Influence of Political Socialization Agents on Pakistani Youth's Political Participation: The Mediating Role of Media and Interpersonal Communication

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ABSTRACT

Apathetic and disconnected from the political world, these are just two of the titles scientists, journalists and politicians have been attributing to youth. Hence, what factors weaken or encourage youth to participate in politics is forefront in academic and non-academic researches. Hence, in view of this context, the role of political socialization agents in engendering political activities among youth cannot be overstated. However, not much research is being carried out in this area. Thus, this study assessed the influence of family communicative environment and peer norms as political socialization agents on media and political participation. A cross-sectional survey was conducted on social sciences students of Pakistani universities. Questionnaire (228) was used to collect data which were analyzed by using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The findings revealed that among other political socialization agents, peer norms was found to be more significant for youth's media consumption and political behavior. In particular, results revealed that information consumption through traditional newspaper; TV and online newspaper led to political participation, centering political expression via interpersonal communication. Moreover, interpersonal communication is found to have direct influence on Pakistani youths political participation. This study provides an empirical justification for the potential of peer group as agent of political socialization for enhancing political activities among youth in Pakistan.

Keywords: *Political socialization, family, peer norms, informational media use, interpersonal communication, political participation.*

INTRODUCTION

The notion of governance of populace stands at the heart of democracy. However, it is through actual political socialization processes in which person learns to adopt the political norms and values for the subsequent political participation. Democracy is premised on the body politic that socialized in ways that make citizen very much interested in public affairs as well as to acquire a certain amount of information about decisions and events, access to an ample array of ideas and actively participate in political activities (Brants, 1998; McLeod, Scheufele, & Moy, 1999). Recently, however, concerns have grown about political participation of citizens that become inaction, which is a serious threat to the health of democracy (Bakker & Vreese, 2011; Bennett, Wells & Rank 2009; Rauf, Hamid & Ishak, 2016). In relation to this, Phelps (2004), Kayani and Rafi (2013) claim that one of the conventional political participation (voting) has been observed to be very low. Corroborating this, findings from established democratic countries such as United States showed that youth electoral turnout is collapsing from 50.9% in 1964 to 38.0 % in 2012 (File, 2014). Likewise, the declining trend in voter turnout is also witnessed in Pakistan (Kayani & Rafi, 2013). In Pakistan, general election's voters' turnout (55 percent) has been lower in 2013

(Kayani & Rafi, 2013). Hence, 45 percent citizens still did not exercise their right in the governing process.

Increasingly, research exploring the causes and the consequences of citizen political participation has focused on youth, in large part, because most of the studies in this area found that youths are particularly uninterested in political activities (Lee, Shah, & McLeod, 2013; Rauf, Hamid, & Ishak, 2016). Also, compared with earlier youth cohorts, today's young people are less knowledgeable about the substance of politics (Mushtaq, Abiodullah & Akber, 2011). They are less likely to consume public affairs news content than their elders. At the time, scholars have shown worries about the future of democracy, in part on the basis of generational replacement (Putnam, 1995). In view of the aforementioned, it is significant to refocus scholarly efforts on study of political socialization (Hively & Eveland, 2009).

As a response to this challenge, recent literature (Gordon & Taft, 2011; McLeod & Shah, 2009; McDevitt & Chaffee, 2002; Lee, Shah, & McLeod, 2013; Memon, Ishak & Hamid, 2017) have advanced insights on political socialization by highlighting the role of parents, peers, media, and political talk as stimulants to the youths' process of citizenship. This is a departure from the fixed functionalism that highlight the acquisition of skills and norms for the maintenance of a political system (Sigel, 1956). Therefore, more literature on political socialization have shifted focus to how young people develop key capacities and motives that are essential to participate meaningfully and effectively in the democratic processes (Bennett, 2008; McLeod & Shah, 2009).

Equally, in the past, vigorous attention was set on socialization with emphasis on the role of political talk in the family and among peers, but these researches hosted general family communication patterns as an essential variable (e.g., Chaffee, McLeod & Wackman, 1973). Meanwhile, recent academic studies centered on the process of political socialization have extended this by examining the interpersonal discussion about politics in the family, peer and informational media use (e.g., Ekström & Östman, 2013; Jung, Kim & de Zúñiga, 2011; McDevitt, 2006). Expressively, it underlines the centrality of communicative phenomena in the home, among peers, and through media in the development of young peoples' democratic competencies and motivations for participation (Shah, McLeod & Lee, 2009). These studies, coupled with the fast transition to information technologies and online media, highlight the need for a comprehensive investigation into how media and communication are now related to youth socialization (Lee et al., 2013; Shehata, 2016). Consequently, this gap and perspectives become imperative for examination, therefore this study will model the relationship between political socialization agencies (Family and Peer), mediating role of media (online and offline), interpersonal communication (online messaging and face to face communication) on political participation of Pakistani youth.

LITERATURE REVIEW
Family as a political Socialization Agent
Family is broadly viewed as substantial amongst the most persuasive operators of political and media research (Shulman & DeAndrea, 2014; Shehata, 2016; Memon, Ishak & Hamid, 2017). Family especially parents have a special role in enhancing civic and political participation (Cicognani, Zani, Fournier, Gavray & Born, 2012). It is the basic social agent that shares its social values to the youth (Liebes & Ribak, 1992; Shehata, 2016). Sani and Quaranta (2015) affirm that there are strong similarities between the youth and their

parents in party selection, political inclinations, in their attitude and behavior. They further found that pattern of youth political participation resembled those of their parents.

Moreover, Kuhn (2004) emphasized that parents are role model who influence directly and indirectly their family members' political attitude and behavior. Mostly indirect influence is being measured in terms of party selection and affiliation with the party. Opposing, direct influence of parent is scaled in the form of parenting style, family communicative environment, and emotional relationships. Scholars claimed that family communicative environment is the key factor to political socialization (McLeod, Chaffee & Wackman, 1973 as cited in Shulman & DeAndrea, 2014). While elaborating on the family communication environment, Shah and his colleagues (2009) affirm that there are two scopes in the family communication environment, first is concept-oriented and second is socio-oriented, latter suggest about harmonious environment through escapism and overt disagreement on topic. In contrast, communication environment suggests open conversational environment where children are encouraged to express their concerns, ideas as well as share views on controversial the topic.

A family communicative environment based on concept orientation is argued to be "key to civic socialization, because it opens young people to the exploration of opposing perspectives and rewards discussion as a norm" (Lee et al., 2013, p. 673). To explain, Family discussion environment, where parents encouraged youth to give an opinion on an issue and where youth feel free to express their concerns, ideas and argue on controversial issues. Such democratic environment foster youth civic and political skills, search for more information for future discussions as a result, increased political knowledge and encouraged political participation (Shulman & DeAndrea, 2014). Therefore, we believe that family communication pattern based on concept oriented is as a kind of domestic "public sphere", where young people and their parents freely discuss and identify societal and political problems. Hence, such domestic public spare prompts information seeking as well as stimulate their folks and offspring participation in political activities. Under this discussion, this study conceptualizes concept orientation as family communicative environment and hypothesizes that:

H1a Family communicative environment as an agent of political socialization positively influences the news media use of Pakistani youths.

H1b Family communicative environment as an agent of political socialization positively influences political participation of Pakistani youths.

Peers Norms as a Political Socialization Agent
Friendships and integration into the peer-group has been viewed positively for social capital (Harell, Stolle & Quintelier, 2008). In fact, association with peer, having different opinions and backgrounds with common interests, social position, and age is thought to foster political and civic skills as well as uplift civic and political eagerness (Lee et al., 2013; Harell et al., 2008). Also, involvement in peer group expands informal social networks of young group. As a result, they are more likely to consume political information through the media and to be the target of appeals for political action.

To date, there is likelihood that youth's political attitude and political and civic participation affected by their peers is largely unexplored (Amnå, Ekström, Kerr & Stattin,

2009). Similarly, in some studies there are contrasting conclusions. For instance, Kuhn (2004) claimed that young people adopt deviant behavior in peer groups, like vote for extremist party, disposition to use of violence in political actions. Similarly, Mutz (2002) claimed heterogeneity in peer group creates problem in participating in political activities, she further elaborated that ''exposure to those with political views different from one's own also creates greater ambivalence about political actions, and thus make it more difficult to take decisive political action'' (p. 851). Also, Tedin (1980) claims peer groups do not discuss politics; they are more interested in music, clothing, and hair styles.

Given these arguments, Scheufele, Hardy, Brossard, Waismel-Manor and Nisbet, (2006) reviewed the conflicting scholarship on peer group's political participation and claimed that methodological errors linked to an inadequate theoretical conceptualization. Denying the conception of discouraging and negative influence of peer group, they emphasize that peers hold different background and opinion, promotes joint deliberation, political knowledge, and subsequently political participation. Similarly, Harell et al. (2008) claimed that different opinions of youth within the peer group constrain them to reconsider and refine their social and political matter stances as an after effect of possibly being challenged in their opinions by non-like-minded others. Hence, it highlights the perceived social pressure among the peer group to engage or not to engage in a behavior. Similarly, Lee et al. (2013) asserts that young people's concern for group approval. It indicates that in peer groups there are interaction and behavioral norms. Hence, if young people group have norms of value knowledge, discussion on public affairs and valuing political activities thus they are likely to be encouraged to consume and reflect on news content and participate in political activities (Lee et al., 2013). Therefore, we conceptualized peers group as peer norms and hypothesized that:

H2a   Peer Norms positively influence youth's informational media use in Pakistan.

H2b   Peer Norms significantly influence youth's political participation in Pakistan.

Informational Media Use
The incorporation of news use in the family communicative environment and among peer group designates the centrality of public affairs media for practicing youth social and political norms, values and communication skills. Media is known as an informal political socialization agent, it dramatically influences political participation by producing public affairs news, enlighten people about governmental practices, as well as inform them about public policy controversies (Zhang & Chia, 2006; Adeel-Ur-Rehman, Ahmed, Zafar &Shahzad, 2013). Since most individuals are not directly involved in politics, they come to know about politics via media. Therefore, political world reaches individuals as a ''second-hand reality,'' shaping people's first political cognition, yet changing them over time. Conversely, today's youth use media an average of six hours (Strasburger, 2009) and for factual information; they depend on news content of the media (Hollander, 2005; Lee et al., 2013). However, recent studies conducted to know what medium has more influence to interest youth in the political domain hence increased their democratic participation.

Conversely, in the context of Pakistan, large population rely on TV news, the best example of this is 2008 and 2013 general elections (Javaid & Elahi, 2014). However, in other part of the world,newspaper readership has been consistently found to increase civic and political participation (Yoon, 2003; Norris, 1996; McLeod et al., 1999; Zhang & Chia, 2006; Lee et al., 2013). To explain, both mediums have their importance at their own place, because TV provides initial awareness of an issue thus newspaper provides information of that issue in very detail (McLeod et al., 1999; Memon & Pahore, 2014). Moreover, the Internet has turned into a vital piece of our regular lives, particularly for the youth. Hence, the emergence of online media has first been viewed as a risk to political socialization and participation (Möller, 2013). During the past decade, the Internet was blamed for damaging the face-to-face social interaction (Nie & Erbring, 2000). However, the scholarly argumentation on the power of the internet for the youth political socialization now concentrates on its opportunities (Coleman, 2008). In this case, recent studies suggest that information-oriented use of the Internet such as social and political information obtains through online newspaper, online news, TV and interactive messaging through social media offers users with opportunities for civic recruitment and further encourage political participation (Min-Woo, Wilcox & Shah, 2014; Lee et al., 2013).

Moreover, by analyzing Doyle Dane Bernbach (DDB) life style survey data, Shah, McLeod, and Yoon (2001) affirm that unlike newspaper and TV, American youth uses an internet regularly for information and surveillance motives. Moreover, they found that internet influences trust in people and increases civic and political participation. Apparently, Lee et al (2013) disclosed that conventional online news (online newspaper and national online TV news) plays a dynamic role in boosting youth civic and political participation. Therefore, we expect that, TV, traditional newspaper, and online newspaper informational content use influence youth's political participation.

However, media and communication researchers claim that media do not directly influence individual's political preferences and beliefs. Rather, the media produces the psychological foundation for assessment by "altering the comparative weight people give to numerous considerations that make up the definitive evaluation" (Cho, 2005), hence, rejecting the notion of media as a "magic bullet" or "hypodermic-syringe" (Eveland & Thomson, 2006). Similarly, Mutz (2002) asserts that informational media use allocates resources (knowledge) for political discussion and generates opportunities for exposure to viewpoints unavailable in one's social network. Identically, it denotes the conception of Lazarsfeld model which explains that interpersonal sources (opinion leaders) interpret media messages within the interpersonal network (Schäfer, 2015). Similarly, Shah et al (2005) tested the citizen communication mediation model and found the informational media use (online and offline) influences democratic citizen activities such as civic and political participation through interpersonal communication.

By and large, informational media use on political participation work indirectly, through interpersonal communication, therefore, increasing levels of knowledge of politics and political efficacy, which in turn influence levels of political participation (McLeod, Scheufele & Moy, 1999). Therefore, it is necessary to test the direct and indirect relationship among these variables. Thus, the following hypotheses are generated:

H1a Informational media use (TV, traditional newspaper and online newspaper's informational content) influences the Pakistanis youth's political participation.

H1b Informational media use (TV, Newspaper and online newspaper's informational content) influences the Pakistanis youth's political participation through interpersonal communication.

METHODOLOGY

The data for the current study was collected through self-administered questionnaire. Participants were recruited from different multi discipline universities located in the province of Sindh, Pakistan. The sample includes 228 undergraduates, master and PhD students drawn from the Faculty of Social Sciences. Student sample was chosen because Stolle, Hooghe and Micheletti, (2005) claimed that they are prone to participate in political activities. Also, if we do not find consistency of political behavior in this group, we can conclude that participation in political activities is not a consistent behavioral pattern in the population at large (Stolle, Hooghe & Micheletti, 2005). To achieve a representative of respondents, systematic stratified sampling procedures were employed. The results of this study were analyzed using SPSS for descriptive data and PLS-SEM 3 was used to analyze inferential data.

MEASUREMENT

Family Communicative Environment

To measure the family communicative environment Ritchie and Fitzpatrick (1990) items were adopted. Six items were asked in the context of open discussion climate in the home on 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 7 (Strongly Agree) as anchors. The six items were "my parents often say something like "you should always look at both sides of an issue.", "my parents encourage me to question their ideas and beliefs", "my parents often ask my opinion when the family is talking about something", "my parents often say something like "every member of the family should have to participate in family decisions", my parents say that getting my idea across is important even if others don't like it", and "my parents admit that kids know more about some things than parents do".

Peers Norms

For measuring the peer norms in valuing knowledge and valuing political participation Lee et al. (2013) and Zhou (2009) items were adopted. The item was "Among my friends, it is important to know what's going on in the world" was asked on interval measurement scale with 7-points Likert type scale asking from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree) was used as an anchor.

Informational Media Use

Informational media use refers to the consumption of news, when we examine the political socialization of youth through media. Recently, researchers are more concerned about what and how informational content consumption through a specific medium leads young people towards political activities (Shah et al., 2009). These researchers indicate to understand more closely the difference between dosage and potency (Peer, Malthouse & Calder, 2003; Möller, 2013). For instance, youth watches television informational content more extensively (dosage) than the read informational content from the newspaper (Lee et al., 2013). Similar to the virtual world, especially online news use influence (potency) as a socialization agent much more than of offline news use regardless of the fact that levels of

consumption for online news remain low (Min-Woo et al., 2014; Pasek, Kenski, Romer & Jamieson, 2006). Accordingly, for general dosage and potency of informational content consumption through online and offline media was adapted (Jung, Kim & Gil de Zúñiga, 2011). Respondents were asked how often they do watch the national network TV news, read printed copy newspaper, read online newspaper to get information about events, public issues and politics.

Interpersonal Communication

Interpersonal communication refers to both face to face and online messaging. To test these both construct Min-Woo et al. (2014) measurement scale was adopted. To measure face to face discussion respondents were asked how often they talk about political issues with family members, friends, adults outside their family, or people who disagreed with them. Seven points Likert scales, ranging from 1 (never) to 7 (every time) were used as anchors. Similarly, for online messaging respondents were asked four questions on how often they discussed political issues through forwarding, receiving, reading online newspaper web comment. Again seven points Likert scales, ranging from 1 (never) to7 (every time) were used as anchors.

Political Participation

For measuring political participation, Jung et al. (2011) scale was adapted. They asked respondents if during the past 2 years they had engaged or not in conventional such as whether respondents voted in 2008 presidential election and non-conventional political activities like attended a political meeting, or rally, work for a political party or candidate, wore a campaign T-shirt or cap, called or sent a letter to elected public officials. The responses to each statement were yes or no, which is fundamentally nominal or categorical (discrete at measurement level) measurement scale (Scheufele et al., 2006). At the stage of data analysis, this scale was computed to form a composite index in SPSS.

RESULTS

Measurement Model

The reliability and validity of the model were assessed by the measurement model of PLS-SEM path modeling. As can be seen from Table 1, the composite Reliability (CR) values of the constructs have internal consistency; CR for the construct is above the threshold of 0.60 to 0.70 for this exploratory study (Hair et al., 2014). Also, the value of the average variance extracted (AVE) which represents the convergent validity of the entire constructs is also achieved. The grand mean scores of each construct (i.e., the average of the squared of factor loadings of each construct's item) is above the threshold of 0.50 and hence indicates that each of these constructs explains more than 50% of the variance of its indicators (Hair et al., 2014).

Table 1: Measurement information: Convergent validity.

Constructs	Items	Loadings	AVE	CR
Family Communicative Environment (FCE)	FCE2	0.640	0.547	0.827
	FCE3	0.846		
	FCE4	0.763		
	FCE5	0.692		
Peer Norms (PN)	PN4	0.776	0.520	0.762

	PN5	0.786		
	PN6	0.584		
Informational Media Use (IMU)	IMU1	0.724	0.588	0.850
	IMU2	0.681		
	IMU3	0.832		
	IMU4	0.820		
Interpersonal Communication (IC)	IC2	0.761	0.501	0.857
	IC3	0.720		
	IC4	0.716		
	IC5	0.636		
	IC7	0.723		
	IC8	0.684		
Political Participation (PP)	PP1	1.000	1.000	1.000

Note: items (FCE1, FCE6, PN1, PN2, PN3, IMU5, IC1, and IC6) were deleted due to measurement issues, CR: Composite reliability, AVE: Average variance extracted.

Additionally, AVE was as used to examine the discriminant validity of the constructs under study. To discriminant validity, the square root of AVE should be greater than correlations among latent constructs (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Hence, as parented in Table 2, the correlations among the latent constructs were compared with the square root of AVE (in bold and italic face). The AVEs were all greater than the correlations among latent constructs, indicating enough discriminant validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

Table 2: Discriminant validity.

	FCE	IC	IMU	PN	PP
FCE	*0.739*				
IC	0.221	*0.708*			
IMU	0.331	0.384	*0.767*		
PN	0.308	0.305	0.341	*0.721*	
PP	0.083	0.182	0.065	0.130	*1.000*

Note: The square roots of the AVEs are marked in italics and bold face.

Structural Model
The proposed hypotheses were tested through the assessment of the structural model. Current study applied the standard bootstrapping procedure of 5000 bootstrap (subsamples) samples to examine the significance of the path model (Hair et al., 2014). The estimates of the structural model are shown in Table 3, the path coefficient and the decision for each hypothesis. The findings revealed that, five out of seven hypotheses formulated in this study were significant (FCE→IMU, ß = 0.249, p <0.000; IC → PP, ß = 0.161, p <0.013; IMU → IC, ß = 0.384, p < 0.000; PN→ IMU, ß = 0.264, p <0.000; PN→ PP, ß = 0.094, p <0.076). However, two hypotheses (FCE → PP, ß = 0.043, p <0.262; IMU → PP, ß = 0.022, p <0.374) were not supported.

Table 3: Structural model analysis result.

Hypothesis	Direct Effect (β)	Std. Error	T Statistics	P Values	Decision
FCE -> IMU	0.249	0.058	4.286	0.000	Supported
FCE -> PP	0.043	0.068	0.637	0.262	Not Supported
IC -> PP	0.161	0.073	2.219	0.013	Supported
IMU -> IC	0.384	0.046	8.320	0.000	Supported
IMU -> PP	0.022	0.070	0.320	0.374	Not Supported

PN -> IMU	0.264	0.059	4.469	0.000	Supported
PN -> PP	0.094	0.065	1.432	0.076	Supported

Table 4: Mediation effect.

Hypothesis	Mediation Path	Std. Beta	Std. Error	T-Value	P-Value	Confidence Intervals		Decision
						Lower Limit (5%)	Upper Limit (95%)	
H1b	IMU>IC>PP	0.062	0.030	2.061	0.020	0.014	0.113	Supported
H2a	FCE>IMU> PP	0.006	0.018	0.302	0.381	-0.024	0.036	Rejected
H3a	PN>IMU> PP	0.006	0.019	0.304	0.380	-0.028	0.036	Rejected

On the mediation, as shown in Table 4 that one out of three was proven to be statistically significant based on path coefficients (Beta) and their P-statistics (p-value). Firstly, regarding the Information Media Use (IMU) and Political Participation (PP) model, results demonstrated significant statistical evidence of mediating effect of Interpersonal Communication (IC) on the relationship between IMU and PP (ß = 0.062, p < 0.020). However, hypothesized relationships on the mediating effect of informational media on the relationship between family communicative environment and political participation are not supported statistically (ß = 0.006, p < 0.380). Similarly, the hypothesized relationships on the mediating effect of informational media in the relationship between Peer norms and political participation are not supported (ß = 0.006, p < 0.380).

Table 5: Determination of co-efficient (R2), predictive relevance (Q2) and effect size (f2).

	R2	R2 excluded	f2	Effect Size	Q2
Informational Media Use	0.172				0.088
FCE		0.115	0.0688	Small	
PN		0.110	0.0749	Small	
Political Participation	0.042				0.018
FCE		0.041	0.0010	None	
PN		0.036	0.0063	None	
IMU		0.068	0.00	None	
IC		0.021	0.0219	Small	0.058

Additionally, the findings presented in Table 5 shows the values co-efficient of determination (R2), cross-validated redundancy (Q2) and effect size (f2) of exogenous constructs on endogenous constructs. The values of R2 (coefficient of determination) show that family communicative environment and peer norms explain 17.2% variance in informational media use. Family communicative environment, peer norms, informational media use and interpersonal communication collectively explain 4.2% variance in political participation. The Q2 values reported in Table 4 for informational media use, 0.088; and for political participation, 0.018 are all greater than 0, which shows that the exogenous variables have predictive relevance over the endogenous variables. Finally, f2 values (table 5) explain the importance of each exogenous construct analyzed.

DISCUSSIONS

The current study tested the influence of political socialization agents on informational media use and political participation. More specifically, the family communicative environment and peer norms influence (PS agents) on Pakistani youth news media consumption and their political activities were tested. Also, mediating effect of media and interpersonal communication were tested. Therefore, in this study direct and indirect hypotheses were formulated and tested.

Hence, the result of the first direct hypothesis revealed that, family communicative environment directly and positively influences informational media use of respondents. Consistent with previous studies (Valenzuela, Bachmann, & Aguilar, 2016; Shulman & DeAndrea, 2014) youth were more likely to consume informational content of media if they have interacted and dialogue rich environment. Hence, informational media consumption likely equips youth with the skills and abilities needed to function as informed and active citizens in a democratic society (Pasek et al., 2006; McLeod & Sotirovic 2001). Indeed, youth who frequently read and watch informational content are more likely to be informed about social and political issues (Zhang & Chia, 2006). Therefore, more dialogue rich environment youth have, more they will consume news.

However, contrary to our expectations, family communicative environment neither directly nor indirectly, through informational media use influences political participation. Hence, these findings implied that family communicative environment appeared to promote informational media use among youth not political activities (Lee et al., 2013). Although, this may refer to age, as Sibliger (as cited in Tedin, 1980) affirm that "With age the individual becomes decreasingly dependent on formal agents of socialization such as the school and the family, and interacts more frequently and intensely with peers". Although it is possible within the Pakistani context, as Javaid and Elahi (2014) majority of rural people's attitude and voting patterns was same just because people more rely on peer group.

Seemingly, peer norms were found to be positively linked with all the other endogenous variables included in the proposed model for testing the direct effect. The results of all these significant paths were robust and positive. To explain, peer norms was positive and directly influence on informational media use as well as on political participation of respondents. This suggests that the association with peers, having different opinions and backgrounds but with common interests, social position, and age foster political skills as well as uplift political zeal (Lee et al., 2013; Harell et al., 2008). The finding of this study seems to suggest that youth gives importance to the politics hence rejecting the Tedin (1980) claim that peer groups do not discuss politics; they are more interested in music, clothing, and hair styles.

Moreover, the finding of this study also seems to reject the Kuhn (2004) and Mutz (2002) claim of discouraging and redundant effect of peer groups on media and political activities. Hence, supporting the Scheufele et al. (2006); Harell et al. (2008) and Lee et al. (2013) assertion of positive and encouraging influence of association in a peer community with having media surveillance norm and political norms.

In the first place, testing the direct influence of political socialization agents, the findings of this study have unmasked a relative mechanism behind family and peer influence on the increase of political and media consumption behavior. Specifically, peer norms are a significant predictor of youths informational media use and for political participation, whereas family communicative environment for political participation was not hence it was

only for informational media use. Therefore, it can be asserted that peer norms as political socialization agents foster skills, capacities, and motivations essential for engaging in the subsequent search of significant political information and the exchange of opinions on public issues, thereby strengthening political participation.

However, peer norms found to have no indirect effect on political participation through informational media use. This can be referred to media as no "magic bullet" or "hypodermic-syringe" (Eveland & Thomson, 2006). Hence, media content provides talking points in which to initiate and sustain conversations, which in turn facilitated the participation (Cho, Chen, & Lee, 2009; Min-Woo et al., 2014, Jung, Kim & de Zúñiga, 2011). Therefore, future research may test the mediating role of interpersonal communication with regard to political socialization agencies.

Additionally, informational media use directly influence political participation, the results demonstrated a non- significant influence. This implied that the media do not directly influence youth political participation. However, the media found to influence political participation through interpersonal communication. The findings seem to indicate the conception of the two-step-flow theory of press influence (Lazersfeld, 1955). However, the idea of interpersonal communication is less about opinion leaders influencing. More specifically, this idea shares with the communication mediation model, which suggests the centrality of expression through deliberative and collective consideration (McLeod et al., 1999). The finding of this study consistent with the previous studies (Jung et al., 2011; Shah et al., 2005) these studies claimed that interpersonal communication about public affairs with friends, co-workers, and siblings has been found to be a powerful mediator of informational media use influence on political participation.

Conversely in this study, interpersonal communication was found to be significant variable in testing the direct and indirect effect. With respect to the direct effect of interpersonal communication on political participation of Pakistani youth, it was found to be significant. Also, it was found to be a mediator in between informational media and political participation. Hence, it seems to suggest that participatory experiences, and activities engaged in online and face to face conversations give more motivation, confidence, and opportunities to engage in traditional forms of political participation (Chan & Lee, 2016).

CONCLUSION

Overall, the findings of this study provide an instructive insight for election commission of Pakistan, government and non-government organization and media organizations on the implications of informational media use. This study provides an empirical justification to the notion that, informational media use stimulates youth discussion and expression, which in turn boosts political participation. The results clearly indicate that information consumption through traditional newspaper, TV an online newspaper works through interpersonal communication to encourage political engagement.

Additionally, the evidence of current study indicates that youth are motivated by their friends. Hence stakeholders, especially government and non-government organization can make considerable efforts in encouraging political participation by arranging the more healthier activities through peer group (e.,g volunteerism and scaffolding, by the community's adults—via schools, youth programs, and other social institutions—is critical for helping youth participate in the real-life arena of political contention).

BIODATA

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