

UNIQUE STUDY POINT

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| Class: X | Subject: Political Science | Session: 2025-26 |
| Chapter: 02 - Federalism | Time: 1½ Hours | Max. Marks: 40 |

General Instructions:

1. All questions are compulsory.
2. This question paper contains 20 questions divided into five sections A, B, C, D and E.
3. Section A contains 10 MCQs of 1 mark each.
4. Section B contains 4 questions of 2 marks each.
5. Section C contains 3 questions of 3 marks each.
6. Section D contains 1 question of 5 marks.
7. Section E contains 2 Case Study Based questions of 4 marks each.

SECTION A - Multiple Choice Questions (1 mark each)

- Q1.** In a federal system, the central government:
- (a) Can order state governments
 - (b) Cannot order state governments to do something
 - (c) Has all the powers
 - (d) Is subordinate to state governments
- Q2.** Belgium shifted from unitary to federal government in:
- (a) 1990
 - (b) 1992
 - (c) 1993
 - (d) 1995
- Q3.** The largest language in India, Hindi, is the mother tongue of about:
- (a) 25% Indians
 - (b) 35% Indians
 - (c) 44% Indians
 - (d) 55% Indians
- Q4.** Which of the following is a subject in the Concurrent List?
- (a) Defence
 - (b) Police
 - (c) Marriage
 - (d) Communications
- Q5.** All the panchayat samitis or mandals in a district together constitute:
- (a) Gram Sabha
 - (b) Gram Panchayat

- (c) Zilla Parishad
- (d) Municipality

Q6. Which of these countries has approximately 40% of the world's federal population?

- (a) Only 10 countries
- (b) Only 15 countries
- (c) Only 25 countries
- (d) Only 50 countries

Q7. In municipalities and municipal corporations, the elected body consists of:

- (a) Government officials
- (b) People's representatives
- (c) Panch and Sarpanch
- (d) Collectors

Q8. What is the minimum percentage of state legislatures that must ratify constitutional amendments related to federalism?

- (a) One-third
- (b) Half
- (c) Two-thirds
- (d) Three-fourths

Q9. The basic principle realized through local government is:

- (a) Centralization
- (b) Local self-government
- (c) Representative democracy
- (d) Majoritarianism

Q10. Which city in Brazil conducted an experiment in participative democracy and decentralization?

- (a) Rio de Janeiro
- (b) São Paulo
- (c) Porto Alegre
- (d) Brasília

SECTION B - Short Answer Questions (2 marks each)

Q11. What is the difference between federal and unitary forms of government? Give one example of each.

Q12. Why did India not declare Hindi as the national language? What alternative arrangement was made?

Q13. What role do courts play in a federal system? How does this help maintain federalism?

Q14. Describe the structure and functioning of Gram Sabha.

SECTION C - Short Answer Questions (3 marks each)

Q15. Compare the federal systems of 'coming together' and 'holding together' federations. Explain with examples.

Q16. How did the nature of federalism change in India after 1990? Explain the reasons and impact of this change.

Q17. Explain the reservation system in local government bodies as per the 1992 Constitutional Amendment.

SECTION D - Long Answer Question (5 marks)

Q18. "India is a federal country with a difference." Justify this statement by explaining: (a) Why India is considered a federation despite not using the word 'federation' in the Constitution, (b) How India's federal system differs from typical federations like USA or Switzerland, and (c) What special provisions exist for some states, giving examples.

SECTION E - Case Study Based Questions (4 marks each)

Q19. Read the following case study and answer the questions that follow:

In 1947, the boundaries of several old States of India were changed in order to create new States. This was done to ensure that people who spoke the same language lived in the same State. When the demand for the formation of States on the basis of language was raised, some national leaders feared that it would lead to the disintegration of the country. The Central Government resisted linguistic States for some time. But the experience has shown that the formation of linguistic States has actually made the country more united.

- (a) What was the basis for reorganization of states in 1947? (1 mark)
- (b) What were the fears of national leaders regarding linguistic states? (1 mark)
- (c) How did linguistic states strengthen national unity instead of weakening it? (2 marks)

Q20. Read the following case study and answer the questions that follow:

A city called Porto Alegre in Brazil has carried out an extraordinary experiment in combining decentralisation with participative democracy. About 20,000 people participate in this decision making exercise every year. The budget of the city is discussed in meetings. This method has ensured that the money cannot be spent only for the benefit of the colonies where rich people live. Buses now run to the poor colonies and builders cannot evict slum-dwellers without resettling them. In our own country, a similar experiment has taken place in some areas in Kerala.

- (a) Where was the experiment of participative democracy conducted? (1 mark)
- (b) How many people participate in budget decisions in Porto Alegre? (1 mark)
- (c) What benefits did participative democracy bring to Porto Alegre? (2 marks)

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SECTION A - Answers to MCQs

Q1. (b) Cannot order state governments to do something

In a federal system, the central government cannot order the state government to do something. State government has powers of its own for which it is not answerable to the central government.

Q2. (c) 1993

Belgium shifted from a unitary to a federal form of government in 1993. Regional governments were given constitutional powers that were no longer dependent on the central government.

Q3. (c) 44% Indians

Hindi, the largest language in India, is the mother tongue of only about 44% (approximately 40%) of Indians. This is why it could not be imposed as the sole national language.

Q4. (c) Marriage

Marriage is a subject in the Concurrent List along with adoption, succession, education, and forest. Defence and Communications are in Union List; Police is in State List.

Q5. (c) Zilla Parishad

All the panchayat samitis or mandals in a district together constitute the Zilla Parishad (District Panchayat), which is the highest tier of rural local government.

Q6. (c) Only 25 countries

Though only 25 of the world's 193 countries have federal political systems, their citizens make up 40 per cent of the world's population. Most large countries are federations.

Q7. (b) People's representatives

In municipalities and municipal corporations, the elected body consists of people's representatives who are elected by the citizens of that urban area.

Q8. (b) Half

Constitutional amendments related to power-sharing between Union and States must be ratified by the legislatures of at least half (50%) of the total states after being passed by Parliament.

Q9. (b) Local self-government

Local government is the best way to realize one important principle of democracy, namely local self-government, where people directly participate in governing their local areas.

Q10. (c) Porto Alegre

Porto Alegre, a city in Brazil with nearly 13 lakh people, carried out an extraordinary experiment in combining decentralization with participative democracy, where citizens participate in making the city budget.

SECTION B - Answers to Short Answer Questions

Q11. Federal vs Unitary Government

Federal Form:

- Power is divided between central authority and various constituent units
- Different tiers govern same citizens but each tier has own jurisdiction
- Central government cannot order state governments
- Both governments are separately answerable to people

Example: India, USA, Switzerland, Australia

Unitary Form:

- Either only one level of government or sub-units are subordinate to central government
- Central government can pass orders to provincial/local governments
- National government has all the powers

Example: Sri Lanka, United Kingdom, France, China

Q12. Hindi and Language Policy

Why Hindi was not declared national language:

- Hindi is the mother tongue of only about 40% of Indians
- Declaring it as national language would be unfair to the majority who speak other languages
- It would create resentment and conflict

Alternative arrangement:

- Hindi was identified as the official language (not national language)
- 22 other languages were recognized as Scheduled Languages
- States can have their own official languages
- English continues to be used along with Hindi for official purposes

Q13. Role of Courts in Federal System

Role of Courts:

- Courts have the power to interpret the constitution
- They can interpret the powers of different levels of government
- The highest court (Supreme Court) acts as an umpire if disputes arise between different levels of government

How this helps maintain federalism:

- Ensures no level of government exceeds its constitutional authority
- Provides impartial resolution of Centre-State disputes
- Protects the federal structure from being undermined
- Example: Supreme Court's judgement made it difficult for Central Government to dismiss state governments arbitrarily

Q14. Gram Sabha

Structure:

- The Gram Sabha is a body consisting of all adult voters in a village or group of villages
- All the voters in the village are its members
- It is the most democratic and inclusive body at the village level

Functioning:

- It is the decision-making body for the entire village
- The Gram Panchayat works under the overall supervision of the Gram Sabha
- It has to meet at least twice or thrice in a year
- It approves the annual budget of the Gram Panchayat
- It reviews the performance of the Gram Panchayat

Q15. Coming Together vs Holding Together Federations

BASIS OF COMPARISON:

COMING TOGETHER FEDERATIONS:

Formation: Independent states come together on their own to form a bigger unit

Reason: By pooling sovereignty and retaining identity, they can increase their security

Power Distribution: All constituent states usually have equal power

Balance: States are strong vis-à-vis the federal government

Examples: USA, Switzerland, Australia

- USA: 13 colonies came together in 1787 to form the United States
- Switzerland: Cantons came together to form Swiss confederation
- Australia: States came together to form Commonwealth of Australia

HOLDING TOGETHER FEDERATIONS:

Formation: A large country decides to divide its power between constituent states and national government

Reason: To accommodate diversity and decentralize power

Power Distribution: Different units may have unequal powers; some units granted special powers

Balance: Central Government tends to be more powerful vis-à-vis the states

Examples: India, Spain, Belgium

- India: Emerged as one nation after independence, then created states
- Belgium: Transformed from unitary to federal in 1993
- Spain: Devolved powers to autonomous regions

The key difference is the direction of power flow: In coming together, power flows from states to centre; in holding together, power flows from centre to states.

Q16. Changes in Federalism After 1990

REASONS FOR CHANGE:

- Rise of regional political parties in many states
- No single party getting clear majority in Lok Sabha
- Beginning of coalition era at the Centre
- Supreme Court judgements protecting state autonomy

NATURE OF CHANGES:

1. Coalition Politics:

- Major national parties had to enter alliances with regional parties
- Regional parties became partners in national government
- This gave them significant bargaining power

2. New Culture of Power Sharing:

- Greater respect for autonomy of state governments developed
- States started asserting their rights more confidently
- Dialogue and negotiation replaced imposition

3. End of Arbitrary Dismissals:

- Practice of dismissing state governments controlled by rival parties reduced
- Supreme Court made it difficult to dismiss states arbitrarily

- Constitutional propriety was better maintained

IMPACT:

- Federal power sharing became more effective in practice
- States gained greater voice in national policy-making
- Regional concerns received better attention
- Overall strengthening of federal structure
- Democracy became more inclusive and representative

Q17. Reservation System in Local Government

The 1992 Constitutional Amendment (73rd and 74th Amendments) introduced a comprehensive reservation system in local government bodies:

1. RESERVATION FOR SC/ST/OBC:

- Seats are reserved in the elected bodies for Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and Other Backward Classes
- Reservation is proportional to their population in that area
- Applies to both members and executive heads (Sarpanch, Chairpersons, Mayors)

2. RESERVATION FOR WOMEN:

- At least one-third of all positions are reserved for women
- This applies to general seats as well as reserved category seats
- Women from SC/ST/OBC categories get double benefit (category + gender reservation)

3. IMPACT OF RESERVATION:

- Dramatically increased women's representation and voice in democracy
- About 36 lakh elected representatives in panchayats and municipalities
- Over 10 lakh women elected to local bodies
- Empowered marginalized sections of society
- Brought grassroots issues to the forefront
- Made local democracy more inclusive and representative

This reservation system has been one of the most significant steps toward social justice and inclusive democracy in India.

SECTION D - Answer to Long Answer Question

Q18. India - A Federal Country with a Difference

(A) WHY INDIA IS CONSIDERED A FEDERATION DESPITE NOT USING THE WORD 'FEDERATION':

Constitutional Position:

- The Constitution declares India as a "Union of States"
- It deliberately avoided the word "federation"
- However, the Indian Union is based on all the principles of federalism

Key Federal Features Present:

1. Multiple Tiers: Originally two-tier (Union and States), now three-tier (including local government)

2. Separate Jurisdictions: Three-fold distribution of legislative powers through Union, State, and Concurrent Lists

3. Constitutional Guarantee: The existence and authority of each tier is constitutionally guaranteed and cannot be unilaterally changed

4. Amendment Procedure: Changes to federal structure require two-thirds majority in Parliament plus ratification by half the states

5. Independent Judiciary: Supreme Court acts as umpire in Centre-State disputes

6. Financial Autonomy: Separate sources of revenue for each level clearly specified

Therefore, despite not using the term, India possesses all essential characteristics of a federal system.

(B) HOW INDIA'S FEDERAL SYSTEM DIFFERS FROM USA/SWITZERLAND:

1. TYPE OF FEDERATION:

- USA/Switzerland: 'Coming together' federations - independent states voluntarily joined
- India: 'Holding together' federation - single nation divided power among constituent units

2. POWER BALANCE:

- USA/Switzerland: States relatively stronger vis-à-vis federal government; all states have equal powers
- India: Central Government more powerful vis-à-vis states; states don't have equal powers

3. FLEXIBILITY:

- USA/Switzerland: Rigid federal structure with strong state rights
- India: More flexible with provisions for special status to some states, Union Territories, emergency provisions

4. RESIDUARY POWERS:

- USA: Residuary powers with states
- India: Residuary powers with Union Government

5. SINGLE CITIZENSHIP:

- USA: Dual citizenship (Federal + State)
- India: Single citizenship

6. EMERGENCY PROVISIONS:

- USA/Switzerland: No provision to convert to unitary
- India: During emergency, federal system can become virtually unitary

(C) SPECIAL PROVISIONS FOR SOME STATES:

Why Special Provisions:

India is a 'holding together' federation where not all states have identical powers. Some states enjoy special status due to peculiar social and historical circumstances.

Article 371 - Special Provisions:

1. NAGALAND:

- Special powers regarding land ownership
- Protection of customary law and practices
- Religious and social practices protected

- Acts of Parliament require approval of state legislature in certain matters

2. ARUNACHAL PRADESH:

- Governor has special responsibility regarding law and order
- Protection of tribal rights
- Inner Line Permit system for outsiders

3. ASSAM:

- Special provisions for tribal areas
- Protection of land rights of indigenous people
- Autonomous district councils

4. MIZORAM:

- Acts of Parliament don't apply on religious and social practices
- Customary law protected
- Ownership and transfer of land protected

Special Benefits Under These Provisions:

- Protection of land rights of indigenous peoples
- Protection of their culture and traditions
- Preferential employment in government services
- Indians who are not permanent residents cannot buy land or houses
- Some laws of Parliament need special approval

CONCLUSION:

India is indeed a federal country with distinctive characteristics. While it possesses all essential federal features, it has adapted federalism to suit its unique context of diversity, size, and historical circumstances. The asymmetric federalism (where states have unequal powers) and special provisions for some states show pragmatic flexibility. This "holding together" federation with a strong centre and flexible provisions has successfully managed India's incredible diversity while maintaining unity. The system represents an innovative adaptation of federalism to Indian realities rather than a mere imitation of Western models.

SECTION E - Answers to Case Study Based Questions

Q19. Linguistic Reorganization of States

(a) The basis for reorganization of states in 1947 was language. Boundaries of several old states were changed to create new states to ensure that people who spoke the same language lived in the same state.

(b) When demands for linguistic states were raised, some national leaders feared that:

- It would lead to the disintegration of the country
- India might break up into many small nations based on language
- Linguistic identity might become stronger than national identity
- It would weaken national unity

Due to these fears, the Central Government initially resisted the creation of linguistic states.

(c) Contrary to the initial fears, linguistic states actually strengthened national unity in the following ways:

1. Respected Diversity:

- Linguistic reorganization recognized and respected India's linguistic diversity
- People felt their identity and language were valued

- This created a sense of belonging rather than alienation
- When people's cultural identity is respected, they feel more committed to the larger union

2. Made Administration Easier:

- When people and government officials speak the same language, communication improves
- Government policies and programs could be implemented more effectively
- People could participate better in governance when they could use their mother tongue
- This increased people's connection with their state government

3. Reduced Conflicts:

- Giving linguistic recognition defused potential conflicts
- States like Andhra Pradesh (Telugu), Kerala (Malayalam), Karnataka (Kannada) were formed peacefully
- People's demands were met democratically through constitutional means
- This strengthened faith in democratic processes and the Indian Constitution

The experience proved that unity doesn't require uniformity. India's strength lies in its ability to "unite in diversity" - respecting differences while remaining one nation.

Q20. Participative Democracy - Porto Alegre

(a) The experiment of participative democracy in combination with decentralization was conducted in Porto Alegre, a city in Brazil with nearly 13 lakh (1.3 million) people.

(b) About 20,000 people participate in the budget decision-making exercise every year in Porto Alegre. This represents approximately 1.5% of the city's population actively participating in governance.

(c) Participative democracy brought several significant benefits to Porto Alegre:

1. Equitable Resource Distribution:

- The system ensured that money could not be spent only for the benefit of colonies where rich people live
- Resources were distributed more fairly across all areas of the city
- Poor areas received attention and investment that they previously didn't get
- Budget priorities reflected needs of all citizens, not just the elite

2. Improved Public Services:

- Buses now run to the poor colonies, improving connectivity
- Basic services like water, electricity, and roads were extended to previously neglected areas
- Public facilities were built based on actual needs identified by residents

3. Protection of Poor:

- Builders cannot evict slum-dwellers without resettling them
- This gave security to the most vulnerable sections
- Poor people got a voice in decisions affecting their lives

4. Democratic Empowerment:

- Citizens gained real decision-making power over city budget
- Direct democracy gave people ownership of governance
- It demonstrated that ordinary citizens can make responsible decisions
- Created a model that has inspired similar experiments worldwide, including in Kerala, India

This experiment shows that genuine decentralization combined with participative democracy can lead to more just, equitable, and effective governance.

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