

Chapter 1 Power Sharing

ACTIVITY AND IN-TEXT QUESTIONS

In-Text Question

Q 1. Look at the maps of Belgium and Sri Lanka. In which region do you find concentration of different communities?

Ans 1: (1) In Belgium, the majority of French speakers reside in the Wallonia region to the south, whereas Dutch speakers predominantly inhabit the northern region known as Flanders. Additionally, a German-speaking community is located in the eastern part of the country.

(2) In Sri Lanka, the Sinhalese population is found across the entire island. Sri Lankan Tamils are primarily located along the northern and eastern coasts, while Indian Tamils are dispersed in the northern, central, and southern areas. The Muslim community is distributed in various locations throughout the country.

In-Text Question

Q 1. What's wrong if the majority community rules? If Sinhalese don't rule in Sri Lanka, where else will they rule?

Ans: (1) In a democratic system, the fundamental principle is that the government operates according to the will of the majority. However, this majority is not solely defined by numerical strength based on religion or community. In its essence, a majority refers to a majority of opinions. At times, the majority community may also contribute to this majority opinion. Therefore, governance by the majority community is acceptable in a democracy, provided it is rooted in opinion.

(2) Indeed, the Sinhalese represent the majority community in Sri Lanka and should have a significant role in governance. Nevertheless, this does not imply that other communities should lack adequate representation. If that were the case, it would undermine the very essence of democracy.

Let Us Read Newspaper

Q 2. Read any newspaper for one week and make clippings of news related to ongoing conflicts or wars. A group of five students could pool their clippings together and do the following:

- **Classify these conflicts by their location (your state, India, outside India).**
- **Find out the cause of each of these conflicts. How many of these are related to power sharing disputes?**
- **Which of these conflicts could be resolved by working out power-sharing arrangements?**

Ans 2: Students, Do Yourself

[hint]: To address the task, you and your group can follow these steps:

1. **Collect Clippings:** For one week, read various newspapers and gather clippings about ongoing conflicts or wars.
2. **Classify Conflicts by Location:**

Class 10 Political Science, Text Book Democratic politics-2 Ncert Solution of Chapter 1 Power Sharing

- **Your State:** List conflicts occurring in your own state.
 - **India:** Identify conflicts happening in other parts of India.
 - **Outside India:** Note down conflicts from around the world.
3. **Identify Causes:**
- For each conflict, research and summarize its underlying causes.
 - Determine how many of these conflicts are related to power-sharing disputes, such as ethnic tensions, governance issues, or resource allocation.
4. **Evaluate Power Sharing Arrangements:**
- Analyze which conflicts might benefit from power-sharing arrangements, discussing potential solutions or compromises that could lead to resolution.

By organizing your findings in a table or chart, your group can clearly present the information on conflicts, their causes, and potential resolutions.

Let us Revise

Q 1. Annette studies in a Dutch medium school in the northern region of Belgium. Many French-speaking students in her school want the medium of instruction to be French. Selvi studies in a school in the northern Tamil speaking and they want the medium of instruction region of Sri Lanka. All the students in her school are to be Tamil.

• If the parents of Annette and Selvi were to approach respective governments to realise the desire of the child who is more likely to succeed? And why?

Ans 1: Annette's parents are more likely to achieve success. In Belgium, the community government is chosen by citizens belonging to one of the language communities—Dutch, French, or German-speaking—and it has authority over cultural, educational, and language-related matters. Conversely, in Sri Lanka, education falls under the central government's control, making it challenging for ordinary citizens to approach or influence the central government to address similar issues.

In-Text Question

Q 1. (i) Can you help poor Vikram in answering Vetal? "If you had the power to rewrite the rules in Lebanon, what would you do?"

Ans 1:

(i) Democracy is a system of governance "for the people, by the people, and of the people." However, it should not lead to situations that incite conflict or unrest in society. Instead, democracy is founded on the principle of "live and let live." Therefore, if various communities in a country reach a consensus based on a defined framework for power sharing, it is valid. There is no need to alter the established rule.

(ii) Would you adopt the 'regular' rules followed everywhere, as Khalil suggests? Or stick to the old rules? Or do something else?

Ans 1: (ii) If Lebanon's laws allow everyone to vote and run for elections according to the power-sharing agreement between various communities, I would not follow the standard rules suggested by Khalil. Instead, I

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would adhere to the rules established through this community agreement, as there would be no need for any additional steps.

Let's Read the Cartoon

Q 1. In 2005 some new laws were made in Russia giving more powers to its president. During the same time the US president visited Russia. What, according to this cartoon, is the relationship between democracy and concentration of power? Can you think of some other examples to illustrate the point being made here?

Ans 1:

1. Generally, democracy reflects the collective will of the people. However, when authority is centralized in the hands of a single individual within a democratic setup, this person's influence can override the public's interests. The cartoon illustrates this idea, suggesting that democracy, in this case, is governed by a select few who prioritize their own agenda over the wishes of the general population.
2. Countries like Pakistan and Iraq also exhibit similar situations, where democratic principles may be overshadowed by concentrated power.

In-Text Question

Q 1. In my school, the class monitor changes every month. Is that what you call a power sharing arrangement?

Ans 1: No, rotating the role of class monitor every month does not qualify as a power-sharing arrangement. In a true power-sharing system, various institutions and interest groups hold authority and monitor each other's actions, creating a structure of checks and balances.

Let us Revise

Q 1. Here are some examples of power sharing. Which of the four types of power sharing do these represent? Who is sharing power with whom?

1. **The Bombay High Court ordered the Maharashtra state government to immediately take action and improve living conditions for the 2,000-odd children at seven children's homes in Mumbai.**

Ans 1):

- (1) This is an instance of power distribution among various branches of government.
- (2) In this case, authority is divided between the judiciary and the executive.

2. **The government of Ontario state in Canada has agreed to a land claim settlement with the aboriginal community. The minister responsible for Native Affairs announced that the government will work with aboriginal people in a spirit of mutual respect and cooperation.**

Ans 2):

1. This illustrates how power can be distributed among various social groups.
2. In this case, authority is divided between the indigenous population and other societal groups.

3. Russia's two influential political parties, the Union of Right Forces (SPS) and the Liberal Yabloko Movement agreed to unite their organisations into a strong right-wing coalition. They propose to have a common list of candidates in the next parliamentary elections.

Ans 3:

1. This example demonstrates how political parties, pressure groups, and movements can influence or share power through specific arrangements.
2. In this case, the power-sharing occurs between the SPS and the Liberal Yabloko Movement.

4. The finance ministers of various states in Nigeria got together and demanded that the federal government declare its sources of income. They also wanted to know the formula by which the revenue is distributed to various state governments.

Ans 4:

1. This illustrates power sharing across different levels of government.
2. In this instance, power is distributed between the federal and state governments, as well as among the state governments themselves.

EXERCISES

Q 1. What are the different forms of power sharing in modern democracies? Give an example of each of these.

Ans 1: In modern democracies, power is shared in several ways:

1. **Among different branches of government:** Power is divided among the executive, legislative, and judicial branches.
2. **Across various levels of government:** Power is distributed between central and state governments, as well as among different state governments.
3. **Among social groups:** Power is shared among majority and minority groups, disadvantaged communities, women, indigenous groups, and other social segments.
4. **Among political parties, pressure groups, and movements:** For example, multiple political parties may form alliances to establish a coalition government.

Q 2. State one prudential reason and one moral reason for power sharing with an example from the Indian context.

Ans 2:

(1) **Prudential Reason:** India is characterized by its diverse population, which includes a caste system. Each caste group has distinct interests, with some being more dominant than others while others remain marginalized. To prevent potential social conflicts and ensure political stability, it is essential to implement power-sharing mechanisms. This concept is known as the prudential approach.

(2) **Moral Reason:** Historically, marginalized communities have been denied their political rights, despite constituting a significant portion of the population. Their involvement in political processes has been minimal, and therefore, it is crucial to provide them with sufficient opportunities to engage in politics. This principle is referred to as the moral approach.

Q 3. After reading this chapter, three students drew different conclusions. Which of these do you agree with and why? Give your reasons in about 50 words.

Thomman - Power sharing is necessary only in societies which have religious, linguistic or ethnic divisions.

Mathayi - Power sharing is suited only for big countries that have regional divisions.

Ouseph - Every society needs some form of power sharing even if they are small or do not have social divisions.

Ans 3: I concur with Ouseph's conclusion that every society, regardless of size or the absence of social divisions, requires some mechanism for power sharing. This principle is fundamental to democracy, as it emphasizes that individuals should govern themselves through self-governing institutions. People possess the right to determine their own governance. Even in a small or unified society, there exists a collective will that deserves adequate representation to prevent conflicts and ensure political stability.

Q 4. The mayor of Merchtem, a town near Brussels in Belgium, has defended a ban on speaking French in the town's schools. He said that the ban would help all non- Dutch speakers integrate in this Flemish town. Do you think that this measure is in keeping with the spirit of Belgium's power sharing arrangements? Give your reasons in about 50 words.

Ans 4: No, this ban does not align with the principles of power sharing in Belgium, a nation characterized by its diverse population. Approximately 59% of Belgians reside in the Flemish regions and speak Dutch, while about 40% live in Wallonia and communicate in French. If French were to be prohibited in the Flemish areas, it could lead to the people of Wallonia advocating for a similar ban on Dutch in their region. This scenario would likely result in social tensions and political instability. The Belgian model of power sharing is designed to provide equal representation to minorities in each region, making any language ban contrary to this foundational principle.

Q 5. Read the following passage and pick out any one of the prudential reasons for power sharing offered in this.

"We need to give more power to the Panchayats to realise the dream of Mahatma Gandhi and the hopes of the makers of our Constitution. Panchayati Raj establishes true democracy. It restores power to the only place where power belongs in a democracy in the hands of the people. Giving power to Panchayats is also a way to reduce corruption and increase administrative efficiency. When people participate in the planning and implementation of developmental schemes, they would naturally exercise greater control over these schemes. This would eliminate the corrupt middlemen. Thus, Panchayati Raj will strengthen the foundations of our democracy."

Ans 5: One prudential reason for power sharing offered in the passage is that giving power to the Panchayats can **reduce corruption and increase administrative efficiency**. This is because when people are involved in the planning and implementation of developmental schemes, they exercise greater control over these processes, which can help eliminate corrupt middlemen.

Q 6. Different arguments are usually put forth in favour of and against power sharing. Identify those which are in favour of power sharing and select the answer using the codes given below?

Power sharing:

- A. reduces conflict among different communities
- B. decreases the possibility of arbitrariness
- C. delays decision making process
- D. accommodates diversities
- E. increases instability and divisiveness
- F. promotes people's participation in government
- G. undermines the unity of a country

(a)	A	B	D	F
(b)	A	C	E	F
(c)	A	B	D	G
(d)	B	C	D	G

Ans 6: (a) A, B, D, F.

Q 7. Consider the following statements about power sharing arrangements in Belgium and Sri Lanka.

- A. In Belgium, the Dutch speaking majority people tried to impose their domination on the minority French-speaking community.
- B. In Sri Lanka, the policies of government sought to ensure the dominance of the Sinhala-speaking majority.
- C. The Tamils in Sri Lanka demanded a federal arrangement of power sharing to protect their culture, language and equality of opportunity in education and jobs.
- D. The transformation of Belgium from unitary government to a federal one prevented a possible division of the country on linguistic lines.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- (a) A, B, C and D
- (b) A, B and D
- (c) C and D
- (d) B, C and D.

Ans 7: (a) A, B, C and D.

Q 8. Match List I (forms of power sharing) with List II (forms of government) and select the correct answer using the codes given below the lists:

List I	List II
1. Power shared among different organs of government	A. Community

Class 10 Political Science, Text Book Democratic politics-2
Ncert Solution of Chapter 1 Power Sharing

2. Power shared among governments at different levels	B. Separation of powers
3. Power shared by different social groups	C. Coalition government
4. Power shared by two or more political parties	D. Federal government

	1	2	3	4
(a)	D	A	B	C
(b)	B	C	D	A
(c)	B	D	A	C
(d)	C	D	A	B

Ans 8: Now, let's match them according to this reasoning:

- 1 → B (Separation of powers)
- 2 → D (Federal government)
- 3 → A (Community)
- 4 → C (Coalition government)

Thus, the correct answer is: (c) B D A C.

Q 9. Consider the following two statements on power sharing and select the answer using the codes given below:

(A) Power sharing is good for democracy.

(B) It helps to reduce the possibility of conflict between social groups.

Which of these statements are true and false?

- (a) A is true but B is false
- (b) Both A and B are true
- (c) Both A and B are false
- (d) A is false but B is true

Ans 9: (b) Both A and B are true.