

Political socialisation (models and theories)

[Science](#), [Social Science](#)



Development Theories of Political Socialization and Political socialization is a process in which human beings acquire various behaviors, attitudes, and beliefs from when they are born until when they die. This means that the political ideologies and beliefs of individuals may vary throughout their lifetime. The variation of beliefs is caused by the interaction of individuals with different socialization agents throughout their life. These agents include the government, media, family, friends, and social class. This essay will discuss the various theories of development that determine how the process of political socialization takes place. The hypotheses include moral development, life course, and gender and moral development (Glasberg, & Shannon, 2011).

Theory of Moral Development

The theory of moral development that was developed by Kohlberg argues that individuals acquire various political ideologies based on three stages of reasoning (Glasberg, & Shannon, 2011). The theory argues that the first stage of reasoning is the pre-conventional phase. In this stage, children appreciate the things that give them pleasure while they dislike those that give rise to pain. This means that at this stage, individuals acquire the behaviours and beliefs that give rise to happiness. For example, children support the ideas of leaders who provide them with resources such as books in school. The next stage is the conventional phase that takes place during teenage years (Glasberg, & Shannon, 2011). According to the theory, children appreciate the beliefs and ideas that are in accordance with the beliefs of their culture. In the last stage, which is the post-conventional stage, individuals begin to embrace the attitudes and behaviors that are

ethically upright.

The Life Course Theory

The life course theory that was developed by Erikson argues that individuals experience various challenges in eight phases during their life time. The eight stages of life course include infancy, adolescence, pre-school, old age, pre-adolescence, toddlerhood, middle, and young adulthood (Glasberg, & Shannon, 2011). Erikson argues that in the first stage of infancy, children learn to differentiate trust from mistrust; while in the last stage of old age individuals face the challenges of hopelessness and honesty. Therefore, Erikson postulates that individuals acquire the ideologies and beliefs that are shaped by the challenges that they face. For example, during infancy when the main challenges are trust and mistrust, children may hold onto the beliefs of their parents because they trust them. Children trust their parents more than other people at this stage because they take care of them by providing them with clothing, shelter, and food.

Theory of Gender and Moral Development

This hypothesis was developed by Carol Gilligan, and the theorist aimed at developing Kohlberg's theory of moral development with the main aim of eliminating gender bias. Gilligan had found out that Kohlberg concluded his findings using a sample of males only. Gilligan, therefore, aimed at determining the difference in moral development that exists between boys and girls. The theorist found out that the development of males is based on rules and regulations; while the development of girls is based on responsibility, and care (Glasberg, & Shannon, 2011). The theory, therefore, concludes that males acquire beliefs that are just based on existing rules.

Girls, on the other hand, appreciate the attitudes that lead to care and responsibility. For example, if a person steals, and there is a rule that requires the state to imprison thieves, men may argue that that person should be jailed according to the rules. Women, on the other hand, may argue that the thief be released if the reason for stealing was out of lack and poverty and be imprisoned if the motive was criminal.

Socialization is a process of holding onto certain beliefs and attitudes. The theories of development argue that individuals embrace various views according to their stage of development in life. During childhood, individuals embrace beliefs that are based on trust and that give rise to happiness. During old age, individuals choose beliefs that are ethically acceptable.

Reference

Glasberg, D. S., & Shannon, D., 2011. Political sociology: Oppression, resistance, and the state. Thousand Oaks: Pine Forge Press.