**Role of Media in Political Socialization**

Media plays an important role in creating political awareness among the people and ensures their participation in the democratic process in Pakistan. It also plays a significant role in bringing changes in the society. Socialization is a long-term process that every human being undergoes as he or she becomes a functioning member of society. Socialization refers to the internalizing (affecting) of all of the lessons (trainings)from many sources concerning ways of behaving that are **approved or expected by society**, as individuals mature through every stage in the life cycle.”

Media is one of the agents that politically socialize masses. Radio and Television are playing significant role in a politically socialized life. Media is a source of information which not only affects daily activities of human life but also provides information about other events like developments being took place on national and international forums. **The extent of media and its possible effect on general public have been acknowledged in various media research studies.**

**The primary purpose of media is to ensure a well informed citizenry for our social and political structure**. The mass media provides information and programs that can promote democracy.

McLeod and his associates have categorized individual effects of media into four major types.

(i) Opinion formation and changes.

(ii) Changes in cognition. (reasoning, perception)

(iii) How individual understand the political system.

(iv) What is their participation?

**Case in Pakistan**

If we take the issue of restoration of judiciary in Pakistan as an example, media played a pivotal role in creating political awareness among masses towards autonomous and independent judiciary, while on the other hand some of our political players were not in favor of restoration of judiciary. Media opted for people’s aspirations and projected their agenda.Political talk shows and discussion programs played very effective role in creating political awareness in masses.

During elections of 2007 and 2013, media generated the opinion of common voters by presenting different parties’ manifestos. The issues of election campaign and images of candidates are to be the major factors of voting. These are aimed for the voters to get information about the political parties. It raises a question about the source of information.

It is evident that most of common people get their desired political information through political programs of media. “Voting is a sacred act in democracy. Whatever its virtue, a political system cannot begin to call itself democratic unless its citizens, one and all, have the right to vote. By degrees, many societies have met this basic standard with each of their citizens empowered to elect representatives or vote directly on policy.

**Social Learning Theory**

“People learn through observing others’ behavior, attitudes, and outcomes of those behaviors. Most human behavior is learned observationally through modeling: from observing others, one forms an idea of how new behaviors are performed, and on later occasions this coded information serves as a guide for action”.

**Agenda Setting**

Agenda setting describes a very powerful influence of the media – the ability to tell us what issues are important. As far back as 1922, the newspaper columnist Walter Lippman was concerned that the media had the power to present images to the public. McCombs and Shaw investigated presidential campaigns in 1968, 1972 and 1976. In the research done in 1968 they focused on two elements: awareness and information. Investigating the agenda-setting function of the mass media, they attempted to assess the relationship between what voters in one community said were important issues and the actual content of the media messages used during the campaign. McCombs and Shaw concluded that the mass media exerted a significant influence on what voters considered to be the major issues of the campaign.

**Gatekeeping**

Kurt Lewin was apparently the first one to use the term "gatekeeping," which he used to describe a wife or mother as the person who decides which foods end up on the family's dinner table. (Lewin, 1947). The gatekeeper is the person who decides what shall pass through each gate section, of which, in any process, there are several. Although he applied it originally to the food chain, he then added that the gating process can include a news item winding through communication channels in a group. This is the point from which most gatekeeper studies in communication are launched. White (1961) was the person who seized upon Lewin's comments and turned it solidly toward journalism in 1950. In a political system there are gatekeepers, individuals or institutions which control access to positions of power and regulate the flow of information and political influence. Gatekeepers exist in many jobs, and their choices hold the potential to color mental pictures that are subsequently created in people’s understanding of what is happening in the world around them. Media gatekeeping showed that decision making is based on principles of news values, organizational routines, input structure and common sense. Gatekeeping is vital in communication planning and almost al communication planning roles include some aspect of gatekeeping.

**Spiral of Science**

The spiral of silence theory is a political science and mass communication theory proposed by the German political scientist Elisabeth Noelle-Neumann, which stipulates that individuals have a fear of isolation, which results from the idea that a social group or the society in general might isolate, neglect, or exclude.

**Cultivation Theory**

The cultivation theory was proposed by George Gerbner. ... today, cultivation theory is applied to studies on health, religion, sex roles, political orientations, etc.