

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



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The Process of Political Learning

Political socialization is both a formal and informal process of social and educative learning, by which political attitudes, skill, priorities and beliefs are intentionally and unintentionally absorbed by the individuals or citizens. Being a significant process, it orientates the people towards a particular type of political behavior, philosophy and ideology. At the same time, it causes stability or instability, continuity or change and strength or weakness in a political system, and in the government of the country. It determines the type of participation in politics and government by the people. It is, without any doubt, the political aspect of the general process of socialization which is always taking place in every society and culture.

Political learning begins early in family life, when the child is still young, when different treatment of the little boys and girls produces different political attitudes and behavior in them. Generally speaking, boys are expected to be active in politics, while girls are deliberately denied political orientation and participation by their parents and other people around them. Class differences also produce differences in political attitudes and behavior. Rich stratum of the society expects that its members should learn political skills and the attitude of domination or superiority. On the other hand, the poor people, in most of the cases are humble and docile and they socialize their children in the same way. Therefore, their attitudes and behavior are mostly submissive.

There are different agents of political socialization. Some of them are relatively active and instill the political attitude among the individuals in a compelling manner, while some others are passive in this regard and do not directly promulgate such socialization. Family is among the active agents of political socialization. Most of the basic political socialization takes place within the family. In tribal societies, like Afghanistan, the political socialization within the family is also influenced by certain groups that are outside the family; such as tribes, casts, clans and ethnicities. Another powerful agent is educational institution.

Not only the political attitudes and beliefs of the teachers influence their pupils but civic education is purposely imparted to them. This is one reason why certain subjects relate to the civic education. Moreover, patriotism is also taught in schools by different methods. However, certain formal and modern ways through which basic political understanding can be taught to the children in school are not taught to the children. Mostly, in our country, such education is not part of school course. Among the other agents of political socialization, TVs, radios, newspapers and journals, political parties, pressure groups and interest groups are the most dominant ones. Sometimes, the influences of these agents are deliberate and consciously inculcated but most often they are not so.

In addition, their influence produces some destabilizing effect on the growing minds of young people as they sometimes learn the political cynicism of the adults around them. Resultantly, they start downgrading political sentiments of loyalty and patriotism.

This sort of dichotomy in political socialization, in certain cases, causes the phenomenon of revolt of the youth, more dominantly among the college and university students. Meanwhile, in certain strictly ideological countries, deliberate political socialization, even indoctrination is considered as one of the primary duties of the state. Once an individual is properly socialized in politics, he can then participate actively in political matters. Such participation is really important for a society, particularly when the society is based on a democratic political system. Democracy demands from the people that they should be vigilant and participatory so that they have their share of participation in the matters of the state.

Properly politicized person, having enough political awareness, can have continuous look over the decisions of the government, the policies of the policy makers and the decisions of different political institutions. They are also in a position to take actions, which may be necessary if the decisions and the policies are not for the advantage of the people. Unfortunately, politics is considered to be very much negative in our society and different institutions, other than the political ones, make sure that they are not politicized in any manner. They keep their members away from politics and advise them to keep a distance from it. In such circumstances, the individuals start losing confidence from politics and consider it to be an evil instead of a blessing.

This gives rise to individuals who are not fully aware of their political circumstances and can easily be fooled by the politicians and utilized in different ways by them. Man is a political being. If he is not interested in politics, politics is interested in him; therefore, he must make efforts to have political awareness and understanding and also strive so that the younger generations are also socialized properly in this regard. The different institutions in the society should also take steps to facilitate the political socialization so that we have a politically aware and active young generation.



Globalization of Terrorism and Strategies for combating it

By Syed Asif Hussaini

Despite the fact that Afghanistan has suffered heavily as a result of horror and terror, the threat posed by terrorists will not be restricted within a particular geography. The fact has proved that terrorist groups extend their reach every day within Europe and America, which indicates that terrorism knows no limitation or boundary and will intensify in case of not being combated. On the other hand, there are concerns that the obstacles before their access to the weapon of mass destruction seem to be reduced. The modern technology and access to modern products are mushrooming uncontrollably and it is feared that terrorists get access to destructive weapons without the support of states. Access to modern technological products has compounded the threat. With this fact, terrorists infiltrated safe places in Europe such as metro stations and daytime protected areas.

The shadow of terrorism spread fear beyond the center of crisis. Since terrorism is a global phenomenon, it needs to be reacted by all states. Currently, one cannot define terrorist as a certain military group with certain geography rather it is a network combining of groups and individuals locating in several countries and among different nations. The presence of some European citizens in the self-styled Islamic State in Iraq and Syria (ISIS) group is jaw-dropping for political analysts. Although terrorists such as ISIS and the Taliban are operating as non-state groups, it does not necessarily mean that they are not in relation with people or completely lack state supports. Their equipment and military strategy reveal that their operations are engineered by strong intelligence and state supports. Despite the fact that some countries have defined their immediate interests in supporting terrorist groups, the international community will have to make those countries to change their policy in this regard and observe the principles of international law.

The more seriously the international community pursues this issue, the more easily it will persuade its backers to stop. The problem is that this demand has not been planned based on a common will.

However, nations expect that the international community should give the UN more important role in designing and implementing the anti-terrorist campaign. Otherwise, any countries in case of undertaking this responsibility will be affected by prevailing interests and policies. Therefore, a number of countries urge that the UN should play the greater role and the Security Council should take the necessary measures and military action against terrorism.

The philosophy behind the United Nation's Charter is stated to be supporting the fundamental principles of human

rights, dignity and human values and sustainable universal peace.

The United Nations created the Interim Terrorism Committee in 1972 for the first time through the General Assembly. Similarly, the Security Council issued the 8631 and 3731 resolutions in this regard following the 11 September.

In addition to condemning the terrorist attacks on the US, these resolutions introduced terrorism as a threat to international peace and security and recognized individual and collective defense for the United States.

The UN urged all countries to cooperate with one another to capture the organizers, supporters and perpetrators of these attacks. It was stressed in the resolution that anyone supported the perpetrators and organizers of 9/11 attacks financially or in any other ways, would be held responsible. The UN urged the international community through the resolutions to strengthen their efforts to prevent terrorist acts by cooperating and fully implementing the Security Council's international anti-terrorist conventions. The 3731 resolution also emphasized the fight against terrorist acts that endangered international peace and security in any way and with any means.

But the fact is that the UN has not implemented the issues stressed in resolutions regarding the countries supporting terrorism. The UN has neither fulfilled its responsibility about Pakistan which is said to support Haqqani network and other terrorist groups. Therefore, it is more likely that the UN and Security Council will not be able to fulfill their legal responsibilities and institutionalize sustainable peace at international level only through issuing resolution. Thus, the UN must launch a serious global effort to pursue and arrest terrorists and put pressure on their supporters.

In addition to putting pressure on supporters of terrorist groups, calling and facilitating Arab and Islamic countries in anti-terrorist campaign will be fundamental step that yet to be taken. The experience of Cold War suggests that any kinds of efforts for liberation should be accompanied by supporting the poverty-stricken countries financially and economically. To combat terrorism in a country such as Afghanistan, efforts should be made to provide economic assistance for the establishment of a stable political rule since poor countries are always susceptible to crisis and in need of double support of international community. The war in Afghanistan and Iraq has proved that the weakness of the post-crisis governments will make it possible for terrorist organizations to reinforce their terrorist acts through capitalizing on disorder.

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Helping the Heroines of Polio Eradication

By Minda Dentler

Last month, world governments and other donors pledged \$1.2 billion to help carry the 30-year fight to eradicate polio over the finish line. At its height, the polio epidemic caused 350,000 cases of paralysis in children every year. Last year, only 37 cases were reported. So far this year, the number stands at six.

But as momentous as these gains are, victory over polio is not yet assured. And one factor - the role of female vaccinators - will be a critical determinant of success.

Women have long been on the front lines of the global effort to end polio. In places like the tribal areas of Pakistan, male vaccinators are often not allowed to enter a stranger's home, whereas female health workers can deliver the vaccine to vulnerable children, along with other routine immunizations and basic health services.

In 2015, I traveled to neighboring India to take part in a national immunization campaign, joining an all-female team of health workers assigned to administer the polio vaccine to children in an impoverished part of New Delhi. I accompanied a local health worker, Deepika, on my crutches, as I have been crippled by polio myself.

We made our way through the crowded dirt paths, and at one house, a mother of three whom Deepika knew well invited us in. Deepika paused knowingly: "Someone is missing," she said, counting two children. The mother replied that her eldest child had gone to another village. Deepika recorded this fact in her notepad, vowing to return, and vaccinated the remaining children before moving on. Even one child missed is too many. Where polio still persists - in Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Nigeria - vaccinators like Deepika work tirelessly to reach every child. This "last mile" in the global polio eradication drive is indeed the toughest. According to the June 2017 report of the Independent Monitoring Board (IMB) of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative, more than a million children remain unvaccinated, including 858,000 in Pakistan alone. The hardest-to-reach children in Pakistan are those on the move, traveling from relative to relative as families search for a better life, often crossing the Afghan border. While some of these children are vaccinated at border crossings, many are missed.

The IMB is now calling for a new approach: finding the children not when they are in transit, but wherever they reside, no matter how short their stay. This strategy calls for deep local knowledge to anticipate when a child will return, so that a vaccinator can be there. And who better to know such intimate details than the women of the communities in need of this service?

In the Pakistani district of Kohat, south of Peshawar, female vaccinators have been credited with helping to lower the number of unvaccinated children from 30,000 to 22,000, and to reduce the number of vaccine refusals from around 4,000 to 400. These brave and dedicated women conduct their work despite great obstacles, including threats to their safety. One health worker described how she has been going door to door to administer the polio vaccine to children for 16 years. Despite pleas from her family to stop, she persists, heartened by the fact that for years, not a single child in her area had been crippled by polio.

Conversely, in Quetta, the area of Pakistan with the highest number of susceptible children, female vaccinators are in short supply, and turnover is high. There, the number of confirmed polio cases is on the rise. These two cities tell the story of the polio eradication campaign: success, or failure, depends on the role that female vaccinators play. To ensure that female vaccinators stay engaged in this fight, it is essential to address the obstacles - whether physical security, social constraints, or low pay - that they confront. Let us not forget that the risks these women take to protect everyone from a disease that has taken an enormous toll on global health. As a polio survivor, I simply cannot fathom the possibility that, with complete eradication in our sights, we might allow polio to return.

Since UNICEF began emphasizing the hiring of women for its polio program in 2014, the number of female vaccinators has increased dramatically. Nearly 62% of vaccinators in Nigeria are women. In Pakistan, the proportion of female vaccinators is 58%, and 30% in Afghanistan. As Aidan O'Leary, UNICEF's chief of anti-polio efforts in Pakistan, has noted, "female vaccinators are driving every single operational gain that is being made." To be sure, female vaccinators are not the only ones immersed in this global fight. Religious and local leaders have played pivotal roles in building public understanding and engagement. Police and military personnel are sometimes needed to protect vaccinators from security threats. And, of course, political commitments at the highest levels have kept the momentum going. But at the end of the day, women on the ground know their communities best, and are uniquely qualified to finish the job. Completing the last mile will require creativity and tenacity, and governments and donors should support the women who will get the world across the finish line, to a world with zero polio cases - forever.

Minda Dentler, a 2017 Aspen New Voices fellow, is a polio survivor and a global health advocate. In 2013, she became the first female wheelchair athlete to complete the Ironman World Championship in Kona, Hawaii

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