

# Political science

Political science focuses on the theory and practice of government and politics at the local, state, national, and international levels. We are dedicated to developing understandings of institutions, practices, and relations that constitute public life and modes of inquiry that promote citizenship.

Polity of a country is designed according to its Constitution and any change to the Polity is possible only when an amendment is made to the Constitution.

The word polity denotes the “form of government” in a country and includes its powers, functions and limitations. The term form of government indicates the following:

The source of government – whether it is elected by the people (democratic form of government) or whether it is decent based (monarchical form of government).

India has a democratic form of government as the people of the country chose their government by voting in elections.

The type of rule – whether it is centralised (unitary form of government) or de-centralised (federal form of government).

India has a federal form of government as it has two governments – one in the Centre and the other in the states – indicating decentralised rule.

The relationship between the executive and legislature – whether the executive is a part of Legislature (Parliamentary form of government) or whether the executive is independent of Legislature.

India has a Parliamentary form of government as India has a majority party rule where people elect the members of Legislature and the party which gets majority seats in the legislature goes on to form the government (executive).

But on what basis is the form of government in a country, whether – Democratic or Autocratic or Monarchic, Presidential or Parliamentarian, is decided. Also where will the powers, functions and responsibilities of the government be listed. The answers to all this can be found in the Constitution of that country.

The polity of India is a unique specimen in the world. There are two easily observable things that define

this specimen. One, that we inherited long traditions of democratic functioning and even longer traditions of democratic debate and discussions. And two, our *body politic* is purely an evolution, in which the growth of institutions - both democratic and public - being in the process of change since the beginning of history. The ultimate result of this process is our Constitution and all the Public Institutions of the country like the Parliament and the Supreme Court.

A constitution can be defined as “a body of fundamental principles according to which a State is constituted or governed”. It is fundamental because it also lays down basic rules for minimal coordination in the society along with the form of government, its functions, responsibilities and limitations. These basic rules include the rights and duties of people of that country and the manner in which they are enforced. A constitution therefore can be understood as the basic law or fundamental law of the land.

### **RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CONSTITUTION AND POLITY**

The Polity of a country is based on its Constitution. India has a democratic form of government because the Constitution of India provides for Universal Adult Franchise with periodic elections. Therefore, the Polity of a country is designed according to the Constitution of a country and any change to the Polity of the country is possible only when an amendment is made to the Constitution.

The next article will be on significance of the Constitution.