

In the Name of God, the Most Merciful, the Most Kind



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## Education Starts at Home

Some parents think that once their children start going to school, they can relax and enjoy; however, researches in this regard show that parents have an even larger influence on their children's academic results than the schools. Most of a child's ability to interconnect, to share with teachers and peers and their attitude to learning, is shaped from home. Parents can, without a tinge of doubt, assist largely in giving their children a helping hand, by starting their education and tutoring at home.

Things as simple as baking a cake with their children can help parents in the education of the children. Measuring the ingredients for a cake is a basic form of mathematics. Another way of assisting young children in basic mathematics is simply planning to buy different things that are required at home; for example, cups, glasses, oranges, bags, and so on. Children often find these real life experiences very much helpful and through these examples they can solve their mathematical problems more easily. Another way that parents can support their children with their Math, is to give them pocket money. It, necessarily, does not have to be a large sum of money, and they may be required to chores to earn it. This not only teaches them about the value of money, but they may be required to bring in use their basic Math so as to work out how long they will have to save in order to be able to buy the special toy that they wish. This implies that children are improving their sense about money, and at the same time their Math skills.

Reading to children at an early age can already prepare them before they start school. However, parents should not halt reading to children when they start going to school. They, mostly, like to be read to, particularly different stories and it can help to increase their vocabulary as well. Parents can also improve their children's reading skills by facilitating them with reading opportunities. Parents can read their children books, magazines, sign or anything else of their interest.

Making children learn the alphabet while they are young, can also benefit them with their spelling and reading. Making children use the right equipment can help with their education. Giving them a noiseless place where they can work, read and do homework, with a bright reading light and a comfortable chair and desk, are just some of these things. Parents can also assist their children by showing them with some reference books, and any other pertinent learning material they might require.

There are different ways that parents can support their children with their oral communication skills. Some of these involve letting their children answer the phone and order food and contribute in family conversation and casual conversation with neighbors so that they can experience varied situations where different types of speeches are used. It is also significant to encourage good and ethical speech, and parents should do this by using correct speech themselves, and helping their children when they say something incorrectly.

Parents can also help with society and environment in a number of different ways. For example, they can show their children how the scale and legends on a road map help to determine different routes. They can also support their children with finding right information for assignments, but they have to be careful that they do not do the assignments for them.

Science is everywhere around the world and of great importance; therefore, helping children with this subject is essential and it is not very difficult for the parents as well. Pointing out flora and fauna in the garden for example is giving children a basic scientific education. The fridge, TV, air-conditioner, and computer are all linked to science in one way or another, and teaching young children about these things and various others, can help to develop their scientific minds. Health starts from an early age, and teaching children basic things at home about health can help them when they start to go to school. Parents can teach their children about food, exercise, and rest and this will help them with health, as these things are related to it. Parents can also teach their children the importance of safety rules, hand washing, and caring for teeth, all of which are necessary knowledge for children.

Obviously, parents do need to take a lively and concerned role in the education of their children. As revealed, there is a multiplicity of different things that parents should do to help their children with their education, but of course there are many more things that parents can do. If parents do not do any of these things, you can easily see how far their children may fall behind when they go to school. So if parents are interested that their children should do well at school, they must be organized enough to help educate their children at home.

## Functions and Operations of Political Party in Democratic Systems

By Mohammad Zahir Akbari

Politics is the process to organize how we live together in a society, and the purpose of political parties is to join people who hold similar points of view about the government together. They usually elect officials who will try to carry out the party's policies. A political party offers candidates for public office. It sets out positions on fundamental issues that may range from security, economy, education and Health. When people in a democracy disagree about what the government should do, voters express their opinions by voting for the candidates that most closely reflect their views. Political parties provide a way for voters to easily identify a candidate's positions. Political parties may be large or small, national or local. Large political parties generally have millions of members and supporters but each one needs to promote a broad set of core beliefs and platform to attract more voters. In democratic election campaigns, parties compete freely for votes; such competition is one of the hallmarks of democracy. In the other words, every citizen can participate in this process - by freely acceding information about political issues, by openly expressing the own opinion on public affairs, by formulating expectations, proposals or requirements without fear of repression, by voting in elections, by engaging in civil society organizations or political parties, or by standing up as a candidate in democratic elections. In this way, democracy is the government of the people, by the people, for the people. Unfortunately, the Modern Political parties which are the central institutions for a modern democracy have not formed yet in Afghanistan. The current parties are more likely, to a business firm rather than a stable party having long term platform. Firstly, due to lack of political experiences; secondly, due to socio-political facts prevent from forming strong party based on people's will and meritocracy criteria. Anyway, modern political party should not be confused with associations, federations, or tribe-driven groups. A well-known definition of political parties comes from the American political scientist Antony Downs, who wrote: "A political party is a team of men seeking to control the governing apparatus by gaining office in a duly constituted election". Parties in opposition should exercise an important function in a democratic system as a "watchdog" of government policy and as a political alternative in the future, and expected to express itself on all issues relevant for government. Parties are expected to propose views on domestic and foreign policies, economic and social policies, and youth and civil policies etc. In order to meet these requirements, each party should have certain platform and programs.

In a democracy, most if not all citizens should be involved in political activities. However, a direct democracy where every citizen is directly involved in all political decisions is not possible within modern mass societies. This is why a modern democracy needs institutions and organizations that represent the will and the interests of the citizens as authentically as possible. These can be associations, informal groups or non-governmental organizations. In particular, the political parties carry out such a representative function. They offer to the citizens the possibility to influence politics and political decisions. They are an important instrument and institution of politics. Hence, without political parties, a modern representative democracy is not conceivable. Only, the parties ensure that the citizens are permanently capable to act politically. They articulate and integrate differ-

ent interests, visions and opinions. They are also the main source for the recruitment of political elites.

According to pluralistic theories, the formation of political parties achieved through an open process of competition between candidates. Due to the diversity of opinions and social conflicts there is no perfect solution to problems unless the decisions have to be made on the basis of consent and approval of a majority of the citizens. Nevertheless, there may be no "tyranny of the majority" that offends democratic rules and violates inalienable human rights. Even majority decisions may imply deficiencies or even injustice. Therefore, a distinct and constitutionally guaranteed protection of minorities on the one hand, as well as the recognition of voting or election defeat of the losing side on the other hand - provided that it is a (largely) free and fair poll - are constitutive elements of this concept of democracy.

The major Functions of political parties

(1) They articulate and aggregate social interests: Parties express public expectations and demands of social groupings to the political system (function of political opinion-making). (2) They recruit political personnel and nurture future generations of politicians: They select persons and present them as candidates for elections (function of selection). (3) they Unite and lead: Parties integrate various interests into a general political project and transform it into a political program, for which they campaign to receive the consent and support of a majority (function of integration). (4) They promote the political socialization and participation of citizens: Parties create a link between citizens and the political system; they enable political participation of individuals and groupings with the prospect of success. (function of socialization and participation). (5) They organise the government. They participate in elections to occupy political charges. Normally in party democracies, a good part of government authorities arise from political parties (function of exercising political power). (6) They contribute to the legitimacy of the political system: in establishing the connection between citizens, social groupings and the political system, the parties contribute in anchoring the political order in the consciousness of the citizens and in social forces (function of legitimating). In order to establish a successful political function and operation a party needs a permanent organization. With regard to the institutional setup of a party there are different basic patterns. On the basis of an individual, meaning the direct membership of individual persons, many parties are organized in a decentralized form that is on the basis of local associations, according to residential areas or districts, or at least at a municipal level. Higher levels of party organization usually follow the structure of the state. The local party organizations are of particular importance for a stable and active party. Here, members can directly be politically active. At this level, they have the deepest contact with their party and politics in general. Local party organizations should conduct regular membership meetings, and support, promote and integrate new members. These should be invited to the party and district meetings and social events, as well as to discussions on local politics issues and local initiatives, for instance, residential redevelopment, road building or laying, schools, business settlements etc.

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## Globalization and its New Discontents

By Joseph E. Stiglitz

Fifteen years ago, I wrote a little book, entitled Globalization and its Discontents, describing growing opposition in the developing world to globalizing reforms. It seemed a mystery: people in developing countries had been told that globalization would increase overall wellbeing. So why had so many people become so hostile to it? Now, globalization's opponents in the emerging markets and developing countries have been joined by tens of millions in the advanced countries. Opinion polls, including a careful study by Stanley Greenberg and his associates for the Roosevelt Institute, show that trade is among the major sources of discontent for a large share of Americans. Similar views are apparent in Europe.

How can something that our political leaders - and many an economist - said would make everyone better off be so reviled?

One answer occasionally heard from the neoliberal economists who advocated for these policies is that people are better off. They just don't know it. Their discontent is a matter for psychiatrists, not economists.

But income data suggest that it is the neoliberals who may benefit from therapy. Large segments of the population in advanced countries have not been doing well: in the US, the bottom 90% has endured income stagnation for a third of a century. Median income for full-time male workers is actually lower in real (inflation-adjusted) terms than it was 42 years ago. At the bottom, real wages are comparable to their level 60 years ago. The effects of the economic pain and dislocation that many Americans are experiencing are even showing up in health statistics. For example, the economists Anne Case and Angus Deaton, this year's Nobel laureate, have shown that life expectancy among segments of white Americans is declining.

Things are a little better in Europe - but only a little better.

Branko Milanovic's new book Global Inequality: A New Approach for the Age of Globalization provides some vital insights, looking at the big winners and losers in terms of income over the two decades from 1988 to 2008. Among the big winners were the global 1%, the world's plutocrats, but also the middle class in newly emerging economies. Among the big losers - those who gained little or nothing - were those at the bottom and the middle and working classes in the advanced countries. Globalization is not the only reason, but it is one of the reasons.

Under the assumption of perfect markets (which underlies most neoliberal economic analyses) free trade equalizes the wages of unskilled workers around the world. Trade in goods is a substitute for the movement of people. Importing goods from China - goods that require a lot of unskilled workers to produce - reduces the demand for unskilled workers in Europe and the US. This force is so strong that if there were no transportation costs, and if the US and Europe had no other source of competitive advantage, such as in technology, eventually it would be as if Chinese workers

continued to migrate to the US and Europe until wage differences had been eliminated entirely. Not surprisingly, the neoliberals never advertised this consequence of trade liberalization, as they claimed - one could say lied - that all would benefit.

The failure of globalization to deliver on the promises of mainstream politicians has surely undermined trust and confidence in the "establishment." And governments' offers of generous bailouts for the banks that had brought on the 2008 financial crisis, while leaving ordinary citizens largely to fend for themselves, reinforced the view that this failure was not merely a matter of economic misjudgments. In the US, Congressional Republicans even opposed assistance to those who were directly hurt by globalization. More generally, neoliberals, apparently worried about adverse incentive effects, have opposed welfare measures that would have protected the losers. But they can't have it both ways: if globalization is to benefit most members of society, strong social-protection measures must be in place. The Scandinavians figured this out long ago; it was part of the social contract that maintained an open society - open to globalization and changes in technology. Neoliberals elsewhere have not - and now, in elections in the US and Europe, they are having their comeuppance. Globalization is, of course, only one part of what is going on; technological innovation is another part. But all of this openness and disruption were supposed to make us richer, and the advanced countries could have introduced policies to ensure that the gains were widely shared. Instead, they pushed for policies that restructured markets in ways that increased inequality and undermined overall economic performance; growth actually slowed as the rules of the game were rewritten to advance the interests of banks and corporations - the rich and powerful - at the expense of everyone else. Workers' bargaining power was weakened; in the US, at least, competition laws didn't keep up with the times; and existing laws were inadequately enforced. Financialization continued apace and corporate governance worsened. Now, as I point out in my recent book Rewriting the Rules of the American Economy, the rules of the game need to be changed again - and this must include measures to tame globalization. The two new large agreements that President Barack Obama has been pushing - the Trans-Pacific Partnership between the US and 11 Pacific Rim countries, and the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership between the EU and the US - are moves in the wrong direction. The main message of Globalization and its Discontents was that the problem was not globalization, but how the process was being managed. Unfortunately, the management didn't change. Fifteen years later, the new discontents have brought that message home to the advanced economies. (Courtesy Project Syndicate)

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