**POLITICAL SOCIALISATION**

The process by which individual in a political system learn their political orientations and disposition is called political socialisation, these orientations being beliefs, feelings and value components. It refers to the process in vogue in a society where the young and new comers get integrated within the society.

**Definitions**

Robert Levine defines ,”Political socialisation as the means by which individual acquires attitudes, habits and value relevant to the participation in political system”.

Peter H.Merkl, “political socialisation refers to the acquisition of political attitudes and orientation pattern by a member of a political system or sub-system”.

According to Almond and Powell, “political socialisation is the process by which political culture are maintained and changed”.

Easton and Dennis defines, “political socialisation as those development process by which persons acquire political orientations and pattern of behaviour”.

Allan R.Ball defines, “political socialisation as establishment and development of attitudes to beliefs about the political system”.

The main aim of political socialisation is the transmission of political values from one generation to another. It shape and transmit a nations political culture. It maintains transforms and sometimes creates the political culture of a people and successfully transmitting it from an old generation to a new one. It introduce values, norms and orientations in the minds of the individuals so that they develop trust in their political system and leave their imprints on the minds of their successors. Such a process of maintaining, transforming and creating a political culture is going on in all those countries of Asia, Africa which have their own independence recently.

**Forms**

The process of political socialisation has two forms:-

1. Homogeneous or continuous – Signifying that the individuals co-operate with each other in an atmosphere or mutual trust towards their political system.
2. Heterogeneous or discontinuous – signifying that the individuals have an attitude of mutual suspicion and hatred towards each other that eventually leads them to have disaffection with their political system.

**Agents of Political Socialisation**

1. **Family** – The first and foremost agent of socialisation is the family. This primary organisation has an authority, structure and a decision-making process. Family is the child first window to the outside world. From family he adopted all the behaviour which guided him through life. The child learn from the family about his surroundings, what to like and dislike which is important for his growing up.
2. **School or educational institution** – Individual acquire knowledge from the schools and universities he attended through which he interact with the world. The more the individual is educated he has high qualification which enable him to socialised. Education and institutions gave them the knowledge and power to socialised with others.
3. **Peer group -** The peer group is a group of people approximately of he same age, sharing similar problems. The more the individual is socialised the more knowledge he acquire. Through peer group individual come together as a group having a common ideas and views about the political system. They strive to produce a common good result.
4. **Employment experience** – Another agent of political socialisation is the employment experiences. Political orientations are shaped through participation in unions, collective bargaining, demonstrations and other forms of decision-making. Informal groups of employee exert influence on the attitude of their members towards political objects and events.
5. **Mass media** – The mass media whether directly controlled by the government or not tends to reinforce the existing political system. Through television, radio etc people started socialising and learn more about their government, the political party as well as the political system of their country which enable them to have a more wider view on the political system. Even those illiterate can learn about the political system through television.
6. **Political Parties** – A person relations with political parties and pressure groups and influential political leaders determines his attitudes towards politics. Through political propaganda, electioneering, presenting their views in written and spoken language by recruiting people and by articulating and aggregating their political interests, political parties become direct agents of political socialisation.
7. **Religious Institutions** – Religious institutions also plays an important role. Religious institutions have played and are playing an important role among the Sikhs in India in general and Punjab in particular. The same can be said of the Muslim in India.
8. **Symbols –** Symbols also play an effective role in political socialisation. The observation of birthdays or martyrdom days of national heroes like Gandhi, Bhagat Singh, Subhash Chandra Bose, Lala Lajpat Rai etc inculcates a new spirit among the youth and they begin to work for the Nation.

**Criticism**

The process of political socialisation maybe accused on the ground for being conservative. It does not serve the purpose of those who subscribe to the school or Marxism-Leninism, nor can it fully satisfy those who are in search for a real alternative to the school of scientific socialism. The Marxist openly declare that the philosophers have so far interpreted the world, the problem is how to change it. For this reason, they reject any concept of an open society like that of political socialisation as another ingenuous gift of the bourgeois mind. The Third World reveals that the concept is too much bureaucratic too much unequal distribution and not enough production, it neglect the infrastructure and too much politics for the elites and not enough participation for the masses.

**Conclusion**

We can conclude by saying that political socialisation itself is an important agent of a political system, because through political socialisation individuals learn values, beliefs, emotions, attitude about politics and it control the lives of almost every individuals. It encourage loyalty to the nation, the fostering of a particular system and it may increase either the support for or alienation from the system.