



Teacher's Guide

Federalism

Part 4

Based on the NCERT Curriculum for Standard X



JANAAGRAHA CENTRE FOR CITIZENSHIP & DEMOCRACY

Janaagraha's initiative to improve citizen engagement in India's democracy through their civic learning program

Developed in collaboration with Young Leaders for Active Citizenship (YLAC)

Federalism | Teacher's Guide (4/4)

Part 4

Class X

Board – CBSE

Subject – Social Science

Textbook –Democratic Politics- II for class X (NCERT)

Chapter 2 – Federalism

Number of parts – 04

Length – 65-80 minutes (estimated, for a class of 40-45 students)

Note: Teachers may divide the lesson plan into as many periods as they see fit

Section I – What are we going to learn and why is it important?

Learning objectives

Students will:

- Understand the need for decentralisation of power in India .
- Understand the changes that took place in the governance system post 1992.
- Understand the need for citizens to engage with the local government.

Learning Outcomes

Students will be able to:

- Appreciate the importance of power sharing and inclusive governance.
- Address the reasons for low engagement of citizens with their local government by taking initiatives that will facilitate citizen participation and help hold the government accountable.

Key Terms

| | | | | | |
|------------------|------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|--|------------------------------------|
| Decentralisation | Panchayats | Municipal Corporation/Municipalities | Participatory Budgeting | 73 rd & 74 th Constitutional Amendment Act | Citizen engagement & participation |
|------------------|------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------|--|------------------------------------|

Materials Needed:

1. One print each of the four quotes (printable versions in the appendix) for the activity the importance of decentralisation.

2. 5 sets of print outs of the information chits for the activity time series building.

Section II – How are we going to learn?

1. The need for decentralisation

Activity: Importance of decentralisation of power.

Time: 15 minutes

Materials Needed: One print each of the four quotes (printable versions in the appendix)

Note to the teacher: The purpose of this activity is to get students to think about local government. It is important for the teacher to follow it up with a small debate or an enquiry session

Activity Flow:

- Before class starts, the teacher will place four quotes in four corners of the class.
- Students are asked to get up and walk around the class and read each quote carefully in the next 5 minutes.
- Every quote has a few questions mentioned below it. Ask students to note down these questions and then come to their desks and discuss them.
- Give students another 10 minutes to discuss these questions followed by a debrief.

Facilitation Notes:

- Good morning everyone. We are on the last and perhaps the most interesting part of this chapter.
- Just to recap, I hope everyone knows, at least roughly, what local government is. It is the administration of a particular county or district, with representatives elected by those who live there. Great. Now let's move on.
- I want to start today by exercising your legs (in a joking tone). Everyone will get up from their seats and walk around the class. As you can see, I have placed 4 sheets in the four corners. Each of these sheet has a quote followed by a few questions below it.
- Everyone will read these quotes and make a note of the questions in their notebooks.

- Then come back to your desk and discuss these questions with at least 2-3 people around.
- Let's start walking!
- (After 5 minutes) Okay now everyone will come back to their desks and take the next ten minutes to discuss the questions that they noted.

Debrief:

- These were quotes by some of the greatest thinkers of their generations- writers, politicians, rulers etc.
- Let's start with the questions that another great thinker (me!) gave you:

| Questions | Expected answers |
|--|--|
| Think of three problems a local government will be better at solving than a federal government. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When there is a local water issue. • When there is a high incidence of a local disease like typhoid or dengue. • When garbage accumulates in an area. • When there is a road or streetlight that needs fixing. |
| Why is it important that, at least, some politics is local? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is important that people feel they are a part of their government. Local politics creates awareness among people about their rights/ duties etc. and makes them hold the government accountable. • It gets young people and fresh ideas involved in the building up of the nation. |
| How will a government and a country benefit from active and responsible citizens? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People will be more responsible in their own actions and actions towards their fellow citizens. • Laws will be followed and unjust acts by citizens and even the government will be questioned. • Everyone will think of their own benefit as well as that of the entire society. • For instance, they will segregate waste, not litter, use public transport, follow traffic rules, conserve water & electricity, not use plastic and use ecofriendly materials, keep school and other |

| | |
|---|---|
| | <p>public spaces clean, vote in elections once 18 years of age.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tensions and violence will be lesser as everyone will respect and value their fellow citizens. |
| How will society get impacted if we begin to govern our own actions? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Laws will be followed. • No- one will break basic rules. • There will be more peace. • Women and children will be safer. • Any social ill will get corrected by other people. |

- This conversation brings me to an important question: Why do we need local governments?
- Let's summarise this in three points (from the text book)
 - Local government is the closest form of government for its citizens.
 - People have better knowledge of problems in their localities
 - They have better ideas of how to spend the money and manage things more efficiently
 - Local governments enable people to directly participate in decision making. It inculcates the idea of participation and strengthens a democracy.
- We'll now talk about the evolution of local government in India.

2. Activity: Time series building

Time: 15 minutes

Materials needed: 5 sets of print outs of the information chits. (the teacher to tear these chits and make five sets. If printing isn't possible, ask a 2-3 student to write these down and make five sets)

Facilitation Notes:

- The next section of the chapter has very important factual information that I want everyone to know.
- But to make this part also fun, let's cover this part with an activity. I am calling this activity a time series building.
- I want the class to divide itself into 5 groups. (the teacher to divide the class in a way that the children sitting closeby form one group)
- Okay, every group will send one student to take a few slips from me. Every slip of paper has a piece of information written on it.

- Your task as a group is to take these pieces of information and arrange them in a time series. Events that you think happened first should be put first and events that happened later should be put next.
- Let's start. You have 10 minutes to do this. (the teacher to give every group the slips of paper and then walk around the class to make sure that the students are doing that correctly).
- (after 10 minutes) Alright class, let's all settle back in our groups and understand how decentralisation happened in India.
- We will arrange all this information together. Let's see how much of it did you get correct.



Source: [Deccan Chronicle](#)

Solutions Sheet:

The need for decentralisation was recognised in our Constitution. It was understood that even within states, there were vast population and a lot of differences among people. So a simple state government would not be able to cater to everyone.

Panchayats in villages and **municipalities** in urban areas were set up in all the States. But these were directly under the control of state governments

Local governments did not have any powers or resources of their own. Thus, there was very little decentralization in real sense.

A major step towards decentralisation was taken with a constitutional amendment in 1992. -73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendment, to make the 3rd tier of democracy more powerful and effective.

After 1992, the following changes were adopted

- Now it is constitutionally mandatory to hold regular elections to local government bodies.
- Seats are reserved in the elected bodies and the executive heads of these institutions for the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes.

- At least one-third of all positions are reserved for women.

- An independent institution called the State Election Commission has been created in each State to conduct panchayat and municipal elections.
- The State governments are required to share some powers and revenue with local government bodies.
- The nature of sharing varies from State to State.

The presence of local governments has helped make India more democratic with people being a part of their own governance systems. But this system was not without problems.

While elections are held regularly and enthusiastically, gram sabhas are not held regularly. Most state governments have not transferred significant powers to the local governments in urban and rural areas. Nor have they given adequate resources. We are thus still a long way from realising the ideal of self-government.

3. Pop Quiz on Local Government

Time: 15- 20 minutes

Note to the teacher:

- The structure of local government has been taught to students in earlier classes. The purpose of this section is to enable students to recall their past knowledge in a fun manner and also make sure that all important information is conveyed.
- For the quiz, divide the class into two groups

Facilitation Notes:

- I believe that the core of social science, especially political science as a subject is to enable students to understand how the government works and to hold them continuously accountable for it.
- To be able to question the government, we need to first know exactly how it functions and how it is structured.
- We'll now do a pop quiz on the structure of local government.
- Okay, you are divided into team A and B. For every right answer, you will get 10 points and every wrong answer will lead to deduction of 5 points.
- If a question passes, then the next team gets 5 points for right answer and no minus points for wrong answer.
- Okay, let's start (ask students to get some energy, keep their books back in their bags)

- (alternatively ask questions to team A and B and note down their scores in a column on the board)

List of questions and answers:

| Question | Answer |
|---|--|
| Rural Local Government | |
| What is a gram sabha? | All the voting members of a ward are collectively called gram sabha. |
| How is a gram panchayat formed? | The gram sabha members of each ward elect ward members of the panch. They form the panchayat. |
| Does every village have a panchayat? | No. Sometimes two or more villages together have one panchayat |
| Who is the head of the panchayat? | The sarpanch |
| Give any two functions of a gram sabha? | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To supervise the working of a gram panchayat. 2. To approve the budget made by the panchayat. 3. To vote for the ward members who form the panchayat. |
| What does a gram panchayat do? | Make all administrative decisions of the village/ villages. |
| After a gram panchayat, what is the next higher level government in rural areas called? | Gram Samiti or a block or mandal. |
| How is it formed? | It is formed by the elected ward members of all gram panchayats in a block. |
| What is the local government at the district level called? | Zilla parishad |
| Apart from the elected members, who else can be a part of the zilla parishad? | Members of the Parliament (MPs) and Members of Legislative Assemblies (MLAs) are also its members. |
| Urban Local Government | |
| What is the local government of towns and cities called? | Municipalities in towns. Municipal corporations in big cities. |
| Who is the head of a municipality? | Municipal chairman |
| Who is the head of a municipal corporation? | Mayor |

4. Participatory Budgeting in Brazil: An example

Time: 10 minutes

Note to the teacher: After having explained the importance and the structure of local government, this discussion is to enable students to understand a case of active citizenship from Brazil and formulate solutions to make local governments in India stronger.

Facilitation Notes:

- As I have repeatedly mentioned, there is absolutely no point of studying political science if we don't use these lessons in our lives to make our governments more effective, efficient and accountable.
- Let's start with an incredible case from a city in Brazil called Porto Alegre and see how we can do our part to be responsible citizens and hold our government accountable. I want everyone to make notes of what they see in the video.
- **Video: Participatory budgeting in Brazil**
The video shows how a very successful experiment was conducted in Brazil with participatory budgeting where nearly 13 lakh citizens came together and decided how the city's money should be spent.
Link: [Participatory](#)
- (After the video is over) Can someone summarise the process of participatory budgeting to me? (It is a process where citizens are invited to deliberate and decide how to allocate a part of the city's budget)
- Isn't this great?! Does anyone know if this happens in India?
- Participatory budgeting has taken place in a very limited capacity in India. Very few cities including Bengaluru, Pune etc have experimented with it. However, in the year 2015, the government of Delhi introduced a new experiment around participatory budgeting. It was called the Swaraj Budget. Meetings were held across Delhi and citizens were asked their priorities. The government even allocated 253 crores to be spent after deliberations through these meetings. ([Source](#))
- The purpose of starting this section with this example was for me to show you how incredible and effective citizen's participation can be. Through these processes around the world, people have allocated money to schools, waste management, environmental causes and so on.
- India may not be at this level yet, but if we keep pushing, we can also improve our governance system and make our country more effective and progressive.



5. Responsible Citizenship: Problems and solutions

Time: 10- 15 minutes

Facilitation Notes:

- We can keep talking about the faults in the government and how no one is listening. But the truth of the matter is that nothing will change unless someone changes it.
- And while we should rightfully point out flaws in our local governments, we also need to find out ways to hold them accountable and make them more effective. For once, let's focus on how we as citizens can change our behaviour and make our local governments more effective.
- I want everyone to now get into groups of 4. And discuss the following question:
- What are the shortcomings of citizens in making local governments more effective? How can we resolve them?
- It is absolutely correct that local governments need to be more responsible. But what is also true is that they often go unchecked. Citizens rarely keep a track of what is being done by their local councillors and how they can hold them accountable.
- *Very often citizens do not participate and engage in the system of governance either for reasons such as*
 - a) *indifference,*
 - b) *ignorance*
 - c) *lack of information*
 - d) *lack of understanding of the process required to engage or to create impact*
 - e) *lack of understanding of the navigation that is required to achieve results*
 - f) *lack of a community of citizens that care for the same issue.*
- *Think about these and other problems and how can they be solved.* (give students 10 minutes to think and discuss)
- Ask students to share a few responses.
- Solutions sheet:

| Problems | Possible solutions |
|---|--|
| 1. People are not aware of their local representatives. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find out how many wards are there in your city. • Find out details about your ward-the ward number and where your ward office is located. Look up this information from the municipal (local govt) websites • Find out about the elected members from municipal websites (local govt) or through your Resident Welfare Associations /Apartment Associations and create awareness about them in your neighbourhood. |

| | |
|---|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circulate their names and numbers among your parents and neighbours. • Keep a track of the promises they make during campaigning and see if these promises are met. |
| 2. People do not know how to get local issues addressed. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approach the local councillor to get an issue addressed. • Visit the ward office. • Make a group of citizens who will regularly follow up on the civic issue. |
| 3. There is general lack of understanding/ enthusiasm when it comes to local politics among people. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make a list of subjects that fall under the purview of the local government. • Educate neighbours and family members of these issues. • Share examples of success by local officials in fixing problems to create more enthusiasm about local participation. |
| 4. There are no regular meetings with the local representatives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Every ward has meetings with all its elected members. Find out about those dates and attend those meetings. • Ask your local representative about the development work being done in your ward. • Raise concerns about the issues you face in your neighborhood. |
| 5. People do not vote in local elections. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Voting is your right and responsibility. • Find out when are the next municipal elections to be held. • Make a list of the candidates and the promises they are making during campaigning. • Encourage your parents to find more information about the candidates. • Encourage people to vote in local elections. • Emphasise on how their day to day lives are deeply impacted by local leaders. • Get yourself registered to vote once you are 18 years of age. |

Debrief:

As citizens and, more importantly, as people whose lives are so deeply impacted by local politics, it is not only our duty but also our right to make local government more effective.

Section III –Assessment

Time: 10 minutes

Materials needed: Blackboard and chalk

Facilitation notes:

- Mark 'T' if the statement is True and 'F' if the statement is false
 - Local governments are not needed since the state government has a fair understanding of what is going on in their state.
 - A few gram panchayats are clubbed together to form a panchayat samiti or a block or a mandal.
- Fill in the blanks
 - The chairperson of the panchayat samiti is called _____
 - India has _____ elected representatives in various local bodies across the country. (36 lakhs)

- Match the following:

| List 1 | List 2 |
|-----------------------|----------------|
| Union of India | Prime Minister |
| State | Sarpanch |
| Municipal Corporation | Governor |
| Gram Panchayat | Mayor |

- Why are local governments important in India?
- State two differences between local government before and after 1992.
- Mention two problems faced by local governments in India.

- What is participatory budgeting? List two advantages and two disadvantages of it.

Section IV – Closure

Time: 5 minutes

Recap by a student and teacher

Time: 5 minutes

Pick a student and ask him to summarise. The teacher to add to points whenever the student misses.

In the recap by the teacher, the following points should be covered:

- In a vast country like India, having only two levels of governance is not enough.
- Even within states, there are a variety of different towns cities and villages. This creates a need for people who are closest to the issues to resolve them. Hence local governments were first provided for by the constitution.
- Earlier, local governments did not have any powers or resources of their own. However, after the constitutional amendment of 1992, all this changed.
- Now it is constitutionally mandatory to hold regular elections to local government bodies.
- Seats are reserved in the elected bodies and the executive heads of these institutions for the Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Classes.
- At least one-third of all positions are reserved for women.
- An independent institution called the State Election Commission has been created in each State to conduct panchayat and municipal elections.
- The State governments are required to share some powers and revenue with local government bodies.
- We also studied the case of participatory budgeting that has been tried very successfully in Brazil and in a very limited way in India.
- Ultimately, the purpose of local government is to bring citizens close to their government and be a part of the governance system. Complaining about the government and its many faults is not enough.
- We, as citizens, need to understand that any system is made up of its people. If we start behaving with responsibility and integrity, then government automatically will become more responsible and accountable.

Section V- Field Visit to a Municipal Council Meeting in your city

Note: Learning through experience has many success stories. Taking students to a Municipal council to witness its proceedings will help them understand the nature of conversations and how decision making processes take place.

To plan this field visit in your city, seek prior permission from your Municipal Council. The proceedings only happen on certain days or at least once in a month, so

the visit must be timed accordingly.

Ideal visit Time: 2-3 hours

Things to observe:

- How do councillors represent the interests of their local wards?
- How does the council conduct itself?
- How does decision making happen in the house?

Section VI: Homework

- Find out answers to the following:
 - a. Find out about the local government in the village or town you live in.
 - i. If you live in a village, find out the names of the following: your panch or ward member, your sarpanch, your panchayat samiti, the chairperson of your zilla parishad.
Also find out when did the last meeting of the gram sabha take place and how many people took part in that.
 - ii. If you live in urban areas, find out the name of your municipal councilor, and the municipal chairperson or mayor. Also find out about the budget of your municipal corporation, municipality and the major items on which money was spent.

Make a small brochure of this important information in an easy to read manner and circulate in your neighborhood.

- b. Go home and talk to your parents. Try and come up with a power sharing structure where everyone is happy and share the result in class.
Think on the following lines:
 - i. How will you and your parents divide work at home?
 - ii. What are the important things that your parents expect from you?
 - iii. What do you expect in return?
 - iv. How will you solve conflicts between each other?

Section VII: Additional resources

Resources for teachers:

1. Article: What is citizens made the budget?

The article is an in-depth analysis of the process of participatory democracy (mentioned in the chapter)

Link: wri.org

2. Article: Democracy depends on a vibrant gram sabha

The article talks about the importance of effective gram sabhas and how they impact the nation.

Link: Mint

Resources for students:

1. Video: How India's villages work

The video details the need for having a local government system in rural areas

Link: YouTube

2. Reading: Municipal Budgets in India

The reading elaborates on the structures of local governing bodies, how the municipal budgets are formed and what all is covered under these budgets.

Link: Open Budgets India

3. Video: The 74th amendment

The video explains in detail the 74th amendment of the constitution.

Link: YouTube

Appendix:

Printable quotes for the activity importance of decentralisation:

“What we need is not more Federal government, but
better local government.”

Calvin Coolidge

Think of three problems a local government will be better at solving than a federal government.

“All politics is local.”
Thomas P. “Tip” O’Neil

Why is it important that, at least, some politics is local?

“Public instruction should be the first object of government.”

Napoleon Bonaparte

How will a government and a country benefit from active and responsible citizens?

“The best government is that which teaches us to govern ourselves.”

Johann von Goethe

How will society get impacted if we begin to govern our own actions?

Printable worksheet for the activity time series building

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