**Political Socialization**

The process of acquiring political values and attitudes is called political socialization, which occurs throughout our lifetimes as we come into contact with other people

**Agents of Political Socialization.**

    These Agents of Socialization all influence in one degree or another individual's political opinions: Family, Media, Friends, Teachers, Religion, Race, Gender, Age and Geography. These factors and many others that people are introduced to as they are growing up will affect their political views throughout the rest of their lives. Most political opinion is formed during childhood. Many Political Ideas are passed] down from Parents to young Adults through them expressing their beliefs.

**Factors / Agents :**

The agents a child surrounds him/she with during childhood is crucial to the child's development of future voting behaviours. Some of these agents include:

1.    Family: Glass (1986) recognizes family as a primary influence in the development of a child’s political orientation, mainly due to constant relationship between parents and child.

2.    Schools: Most influential of all agents, after the family, due to the child's extended exposure to a variety of political beliefs, such as friends and teachers, both respected sources of information for students.

3.    Peer group: It is a group of people approximately of the age, sharing similar problems. Peer groups become increasingly important influence on political attitude and behavior.

4.    Mass Media: Becker (1975) argues that the media functions as a medium of political information to adolescents and young children.

5.    Religion: Religious tradition can have a strong effect on someone's political views.

6.    Political Parties: Scholars such as Campbell (1960) note that political parties have very little direct influence on a child due to a contrast of social factors such as age, context, power, etc.

7.    Employment experience: Political orientation is 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.

8.    Symbols: Symbols are also play an effective role in political socialization. The observation of birth days or martyrdom days of national heroes inculcates (teaches) a new spirit among the youths and they begin to work for the nation.

**Importance of the Political Socialization**

§   It brings enlightenment (clarification) among the people.

§   It brings efficiency (competence) in the working of the political system.

§   Provide legitimacy (legality) to political system.

§   Helpful in the formation of the political culture.

§   Helpful in maintaining political culture.

§   It prepare the people for political roles.

§   Provide link between political system and social system.

§   Provides knowledge about the political matters.

§   Provide stability to political system.

In order to properly understand the politics of a country we must endeavor (effort) to understand the process of the political socialization of that country. The process of political socialization also contributes in the evolution (development), modification (change and adjustment) and orientation (direction) of political culture in a society.