

Political Socialization of Educated Youth and Path to Sustaining
Democracy: Role of Youth- Parent Participation Partnership, Gender,
Schooling, Community Association and Institutional Trust

By

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Thesis submitted to the Lahore School of Economics
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
MPhil Development Studies
2019

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Abstract

Discussions on political behavior of electorate enter into their sixth decade in the developed world (Astuto & Ruck, 2010) while remaining nearly a decade old in the developing world. Political scientists and developmental psychologists have a consensus on gender differences in political participation and civic engagement of adults, rendering women less politically engaged. There is abundance of discourse on key supporting theories; role of structural factors, situational (SES) elements, political dispositions and socialization processes of adults. In comparison, less emphasis on developmental pathways to citizenship, bars policy makers from seeing the complete picture of gender gap, as gender roles take hold in an early stage of life. Further, the paucity of political and civic involvement of youth in schools and communities will gravely impact the future of new democracies such as Pakistan-destined to remain a youth majority country till 2045. Building on sociopolitical development perspective, this paper provides insight into the political participation of the educated youth cohort in Lahore (aged between 17 and 28). Using multivariate analysis of variance for empirical findings we confirm: gender gap in participations, age gap in political participation and differences in public/private university students' institutional trust and online political participation. Variations in impacts of same-sex parents' participations on off-springs' activities suggest that political socialization processes are gendered. Mediation of institutional trust between pupils' civic participation and intentions to vote, being more significant in females than in males, is interesting. Trust in institutions plays role in explaining how civic participation leads to greater internet political engagement in both sexes. Absence of mediation by sense of community between civic and political participation of the educated youth is worrisome for their political efficacy.

Keywords: educated youth, political participation, civic engagement, citizenship, political engagement, institutional trust, gender gap, public/private university, sense of community, internet participation, parental participation, political socialization.