

## **Curriculum and Political Socialization: a Case Study of Secondary Schools in Pakistan**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The political socialization is considered significant for the real democracy which is further well thought-out a key to the progress and prosperity of a country. In this study, efforts are made to determine the extent of political knowledge incorporated in the compulsory subjects taught at secondary level. The study was qualitative as well as quantitative in design. The content analysis of the eight compulsory books being taught at secondary level was carried out. In quantitative approach, survey research design was used. Data were collected from 828 Secondary School Teachers (SSTs) by a self-developed Likert Scale to validate the results of the content analysis. The reliability of the tool was determined by computing the value of Alpha coefficient that was 0.91. The collected data were analyzed by using descriptive and inferential statistics. The results of the study showed that neither the curricula nor the teachers were developing the sense of political socialization among the students. It is suggested that a wide range of topics on basic political knowledge should be incorporated in the present curricula. A teacher training mechanism should also be introduced and made functional through which the teachers themselves got interested in developing political socialization among the students.

**Keywords:** *Curriculum, Political Socialization, Secondary Schools, Pakistan*

### **Introduction**

Socialization is a process in which a child becomes familiar with the system of society and shapes his responses to different phenomena and it examines the social, political, economic and cultural values of society. Political socialization is a process of development of attitudes and beliefs of political system. This process encourages the individual to be loyal to his nation, foster the particular beliefs and values and support for the system. Political socialization is very important process in which the individual get involved in political activities. (Wiley, 1976) Political socialization acts as a bridge between the political and social system (Michael & Philip, 1971).

Political socialization is the process of purposeful inclusion of political information, values and practices through educational institutions which have been formally assigned by this responsibility. A broader conception in this regard would take in all political learning, formal and informal, purposeful and unplanned (Hyman, 1959). Political socialization inculcates the norms, orientations, values and beliefs in individual's mind so that their trust may be developed for political system and they become well aware and informed citizens. The politically informed citizenry, of course, play their vital role in developing and strengthening the democratic system within a country. The real democratic system promotes democratic behaviors among the public which is considered the symbol of democracy. (Johri, 1987)

In Europe, policy makers were trying to find the answer of the questions how to sustain stable democracy and how to convert the authoritarian regimes into the democratic regimes. Finally, they did efforts to consolidate the democratic behavior within the society through political knowledge. Democracy has challenges like diversified cultural values and norms, linked with the political traditions and the political environment. What so ever the issues dealing with the political process in Europe, the theme line is that the European policy makers focused on the institutional making process through the educational channel, the educational institutions. The objective was to develop the informed citizen so that the democratic behavior, concerned to the responsibilities and the duties, are the timeline development within the political orientation of the European society. (Lange, 2012)

It is acknowledged that the young European is required to learn the values of the democratic citizens. The Europeans are engaged to discuss the experiences of the democratic citizens to prepare them for the future role of the individuals within the institutions like parliament and political parties. In this way, they would be in the position to learn the political ideologies and the scientific interests to train for the representative democracy, normally the young are ignored. They focused on the educational policies and the formation of the curriculum, how to develop the political engagement culture within the individuals and how to educate them politically. In fact, all these efforts are done to politically civilize the individuals. It has been observed that the young people are not aware of the political education and the political systems, even then they do not have the exact information about the casting of vote and the political issues and the election process, because majority of them do not have the political affiliation with the political parties. (Print, 2013)

It is the school where the civic education is given at the elementary and the secondary level. The school has influential and the effective role within the European and the American society. According to their opinions, the issue is to address the roots of the democracy. The efforts are made to invoke the democratic attitudes within the school environment through the educational curriculum. It is school environment and the course contents which can promote the democratic vision within the future generation. The open-society is generated in Europe to consolidate the indifferences of the opinions. It is observed that within the open societies the social equality is developed to frame the stable political culture and further to promote the liberal society. The democratic society and the development of the institutions are interlinked and have constant learning process. These

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societies will strengthen the citizen to avoid intolerance and violence. Within these societies the institutional challenges for the democratic institutions are addressed. (Afzal, 2003)

The political Education now is a global concerned issue because the future generation has no experience with the political affairs. For meeting these challenges the government is interested to consolidate the democratic culture through educational institutions. In this regard a serious commitment is required to generate a society having political knowledge with the help of curriculum formation. It has been keenly observed that only a single school subject is not responsible to promote political education but the issue is that the education policy makers need to address all the subjects as source of democratic inspiration. The school subjects are linked with school life but here is the important issue that the subject should cover the issues of the political system and they should address the democratic action of the society. In Europe within school the students are taught the democratic learning experience since last twenty years through democratic actions and democratic studies. The efforts are done to apply the practical knowledge of democracy over the school children through the course curriculum. It is the responsibility of the school curriculum to carry on democratic learning and experiences. In Germany the policy maker established the German Association for Democratic Education Institution just to promote the competency level of the students to deal democracy through the course content (Beutel, 2012).

It is considered that school should perform a crucial activity to develop an inform citizen in terms of the democratic polity. In America, the schools have played major role to develop a democratic citizen. From Thomas Jefferson to Horace Mann have focused on the development of a public school system because it is the nursery to produce informed citizen, still the same is following in American schools. Today, the same opinion has been presented by various research scholars that school is the central unit to deliver civic society (Ajzen, 2011).

The school system is responsible for promoting good citizen, democratic behavior, and responsible citizen. It develops a sense of commitment to introduce political awareness within society without the political engagement theoretically; it could not be possible to introduce civics citizenship within society. In fact, school is engaged to generate active citizens, who has better understanding electorate system, democratization process, political participation and politically be engaged person. In fact school's role is not treated as effective instrument to link with the political socialization (Galston, 2009).

The school's role is undermined and treated as less effective in this sense. It is the tragedy that the relationship between the school and the political socialization has not been understood in detailed manner. The scholars did efforts to link between the education and the political development but the policy makers failed to bridge both. It has been observed that few scholars did scholarly efforts to introduce a relationship of political awareness and the political engagement with the schools, curriculum, national education policies and the student's mental inclination towards the existing political system. Because of this factor, little understanding is developed among the schools, children toward the institutionalization process. Now the importance should be given to the schools which can play effective role in shaping the individual behavior. It is important for the policy makers to identify

those factors which can link school to democratic values and the political behavior (Ali, 2012).

The school can literate student as if they are provided the civic knowledge, the political history of the given society and governmental affairs of the state. Structure of the government will be the core theme of the school system. Beside this the governmental affairs meant as to involve the students on the local, national and international politics to make ensure what the students are thinking and what the government has options before the policy making. It is to be discussed how the students should be introduce political awareness and further understanding the performance of the institution. In order to achieve this objective, the political literacy program should be designed in which the students able to perform practically (Doğanay, 1997).

Curriculum has been referred as a breath of the education system. Its scope is broad and it has diversified objectives to integrate the society in all aspects of life. It is the curriculum which has the answer how to develop the students from the perspective of political awareness and political education. It has principles, concepts and ideas. It covers the knowledge and attitude of the students to generate democratic politics. Curriculum has three dimensions. First dimension is called knowledge. Knowledge referred as to cover the social, cultural, political and economic participation of the students in future for the society. Second dimension is referred as attitudes and values. The third dimension is referred as skills within the students. Now it is required by the policy makers before designing the curriculum to keep in mind that what sort of education is required to make the students politically aware and democratically sound. Besides this it is the responsibility of the curriculum makers to determine the dimension of the knowledge, required for citizenship education. Finally the curriculum makers has to take the broad vision of the subjects, taught to the students within the school, in the context of social, cultural and political aspects . Three major points in the political citizenship curriculum are needed to be addresses (Cox, 2005).

To focus on introducing the role of the political institution in each subject of curriculum

To educate the secondary school students in terms of expansion of their knowledge regarding the political history of the given society

To focus on the shaping of the behavior and the attitudes of the students in the context of democratic relationship

Mc Cowan (2009) has explained the f inside and outside school factors in the context of the citizenship education in the following words, “Explanation involves teachers, either orally or through texts, transmitting knowledge to students about political institutions, current affairs and so forth. Investigation involves the students researching issues themselves, extending their knowledge of topic of interest and developing information gathering skills. Discussion extends this by allowing discussion and debate to develop, in which students can state their views and modify them in the light of those of others. Lastly, by simulation schools can stage context for participation, such as election, trials and parliament, in which the procedures are as close to reality as possible, but with no real effect”.

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Singh (1998), in his study “Political Socialization: Profile of university students” found that social sciences students were more politically aware than the students of natural sciences. This is because that the curriculum of social science comprised of more material on basic political awareness as compare to the curriculum of natural sciences. Kaur (2000) conducted a study on secondary school students regarding the political socialization and found that arts students are more politically socialized than the students who were taking science combination. Moreover he also found that the teachers also have little political knowledge teaching the students at secondary level. In Pakistan, Jabeen (2007) found that Pakistani women were less politically socialized as a whole and female urban were more socialized than the female in rural areas.

In Nigeria, Abonu (2013) assessed the level of political socialization at secondary level in his study and found that male students were more socialized than female students. It means that the political socialization requires the basic political knowledge either transmitted through the curricula or through the teachers, mentors and political leaders. In Pakistan, such kind of study has not already been conducted, so keeping in view the same notion in mind, the present study was designed to carry out the comprehensive analysis of the curriculum of compulsory subjects with reference to political knowledge taught at secondary level and to explore the opinions of the Teachers about the extent of political knowledge at secondary level in Punjab, Pakistan.

### **Materials and Methods**

This study was designed to determine the extent of political knowledge by doing manual content analyses of the compulsory subjects like English, Urdu, Pakistan studies and Islamiyat taught at secondary level. To validate the results of the text books, the opinions of the secondary school teachers were also sought by developing a questionnaire out of the basic political knowledge which is considered compulsory for political socialization. The questionnaire was administered on 414 male and 414 female teachers. The opinions of the teachers were taken on a five point rating scale that was developed keeping in view the basic political knowledge required for the students at secondary level in consultation with the experts in the relevant field.

There were 15 statements in the questionnaire which were rated on five point scale with two single extended response items. The first open ended question was asked from the teachers whether they communicate the students the fundamental political awareness among the students to develop political socialization. In the second open ended question, the opinions of the sampled teachers were sought regarding the suggestions for developing political socialization among the secondary level students. The content and face validity of the tool was also determined along with the reliability after pilot testing on a small sample of the secondary school teachers other than the study sample.

The inter item and intra item correlation was computed by applying Alpha Coefficient with the help of SPSS version 20. The tool was found quite reliable with Chronbach Alpha value .91 which falls in excellent category of the reliability of a research tool. The researcher personally and with the help of colleagues administered the tool on the desired sample. The collected data were analyzed by

applying different statistics like mean score, SD and Z- test. The hypotheses of the study were also tested with the help of parametric test of significance.

## Results and Discussions

**Table 1**  
*Content Analysis Summary*

Sr. No	Categories	Subject Related			
		Topics	Paragraphs	Lines	Words
	<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>1317</b>	<b>10471</b>	<b>135754</b>
1	Political Science and its elements	0	0	0	34
2	State concepts, theories and its elements	0	0	0	51
3	Sovereignty (features, kinds, theories)	0	01	03	12
4	Government Concepts, Forms and its organs	0	0	0	115
5	Constitutions of Pakistan Characteristics, Kinds	3	35	228	67
6	The Federal System, President, Prime Minister, Cabinet	0	0	0	149
7	Parliament ; Assembly, Senate, Law Procedure	0	0	0	34
8	The Judiciary (Supreme Court, High Court, Supreme Judicial Council	0	0	0	30
9	Election And Electoral System	01	4	60	43
10	Local Government System of Pakistan	02	12	98	24
11	Political Dynamics, Public Opinion, Political Parties, Interest Groups Pressure Groups, Leadership	0	0	0	217
12	Constitutional Departments, Islamic Ideology Council, National Security Council	0	0	0	7
13	International Organizations	01	07	67	45
14	Comparison Among Political Systems of other Countries	0	0	0	0
15	Good Governance	0	0	0	1
	<b>Total</b>	<b>07</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>456</b>	<b>829</b>
	<b>Percentage %</b>	<b>4.66 %</b>	<b>4.47 %</b>	<b>4.35 %</b>	<b>0.61%</b>

This table shows the overall results regarding content analysis of the eight compulsory books (four books from 9th class and the same from 10th class). The content analysis shows that in eight books, there were totally 150 topics out of which only 07 topics (4.66%) comprised basic political information. Similarly, 1317 paragraphs were there in those books but only 59 paragraphs (4.47%) were related to basic political knowledge. There were 10477 lines in those books out of which only 471 were (4.35%) covering the basic political information. While there were 135754 words out of which only 829 words (0.61%) were relevant to basic political knowledge.

The concepts related to the state and its constituents were found in the sample texts but not in a comprehensive and self-explanatory way. In the text book of Islamiyat, the words like caliph, King and court were found without their proper explanation. The concept formation about these words was not treated appropriately. Activities related with formation of the concepts about these words were not concluded in the text. Same was the case with the English text that totally failed to fulfill the suitable extent of basic political knowledge. So, the overall content analysis of the sampled books showed very poor extent of content on political knowledge.

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**Table 2**

*Assessment of Statements of the questionnaire of the teachers (Means Score Wise)*  
No. of statement = 15

Item No	The following topics are taught at Secondary Level	Mean Score
SC 5	National Constitution, Characteristics, and Kinds Constitutions of Pakistan	3.09
SC 10	Local Government System of Pakistan	2.78
SC 13	International Organizations	1.79
SC 15	Good Governance	1.54
SC 11	Political Dynamics, Public Opinion, Political Parties, Interest Groups Pressure Groups, Leadership	1.53
SC 6	The Federal System, President, Prime Minister, Cabinet	1.48
SC 12	Constitutional Departments, Islamic Ideology Council, National Security Council	1.45
SC 2	State concepts, theories and its elements	1.43
SC 1	Political Science and its Elements	1.41
SC 8	The Judiciary (Supreme Court, High Court, Supreme Judicial Council)	1.39
SC 9	Election And Electoral System	1.35
SC 14	Comparison Among Political Systems of other Countries	1.35
SC 3	Sovereignty (features, kinds, theories)	1.34
SC 7	Parliament (National Assembly, Senate, Speakers, Role of parliament, Powers of parliament, Procedure of lawmaking)	1.34
SC 4	Government Concepts, forms (Democracy, Dictatorship etc) and its organs; Legislature, Executive, Judiciary and Media	1.32

Table No. 2: shows that out of fifteen (15) statements, 13 statements showed negative level of acceptance on the part of the Teachers. One statement showed relatively low level of acceptance. While the other statement SC5 showed the acceptance level more than moderate. The analysis of the opinions of the teachers about the availability of the basic political knowledge in the curriculum at secondary level validates the results drawn from the content analysis of the text books.

**Table 3**

*Analysis of the open ended question No 1*

**Do the teachers inculcate the basic political information among the students on their own?**

Sample		Yes		NO		Yes % age		NO % age	
Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	female	Male	Female	Male	Female
414	414	13	11	401	403	3.14	2.65	96.86	97.35

Table No 3 shows that out of the total male study sample, only 3% were agreed that they inculcate the basic political awareness among the students on their own. The remaining 97% of the male teachers responded in “NO”. The same result was drawn out from the female teachers, 2.65% responded in “Yes” and the remaining 97.35 % responded in “No”.

**Analysis of the open ended question # 2**

Give your valuable suggestions to improve political socialization among the students of secondary level in Pakistan.

In response to this question, most of the study sample (63%) did not responded to this question, while the remaining (17%) suggested the same things as were explained in the questionnaire. Only 20% of the study sample suggested the valuable suggestions which are explained in the recommendations of this study.

**Hypotheses**

Following null hypotheses were made

H<sub>01</sub> =No significant difference exists between the opinions of male and female teachers about the political knowledge incorporated in compulsory subjects.

H<sub>02</sub> =There is no difference between the opinions of male urban and male rural teachers about the political knowledge incorporated in compulsory subjects.

H<sub>03</sub> =There is no difference between the opinions of female urban and female rural teachers about the political knowledge incorporated in compulsory subjects.

**Testing the Hypotheses of the Study**

By applying parametric test of significance hypotheses Ho1, Ho2 and Ho3 were tested and the results showed

**Table 4**

*Testing the Hypothesis H<sub>01</sub>*

Sample	Statistics			
	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	Z
Teachers (M)	414	22.07	10	0.371
Teachers (F)	414	21.94	07	

CV = 1.37; TV = 1.96; CV < TV; Null hypothesis is accepted. .

**Table 5**

*Testing the Hypothesis H<sub>02</sub>*

Sample	Statistics			
	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	Z
Teachers Male (U)	208	23.03	11	1.03
Teachers Male (R)	206	22.11	08	

CV = 1.03; TV = 1.96; CV < TV; Null hypothesis is accepted.

**Table 6**

*Testing the Hypothesis H<sub>03</sub>*

Sample	Statistics			
	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	Z
Teachers Female (U)	208	22.99	08	0.82
Teachers Female (R)	206	20.89	07	

CV = 1.51; TV = 1.96; CV < TV; Null hypothesis is accepted.

The results of Ho1 showed that there is no significant difference between the opinions of the male and female Teachers about the inculcation of political knowledge in secondary level curriculum. The results of Ho2 proved that no



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significant difference was found between the opinions of the Male Urban and Male Rural teachers about the extent of basic political knowledge. Similarly the results of Ho3 showed that there is no significant difference between the opinions of the Female Teachers from Urban and rural areas about the extent of basic political knowledge incorporated in the curricula of the compulsory subjects at secondary level.

### **Conclusions and Recommendations**

The overall results of the study showed that the curriculum at secondary level has a very little amount of basic political knowledge which were also supported and validated by the opinions of the teachers teaching the compulsory subjects at secondary level. So, the opinions of the teachers authenticate the results of the content analysis of the texts. It means that both, the texts and the teachers make institutions which are not developing political socialization among the students at secondary level. The results of the study are also in line with the results of the studies conducted by Singh, 1998, Kaur, 2000, Jabeen, 2007 and Abonu, 2013.

In the light of the results of the study, the following recommendations were suggested. In the educational policies, the aspect of political knowledge should be focused with the integration of basic political knowledge in the compulsory subjects at secondary level. The teachers should be given trainings on the lines to inculcate the basic political knowledge in the minds of the students along with the revision of curriculum at secondary level. Curriculum Wing has to take up the responsibility to streamline the outline features of the state's education policies. The government should pay special attention for the propagation of political knowledge in order to develop political socialization among the students by media advertisement. The seminars and the workshops should be arranged in the secondary schools in collaboration with the educational and local political representatives in order to develop political socialization among the students. Political awareness cells should be developed in each and every secondary school.

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