

Department of Political Science
Paper: General Sociology II
6th Semester (Major)

Topic: Factors of the Process of Socialization

Socialization is the process of learning group norms, habits and ideals. There are four factors of this process of learning. These are **imitation, suggestion, identification and language**. A brief description of these four factors is necessary:

(i) Imitation: Imitation is copying by an individual of the actions of another. For example, when the child attempts to walk impressively like his father swinging a stick and wearing spectacles, he is imitating. Imitation may be conscious or unconscious, spontaneous or deliberate, perceptual or ideational. In imitation the person imitating performs exactly the same activity as the one being performed before him.

Imitation is the main factor in the process of socialization of the child. Through it he learns many social behaviour patterns. The child as compared to adult possesses the greatest capacity for imitation. Language and pronunciation are acquired by the child only through imitation. It is because of the tendency to imitate that children are so susceptible to the influence of their parents and friends whose behaviour they imitate indiscriminately.

(ii) Suggestion: Suggestion is the process of communicating information which has no logical or self-evident basis. It may be conveyed through language, pictures or some similar medium. Suggestion influences not only behaviour with others but also one's own private and individual behaviour. In trade, industry, politics, education and every other field people acquainted with psychological facts make use of suggestion to have their ideas and notions accepted by other people and to make the latter behave according to their wishes. Actually, propaganda and advertising are based on the fundamental psychological principles of suggestion.

The suggestibility of the child is greater than that of the adult because in childhood he is devoid of maturity and reason. The suggestibility of an individual decreases with an increase in his maturity and mental level. It may be however necessary to keep in mind that there be able to be a difference in the suggestibility of children belonging to different societies and also the same society.

There are several external and internal conditions which enhance suggestibility. Thus temperament, intellectual ability, ignorance, inhibition, dissociation, emotional excitement and fatigue are some of the internal conditions of suggestibility. Among the

external conditions mention may be made of group situation, prestige of the suggested and public opinion.

(iii) Identification: In his early age, the child cannot make any distinction between his organism and environment. Most of his actions are random. They are natural reactions of which he is not conscious. As he grows in age, he comes to know of the nature of things which satisfy his needs. Such things become the object of his identification. Thus the toys with which he plays, the picture-book which he enjoys or looking at the mother who feeds him become the objects of his identification. The speed and area of identification increase with the growth in age. Through identification he becomes sociable.

(iv) Language: Language is the medium of social intercourse. It is the means of cultural transmission. At first the child utters some random syllables which have no meaning, but gradually he comes to learn his mother-tongue. Therein it has already been told that language moulds the personality of the individual from infancy.
