

Power Sharing - Class 10 Social Science (Political Science) Notes

Chapter Overview

Power sharing is a fundamental principle of democracy that involves the distribution of power among different organs, levels, and groups in society. It ensures that no single individual or group holds absolute power and promotes peaceful coexistence in diverse societies.

1. Introduction to Power Sharing

Definition

Power sharing is the distribution of power and decision-making authority among different institutions, levels of government, social groups, and political parties to ensure democratic governance and prevent concentration of power.

Why Power Sharing is Necessary?

- **Prevents Tyranny:** No single group can dominate others
- **Promotes Democracy:** Essential feature of democratic systems
- **Ensures Stability:** Reduces conflicts and maintains peace
- **Protects Minorities:** Safeguards interests of all groups
- **Encourages Participation:** Involves all stakeholders in governance

2. Case Study: Belgium

Background

- **Location:** Small country in Europe
- **Population:** About 1 crore (similar to Haryana)
- **Diversity:** Complex ethnic composition
- **Capital:** Brussels (also capital of European Union)

Ethnic Composition

- **Dutch Speaking:** 59% (Flemish community)
- **French Speaking:** 40% (Walloon community)
- **German Speaking:** 1%
- **Brussels:** 80% French speaking, 20% Dutch speaking

Problems Faced

- **Language Conflict:** Tension between Dutch and French speakers

- **Economic Differences:** French speakers were richer and powerful initially
- **Regional Divide:** Dutch speakers were majority but felt marginalized
- **Brussels Issue:** Capital city with French majority in Dutch majority region

Solutions Adopted (Belgian Model)

Constitutional Amendments (1970-1993)

The Belgian constitution was amended four times to accommodate different communities:

1. Equal Representation in Central Government

- **Dutch and French speakers** get equal representation in the central government
- **Special Majority:** Some special laws need consent of majority of members from each linguistic group
- **Council of Ministers:** Equal number from both communities (except Prime Minister)

2. State Governments with Special Powers

- **Regional Governments:** Flanders, Wallonia, and Brussels
- **Community Governments:** Dutch, French, and German-speaking
- **Powers:** Education, culture, language policies
- **Autonomy:** Many powers of central government given to state governments

3. Brussels - Special Arrangement

- **Separate Government:** Brussels has separate government
- **Equal Representation:** Equal representation for both communities
- **Special Status:** Neither Dutch nor French speakers can impose their will

4. Community Government

- **Third Level:** Apart from central and state governments
- **Elected Bodies:** Chosen by people belonging to one language community
- **Powers:** Cultural, educational, and language-related issues

Results of Power Sharing in Belgium

- **No Civil War:** Avoided conflicts like in Sri Lanka
- **Peaceful Coexistence:** Both communities live peacefully
- **Economic Development:** Became prosperous European nation
- **Democratic Success:** Successful model of accommodating diversity
- **EU Leadership:** Brussels became capital of European Union

3. Case Study: Sri Lanka

Background

- **Location:** Island nation, south of India
- **Population:** About 2 crores
- **Independence:** 1948 from Britain
- **Diversity:** Multi-ethnic society

Ethnic Composition

- **Sinhala Speakers:** 74% (majority community)
- **Tamil Speakers:** 18%
 - **Sri Lankan Tamils:** 13% (native to the country)
 - **Indian Tamils:** 5% (brought by British as plantation workers)
- **Christians:** 7% (both Sinhala and Tamil)
- **Muslims:** 1%

Majoritarianism in Sri Lanka

Sinhala Dominance Policies (After 1956)

1. Sinhala Only Act (1956):

- Sinhala became the only official language
- Tamil speakers felt discriminated
- Government jobs became difficult for Tamils

2. Religious Preferences:

- Buddhism given special status in constitution
- Buddhist monks given special privileges
- Other religions felt marginalized

3. University Admissions:

- Policy of regional quotas favored Sinhala students
- Tamil students faced discrimination in higher education
- Merit-based admission reduced for Tamils

4. Employment Discrimination:

- Government jobs increasingly went to Sinhala speakers
- Tamil representation in administration declined
- Economic opportunities reduced for Tamils

Consequences of Majoritarianism

- **Growing Resentment:** Tamil community felt alienated
- **Demand for Autonomy:** Tamils demanded federal structure
- **Formation of LTTE:** Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam formed
- **Civil War:** Armed conflict lasted for decades
- **International Intervention:** India had to intervene
- **Economic Loss:** Huge economic and human cost

Lessons from Sri Lanka

- **Majoritarianism is Wrong:** Majority rule without minority protection leads to conflict
- **Power Sharing Necessary:** Could have prevented civil war
- **Cost of Conflict:** Violence destroys social fabric and economy
- **Democracy Needs Accommodation:** True democracy must protect all communities

4. Why Power Sharing is Desirable?

Prudential Reasons (Practical Benefits)

- **Reduces Conflict:** Helps in avoiding violence and political instability
- **Better Outcomes:** Decisions taken with consultation are better implemented
- **Stability:** Governments last longer when power is shared
- **Peace:** Maintains harmony in diverse societies

Moral Reasons (Intrinsic Value)

- **Democratic Spirit:** Power sharing is the very spirit of democracy
- **Right to be Consulted:** People have right to participate in governance
- **Legitimate Government:** Government becomes more legitimate
- **Inherent Value:** Democracy values power sharing for its own sake

Difference Between Prudential and Moral Reasons

Prudential Reasons	Moral Reasons
Practical benefits and outcomes	Based on principles and values
Power sharing is good because it produces better results	Power sharing is valuable in itself
Reduces conflict and violence	Respects diversity and dignity
Utilitarian approach	Rights-based approach

5. Forms of Power Sharing

1. Horizontal Power Sharing

Definition

Power is shared among different organs of government at the same level.

Features

- **Separation of Powers:** Legislature, Executive, Judiciary have separate functions
- **Checks and Balances:** Each organ can check the others
- **Same Level:** All three organs are at the same level of government
- **Independence:** Each organ is independent in its sphere

Examples in India

- **Legislature:** Makes laws (Parliament, State Assemblies)
- **Executive:** Implements laws (President, Prime Minister, Council of Ministers)
- **Judiciary:** Interprets laws (Supreme Court, High Courts)

Importance

- **Prevents Tyranny:** No single organ becomes too powerful
- **Balance:** Maintains balance between different institutions
- **Accountability:** Each organ is accountable to others
- **Democratic:** Essential feature of democratic government

2. Vertical Power Sharing

Definition

Power is shared among different levels of government.

Features

- **Multiple Levels:** Central, State, Local governments
- **Division of Powers:** Each level has specific powers
- **Hierarchy:** Higher level cannot order lower level arbitrarily
- **Constitutional:** Division is guaranteed by constitution

Examples

- **Unitary System:** Power concentrated at central level (Britain, France)
- **Federal System:** Power divided between central and state (India, USA)
- **Confederation:** States are more powerful than center (European Union)

Federalism in India

- **Three Levels:** Union, State, Local governments
- **Division of Powers:** Union List, State List, Concurrent List
- **Constitutional Guarantee:** Cannot be changed unilaterally
- **Independent Judiciary:** Resolves disputes between levels

3. Power Sharing Among Social Groups

Definition

Power is shared among different social, linguistic, and ethnic groups.

Features

- **Minority Representation:** Ensures minorities get fair share
- **Proportional Representation:** Representation based on population
- **Reserved Constituencies:** Special provisions for weaker sections
- **Cultural Autonomy:** Groups can preserve their culture

Examples in India

- **Reservation System:** For SCs, STs, OBCs in legislatures and jobs
- **Linguistic States:** States reorganized on linguistic basis
- **Minority Rights:** Protection of religious and linguistic minorities
- **Autonomous Councils:** Special status for tribal areas

Community Government (Belgium Model)

- **Language-based:** Different communities get separate institutions
- **Cultural Powers:** Control over education, language, culture
- **Proportional Cabinet:** Fair representation in government
- **Veto Power:** Protection against majority dominance

4. Power Sharing Among Political Parties

Definition

Power is shared among different political parties and pressure groups.

Features

- **Competition:** Parties compete for power in elections

- **Coalition:** Sometimes parties share power in coalition governments
- **Opposition Role:** Opposition parties influence government policies
- **Interest Groups:** Various groups participate in decision-making

Examples in India

- **Multi-party System:** Several political parties compete
- **Coalition Governments:** Parties form alliances to govern
- **Pressure Groups:** Trade unions, business groups influence policies
- **Civil Society:** NGOs, movements participate in governance

Importance

- **Democratic Choice:** People can choose between alternatives
- **Representation:** Different views get represented
- **Accountability:** Government remains accountable to people
- **Peaceful Change:** Power changes hands through elections

6. Federalism as Power Sharing

What is Federalism?

Federalism is a system of government where power is divided between central government and various constituent units (states/provinces) of the country.

Features of Federalism

1. **Two or More Levels:** At least two levels of government
2. **Constitutional Division:** Powers divided by constitution
3. **Independent Jurisdiction:** Each level is independent in its sphere
4. **Constitutional Supremacy:** Constitution is supreme, not any level of government
5. **Dual Citizenship:** Citizens belong to both union and state
6. **Bicameral Legislature:** Usually has two houses of parliament
7. **Independent Judiciary:** To resolve disputes between governments
8. **Rigid Constitution:** Difficult to amend unilaterally

Types of Federations

Coming Together Federations

- **Formation:** Independent states come together to form larger unit
- **Examples:** USA, Switzerland, Australia

- **Features:**
 - States are more powerful
 - All states have equal powers
 - Strong state identity maintained

Holding Together Federations

- **Formation:** Large country decides to divide powers
- **Examples:** India, Spain, Belgium
- **Features:**
 - Central government is more powerful
 - Different states may have different powers
 - Emphasis on unity and integrity

Federal vs Unitary Systems

Federal System	Unitary System
Power divided between center and states	Power concentrated with central government
Each level independent in its sphere	State governments subordinate to center
Constitution divides powers	Center can redistribute powers
Rigid constitution	Flexible constitution
Examples: India, USA, Canada	Examples: Britain, France, Japan

7. Power Sharing in India

Constitutional Provisions

Horizontal Power Sharing

- **Article 50:** Separation of judiciary from executive
- **Parliamentary System:** Executive accountable to legislature
- **Independent Judiciary:** Supreme Court and High Courts independent
- **Fundamental Rights:** Judiciary protects citizens' rights

Vertical Power Sharing (Federalism)

- **Seventh Schedule:** Division of powers in three lists
- **Article 1:** India is a Union of States
- **Article 245-255:** Distribution of legislative powers
- **Article 256-263:** Administrative and financial relations

Social Group Power Sharing

- **Article 15:** Prohibition of discrimination
- **Article 16:** Equal opportunity in public employment
- **Article 330-342:** Reservations for SCs and STs
- **Article 350:** Protection of linguistic minorities

Political Power Sharing

- **Article 19:** Right to form associations and political parties
- **Multi-party System:** Constitutional recognition of political competition
- **Election Commission:** Free and fair elections
- **Coalition Politics:** Accommodation of different parties

Three Lists of Powers

Union List (97 subjects)

- **Central Government:** Has exclusive powers
- **Important Subjects:** Defense, foreign affairs, banking, currency, atomic energy
- **Examples:** Railways, post and telegraph, inter-state trade

State List (66 subjects)

- **State Governments:** Have exclusive powers
- **Important Subjects:** Police, public health, agriculture, local government
- **Examples:** Education, roads, hospitals, irrigation

Concurrent List (47 subjects)

- **Both Governments:** Can make laws
- **Union Dominance:** In case of conflict, union law prevails
- **Important Subjects:** Education, forests, trade unions, marriage
- **Examples:** Criminal law, newspapers, electricity

Residuary Powers

- **Definition:** Subjects not mentioned in any list
- **Authority:** Union government has power over residuary subjects
- **Examples:** Computer software, cyber crimes

8. Language Policy in India

Constitutional Provisions

- **Official Language:** Hindi in Devanagari script
- **English:** Continues as official language
- **No National Language:** Constitution doesn't declare any national language
- **State Languages:** States can choose their official languages

Safeguards for Languages

- **Eighth Schedule:** 22 scheduled languages get special status
- **Three Language Formula:** Hindi, English, and regional language in schools
- **Linguistic States:** States reorganized on linguistic basis (1956)
- **Language Minorities:** Right to preserve language and culture

Accommodation of Diversity

- **Flexibility:** No imposition of any single language
- **Federal Approach:** States have powers over language policy
- **Gradual Change:** Evolutionary rather than revolutionary approach
- **Respect for Diversity:** Multiple languages accepted and promoted

9. Decentralization in India

What is Decentralization?

Transfer of power from central and state governments to local level institutions.

Need for Decentralization

- **Democratic Participation:** Involves people in governance
- **Local Knowledge:** Local people understand local problems better
- **Efficiency:** Quick decision-making and implementation
- **Accountability:** Governments become more accountable
- **Development:** Promotes local development

Panchayati Raj System

Three Tiers

1. **Gram Panchayat:** Village level (about 600 villages)
2. **Panchayat Samiti/Block Panchayat:** Block level

3. **Zilla Panchayat:** District level

Constitutional Status

- **73rd Amendment (1992):** Constitutional status to Panchayati Raj
- **Part IX:** Added to constitution
- **Article 243:** Provisions for Panchayats

Features of 73rd Amendment

1. **Three-tier System:** Mandatory three-tier structure
2. **Direct Elections:** All positions filled through direct elections
3. **Reserved Seats:** 1/3rd seats reserved for women, also for SCs/STs
4. **Fixed Tenure:** 5-year term for all institutions
5. **State Election Commission:** Independent body for elections
6. **State Finance Commission:** Recommends sharing of finances
7. **Eleventh Schedule:** 29 subjects transferred to Panchayats

Urban Local Government

74th Amendment (1992)

- **Constitutional Status:** Urban local bodies get constitutional status
- **Part IXA:** Added to constitution
- **Three Types:** Municipal Corporations, Municipal Councils, Nagar Panchayats

Features

- **Direct Elections:** Mayor and councilors directly elected
- **Reservations:** 1/3rd seats for women, also for SCs/STs
- **Functions:** 18 functions listed in Twelfth Schedule
- **Finance:** State Finance Commission recommends fund allocation

Challenges to Decentralization

- **Lack of Resources:** Insufficient funds for local bodies
- **Interference:** State governments interfere in local matters
- **Capacity Building:** Lack of trained personnel
- **Corruption:** Local corruption in some areas
- **Social Barriers:** Caste and gender discrimination

10. Contemporary Challenges to Power Sharing

Centralization Tendencies

- **Emergency Provisions:** Article 356 (President's Rule) misused sometimes
- **Financial Control:** Center controls major sources of revenue
- **Administrative Control:** All India Services under central control
- **Governor's Role:** Sometimes acts as agent of central government

Regional Movements

- **Demands for Statehood:** New states like Telangana, Uttarakhand created
- **Autonomy Demands:** Some regions demand greater autonomy
- **Identity Movements:** Language, culture-based movements
- **Separatist Movements:** In some border areas

Coalition Politics

- **Hung Assemblies:** No single party gets majority
- **Alliance Politics:** Parties form pre or post-poll alliances
- **Instability:** Some coalition governments are unstable
- **Accommodation:** Forces parties to accommodate different views

Globalization Impact

- **Economic Integration:** Reduces state autonomy in economic matters
- **Cultural Homogenization:** Threat to local cultures
- **Technology:** Changes nature of governance
- **Civil Society:** New forms of participation emerge

11. International Examples of Power Sharing

United States of America

- **Coming Together Federation:** States came together to form union
- **Strong States:** States have significant powers
- **Presidential System:** Separation of powers between President, Congress, Courts
- **Bill of Rights:** Protection of individual rights

Canada

- **Linguistic Federalism:** English and French as official languages

- **Provincial Powers:** Provinces have strong powers
- **Charter of Rights:** Protection of minority rights
- **Asymmetric Federalism:** Quebec has special status

Switzerland

- **Consociational Democracy:** Power sharing among language groups
- **Direct Democracy:** Frequent referendums
- **Coalition Cabinet:** Proportional representation in executive
- **Federalism:** Strong cantonal governments

South Africa

- **Post-Apartheid:** Power sharing after end of white rule
- **Proportional Representation:** Fair representation to all races
- **Truth and Reconciliation:** Peaceful transition
- **Rainbow Nation:** Accommodation of diversity

Key Terms to Remember

- **Power Sharing:** Distribution of power among different institutions and groups
- **Majoritarianism:** Rule by majority community over minorities
- **Federalism:** System with multiple levels of government
- **Decentralization:** Transfer of power to local levels
- **Horizontal Power Sharing:** Among different organs of government
- **Vertical Power Sharing:** Among different levels of government
- **Community Government:** Separate institutions for different communities
- **Coalition Government:** Government formed by alliance of parties
- **Civil Society:** Organizations between state and individual
- **Prudential:** Based on practical considerations
- **Moral:** Based on principles and values

Important Constitutional Articles

- **Article 1:** India is a Union of States
- **Article 245-255:** Distribution of legislative powers
- **Article 256-263:** Administrative relations
- **Article 330-342:** Reservations for SCs and STs
- **Article 343-351:** Official language provisions

- **Part IX (Article 243):** Panchayati Raj institutions
- **Part IXA:** Urban local bodies
- **73rd Amendment:** Panchayati Raj
- **74th Amendment:** Urban local government

Sample Questions for Practice

1. Explain the concept of power sharing with examples.
2. Compare the Belgian and Sri Lankan models of power sharing.
3. What are the different forms of power sharing? Give examples.
4. Why is power sharing desirable in a democracy?
5. Explain federalism as a form of power sharing.
6. Describe the language policy of India as an example of power sharing.
7. How has decentralization strengthened democracy in India?
8. What are the prudential and moral reasons for power sharing?

Tips for Exam Preparation

- Understand the difference between prudential and moral reasons
- Learn the Belgium and Sri Lanka case studies thoroughly
- Remember the features of different forms of power sharing
- Know the constitutional provisions related to power sharing in India
- Practice drawing diagrams showing different forms of power sharing
- Understand current examples of power sharing in Indian politics
- Learn the constitutional amendments related to local government
- Focus on the three-tier system of Panchayati Raj
- Understand the relationship between power sharing and democracy
- Study recent developments in Indian federalism