

UNDERSTANDING THE PROCESS OF SOCIALIZATION IN THE CONTEXT OF INDIAN KNOWLEDGE SYSTEM

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Abstract: Socialization is the fundamental process through which individuals acquire social norms, values, beliefs and skills necessary to function effectively in the society. This obvious process begins at birth and continues throughout the life, influenced by various agents such as family, school, peers etc. It is the learning process through which a biological being turns into a social being. Socialization not only shapes individual's personality but also creates identity and ensures the continuity of social structures. It also makes the society able to secure its existence by cultivating knowledge, values, beliefs, customs, norms, culture etc. among individuals from one generation to the another. Education plays a pivotal role in socializing people throughout the life. From the viewpoint of the Indian Knowledge System (IKS), socialization possesses deeper cultural, ethical, and spiritual significance at all. Indian traditions have emphasized holistic human development through moral education, cultural transmission, self-discipline, and collective well-being. Institutions such as family and school have functioned as important agencies for transmitting indigenous knowledge, ethical values, spirituality, and cultural heritage from one generation to another. The present discussion highlights the concept, types and functions of socialization and also puts light on the role of education in the process of socialization in the context of Indian Knowledge System.

Introduction

We all are human being as well as social beings. Socialization is the learning process through which a biological being turns into a social person. After birth, a human child is more vulnerable than even a puppy or kitten; he has no sense of his social identity and he is fully dependent on others for survival. The journey from biological birth to the social birth refers to the process of socialization. In respect to other animals, the fact of human is different. Almost all animals are fit after birth to display or act the behaviours of their own species but a human child is not able even to feed, move or do other activities of human being independently. It is true that we born with a physical body of human but we actually have to learn to be human and this is possible only by the process of socialization that starts with the interaction with other peoples of the society. In this point, human being is different from other animals. Society plays a fundamental role in the overall development of an individual (Roy, 2021). Socialization is a lifelong process and each individual has to go through this obvious process after birth (Epstein, 2018). Through the process of socialization, an individual can easily be engaged in different social activities and be facilitated in cultural integration also (Terziev & Vasileva, 2022). It is the process through which the cultural heritage of our society is transformed among people and they start to feel themselves as an important part of the society.

As a social being, an individual has to follow different rules and norms set by the society. Society makes boundary of do and don't and also decides the actions performed by the individuals throughout the life. Beyond the individual existence of people, socialization also makes the society able to secure its existence by cultivating knowledge, values, beliefs, customs, norms, culture etc. among individuals from one generation to another. So, in broader sense, socialisation is vital for the preservation and continuity of society. Neither individuals nor the society can function accordingly without the process of socialization. It can mould human nature according to social character and ensures that society remains coherent, functional and capable of sustaining its cultural legacy. The pattern of socialization is not exactly same for all individuals, it occurs according to the society to which they belong. Each society is different and these have unique pattern of social behaviours. Socialization enables people to learn the behaviour patterns of that society they live in.

The concept of socialization occupies an important place within the Indian Knowledge System (IKS). IKS encompasses a broad and pluralistic set of intellectual traditions evolved on the Indian subcontinent over millennia (Chakravorty, 2026). Indian traditions have historically put emphasis on the holistic development of individuals through cultural transmission, spiritual practices, ethical learning and community participation. Socialization is not merely the process of adapting to society; rather, it is a lifetime journey of individuals through which they acquire values, norms, duties, discipline, and collective consciousness. In the Indian Knowledge tradition, institutions such as family, community, religion, and the Guru-Shishya Parampara of educational institutions play a pivotal role in shaping human behaviors and personality. Ancient Indian educational practices focused not only on intellectual growth but also on moral, spiritual, and social development. It can be said that, the process of socialization can be explained as one of the most foundational mechanisms through which Indian cultural knowledge, traditions, and value systems are preserved and transmitted across generations.

The process of Socialization

In general, Socialization is the process of being socialized in human beings. It refers to the comprehensive and lifelong process through which individuals acquire social norms, values, beliefs, knowledge, skills, behaviours and social roles necessary for life leading in the society as a social being (Tatar, 2022). Socialization is that obvious process through which a new born gradually transforms into a functioning member of the society. Just after birth, a human child is not just made of flesh and blood, but individuals begin absorbing various social matters like cultural practices, linguistic patterns, moral values, code of conducts and other social expectations. Socialization is not a time-bound process; it continues life-time for an individual. An individual is identified because of his/her various traits which are the result of both heredity and environment. From birth to death there are different modes of socialization where a child is humanizing himself or herself in various stages of life. The process of socialization enables people to develop a sense of identity and understand their status in the social framework. It not only equips individuals with the tools for social interaction but also ensures the stability of society. From the Vedic education to contemporary Indian society, socialization works as a bridge between individual identity and social harmony. The study of socialization becomes highly relevant in understanding the philosophical and educational foundations of the Indian Knowledge System.

Socialization makes the individual able to feel 'my' to 'our' by developing we-feeling among them. It can be considered as a process of cultural transmission through which society passes its customs, norms, values, traditions etc. from one generation to the next. By internalizing social norms, socialization helps individuals in shaping their behaviours, attitudes, and emotions according to the needs of the society. Society is a vital dimension of sustainable development; a good society can create sustainable future for our next generation. Without socialization, it is totally impossible to transfer societal knowledge and traditions across the generations. The process of socialization enables the biological organism to be human by regulating behaviours; it is important for not only individual development but also for social development at all. Humans are noted as social beings but a child doesn't become social from the moment of birth. After birth a child has nothing without biological needs. Gradually the child starts to blossom through various social experiences and acquires a social nature through the random interaction with the social environment. Socialization is the process where a child becomes self-sufficient by adopting social nature of the behavior of man. Infants are largely dictated by instinct and physiology but socialization makes them able to realize their social existence. It is considered as the lifelong process through which people can learn how to function in different situations as a responsible member of the society. Indian knowledge system connects socialization with the concept of living in harmony with nature and society, It not only focus on preparing individuals for social adjustment but also on the cultivation of morality, respect, discipline, compassion and duties toward society.

Types of Socialization

Socialization is the process of acquiring and sharing culture and social norms among individuals. By this process people learn to adopt the behaviours expected in social circumstances. There are several forms of socialization and

it occurs differently in different stages of human life. From different agencies of socialization, children can learn manners, habits, religious beliefs, cultural traditions from elders of the society. The entire process of socialization from the perspective of Indian Knowledge System can be understood as a value based culturally rooted process aimed at reshaping ethical, responsible and socially aware individuals while preserving India's cultural heritage and social harmony.

1. Primary Socialization: Primary socialization occurs during early childhood and it is the initial stage of socialization. Basically, family takes the responsibility to make individuals primarily socialized. A biological child learns how to speak, behave and interact with others from his parents, other guardians and caregivers. Primary socialization is important for developing a sense of self and identity formation (Glover & Cheon, 2021). Individuals can learn native language, multiple social roles, emotional development and also acquire social rules and culture through this process. In this infancy period of life children gradually build the foundation of social behaviour. The process of primary socialization usually starts shortly after birth and continues through early childhood. There is not a formal structure of primary socialization, it occurs informally in a non-structured manner primarily through daily interactions with family. Parents, grandparents, siblings, close relatives- everyone helps to internalize the norms, values, beliefs, customs, ideologies as per the social expectations among individuals. Women make significant contribution in reshaping the society as well as the nation (Mondal, 2025; Adhikari & Saha, 2021; Adhikari & Saha, 2021a); people can learn basic moral compass and decide to fix what is right or wrong and also learn the gender roles in the society. Gradually people learn to trust others, co-operate, show feelings and emotions, communicate, understand others and form social bonds. Primary socialization is very essential for individuals in the development of their personality by internalizing thoughts and actions in social circumstances.

2. Secondary Socialization: Secondary socialization usually occurs after early childhood. It continues throughout the life as people encounter new roles, environment and institutions. Different agents take the responsibility of secondary socialization of individuals such as school, peer group, religion, workplace, media etc. which introduce people to new social norms, rules, customs, traditions and expectations. It enables individuals to act effectively in diversified social setting. So, the process of secondary socialization starts after primary socialization and extends throughout the period of adulthood. It prepares individuals to perform various social roles outside the family setting (Wang & Umana-Taylor, 2016). Through this process people can learn time management, discipline, responsibility, social habits, values and so many human qualities that are needed to survive in a social environment. It happens both formally and informally throughout the life. It also develops the quality of adaptability that makes people able to adapt the changing contexts of the society. It also promotes role specific behavior among individuals and completes the process of identity formation through personality development. Secondary socialization plays a crucial role in the process of adjustment in the broader society beyond their family environment. It promotes social integration by making people active and accepted members of society and also strengthens social cohesion and unity.

3. Resocialization: Re-socialization refers to that type of socialization in which individuals have to undergo a deliberate transformation of previously socialized behavior. People have to unlearn or forget or replace the learnt earlier and need to resocialize their thoughts and action according to the new social situation. Resocialization is unlike primary and secondary socialization which happen/occur continuously after birth by social interaction. It may involve breaking down the previous identities and building new ones as per the norms and expectations of the new social setting. Resocialization is necessary if a person enters in a completely new or opposite social environment and it includes unlearning earlier acquired behaviour and adopt the new to fit into the new setting (Chang, 2015). It may be voluntary or involuntary or both and is important according to the needs and situation. It reinforces individuals in adjusting new situations, removal of past bad habits etc. But it is also true that the success or effectiveness of resocialization greatly depends on personal willingness in most of the cases. Besides the loss of old identity, individuals form the new ones which is important for survival. It can modify people's thoughts, values, norms, ethics, roles and expectations which have significant effect on personal growth and formation of identity. The process of resocialization can foster individuals towards the adaptability and it prepares them for life transitions. It sincerely

makes people able to handle the changes effectively both psychologically and socially. So, it plays crucial role not only in individual development but also in collective well-being.

Functions of Socialization

Socialization basically functions as a bridge between individual and society and also it connects individuals with the society by integrating social norms and behavioural patterns among them. It is argued that without socialization, individuals would not acquire the necessities for effective participation in social life (Grusec, 2011).

1. Ensures Personality Development: Socialization shapes an individual's personality by instilling various values, attitudes, and emotional responses through interactions with family, peer groups, and society. It helps people in the development of self by accepting social behaviors.

2. Transmits Culture: It ensures the continuity of culture by passing beliefs, norms, customs, traditions, and languages from one generation to another. People can sustain as well as transmit their traditions, custom, language, norm etc. through this obvious process.

3. Develops Social Skills: Socialization teaches people how to communicate, cooperate, and behave appropriately in different social settings. It helps individuals to learn how to interact with each other in the social environment.

4. Activates Role Learning: It helps individuals to understand and perform their expected roles in the society in various situations (e.g., student, parent, teacher, citizen).

5. Internalizes Norms and Values: Through socialization, people can learn what is considered right and wrong, acceptable and unacceptable in a particular culture or group. It is a way of securing moral development among people.

6. Makes Social Control: Socialization is a process that makes people concerned about social control. By teaching several rules and expectations, socialization regulates right behavior and maintains order and conformity within society.

7. Makes Integrated into Society: Socialization helps to connect individuals to the broader society and makes them functioning members of a community. It makes people bounded with each other by developing we-feeling among them.

8. Creates new Identity: Socialization helps individuals in the formation of a social identity- how a person views themselves in relation to others and society.

9. Balances Continuity and Change: Society is changing itself time to time according to the need of individuals as well as society. Socialization helps in not only preserving cultural heritage but also in adapting social change.

10. Trains Future Roles: Socialization trains individuals for future roles in personal, professional, and civic life, helping them to contribute meaningfully in the society. It enables people to make balance in every sphere of social life.

Role of Education in Socialization

Education plays a fundamental role in the process of socialization by systematically transmitting cultural values, beliefs, norms, and knowledge to individuals. Through formal educational institutions like schools and colleges, education complements the social learning that begins at home and helps shape an individual's social identity and behavior (Roy, 2024). Both formal and informal agencies take proper responsibility to make individuals socialized systematically (Li & Liu, 1987). Education acts as a transition zone where personal and public values converge together. Key Roles of Education in the process of Socialization are:

1. Transmission of Culture: Education serves as a pathway for the transmission of cultural heritage from one generation to the next. Students can learn language, history, traditions, and moral values that help them to integrate into society. Durkheim (1956) argued that education is the means by which society perpetuates itself by instilling collective norms.

2. Development of various Social Skills: Education provides a platform for interaction among peers and teachers which maximizes the scope of being socialized. It makes children aware about cooperation, discipline, respect, and

conflict resolution. Vygotsky (1978) emphasized that social interaction is a key to ensure cognitive and social development.

3. Formation of Self-Identity: Education influences an individual's sense of self and their expected roles in the society. Children internalize roles and expectations through academic achievement and social roles in school. Both family and school enhance the scope of developing self-identity of individuals. Cooley's Looking Glass Self Theory suggests that self-identity forms through social interaction and feedback; it is associated with how we perceive about other's view about us.

4. Learning of Norms and ethics: Both of the explicit curriculum and hidden curriculum (unwritten rules of behavior) in educational institutions inculcate societal norms among individuals like punctuality, obedience, and competition. Bowles and Gintis (1976) claimed that how the hidden curriculum in capitalist societies prepares the learners to accept social hierarchies and work discipline.

5. Promotion of Social Integration: Education is a platform which makes the motto fulfilled- 'play, grow and learn together'. It brings children under same umbrella from diverse backgrounds by promoting unity, tolerance, and shared national identity. Talcott Parsons (1959) viewed education as a bridge between the family and society, preparing individuals for various adult roles.

6. Preparation for Social Roles: Through role-playing, assignments, and group work, educational platform can train students for multiple future roles as workers, citizens, and leaders. Mead (1934) stated that role-taking and social interaction develop the 'self,' a process actively facilitated by educational institutions.

7. Social Control Mechanism: Educational institutions enforce rules, punctuality, regularity, and discipline that align personal behavior with societal expectations. Not only formal institutions but also informal agencies play too significant role to develop social control mechanism among individuals. Educational systems effectively contribute to the regulation of behaviors.

8. Learning of Language and Communication: Language is a very essential part of socialization through which a person interacts. Education develops both verbal and non-verbal communication which are essential for effective social participation. Vygotsky (1978) considered language as a social tool developed through interaction.

9. Develops Sense of Belonging and Group Identity: Education provides a microcosm of society where children learn the importance of collective living, teamwork, togetherness and group cooperation. There are lots of activities in education where various human qualities are developed among people.

10. Inculcation of Moral and Ethical Values: Education contributes to character building and 'man making' by teaching students several values such as honesty, respect, and integrity. These human values are installed in people throughout the life. Education not only contributes in imparting academic knowledge among students but also majorly functions as a powerful agent of socialization. It shapes the individual's personality, values, and social behaviors that are necessary for functioning effectively in society.

Conclusion

Socialization and the Indian Knowledge System are deeply interconnected, as both aim at developing balanced individuals who are capable of contributing positively to society while maintaining moral and cultural integrity. Socialization is that essential process through which people acquire knowledge, skills and values that are necessary to integrate with the society (Lee & Fox, 2009). It can be considered as the foundation of human development which enables them to be functional members of the society. Not only formal educational agencies (school, college etc.) but also the informal agencies of education (family, state, religion, society etc.) take sincere responsibility to make people socialized by transmitting knowledge, beliefs, norms, moral standards, discipline and other civic responsibilities among them (Eshmamatova, 2021; Afzaal et al., 2024). It is an obvious as well as lifelong process and there is no society escaped from the effect of socialization. Different societies are the witness of different forms of education. In this regard, UNESCO (2015) considered that education of 21st century must give emphasis on global citizenship, sustainability and peace-building as the core elements of socialization. It can be concluded that socialization and the Indian Knowledge System are deeply interconnected to each other. Socialization acts as a powerful tool through which Indian cultural heritage, ethical principles, and traditional wisdom are consciously internalized by individuals. Though the term IKS is treated as a modern trend, actually its foundations lie in ancient scriptures that collectively

shaped a systematic, dynamic and practical approach to knowledge transmission (Barbhuiya, 2025). Understanding socialization from the perspective of IKS provides a deep and broader insight into how education, culture, and society together contribute to holistic development of human being.

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