Chapter - II

I&eoreticat Trameworf^ and the Agents of <PoCiticalSocialization
Chapter-II

Theoretical Framework

Political Socialization is a process of learning Political culture of a nation. Such Political culture is transmitted from one generation to another generation. All Political Systems tend to nurture their culture, political patterns and structures through which youth of the society pass through to attain political maturity. This chapter has two parts. In the first part the theoretical and conceptual view points of different theories are discussed for the proper understanding of the patterns and challenges and the political orientations and attitudes of the high school students. The second part mainly explicates the importance and influence of the agents of political socialization on individual in general and school children in particular.

The phenomenon of political socialization has been discussed by many scholars in different ways. But a careful analysis of these views is needed. The following are the important theories and approaches in the research endeavor. Namely.

1) Psycho - Cultural Theory
2) Socio - Psychological Theory
3) Social - Learning Theory
4) Elite Theory
5) The Micro Level and Macro-Level Approaches.
6) Individual Approach and System Analysis
7) Socio-Political Approach.
1) Psycho - Cultural Theory:

It is an important theory in the study of political behavior of an individual in acquiring political socialization. The central argument of this theory is "all political behavior is a learned behavior"\(^1\). This theory mainly focuses on two forms of socialization namely, latent and manifest political Socialization. The Latent political Socialization is the process through which information, the Values and the feelings that are transmitted are not directly political. But it is a basic stage of internalization of political values. Here family plays an important role. As children grow, manifest Political socialization becomes prominent. In the manifest Political socialization, the content of the transmitted information, notions, values and feelings are clearly political in nature. Here school becomes an important vehicle in transmitting political values among the Children.

The theory also discusses the question which agency should be given topmost priority in terms of Political socialization of the children. Two divergent views are expressed in this regard. One group of social scientists believe that, 'political maturity is a byproduct of general education. The chief exponent of this view is Greenstein. Another group of social scientists focus on the potentiality of the formal schooling system. The chief advocates of this view are Hass and Torney. While giving importance to school, they have realized the importance of family as an agent of political socialization. A child starts acquiring and developing basic political orientations from an early age within the family. Thus, family has a predominant role to play in shaping and moulding their political orientations and it also acts as a powerful means of socialization.

2) Socio - Psychological Theory:

To investigate certain cognitive and affective aspects of attitudes among the children of different age-groups particularly the age groups of 8\(^{th}\) to 10\(^{th}\) in India. E.S.K, Ghosh in his study of "Social identity and Political Socialization" stresses on
the importance of this theory. The theory treats individual disposition (e.g. the child's political attitudes and the level of political involvement etc.) and also on the primary output variables of interest. It is taken as an important devise to explore children's concepts and ideas about the nation and the pattern of values and preferences, which accompany these concepts. This theory helps the researcher to find out the extent of differential effects of diverse social realities in the acquisition of socio-political concepts and the identification by Indian Children in different parts of the country. It also throws light on the systematic variations in cognitive and affective behavior, which occur at different age levels for intra-groups and inter-groups.

3) Social - learning Theory:

The chief exponent of this theory is Bruce Campbell. The social learning theory is a general theory of political socialization, which elaborates the levels of political trust among the high school students. This takes into account, the role of family, peers and school, the main attributes in developing political trust among the high School Students. Further, it argues that, social learning is successful in the case of the mother and child brought up in a meaningful social milieu. In addition to this, Race and socio- economic status also play a significant role to predict political trust among the students. This type of social learning helps the children in developing certain political beliefs, attitudes and behaviors to strengthen the political system.

4) Elite Theory:

Elite theory is one of the most important theories on political socialization. The main proponents of this theory are Pareto, Mosca and Renshon. According to this theory, every political system assumes and lives by a set of values. Its strength and survival ultimately depends upon those values and beliefs. The process of political socialization is the process of internalization of the values of political
system by the people of the country. Its success depends on the widespread political 
training and the education imparted to its inmates.

D.M. Shukla in his book "Political Socialization of woman voters" discusses 
this elaborately. He argues that, Education has its impact on the political behavior 
of women. Educated women vote more than the less educated". The educated 
women become aware of their rights and duties. This study is more meaningful and 
relevant especially in the context of a rapidly changing Indian society which is 
confronted with changes among the aspirations and expectations of the masses. 
These changes have thrown challenges to the existing democratic institutions.

Elite theory of socialization develops skills in leadership, decision-making, 
negation and communication which are required by most of the citizens. Renshon in 
his adult development theory argues that, political socialization occurs in stages 
through adult development and also at different stages. Leaders unfolding life 
history is reflected in different sets of personal or political concerns are manifested 
in their approach to the task of developing leadership qualities.

Role theory is another approach in which many thinkers view that, 
political socialization as a sequence of roles namely: student, worker, spouse, 
parents and each new role carries with its recognizable expectations of acceptable 
patterns of behaviour.3

5) The Micro Level and Macro-Level Approaches

The micro-level approach is concerned with the study of the process of 
political learning at the individual level. It entails the study of political orientations 
of the individual learns at different stages of his life. How does he learn these? 
And how is his political life formed? As he gradually grows and matures, he tends 
to cultivate social values, beliefs, and norms in accordance with the social life 
formed by him. Through the process of political socialization individual learns
directly or indirectly about the political values, beliefs and attitudes which Shape the individual's political psychology form his political personality and determine his behavior. The individual political behavior is deep rooted in his political psychology which is developed in him through the socializing process.

The macro-level approach deals with the study of the impact of the political socialization process upon the operations of the political system. The political learning of an individual tends to determine his political behavior which in turn is important and crucial for the stability and viability of the political system. The above arguments clearly explicate the fact that, the process of political socialization does account not only for the patterns of political behavior of the individual but also on the working of the political system. It tends to bridge the gap between micro-macro politics.

6) Individual Approach and System Approach:

Greenstein, Langton, Nimmo and Bonjeen are the forerunners of this approach. The Individual approach focuses on the individual as a unit of investigation and the system approach inquires into the role of political socialization which stabilizes and nurtures the system. Haridwar Singh in this 'Democratic orientations of students in India' argues that, The Individual approach is entirely concentrates and revolves round the individual under this framework. The researcher intends to focus his attention on the cognitive ability and political maturity of an Individual. The basic concern of this approach is to analyze how, when and why Individual comes to possess and develop the particular outlook.

The system analysis is another approach advocated by David Easton, Talcot Persons, Robert Merton to name a very few. According to this approach, a system wants to achieve certain goals and behavior and phenomenon which are related to and should help to reach this end. In every system there are some structures performing certain functions to attain the goals. In this approach Easton stresses on
the need of the continuance, maintenance and existence of a political system as well as the changes that take place in it.

From this approach, the researcher tries to find out the degree and the extent of relationship maintained between political socialization and the larger political system. The followers of this approach define political socialization as a process through which citizens acquire political views that become aggregated in the ways that have its impact on the political life of a nation. This study not only deals with the system that affects the political socialization but it also tries to examine the particular orientation in which political socialization takes the final shape. This leads to Socialization in a democracy.

7. Socio-Political Approach:

An earnest attempt is made in this approach to analyze the orientations of children with socio-political issues. It studies the techniques of attitudinal reinforcement of restructuring within the school. This shapes the individuals in giving citizenship training. Children develop the ideas, beliefs, norms and values during their pre-adult socialization period. This kind of pre-adult socialization helps them for the proper anticipation of adult's roles in future. Those children whose family has political background have shown increasing interest and involvement in politics and political issues. More educational opportunities and socio-economic development, sex, age, religion and media exposure are the other influencing factors that stabilize the pre-adult socialization which saves the attitudinal pre dispositions towards political system.

According to R, T Jangam, Political socialization of the child implies the process of political socialization by which the child becomes a full fledged member in the meaningful socio-political system. The process of political socialization is related to the child's process of political socialization. This shows how the member of every society or children who are its members in the making are shaped,
educated and prepared to play their assigned roles in the society. Man performs his roles according to his age-group. This implies that, there are different stages in man's life, in which he goes on performing his role in the meaningful socio-political system. Thus, he argues that, the passage from childhood to adulthood is the most crucial one as it determine man's role in socio-political system.  

8. **Arun P. Bali** in his paper "Towards an understanding of political socialization" discusses three different approaches closely related to the research under study. Childhood approach: The first and foremost approach is childhood approach which explicates the attitudes learnt early are the most enduring and fair predictors of adult stances and at accords determinative influence to political preferences. Easton and Robert Hess have emphasized in their studies that, the young child's conceptualized and idealized view of the government has a positive and affective attachment to the political system. Although it is less visibly moulded during that period yet it still underlines many permanent orientations to politics.

The second one is the adulthood approach which assumes that one's political orientation is easily be bent and prone to change, and it gets modified throughout one's life-cycle when given the appropriate stimuli to a change. It posits the view that, adulthood brings in its wake contacts with several new settings, novel events, new responsibilities, new experiences as well as the changes in biological and social status. All these factors have powerful socializing impact on the individual.

The contemporary approach is the third one, which throws light on the importance of generations to explain the adult's attitude. It accords a significant role on the events and the changes that set in shaping their attitudes. The events and experiences are differently interpreted among the peers, who share educational trends at which political events take place. The above three approaches reveal the fact that, political socialization is considered as an instrument in moulding and conditioning the child to a prior set of conventions.
The geneses of many theories and studies on political socialization have been concerned with how to socialize children and adolescents and to develop political orientations and behaviors which are valued by adults in society. Theories and approaches discussed above give us a clear picture about the concept of political socialization. Many scholars interpreted it in different ways about the meaning of the term political socialization as what is this process? Why is it worth studying? One of the important or significant concerns of political scientists towards the process of political socialization is, individuals acquire political attitudes and behavior through this process. Hyman's pioneering work 'political socialization' published in 1959 has proved it as an effective approach to understand the reasons for the individual's political attitudes and behavior. Generally, it means, a process by which an individual or children acquire values, norms, beliefs and attitudes of political culture. Greenstein offers both narrow and broad meaning of the term. Political socialization in a narrow sense is the deliberate inculcation of political values, information and practices by those instrumental agents to study political learning at every stage of a life-cycle. Easton and Hess conceive, political socialization as the development of consensus on a political phenomena or the development shared by these political orientations. They are concerned with the products of socialization and conceptualize themselves as types of orientations towards the political system.

The views of the scholars clearly endorse two important norms of the concept of political socialization. They are, a) the concept of political socialization is a constant process of learning b) it is an instrument. As a learning process, it helps the children in acquiring the values, orientations, feelings and attitudes of a political culture, which are internalized. As an instrument, the concept political socialization shapes and moulds the children's earlier set of conventions transmitted to them from individual to group of individuals within a political system. Political socialization moulds an individual through three dimensional orientations in a
significant manner. According to Almond and Verba 'orientation' refers to the internalized aspects of political objects and relations'. Political objects include the general political system in its various structural and human aspects and the role of 'the self as political actors. Internalization involves as a primary condition. The process of knowing constitutes the cognitive orientation'. The process of political socialization offers an explanation about individual's political orientations Viz, cognitive, affective and evaluative. These are essential for the effective and smooth functioning of the political system. They further argue that, political socialization is a process of understanding both patterns of similarities and differences and political outlooks among the constituents in a given system. On the other hand, it helps us to understand the development and dissemination of consensus values or common outlooks.  

All the theories and reviews on the research topic understudy in one way or the other suggest that, children are socialized to politics by various techniques and methods of political socialization. The scholars have identified various agents of political socialization for internalizing political values by the people in general and children in particular. Most of the studies focus on the agents such as, family, school, peers and mass media. But they failed to reach an agreement on the question of the exact age at which child's political learning begins as well as which one of these agents' influences more on children's learning of these political attitudes.

The researcher has also observed that, most of the studies tend to suggest that, family plays a pivotal role in the development of formation of political attitudes among the young children. The scholars like H.Hyman, Berelson, Lazarsfeld, M c Phee, Campbell and Geoffrey k, Robert in their studies have identified that, Family is the primary agent of political socialization. Mary A, Hepburn in her article Revitalized political socialization supported the views of Hyman. she says that, parental influence is viewed as the key to party and participation. The child is dependent on their parents to satisfy his/her basic needs
According to Geoffrey K. Robert, children acquire often gradually and automatically knowledge about politics by the family. In USA three fourth (%) of the offspring's share the same partisan preferences as their parents. In this way they conclude that, the role of family is immense in the process of political socialization of the children.

The recent studies have substantially expressed doubts about the importance of family as stated above, instead they point out the role of other agents which play substantial role in influencing children's political learning in the process of political socialization. In this sequence another group of scholars have seen the school as an important secondary agent of political socialization. They are Almond and Verba, Greenstein, Hass and Torney, Kenneth P, Langton, Easton and Dennis, Lee H,Ehman , James G,Gimple, David Ziblatt to name a very few. They argue that, school and its civics course play a greater role in inculcating political values, beliefs and attitudes among the children. The school as an agent is responsible for socializing groups of young people to acquire political skills and values in a society. According to Geoffrey K Robert 'political socialization has always been regarded important in both America and Britain and here as a subject matter for school system devotes explicit attention to civics education. Very few studies have been conducted to identify the role played by the peer groups.

Most recently researchers have emphasized the role of mass media as a powerful agent of political socialization, which influences more on pre-adult political life. Mass media has become a significant social force by the middle of the 20th century. There is link between T, V and the education with the socialization of the children. It is a continual process. In an open society the use of mass media is to convey political demands as a major weapon to the policy makers.\"
The western scholars have discussed comprehensively and highlighted that, family, school, and mass media's are the prime agents of political socialization. In USA most of the studies have emphasized on the role of school and its curriculum. The main reason for this is, recently in USA voter's turnout and participation in the elections has become very low. According to Geoffrey K Robert in 1984 the presidential election people's participation was only just 50%.\textsuperscript{13} The same thing is stressed by Amy Linimon and Mark.R Joslyn in their article 'Trickle-up political socialization: the impact of kids voting USA on voters' turnout 2002.'\textsuperscript{14} Hence most of the western studies and researches have focused mainly on political orientations through authority relationship and political participation. Recently due to the decline of the youth participation in elections in the western countries, government encourages to conduct research in the field of political socialization to enhance the percentage of the young people to involve themselves in the electoral process. From the participation points of view, this process is more significant in the western world. But in the developing countries it is completely different in creating the awareness is the important task of political system.

The western social scientists have studied the concept of political socialization in order to understand the voting behavior of the children. The school and its extra-curricular activities are set in this direction to enrich the children's participatory orientation. The recent studies in America dealt with the low voter turnout. To improve voter turnout a number of programmes have been undertaken by the government, especially for kids, kids voting and voter's participation in the elections. Teacher in school devotes some amount of time to train the children about the electoral process in electing the president.

In America political organizations have prompted various programmes to enhance and increase political participation. For mobilizing youth, the American government has undertaken several programmes. Because youths are the detached segments of the electorate. Each programme is directed to stimulate them to
increase their turnout in the general elections. The most important programme for children are, Mock elections and kids voting. It is found from the review of literature that, most of the western scholars studied children's political socialization on the basis of psychological, sociological and structural and functional basis. Thus, the process of political socialization is gradually becoming most successful in the western countries.

But it is a new phenomenon in the developing countries like India. These developing nations have a daunting task of training the heterogeneous groups which form the majority. There is a need to prepare or to train its people and preparing them to become responsible citizens so that they can perform their functions and roles as responsible citizens of their respective nations. The scholars in the developing countries view that, political socialization is an important technique in internalizing the values of a political system. Its aim is to prepare good citizens to maintain the stability, sustainability and continuity and the survivability of the political system.

The developments of different dimensions of political orientations are its basic requirement for its sustenance. It is the need of the hour to make our people well informed about politics. The three dimensions are a) political awareness b) political participation c) Evaluative orientation, are essential for the survival and continuity of a democracy. The concept of political socialization is the neglected area of study in India. Quite recently Indian social scientists have drawn the attention on the realization of the potentiality and importance of formal education in the development of politically meaningful attitudes and values as well as for the sustenance of the democratic culture in india.15

The studies conducted in the western countries have inspired the Indian scholars to study on the importance of the agents of political socialization and the need to introduce our youngsters to our political culture. Hence most of the Indian
scholars have laid more prominence to the family in inducing political values among the children. At the same time there are others who argue that, in addition to family and school, the role played by the mass media and peer groups is no less significant. It is clear from the above analyses that, a very few studies are conducted to gauge the influence of the political parties. The child's world is usually limited to the interactions with his parents, teachers and friends. But there are many other studies conducted and tried to include few other agents in the political socialization process of the children. Such as, school, mass media, and peer groups and political parties in this process are the important agents in inducing children towards politics and political culture. It is through these agents our political system can maintain the survivability and stability and so that it can adopt and adjust to ever changing demands of the hour. Rajini Kothari says that, culture develops high and universal ideals with which the creativity and power motivated to make individuals strong to identify themselves. In this way she stresses the need for this study in India.

Many of the Indian scholars have conducted their studies from socio-economic and socio-political and cultural backgrounds. These are serious problems in India, which forbid the people to take active involvement in politics. R.T, Jangam highlights the role of education in the socio-political system of India. He says that, the determining influence of education is enormous on the life of children as future participants in the socio-political power and influence. Cultural anthropologist and psycho-analysts have argued that, early political socialization is basic than the later learnt experience.

In America, method of study, discussions, conversations and extra-curricular activities are the most effective and influential over the grown up students. Social and political institutions also play an important role in internalizing the rules and regulations. At the same time political parties and youth movements have also influenced them for getting support of the majority of people in that country. Political parties influence more on the younger generation by imparting political
education. Mass media’s role cannot be undermined in this direction. It performs a key role in inducing children towards politics. In this way while compared to India the role of agents of political socialization is very powerful in America. They put strong foundation about politics at the initial stage of every individual’s life. People also put demand through the agents of political socialization such as schools, colleges, National, State and Local governments to follow the norms of democracy. This active participation helps them to develop skills to participate in politics and to change the politics in future. In this way the process of political socialization has greatly contributed to the political stability.

Several American researchers have empirically assessed the amount of impact of the high school civics course upon the American students. Edgarlitt in his survey of a sample of American students’ reports that, the students who took civics courses show strengthened support for democratic creed. At the same time, scholars like Hyman in his work surveys the research literature on political socialization and points out the importance of family on political activity. Further Robert Fans, Harvey E Rich and James C Davis also hold the similar views in their works.

On the other side, Indian political scientists namely, Ramesh thakur, k, N, Sharma, B,G.Desai, Kalpana Gupte, Eshanul Haq and Jyoshna Rani Behera have emphasized on the role of family in inculcating political values among the children. Sharma in his study ‘political psychology stresses that, a fairly large percentage over 90% of children recognize their parental candidate preference but only 70% can name their party preference. Our former president A. P. J, Abdulkalam said that, it is possible for primary school teachers to influence effectively in the early life of the students. As it is the beginning stage of the personality development of the children.
Both the Indian and the western political scientists agree the fact that, Mass Media acts as an important agent of political socialization, which affects the behavior of the children. Mass Media acts as a channel of communication to transmit information. It also means that, they do not influence the people directly rather they reinforce the already established orientations. They perform different roles in different contexts. Their role is quite significant in the formation of public opinion. In the present study the researcher has made an attempt to measure to what extent the media's have been effective in shaping and moulding the political orientations among the students of high school and to what extent they have succeeded in this endeavour.

The Indian scholars have considered the concept political socialization as a learning process, by which they studied and analyzed the political attitudes, behaviors and examined the values and beliefs among the children. India is a developing country, wherein citizen's participation in politics is the need of the hour. Giving a systematic training is a major problem. In order to make democracy strong, survival and stable, the values of the democracy have to be inculcated among the children at the early age. These values have to be taught at the age in which children's body and mind begins to change and transform in every sphere of life. This is a transitory period and the best period to shape and mould the children towards politics. In this way, we can make them perform their role in future so to make them become the best and responsible citizens of the nation.

Based on the ideas of both the western and the Indian scholars the researcher makes an observation that, Indian political scientists go a step ahead in analyzing the process of political socialization of a child, on the basis of the nature of Indian society. Apart from endorsing the views of the western scholars, their studies also touch upon the factors that influence like, Education, Class, Ethnicity, Residential, Religion, and Language etc. The research also finds the thin line of difference
between the western scholars and the Indian political scientists. Both of them share similar views regarding the challenges. Most important among them are,

1. As children are immature, they are not in a position to learn politics
2. Children do not have much information about politics
3. Student themselves are not interested towards politics but they are inspired and motivated to know about it.
4. Disinterestedness or lack of interest among the parents and the elders towards political socialization of the girl’s child.
5. The agencies help them to acquaint and socialize themselves towards politics to the children who are highly specialized and more restricted in their knowledge of the world responsible for the children who lack political socialization.
6. The role of civics syllabus in addressing the decline of the youth towards political participation. This is based on the realization that, in the process of political socialization role of the family and the local community network is eroding under mass internet based youth culture placing the burden of socialization at schools.

The issues raised by the social scientists have a telling effect in the light of emergence of Globalization. It widens the awareness regarding social, political and economic interconnectivity among the nations. A truth the researcher finds here is that, most researches conducted all over the world laid emphasis on the significant role played by family and lesser attention is paid on other agents such as, school, peer groups and political parties. Political system always revolves around a society, which is rapidly changing in every depth and dimension in the Indian context. The present research problem undertaken for the study encompasses the areas neglected in the earlier studies to make it exhaustive and scientific one.
Based on the comparative analysis of the views of both the western and the Indian political scientists, the researcher has drawn the following indicators to provide scientific framework to the research undertaken.

1. Political socialization is a learning process through which children are introduced to politics.

2. Political orientations are essential to the survival of any political system. An individual learns these orientations at different stages of his life.

3. The norms, attitudes, beliefs and values which are acquired at the early age have profound impact on the political system as a whole.

4. Stability, survivability, continuity and change in the political system is maintained and adhered by the people through the process of political socialization.

5. The agents of political socialization namely, family, school, peer groups, Mass media and political parties help the children to learn the important aspects about politics and they help the political socialization to transform political culture from one generation to another.

6. The process of political socialization is necessary for both the individual and community level to make the political system strong and stable.

7. Socio-Economic and family backgrounds are relatively the influencing factors in analyzing the children’s political orientations.

8. There is a continuous relationship between the political culture and political socialization. Both are essential to a political system for its smooth and effective functioning.
AGENTS OF POLITICAL SOCIALIZATION

In a democratic society, the success of a democracy largely depends on the political maturity of its citizens. Such a maturity of thought can be brought about through the process of political socialization, which helps a child to become a useful member of a society. Political socialization is a complex process in which various agents work consciously or unconsciously, formally or informally as a means of transmitting political values, attitudes and knowledge. They also impart social, political, traditional and cultural values. They educate, train, impart, inculcate and facilitate some of the basic political and sociological patterns. A person's family, friends, school, church, colleagues and co-workers, political experience and exposure to the mass-media have a telling impact on his political socialization. The researcher in this part analyses the role of the agents of political socialization namely, the family, school, peer groups, mass media and political parties

1) Family:

The first and the most potent agent of political socialization is family. Because the process of political socialization in every one's life begins first in a family. Many social scientists argue that the family is the primary agent at the beginning of latent political socialization. Here children first learn about the basic values and norms of the society. It can be described as "the child's first window on the world outside. It is the child's first contact with the authority". His basic orientations towards authority are moulded within the family. He learns to respect authority in the family.
The family is the actual transmitter of political values. It is the major matrix for individuals' political maturity. Here, the parental influence on the child is immense and the intimate relationship between the parents and a child has a great impact in shaping the child's ability and capacity to learn the political values. It is obvious that, the quality of child's learning is determined by the socio-economic and educational background of the family. Many scholars do agree that the family as an agent occupies an important position at the primary stage of political socialization of a child. Such as, H, Hyman, Hass and Torney, kalpana Gupte and S.S.Ralhan and S.R. Lambat believe that family performs three important functions.

1. At the outset the family transmits certain political values to the child through communication. Communication is the inborn ability of a man.

2. Parents act as a model to a child in the family.

3. A child learns its role which is expected to be played through imitation. Role definitions and expectations within the family structure and their generalization to political object influence the child in acquiring and developing basic political orientations. Hence it is felt that, "foremost among the agencies of political socialization into politics is the family in which a child is born".

At the same time, we should not forget the fact that, every family has its own culture, values and attitudes which have their own socio-political and cultural implications. These political cultures followed by the family members normally differ and they continue to pass from one generation to another. In transmitting these cultures family plays a significant role. Thus, family stands as one of the pre-eminent agents among all the agents of political socialization. A child develops certain socio-political and moral values which he learns in the family when he becomes a responsible adult. Much of an individual's political personality is shaped at home in the first 10-15 years of his formative stage of life and generally a
substantial part of it is formed to outlast the influence flowing from the other socializing agents in the subsequent years of his life. For example "In USA % of the children's generation share the same partisan preference as their parents"\textsuperscript{22}. Early acquisition of party preferences accounts for the parents' primary role of socialization. Children tend to look at their parents as a source of political advice. Hyman, while addressing the agents of political socialization, says that "parental influence is viewed as a key to party and participation"\textsuperscript{23}. The family environment plays an important role in the development of certain political values and mores such as, party identification, knowledge about politics, participation and efficacy. A child learns some of the civic virtues in the family at an early age, such as participation in decision making, obedience to decision, loyalty and authority. In this way, the child develops political competence, when he becomes an adult. Many parents in USA convey to their children categorically, "We are Democrats or we are Republicans"\textsuperscript{24}.

Thus, the parents are the first to introduce the child about the culture of their group. The child learns to identify itself with his parents and adopt their outlook towards the political system. In this patriarchal social setup, the father becomes the prototype authority figure and thereby initiates the child's view of political authority. Davis says that "the family provides the major means in transforming the mentally naked infant organism into fully clothed in its own personality. Most of the individual's political personality, his tendencies to think and act politically in particular ways has been determined at home, years before he can take part in politics as an adult citizen and as a prominent political member of a society.

Political education for citizens begins in the family, which is the first and the most enduring nursery of good citizens. If democracy begins anywhere it is first in the home and home is the fundamental educational institution". Democratic values like tolerance, kindness, co-operation, sacrifice and fellow human concern, a sense of togetherness and belongingness are inculcated among the young children in
the family better than the any other agencies. The family acts as a small social unit, in which the young children can easily understand their position and realize their rights and obligations in a functional manner. It is a simple miniature of a society which provides invaluable learning experiences for democratic living. The foundations of democratic values are laid at the family level. In this way the family plays an important role in the process of political socialization of the children or the youth.

2. School or Educational Institutions:

The second most important agent in the process of political socialization is educational institutions. Education is regarded as the potential instrument of social transformation and as an important means to develop national consciousness so that they become important resources in national reconstruction. School is now open, free secular and universal. The successful development of a nation is largely depends on the quality of education given to the young people. Unless they are properly trained in social and political dynamics, group learning and living, they cannot shoulder their future roles and responsibilities effectively. Thus, the school and teachers play a crucial role in socializing the children towards politics. Education has been regarded as an important variable to analyze the political behaviour. The foundations laid in the family should be consolidated in the school. The school is a more formalized institution than the family. The democratic experiences are deepened, enriched and expanded to the wider dimensions in the educational institutions.

Historically speaking, the schools are the basic and traditional institutions of learning. They have been imparting education through ages and have practically monopolized the sources of knowledge. It is in the school that the political culture is formally acquired and transmitted. Schools not only transmit the formal knowledge about culture but also the ethical sentiments, political attitudes and customs. "The
children in earlier school may uncritically absorb the culture to which their teachers give expression”. Among the educational institutions, the elementary school plays a crucial role in teaching the conceptions and beliefs and attitudes about the operation of a political system. The child is taught to be a good citizen through the class rituals and ceremonies such as pledging allegiance to the Flag, singing the National Anthem and other Patriotic Songs. The teacher may communicate political attitudes and orientations through overt expressions in class room discussions or even outside the classroom as they may feel less constrained in their behavior outside the class.

Based on the above discussion, it can be inferred that, the school socializes children both directly and indirectly. Direct socialization takes place through the curriculum such as national values, teaching about a country's past, its heritage, its heroes, traditions and glorious achievement of the state, thereby helping the students to develop a sense of pride and feeling of loyalty, a sense of belongingness to their country. A student becomes politically socialized during his school life not only through deliberate teaching of school curriculum but also by one's experiences at school. But the real experience about democratic living can be provided to the child through curriculum and co-curricular activities organized in the schools. Thus, the school develops citizenship qualities, such as discipline, co-operation, social awareness, tolerance, patriotism, rationalism and leadership. At the same time, students learn sincerity, discipline, and obedience to authority in the school.

Almond and Verba have rightly pointed out that, "the more extensive an individual's education, the more likely he is to become aware of the governmental institutions, to have more political information, to offer opinions on the political matters, to engage in political discussions with a wider range of people. Finally, they develop greater ability to influence political affairs and feel confident in his social environment and began to trust to the political system. Here, it is essential to quote the idea of Gandhi as he insisted mass education based on minimum
expenditure and resources. His ideas are valid even today from the economic and the political points of view. Gandhiji had a strong belief that, by spreading value based education one can develop meaningful political orientations in a society to make them become politically aware and participate as an active member of a democratic political system. In this way he believed that, education acts as a vehicle for the overall development of human personality. It is in the school that students can develop this character and personality. The views of Gandhi can cement the idea that, a democratic education is able to produce democratic citizens. Our democracy harbours many races and religions, castes and communities and sects. A healthy development of a democratic education can prevent the difficulties and differences arising out of such diversities. In this way school or educational institutions play a crucial role in the political socialization of the young minds.

3) Peer Groups:

The peer groups play a significant role when compared with the other two agents in the process of political socialization of the children. The problem of political socialization arises after the children emerge from the early influence of their family and schools into the world of higher classes that are known as the 'peer groups.' In school, the study of peer group interaction is important because, students stay for a longer time and share the peer group activities like sports, scouts, school sponsored clubs, leadership programmes and cultural associations. In their mutual interactions they internalize certain values. The Peer group refers to "a form of Primary group composed of members sharing relatively equal status and intimate ties". It is also known as "age-homogenous group" and informal face to face group." The individual may come into contact with different types of Peer group at different stages of his life, namely, children's, play-group, friendship, adolescent gang, youth and work-group etc". Usually Peer groups are formed among the intimate friends of equal age. In other words, it is a group of equals with equal age. These groups shape the values, attitudes and orientations of the children.
"Once a child starts attending school, he comes in contact with his friends in schools and in other places. The child spends much of its time outside the home with his friends; There children get enough time to learn new ideas, attitudes and behavior. What he learns at home may be reinforced by what he learns in his association with his Peer groups". They can interact freely with their fellow mates, because there is no authority and they learn participatory orientations and develop feelings of self-confidence and self-competence. These values and orientations help them later when they begin to perform political roles and to participate actively in the political process. Thus, Peer groups provide a sense of collective identity to the young individuals who enter communal life after completing their schooling. They unhesitatingly accept the values and beliefs of the groups with which one identifies.

"An individual joins some official and non-official group when he is an adult. In the office he watches the behavior of his elders and learns many things from them. Besides this, they also act as a member of many other associations namely, religious, cultural, social and economic bodies, whose functioning also determines their political behavior".

Based on the analysis of role played by the agents, the researcher has drawn the thin line of difference between family and peer groups. Political socialization starts firstly in family. In family the parent-child relationship is always hierarchical. In such a condition, the members of the family, the child and the parent naturally cannot enjoy the equal status. On the other hand, Peer groups comprise of members of about the same age. Hence it is non hierarchical and they can manage to enjoy an equal status in their relations with each other.

Secondly, family performs the task of establishing a child's basic and fundamental political orientations and knowledge through the process of Political Socialization. But the influence of a family begins to diminish when the child becomes an adult. The younger generation expects more freedom and desire to function independently. Here peer groups supplement the socializing function of
The family by preparing the individual for more specific political experience. It does not mean to say that, a Peer group always works in conflict with the family. It may often act as a political reinforcer of familial ideas rather than a resocializer. The extent to which a Peer group is able to replace the family as an agent of Political Socialization varies with the degree of parental control. For example in some countries like France, Germany and Belgium, the family asserts its control over the adolescents for a much longer period, while it is opposite in the case of America and Britain. Hence, the importance of Peer group as an agent of Political Socialization is greater in the latter than in the former. Again, the extent to which a Peer groups acts as a Political Socializer is no doubt depends on how far politics happens to create interest among the children.

4) Mass Media

It is observed that, Mass media plays a transformative role in a modern democratic system. "The term 'Mass Media' refers to forms of communication which are directed at large mass audiences without any personal contact". Radio, Television, News papers, Magazines and Cinema are the main Media of Communication. They provide a great deal of political information and very often they add their own interpretation of issues and events. Today we are living in an era of communication by which children can easily know about the government and its functions not only about their Political system but also about the other Political systems.

Mass media provides channels of Communication to receive information and to transmit it others. It provides up-to-date information about the Political happenings". Mass media's are the major source of information and it has decisive influence on the people's attitudes, opinions and behavior. Much of our Political information comes from Mass media. Radio, Television, News papers and Cinema to name a very few. One can communicate his views through these to others mass
media. If Family and school have limited influence, the mass media has a very wide coverage and as such it brings within its purview the whole citizenry of a country. The governments make use of Mass media to popularize and propagate their policies to their countrymen. We all knew that, "Politics is a communicative art". 34 since all these Medias are easily accessible to the children naturally they watch the political events that happen around them. Thus, in a democratic set up mass Medias acts as an important means in imparting education to masses. The children and the youth through these medias asses the role of public officials and to what extent their actions affect the public life. The entertainment programs also address the important contemporary issues that are in the political arena. The main events of attraction to the children are for example, Singirrounds, Harate, Matinamantapa debates and discussion on contemporary issues etc. They influence and affect the attitudes of the children. Thus, the channels of Mass Communication exercise their own impact upon the cognitive aspect of the individuals' personality. The Mass Medias inculcate different sets of values in the minds of the individuals.

5) Political Parties

The fifth and final agent of political socialization is political parties. Political Parties as such play a very important role. They play both expressive and instrumental roles. Parties are the 'Association of man.' They bring about political awakening among the people. They educate the common people and shape their attitudes and orientations about politics. They are considered important vehicles to communicate the political opinions and principles to the masses; They educate and train the people to participate in political life. To educate the citizenry, they devote enormous time and energy as well as other resources in trying to communicate with the voters.

In inculcating political values to the people, "Political parties are the important instrument through which people get a regular opportunity to get
involved in political actions of the society. By involving in political actions of the society, they are politically socialized by the political parties. Political parties are the part of a political culture. They may either reinforce the established political culture or may bring in significant change in the patterns of existing political Culture. "A political party is a group of people organized to secure to control the government in the political education of the masses and the children. Children through their posters, pamphlets, slogans, processions, wall paintings, public meetings, public speech and door to door canvas are attracted by these and observe them with curiosity. "They also disseminate the norms and values for the voters to use in their own process of evaluation". They ensure two-way communication between the government and the people. It is through parties that the government is constantly kept informed about the demands of the society, about the interests and attitudes of the people in relation to the governing process.

Thus, the role played by the political Parties in the developing societies is great because they teach the basic information about the political systems to the illiterate and the ignorant masses of their societies, thereby develop their cognitive map. They organize and articulate public opinions in order to bring out their opinions to bear on the governmental decisions. They educate and instruct the people on the public issues and clarify issues and alternatives. Ultimately, they prepare the citizens of tomorrow to join the mainstream of politics. After a detailed and indepth study of the prominent agents of political socialization. It can be inferred that, all the agents influence the children and the youth in their respective areas with certain limitations. At the same time the researcher does not undermine the part played by either one of these agents in socializing the children and preparing them to shoulder the political responsibility. In the subsequent chapters, the influence and impact of these agents are taken into consideration, while tabulating and analyzing the response of the respondents.
References:


