values into the minds of the members of a given political
system (towards the same), it cannot attain and maintain its perfect unity and integrity. For this purpose, Richard R. Fagan holds that all the enlightened political systems, since the time of Plato, have been found to develop their own systems to mould their citizens of that kind as deemed necessary for their persistence and progress.

The evocation of political ideas, attitudes, beliefs, values is the result of political socialization process. Argyle and Delin suggest that the laws of socialization are non-universal. Thus, with regard to the meaning of political socialization a universal opinion cannot be found. Let us look into a few of the definitions and seek to find out some common points.

Political socialization, may be explained, following F.I. Greenstein, as including all political learning, formal and informal, deliberate and unplanned at every stage of the life cycle, including not only explicit political learning but also nominally non political learning of politically relevant social attitudes and the acquisition of politically relevant personality characteristics.

The study of political socialization is the study of the aggregate political orientations of the people as well as the individual's political orientations whatsoever. The political orientations are very important matters in the study of politics as these may either bring about a fundamental change or maintain the stability of a political system, which in its turn invariably depends upon the functional efficiency of the political
socializing agents. Thus, the ultimate purpose of the political socialization process is to produce a set of attitudes, beliefs, feelings, cognitions as value standards towards the political objects and various role incumbents within a political system.

The study of political socialization generally embraces micro-level approach as well as macro-level approach. These two approaches are complementary to each other although these are capable enough to provide two different types of theoretical formulations in the study of political socialization.

Macro-level approach revolves round the model of political systems analysis that helps us to understand the impact of political socialization on the political system. Thus, "if we want to know how socialization affects the fates of nations, we must compare those countries that are strongly supported by their citizens with those that are weak and crumbling because of internal dissensions. If the patterns of socialization differ from one class of countries to the other, it may be justifiable to infer an important connection."  

The other approach known as micro-level approach is closely related to the individual and completely revolves round the latter only. This micro-level study on political socialization is concerned with the analysis of the cognitive ability and the timing of political knowledge, maturity of the individual requiring as to how, when and why the latter come to acquire such. Not only that, "... what goes on in politics is determined by people's behaviour citizens, officials, revolutionaries, diplomats, news paper
editors, image makers, and others — more than by institutional form. How the norms and conscience that undergird these behaviours are acquired has thus become a critical question. Thus, micro-level study on political socialization is purely concerned with the empirical analysis of the subject-matter of political socialization by investigating what is, in practice, going on within the models of the political systems.

David O. Sears is of the opinion that the contents of political socialization most often investigated fall into three rough categories: (1) attachment to the political system, (2) Partisan attitudes, (3) Political participation. Thus, from this perspective, the micro-level study on political socialization is concerned with the analysis of the standard of cognition as well as the timing of political maturity of the individual, excluding, henceforth, an explanation of the processes through which the individuals acquire political attitudes. As a matter of fact, this type of study on political socialization presupposes a split between the research approaches of macro-level political theorists and political psychologists. If we go through David O. Sears' note it will be clear to us. Thus in the words of David O. Sears:

"Psychological" theories treat individual predispositions (e.g., the child's political attitudes, level of political involvement, etc.) as the primary output variables of interest, whereas "political" theories treat them as mere way stations to the very output variables which involve some aspect of the political system (e.g., its persistence) or political policy.
However, the micro-level study on political socialization, entirely concentrating as well as revolving round the individual only, ignores almost practically, the aggregation of systematic import of politically socialized people. The researchers of this type of study are primarily concerned with the individual political cognition, attachment to the political system and knowledge about it and the contents of dynamic political learning as well.

On the contrary, the macro-level approach on the study of political socialization which primarily revolves round the framework of systems analysis helps us to understand the degree and area of relationship between the political socialization and the political system. Thus, this approach firmly advocates the political system as a dependent variable, which largely depends on the development of the participatory political behaviour of the citizens which is invariably the product of the political socialization processes. Thus, the question of systems persistence is concerned with the process of political socialization.

However both these approaches have their shortcomings. The macro-level study concentrates on how political systems operate under the impact of the aggregation of the politically socialized citizens but it cannot explain how the idiosyncratic differences lead to the establishment of different types of political culture. On the contrary, the micro-level study seems incapable of explaining the political impact of the isolated idiosyncratic differences on the political system.
Thus, the researchers of political socialization should fill up this gap between two approaches by developing an intensive study on political socialization concerning the origin of the individual differences in political orientations and how these differences would interact within a political system for its persistence as well as change.

The field of research on political socialization has been mainly cultivated in the U.S.A. However, other western countries have made considerable progress in this respect. The Afro-Asian and Latin American countries are still lagging behind in this sphere of study. As a matter of fact, India has made a very little progress in this respect.

In the western countries, the research on the political socialization process has been mostly concentrated on the urban areas and with the results of which, the researchers are trying to formulate a general theory of political socialization. Though political socialization research has uncovered variations in who learns what, etc., based on such characteristics as sex, race, socio-economic status, ethnic group affiliation and political culture, the chances of discovering universal processes seem remote. It is contended further that it would be impossible for the researchers to formulate such a general theory, until and unless the political socialization process is intensively studied in the underdeveloped, developing and colonial political systems of Afro-Asian and Latin American countries where the culture, tradition, socio-economic condition and communication patterns deeply differ from those of the developed countries.
Moreover, the laws of political socialization, cultivated till now, are drawn mostly from the experience of the urban areas of political system. Our primary question is: Are such laws of political socialization applicable to the rural areas of the underdeveloped, developing and colonial countries? However, we can postulate that the laws of political socialization produced by the western countries are not applicable at least to the rural areas of the above mentioned countries, as these laws of political socialization are mostly the results of the micro-macro-studies of the urban areas of western countries. Although it is true that a continuous process of political socialization goes on in any political system, the process and the contents of such political socialization might differ beyond doubt, especially in the rural areas.

Robert S. Sigel is of the opinion that "different political systems by virtue of their structure, their laws, and their distribution of authority impel people to develop specific political attitudes and behaviour." This is really true that political structure can affect the process of political socialization.

Let us discuss the nature of political socialization in the different political systems one by one.

The underdeveloped states are, in practice, weak and unstable because their political structures are neither institutionalized nor differentiated, because their political cultures are neither egalitarian nor secular, and because their capacity to
influence their social environment is either limited or non-existent. Thus we can say that the political systems of the underdeveloped states are generally unstable having lower socio-economic condition. The reason is that "the effects of modernization are highly unbalanced in underdeveloped societies." It consequently presupposes the poor rate of people's political consciousness and participations are found where 'charisma inheres in the centre.' This type of political system may be characterized by traditionality where the military cliques, party cliques and the vested interests are active enough to undertake the task of political socialization for their own interests only instilling the idea of loyalty. But the people are found as chauvinists, racialists, intolerant of minorities, etc., and therefore, a hostile attitude towards this type of political system (dominated by the military or party cliques or vested interests) is found. The people who are either suppressed or depressed regard government as the source of injustice, evil, and corruption. So a clash of trust and mistrust is found between these two types of agencies when military or party cliques and vested interests undertake the task of inducting the masses into the ideas in favour of the government while the opposition group undertakes the task of inducting the people into ideas which generate mistrust upon the government and its law.

However, the introduction of modern means of communication, widespread education and gradual enhancement of modern industry along with rationalized structure of administration are steadily affecting these societies. In these societies, a process of
socio-economic and political development is found leading to a transformation of people from parochial and subject status to a participant one and a transition from the values of tradition to the values of modernity. This change to a participant style of life requires mobilization of adult population and a motivation on their part to adopt new political roles. And it is the process of socialization which prepares people to perform their roles.

Thus an under-developed state gradually becomes a developing one when it seeks to adopt policies ensuring gradual political development which must involve both the strengthening of formal government and the establishment of mechanisms for giving coherence to the polity as a whole. The social change is of utmost importance which is both inevitable and inevitably modernizing, removing the difficulties of the traditional socio-economic and political structure.

The developing political societies are transitional ones where the process of democratization as well as modernization are to take place obviously. As a result of it, a gradual transformation of political relationships among various social groups along with the emergence of new and younger elites are found to dominate the decision-making process of the community. Despite of this, in such types of transitional societies, a fundamental difference between the westernized as well as urbanized leaders and more tradition-bound, village based masses is found.

Moreover, Lucian Pye is of the opinion that like the spokes connecting to a hub but without having an outer rim for direct
connections among them, the villages of the different parts of the country in most of the transitional societies tend to have less correspondence with each other, although, they maintain separate communication with the urban centres.

From this perspective, it is contended that in the developing societies where modernization is a gradual process, the political socialization process, is undertaken to change the state of traditional political culture. Social change may produce new modern groups as the pioneering agents of the political socialization to establish a state of new political culture. Thus, it may lead to an inevitable clash with the traditional elites of political socialization. But this clash between traditional elites and modern elites in the process of political socialization cannot be found in the modern developed western societies. Not only that, in the developing societies, social change can affect the different parts of the societies at a differential rate. Moreover, the social change "may not only cause the demise of traditional forms of particularism, it may also create new particularisms."21

Thus from this fact we can observe that political socialization process in the developing countries cannot run in a uniform manner. Another reason may be shown in this respect. "Indeed the process of modernization may well go hand in hand with a rebirth or a strengthening of cultural traditions or with a reawakening of religious and ethnic identities. In this way, in the developing societies, political socialization process goes on through thesis and antithesis and synthesis for the building up of a stable political system."
In the urban areas of the developing countries, the scope of political socialization is greater than that in the rural areas, as the essentially direct and indirect socializing agencies are concentrated in the urban areas. On the contrary, in the rural areas, these are not duly available to the masses. Due to illiteracy and the poor economic condition, the village masses are not capable of rendering political ideas to their offspring. They take the least part in the discussion of politics and political affairs as they are always busy to maintain their livelihood. Due to poor socio-economic condition and modern means of communication, the main agents of political socialization are found to be the least active in the rural areas while they function most prominently in the western countries, specially in the urban areas.

However, this does not mean that in the rural areas of the developing societies all the agents of political socialization are totally inactive. Rather, the political parties and their several networks, governmental machineries, local self-government as well as rural elites are found to exert major influence on the process of mass political socialization. The mass socialization simply refers to "learning what behaviour is appropriate for the citizen or subject, that is to say, behavior that may be performed by the overwhelming majority of people in a particular society, people who are amateurs in politics in the sense that they spend most of their time in non-political pursuits. Being patriotic or voting are examples of mass behavior to which people are socialized." This type of mass socialization is found in the rural areas of the developing societies.
Whereas in the urban areas of developing societies as the educationally and economically advanced groups are found to enjoy mass media facilities more and more, their specific political knowledge as well as over-all political ideas about the system's functional process are found to be greater expressive.

From the aforesaid discussion we can deduce a hypothesis that socio-economic condition is an important variable in the process of political socialization and the relative importance of the socializing agencies in this respect should be determined.

In the developed countries, on the other hand, all the agencies of political socialization are more or less effective in both urban and rural areas because socio-economic disparity between those areas is lesser as compared to the developing countries. This does not mean that all people of such societies are made to be active political participants by such effective process of political socialization. This is due to the fact that parochial individuals are to be found in every society though in developed western societies, according to Almond and powell, they are relatively low.

The more the society gets economically developed and industrialized, the more it helps to develop 'a growing systemness' and a state of growing understanding of being within the political system. Systematic relations help to correlate differentiation of roles, institutions, and organisations. "Systematic relations are generated in the course of societal economic, political, and other interactions; men produce them in the course of confrontation
with other men in pursuit of greater efficiency, greater productive outputs, and better condition of life. They are simultaneously interactions of consensus and conflict. In both cases they relate to and generate systemic interdependencies. In such political systems, political socialization process is undertaken mainly for system's persistence. This does not mean that in such political systems stress does not arise. Stress is ever-present in every political system, but in the developed as well as stable political systems, its strength and frequency is relatively low. Because in such stable political systems, the strength and durability of basic orientations relating to national identification, patriotism and observance of laws and ways of doing things along with ideologies provide a firm and stable underpinning for the fundamental forms and goals of the government. They make for continuity and inter-generational agreement in the political culture.

On the contrary, in the developing as well as newly liberated political systems, changeability through the process of political socialization is a unique phenomenon. David Easton and Robert D. Hess have clearly pointed out that "One of the fundamental phenomena of our age, unlike most earlier centuries, is the relative frequency with which political systems have collapsed to be displaced by new types of regimes. The increase in the quantity and the rate of political change has been especially visible in western Europe where at least the obvious facts of economic distress, war, and conquest, help, although in part only, to explain the emergence of new types of political orders." Thus in such types of political systems, the political socialization process goes on through various disruptive phases.
The researchers on political socialization have invested their energy much in discussing the processes and contents of political socialization of the independent rather than of the colonial countries. In every independent political system, stable or unstable, the process of political socialization is always undertaken either to maintain 'system persistence' or 'change'. Political Socialization is linked to systems change through the notion of "system stress"; i.e. political systems may experience stress on their "essential variables" in terms of insufficient compliance with their outputs, excessive input demands, and/or insufficient input of support, diffuse or specific ... political socialization is seen as a kind of response by which a system may seek to avoid such stress.28

Thus the 'adaptibility of change for system persistence' is the fundamental function undertaken by the socialization process in every independent political system. The authority of every independent political system tries to retain political power and thereby transmits its values between generations to maintain continuity within the polity. Some kinds of intergenerational transmission of political norms have been occurring on a regular basis. Some "Conservatizing" agents of political socialization are clearly effectively at work.29

Political socialization increases political consciousness. Political consciousness makes a nation politically brave, independent, free from internal and external control and morally courageous where the military are always subordinate to the civil administration.
and helps a nation to maintain, to use the expression of Aristotle, a 'good life'.

Are these laws of political socialization applicable to the process of colonial political systems? Does the alien political authority infuse such ideas which may afterwards increase consciousness, what again may overthrow the colonial political authority? Does it ever want to make the colonial subjects politically brave ones?

The political socialization process is undertaken in such type of political system from two angles. The alien authority with the help of the indigenous vested interests always tries to infuse the alien political culture among the subjects in order to make them remain subservient to it as well as to maintain system's persistence. On the contrary, the nationalists with the help of the nationalistic fervour try to infuse among the people the indigenous political culture, thereby to overthrow the colonial political structure. It invariably creates tremendous stresses within such political system like demonstrations, agitation, revolts, disregard to rules and regulations, etc. However, these two types of political agents compete with each other in the process inculcating their respective political roles and values. In the second chapter of this study we have discussed in details these things in relation to the area of our study.

So far as we have discussed, it is clear to us that the process of political socialization can construct, destruct or maintain status quo of a political system. Not only that the nature
of political socialization is different in different political systems.

Two fundamental questions are to be presented in this respect. First, are all the agents of political socialization capable of influencing the subjects of different political systems in the same manner? Second, do these agents interact in similar patterns both in the urban as well as in rural societies?

Most of the scholars agree with Herbert Hyman's Contention that "formost among agencies of socialization into politics is the family"30. Is this view applicable to all types of political systems as Dean Jaros points out, "Indeed, modern revolutionary regimes have taken quite dramatic steps to limit the impact of the family on children ... . New nations frequently find that extended familial (tribal) ties are the chief obstacles to acceptance of the new political order. Perhaps the anti family posture of some contemporary radical thought is based in part on a perceived danger of perpetuating political conservatism"31.

It may also be contended that in the socio-economically backward, rural areas of the underdeveloped and developing political systems, family may not get the pioneering position in the process of political socialization.

To explain it clearly, we contend that in the developed political systems like the U.S.A., the U.K., Japan and West Germany, the children do usually follow the parental influence. "In Britain and the United States the family tends to encourage many of the values that will find support in latter life"32.
In West Germany, on the whole, the case is the same. In spite of that, the picture is different in socialist regimes like China and the U.S.S.R., where the educational institutions are continuously instilling the political ideas for the maintenance of perfect identity of such totalitarian political structure. Thus familial influence on the children is little.

In the case of underdeveloped and developing or newly liberated political systems, the familial political influence on the children is less due to another factor also. In these political systems, specially in rural areas, the families are continuously engaged in economic functions for the maintenance of the families rather than imparting political education or learning to their children. Continuous struggle for existence prohibits the people from acquiring accurate political knowledge, and this hungry and unstable socio-economic conditions generally provides no time to them to transfer even the least political knowledge to their offspring.

There may be found such rural areas in those political systems where the children do not get the political ideas and values from families at the outset as the parents have not the sense of "self-potency". By "self-potency" James N. Mosel means "the extent to which an individual perceives himself as having some degree of control over his world, the extent to which he believes his opinions and actions can affect the solution of his problems." Thus the children usually get the ideas of politics from the educational institutions, if they do not get the opportunity to study in the educational institutions, they
usually get the political ideas from such political institutions as political parties and their networks, governmental and other institutions acting intensively for the rural welfare.

In the Western Countries the educational institutions rank second in importance among the socializing agencies. "In most modern nations, schools, also occupy a favourable position in terms of the preconditions for successful socialization". From the very primary education to University education direct and indirect political indoctrinations are given to the students. The students are first well acquainted with different types of political ideologies and activities in black and white through national educational system. Unfortunately, "in developing countries a regime can seldom afford compulsory universal education, but if it could it might have to expand some coercion to enforce school attendance". It goes without saying that it is equally applicable to the underdeveloped countries.

Educational institutions are the centres of basic learnings of the individuals from which they are taught the virtues of the political system and it can generate the sense of unquestioned obedience to the political authority, so also it may generate general support for the society. Moreover, "the higher 'political literacy' demanded of a democratic citizen requires that the basic practical political education which participation in government itself undoubtedly provides should be enriched by the school".

It is also true that only the educational institutions can help to shape perfect political orientation as compared to other
political socializing agencies. Dean Jaros holds that the augmentation of education makes an individual's orientations and values more conspicuous (he thinks this concept is well established) 37.

Not only that specific political knowledge regarding the political system can only be imparted through the educational institutions. Entwistle says that political education is much more effective for the children than the process of political socialization to learn the fundamental assumptions of their polity 38. Thus J.J. Patrick is of the opinion that "formal courses in history, civics, and government are designed to teach political knowledge, attitudes, and skills. Patriotic holidays and rituals are used to teach respect and love for the nation. . . ." 39 In this respect family can hardly compete with the educational institutions. "American children, e.g., spend a substantial portion of their working hours in schools. College attendance extends this exposure into early adulthood for many . . ." 40 Moreover, in the Soviet Union one fifth of the time is spent in political studies regarding Marxist-Leninist philosophy and what is also taken 'as part of any final degree examination.' 41

In view of this, it is undoubtedly true the very contention of ours is that in the rural areas of the developing and underdeveloped societies, educational institutions are the perfect and most important socializing agency instead of family for the 'school-going children'. But in the case of 'non-school-going children' educational institutions are not the sources of political socialization. Rather they get political ideas and form attitude only
from the political institutions and their activities. The children usually find the party-symbols, hear slogans and watch party processions. From this they can gather at least obscure political ideas.

Mass media have an enormous impact on the process of political socialization. In developed countries, for example, in the U.S.A. "youngsters in the last two decades have been increasingly surrounded by a media environment." 

Not only that "television contributes to learning about politics and government and that political behaviour may be formed as a result of systematic television viewing... to-day, children grow up in a world transformed by mass communication." Moreover, they get the facilities of popular culture which may be called an indirect form of political socialization what bears an infinite range of values. Popular culture refers "to those aspects of human entertainment or activity which are not narrowly or creatively elitist and which are generally (although not exclusively) distributed through mass media. Popular culture is widely received and has mass appeal." Television is an important medium in the urban areas but in the rural areas of developing countries like India it is of little importance.

The members of the transitional societies are found to be more receptive to the political news from the mass media. But unfortunately, the communication structure is neither effectively well spread nor productive, especially in the rural areas. Though there is ample possibilities of using the mass media for spreading political ideas and values in the rural areas, the use is very
limited. This may be supported by Hyman's contention from an analysis of U.N.E.S.C.O.'s report (1961) that "... both radio and television receivers are present in almost 100% of all households in the United States in contrast to the 2-5% standard employed by U.N.E.S.C.O.\textsuperscript{45}.

Peer group as an agent of political socialization refers to the group of persons of the same age belonging to homogeneous character among whom personal contact is such that one can influence perceptions of another regarding political values.

In the developed political societies, under the atmosphere of homogeneous political culture the peer groups can effectively reinforce the political values established earlier by the family and educational institutions. But in the developing political societies, these groups effectively resocialize the individuals to political values by exerting pressure upon them in accordance with the values transmitted by them, rejecting the old ones. Thus in the transitional political societies, the role of the peer groups is creative. In the rural areas these act as the new value transmitters, especially to the non-school going children and uneducated people upon whom the influence of family as well as school is almost nil.

However, the peer groups transmit not only the consensual values but also transmit dissensual values as the peer groups "may blind or break down attitudes of hostility and aggression"\textsuperscript{46}. The role of the peer groups is usually more effective in the rural areas of the transitional societies because the impact of
modernization helps to evoke the hostile attitude towards the traditional political structure and values. The role of the peer groups can be compared to that of the family as it provides the suggestion of either the rejection or acceptance of new values which are usually mediated through political institutions in these countries instead of wide spread channel of communication by mass media.

In the transitional political society the socio-economic reforms and programmes usually attract the rural masses to be socialized into politics. Not only that modernization gradually helps to spread the mass communication which again helps to spread political programmes, and these become helpful to the peers to resocialize the fellow beings by inculcating new values among them.

Thus in the developed political systems the peer groups act as the agents of political value reinforcer whereas in the developing political system these play the evaluative role with regard to the acceptance or rejection of political sentiments and values. Sometimes these play also the creative role in this respect. It is possible only for the process of modernization by which, "major clusters of old social, economic and psychological commitments are eroded and broken and new ones created in their place."47.

As stated earlier in the rural areas of the developing society political institutions like political parties and their various networks, governmental institutions, especially the local self-governments as well as the community development authority are
the most prominent agents of political socialization. The day-to-day activities of these above mentioned agents in the rural areas through the various rural welfare programmes are the sources of political ideas and forming attitudes towards political values. This is true because "in the systems approach to political communication, citizens make demands and offer support for the political regime as well receive feedback about system decisional outputs. All of these activities require some degree of participation, some activity through which the citizen interacts with his or her political environment."

Participation in the rural developmental programmes is itself a source of political information and thereby acts as political socialization. So participation process can also influence the socialization process. Although political participation is the result of political socialization, they also act and interact upon each other.

For the execution of the rural developmental programmes the rural masses are called for expressing their views in the open mass meetings of the villages. Initiatives in this respect are taken by the local governmental institutions and rural developmental agencies like Panchayati Raj Institutions, and Community Development project.

Besides these, the role of the patriotic songs and music in the rural areas cannot be overlooked as agents of political socialization because "people can learn from music important general political attitudes and persistent moods towards politics,"
without necessarily learning more specific themes or sub-attitudes in a given song. The music usually affects the teenagers who are likely to pass critical period through recording devices repeatedly. Not only that, for certain music of this century, secondary associations in which the sing-out has been used, has provided a political use for music.

In addition to these, messages of violence, riot, military disturbances, armed insurrection usually give rise to political orientations of the rural masses. However, when traditional or even most non-traditional modes of communicating have been exhausted, political violence emerges, particularly when regimes can be destabilized by violence.

If violence is to be removed from the political system and a value oriented political system is to be built up, appropriate political socialization process is indispensable. It is contended that each generation must learn what is expected of it if the postulated prerequisites of society are to be fulfilled. If socialization were to fail, no society could maintain itself, disorganisation, even chaos might ensue.
References


9. Ibid., P. 23.


11. Ibid., P. 95.


15. Ibid., P. 75.


43. Ibid., PP. 10-11.


51. Ibid., P. 80.