

Department of Political Science

BA (Major) 6th semester

Topic: Agencies of Socialisation

There exist a number of agencies in a society to socialise the child. To facilitate socialisation different agencies play important roles. These agencies are however interrelated. These agencies can be discussed as follows—

Family: The family plays an outstanding role in the socialisation process. In all societies other agencies besides the family contribute to socialisation such as educational institutions, the peer group etc. But family plays the most important role in the formation of personality. By the time other agencies contribute to this process family has already left an imprint on the personality of the child. The parents use both reward and punishment to imbibe what is socially required from a child.

The family has informal control over its members. Family being a mini society acts as a transmission belt between the individual and society. It trains the younger generation in such a way that it can take the adult roles in proper manner. As family is primary and intimate group, it uses informal methods of social control to check the undesirable behaviour on the part of its members. The process of socialisation remains a process because of the interplay between individual life cycle and family life cycle.

Peer Group: Peer Group means a group in which the members share some common characteristics such as age or sex etc. It is made up of the contemporaries of the child, his associates in school, in playground and in street. The growing child learns some very important lessons from his peer group. Since members of the peer group are at the same stage of socialisation, they freely and spontaneously interact with each other. They view the world through the same eyes and share the same subjective attitudes. In order to be accepted by his peer group, the child must exhibit the characteristic attitudes, the likes and dislikes.

Educational Institutions: Parents and peer groups are not the only agencies of the socialisation in modern societies. Every civilised society therefore has developed a set of formalised agencies of education (schools, colleges and universities) which have a great bearing on the socialisation process. It is in the educational institutions that the culture is formally transmitted and acquired in which the science and the art of one generation is passed on to the next.

The educational institutions not only help the growing child in learning language and other subjects but also instill the concept of time, discipline, team work, cooperation

and competition. Through the means of reward and punishment the desired behaviour pattern is reinforced whereas undesirable behaviour pattern meets with disapproval, ridicule and punishment.

In this way, the educational institutions come next to the family for the purpose of socialisation of the growing child. Educational institution is a very important socialiser and the means by which individual acquires social norms and values beyond those which are available for learning in the family and other groups.

Religion: Religion plays a very important role in socialisation. Religion instills the fear of hell in the individual so that he should refrain from bad and undesirable activities. Religion not only makes people religious but socialises them into the secular order.

Occupation: In the occupational world the individual finds himself with new shared interests and goals. He makes adjustments with the position he holds and also learns to make adjustment with other workers who may occupy equal or higher or lower position. While working, the individual enters into relations of cooperation, involving specialisation of tasks and at the same time learns the nature of class divisions. Work, for him, is a source of income but at the same time it gives identity and status within society as a whole.

Political Parties: Political parties attempt to seize political power and maintain it. They try to win the support of the members of the society on the basis of a socio-economic policy and programme. In the process they disseminate political values and norms and socialise the citizen. The political parties socialise the citizen for stability and change of political system.

Mass Media: The mass media of communication, particularly television, play an important role in the process of socialisation. The mass media of communication transmit information and messages which influence the personality of an individual to a great extent. In addition to this, communication media has an important effect in encouraging individuals to support the existing norms and values or oppose or change them.

Conclusion:

To conclude, environment stimuli often determine the growth of human personality. A proper environment may greatly determine whether the social or the self-centered forces will become supreme. Individual's social environment facilitates socialisation. If his mental and physical capacities are not good, he may not be able to make proper use of environment. However, the family plays perhaps the important part in the process of socialisation.

The child learns much from the family. After family, his playmates and school wield influence on his socialisation. After his education is over, he enters into a profession.

Marriage initiates a person into social responsibility, which is one of aims of socialisation. In short, socialisation is a process which begins at birth and continues until the death of individual.
