



CBSE • CLASS 10 • SOCIAL SCIENCE

POLITICAL SCIENCE

CHAPTER 04

Political Parties



CHAPTER NOTES

POLITICAL PARTIES: MEANING AND MEMBERS

POLITICAL PARTY

A group of people who come together to contest elections and hold power in government.

- Members agree on policies and programmes for the collective good.
- Different parties can have different ideas about what is good for society.
- Parties try to persuade voters that their policies are better.
- They seek popular support to implement their programme.



PARTISAN

A person strongly committed to a party, group or faction.

- A partisan view takes one side and may not be balanced.
- Parties reflect major political divisions and interests in society.

Voters can compare parties and choose between competing policies.

PARTY FUNCTIONS: ELECTIONS AND POLICY

CONTESTING ELECTIONS

- Parties select candidates to fight elections.
- Selection methods differ between countries and parties.
- The chapter contrasts member/supporter selection in the USA with top-leader selection common in India.
- Voters then choose among the candidates.

PRESENTING POLICIES

- Society has many different opinions.
- Parties bring similar views together into a programme.
- They give voters a choice of broad directions for government.
- The ruling party normally guides policy through its programme.

MAKING LAWS

- Elected representatives debate and pass laws in legislatures.
- Party members usually follow their party's position.
- Parties therefore play a major role in law-making.

KEY LINK

Election choices



policy direction



laws and government decisions

PARTY FUNCTIONS: GOVERNMENT AND SOCIETY

FORMING AND RUNNING GOVERNMENT

- Parties recruit and train leaders.
- A party or alliance that wins enough support forms the government.
- Party leaders become ministers and run administration.

ACTING AS OPPOSITION

- Parties that do not govern question and criticise government decisions.
- They mobilise public support against policies they oppose.
- Opposition helps check those in power.

SHAPING PUBLIC OPINION

- Parties raise issues and organise public discussion.
- Related pressure groups and movements may help spread their views.

LINKING PEOPLE AND GOVERNMENT

- Local party leaders connect citizens with officials and welfare schemes.
- Parties respond to people's needs because they can lose support at elections.

Parties work both inside government and among citizens.

WHY DEMOCRACY NEEDS POLITICAL PARTIES

WITHOUT POLITICAL PARTIES

- Every candidate would stand independently.
- Representatives might answer local concerns but struggle to agree on a national programme.
- Responsibility for government policy would be unclear.
- Forming and maintaining a government would be difficult.

REPRESENTATIVE DEMOCRACY

Large and complex societies need an organised way to:

- Collect different views on public issues.
- Bring representatives together.
- Form a responsible government.
- Support or restrain the government.
- Make policies and justify or oppose them.

PARTIES DO THIS WORK

The growth of parties is linked to the growth of representative democracy.

Even elections described as non-party contests, such as some Panchayat elections, may involve groups or panels.

KEY IDEA

Parties connect public opinion, representation and accountable government.



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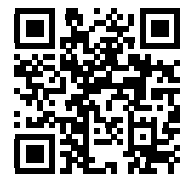


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