

Concept of Power

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Particulars

- **Meaning of Power**
- **Definitions of Power**
- **Structure of Power**
- **Importance of Power to a Modern State**
- **Features of Power**
- **Types of Power**

Introduction

- Power is the crux of politics., local, national and international. Since the beginning of human power has been occupying the central position I human relations.
- Politics is nothing other than the pursuit and exercise of power. And that political relations are mainly power relations.
- Catlin, Maclver, Robert Dahl, H. Lass well, Charles Merriam, Weber, Morgenthau etc. consider power as central to the study of politics.
- They are of the opinion that wherever there is struggle for power, there is politics.

- Today the main aim of every individual, organizations, association and states is to grab power and for attainment of this goal, they are continuously struggling.
- According to Hobbes, “Life is perpetual and restless desire of power that ceaseth only in death”
- A correct analysis of the political writings from Aristotle to the present world no doubt reveal power as the central concept around which attempts explain Politics have revolved.
- Max Weber , “Politics is struggle for power or the influencing of those in power”

- Catlin while expressing his views says, “Politics is a science of power”
- Lasswell, “Politics is primarily concerned with who gets, what when and how”
- Morgenthau in 1957 said, “The concept of power should be made central to political science”.
- After going through the views of different scholars and thinkers, we can say without any doubt that the study of politics is incomplete without the study of power.

Introduction

- **Concept of Power, Authority and Legitimacy is closely associated with notion of State**
- **Without Legitimacy authority the state cannot exercise its power**
- **No state can work in the absence of power**
- **Harold Laswell says that Politics, “Who gets What, When, How”**
- **Politics is the resolution of conflict and distribution of power**

Development of the Concept of power

- The concept of power is as old as the history of mankind because from the very beginning man has been struggling to acquire more and more power.
- We find the mention of the concept of power in the writings of famous Greek philosophers Socrates Plato and Aristotle
- On the basis of holds power Aristotle has done the classification of the state, maccabulary and hops the thinkers of middle age made use of the concept of power in the writings.

- The concept of power became more popular with the emergence of the Idea of modern Nation States.
- By the end of the 17th century great empires of France, England Spain and Russia had come into existence. Nation States took birth also in Germany and Italy.
- The rulers of this States made use of absolute power and this way strengthened their position.
- The philosophers of this each propagated that the state was 'power institution '
- The famous thinkers of 19 and 20 century Nietzsche, Trietschke and Bernhardi glorified the use of power by the state and justify it also

- We have to accept that the development of concept of power was not so much in the writings of traditional thinkers of political science as it has been popularised in the writings of the modern thinkers, such as Robert Dahl, politics is struggle for power
- According to Leswell and Kaplan, politics is the study of shaping and sharing of political power
- Famous philosopher HJ Morgenthau has explained the concept of power in international sphere and he is of the opinion that today every nation is after power and wants to get more and more power of it.

Meaning

- The problem with the meaning of word power is that different philosophers have made use of different words resembling to the meaning of this word.
- For example the words like authority force influence domination and regulations etc have been used in place of the word power
- Therefore Charles mariam is of the opinion that we should see actual use of power in our daily life and not involve ourself in the definitions of power
- We can know it better that In fact power is the ability of person to get his desires en forced on others and if other disagree then they have to face Diar consequences

Meaning of Power

- The English word 'Power' derives from certain Latin and French Words which mean 'to be able'
- No agreement among scholars to define meaning of power because it is complex term---**James March**
- In general Power may be understood as the ability, strength or capacity to control others.
- It is an attribute of individuals which is exercised over other individuals.
- Power corrupts absolutely , absolute power corrupts absolutely

Definitions of Power

- British political philosopher **Bertrand Russel** in his book “Power: A New Social Analysis” defined power “One’s ability to achieve goals”
- **Herbert Goldhamer and Edward shills**, “Power is the ability to influence the behavior of others in accordance with one’s own intention ”
- American political scientist **David Easton** defines power as “Relationship in which one person or a group is able to determine the actions of another in the direction of the former’s own ends”

- American Political Scientist, **Robert Dahl** “Ability to shift the probability of outcomes”
- **Biersted**, ‘Power is Latent Force’
- **Hobbes**, Power is man’s ability to obtain some future apparent goods
- **Max Weber**, Power is the probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will, despite resistances, regardless of the basis on which this probability rests.
- **Laswell and Kaplan** define power as Participation in the making of decisions

- According to Maclver, power is the capacity to centralise regulate or direct behaviour of persons or things
- Bertrand Russell, power may be defined as the production of intended results
- Professor W. G. Sumner, any form of coerced compulsion..... Maybe come politics force it is used to accomplish political ends
- Professor HJ Morgenthau, power we mean the power of man and mines and actions of others in social contract with one another

- HR Towney, power is the capacity of an individual or group of individuals to modify the conduct of other individuals or groups in a manner in which the he desires
- Karl Deutch, power is ability to prevail in conflict and overcome obstacles
- **Conclusion**
- On the basis of their definitions, welcome to the conclusion that power is a capacity or capability by which we are able to change the behaviour of others and from them, we can get the things done according to our and if they do not act likewise, they can be punished.

Structure of Power

- Four theories of power
- 1 Theory of Class Dominance—Karl Marx
- 2 Elitist Theory----Pareto ‘The Mind and Society’
G.Mosca ‘The Rulling Class’
Robert Michel's ‘Political Parties’

- **Feminist Theory**----**Gender base divided society**

- **Pluralist Theory**----- **many centers of power**

Importance of Power to a Modern State

- **Independence to the State**
- **Enables the State to make Laws**
- **Protects the State**
- **Makes people obedient to the State**
- **Existence of State**
- **Protects customs of Traditions**

Features of power

- **1 power is the capacity to impose your will on others**
- To impose your will on others how to make them to do the things in such a manner in which they would have not done otherwise, is the basis of power.
- Gold Hammer, Schills, George Schwarzenberger, Robert A Dahl, M G Smith etc. Philosophers accept this characteristics of power

- **2 power is Relational and Inter-relational**

- The concept of power is always relational and for the use of power, there must be a power holder and an object on which the power is to be used.
- In case there is a power holder but there is no object, cannot be given practical shape.
- When somebody with the use of his power try to regulate or change the behaviour of another person, then actually he is using power on the object

- In case there is no object the power cannot be used.
- In brief the power cannot be used in vacuum, rather there must be subject and object for the use of power.
- Power is **intra relational** also. In democracy for example government gets power from the people and uses the same power on people also.

- **3 power goes with situations and office**
- Power is related with situation and office. So long a person is holding an office, he makes use of power but as soon as he vacates the office, he loses the power also, as a government official loses his power after his retirement.
- **4 power is back to by threat of severe Deprivations**
- Fear of severe deprivations is the very important characteristics of power and this is the feature which separates it from influence.

- If you only have the capacity to influence others, then you do not have any power.
- But if you have capacity to punish for non-compliance then you have the power
- **5 power depends upon its use**

Power is closely related to its use.

If a person is not making use of his power, then he is not powerful.
Only he is powerful who actually makes use of his power.

- For example, the President of India has first powers but he is not powerful because he does not make use of his powers according to his wishes rather, he uses these powers according to the advice of the Council of Ministers.
- In comparison to it, American president is powerful because he makes use of his powers according to his wishes
- **6 power is concerned with external influence**
- With the use of power, we may not be able to influence the internal views of others, what we are in the capacity to influence the external actions of an individual

- We have read that there is severe loss of deprivations behind power and an individual obeys the orders of the powerful because of fear.
- So with the use of power, we may be able to change the man externally but you may not be able to change him internally.
- **7 power is a not something material**
- Power is not something like a matter which can be shown to others or which can be stored or measured.
- Power is a feeling which is felt and made others to feel.

- For example the students know that the principal has the power to punish them, but they cannot see this power of the principal, Nor the principle can shown them the power.
- So power is not a good which can be measured or weighed.
- **8 opposite interest are must for the use of power**
- For the use of power opposite interest are must for power
- You do not want to do a thing because you feel that doing of is not in your interest, but still you do it because of the fear of punishment.

- For example nobody wants to pay the taxes but still because of the fear of punishment, everybody pay the taxes
- **9 power is always used for specific purpose**
- It is an important characteristics of the concept of power that it is used for specific purpose and this purpose can be personal Welfare as well as public welfare.
- In case the power is used without any purpose, Sach power will be meaningless and it will be of no use, so there is a need of a specific purpose to the use of power

- **10 power keeps on fluctuating**
- The important feature of a power is that power keeps on fluctuating with time and situation.
- The powers of the Prime Ministers are the same, where are the some Prime Ministers are strong and Some r week.
- So the quantity of power depends on the capability and the Personal qualities of its user.

- **11 power is backed by sanctions**

- We remember this context, sanctions means power to give punishment or reward and those people who make use of power can get the accepted by giving punishment and rewards.
- Police jails and courts etc. are the symbols of the power of the state and can be punished for the non compliance of the orders of the state.
- The objective of power is not only to give punishment rather it is also used to give recognition to those who do good deeds

- **Conclusion**

- On the basis of the features written above we come to the conclusion that power is the capacity or ability to influence the behaviors of others. And with the use of it.
- You can make others to do the things which they would not have done otherwise.
- fear of severe deprivation is an important characteristics of power which distinguish it from influence.

- Power is concerned with the external influence as power has the ability to change the external behavior of an individual
- Besides this, for the use of power, there must be opposite interests

Types or forms of power

- There are different types of power such as economic, political, ideological and national power
- **1 Economic power**
- From the very beginning economic power has exercised great influence on the life of man and human society.
- There is seeing that Mentally unsound persons also look perfect because of the influence of money power with Them
- Rich persons have always been successful in securing their interest in society and rich persons have always use the power of the state to secure their interest.

- It has been rightly said, rich exercise full control over the administration and law, where as Law crushes the poor persons of society
- **Meaning of economic power**
- In common use, economic power means money power.
- This is the power which one can gets from the ownership of the means of production and distribution such as a land factories and the ownership of such other material goods.
- According to, M.P Jain, economic power means ownership of means of production, generally we see he, who control the money power, control the political power

- For example in a capitalist state, economic power being in the hands of a few rich persons, political power also gets concentrated into their hands.
- In communist States, the control of economic power is in the hands of workers i. e. The proletariat class, with the result of political power too gets concentrated in their hands.
- According to James Burnham, the control of production gives rise to political power and social Prestige as well as wealth

2 political power

- Political power is the Power by which the administrative decisions are taken and implemented and those who disobey these decisions are punished.
- Political power is institutionalized power which is exercised by the state.
- Acc to E P Allen, evidenced by the ability of those who control the Institutions of government to secure obedience of their decisions

Who wields the political power?

- **1 Liberal view**
- The liberalist are of the view that political power is not in the hands of an individual or a group of individuals, rather it resides with the entire community.
- In modern democratic states, the people make use of their political power through their representatives elected on the basis of Universal adult franchise.
- The elected representatives remain responsible to the people and the people can change these representatives.
- The supporters of this view believe in the principle of popular sovereignty.

- **2 Marxist view**

- The Marxist are of the opinion that only those persons make use of the political power who have control over the production and the means of production.
- This is the class of rich people and it makes use of the political power to promote their interest at cost of poor. In case the common people oppose them, they are suppressed with the help of police and army.

- Opposite to it, in socialistic States, the control over means of production is in the hands of entire society, with the result the political power gets concentrated in the prolater prolateriat class.
- During the dictatorship of the prolateral class political power will be exercised to secure the interest of the prolatarieral class and to eliminate the capitalist class

- **3 pluralist view**

- The pluralist like, Maitland, GDH Cole, MacIver, Laski, Barket, Gierke, Figgs and Lindsay are of the opinion that the political power is not the Monopoly of the state or any one Association, rather it is in the hands of various associations which are made by main in order to fulfill their various needs.
- In this way the nature of political power is pluralistic which is exercised by various associations like religious, economic, social and cultural etc.

- **4 Elitist View**

- G. Mosca, Robert Michels, C Wright Mills and V. Pareto etc are of the opinion that in every state, the ruling power is vested into the hands of Elite class.
- These philosophers are of the opinion that whatever may be the external form of the government such as it may be democratic in India, socialistic in China, yet the ruling power in all these countries is vested in the hands of Elite class.

- According to the philosophers, the elite class includes bureaucrats, military officials, political leaders, capitalist, aristocratic families and religious leaders.Etc
- All important decisions are taken by this class.
- V. Pareto calls the, Governing Elites, G. Mosca calls it political Elite

- **Limitations of political**

- powers Some Scholars are of the view that political power has to keep in mind the following limitation
- 1 political traditions of state
- 2 religious at moral principles
- 3 economics social add cultural organization etc within the state and their rights
- 4 opposition parties
- 5 pressure groups6 press and public opinion

- **Pareto- Book 'Mind and Society'**
- History of mankind is graveyard of Aristocracy
- Theory of circulation of elites- power-concentrated circulate in close loop
- Elites – natural qualities
- **Mosca- Book 'Ruling Class'**- people- Govern and governing class- organizational skill – provides axis to elite structure

- **Robert Michels- Book- 'Political parties'**- Iron law of oligarchy- small section of elites have power concentrated
- **C Wright Mills- Book- 'Power Elite'**
- USA- Power elite- Federal politicians, Big corporate house and top officials in different forces

3 Ideological Power

- In the modern times, ideological power has great influence. Acc. To Harold Lasswell, 'the rulers are constrained to sustain themselves by violence but this is costly business, ideological support is cheapest.'
- Lasswell is of the view that the people cannot be controlled only with the use of brute force.
- To achieve this purpose, the state has to create the wide spread network of police, army, courts, jails etc.
- Opposite to it, it is much easier to win over the confidence of the people with the spread of a particular ideology.

- Acc. To Charles E. Merriam, 'the power does not lie in the guns or the ships or the walls of the stones or the lines of steel'
- Imp these are , the real power lies in a definite common pattern of impulses'
- The rulers of different times used various ideologies in order to consolidate their power.
- In the ancient times, it was said the the king is th erepresentatives of God on earth and with the passage of time, in the 17th century , man started questioning the theoof divine rights,

- With the result of social contract theory originated.
- The supporters of this theory were of the view that state was result of social contract and the basis of state.
- Power was the General will.
- In the 18th century state was as a useful institution and in the 19th century govt. Takes the help of popular ideology in order to maintain power.
- The govt. through the use of governmental machinery, Radio, TV, Newspaper and magazines etc tries to maintain its power and popularize its ideology

- By making its ideology popular, it becomes easy for the govt. to get its laws obeyed by the people.
- Mobilize people
- Legitimate power

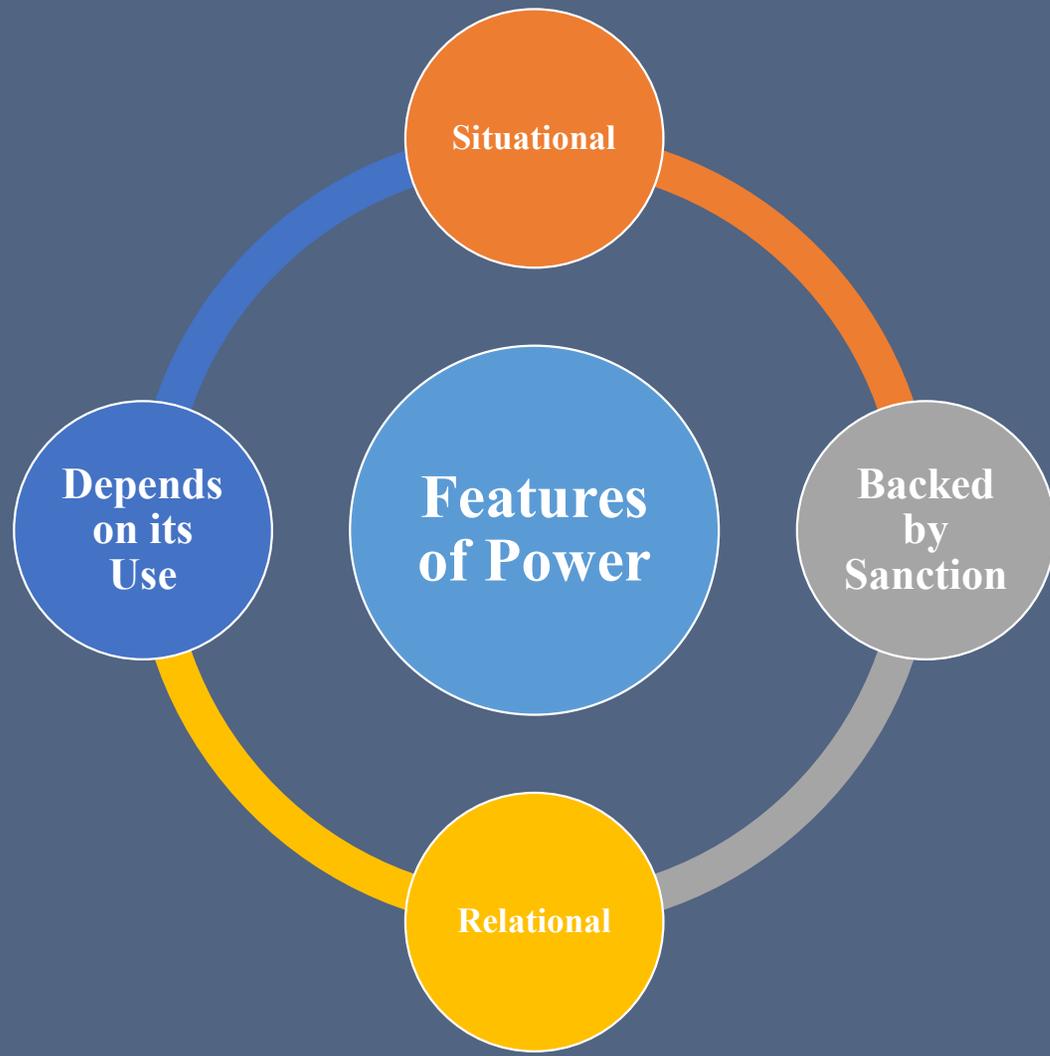
National Power

- The power that a nation uses is called nat. power.
- It is through the use of this power, that nation establishes relation with other countries and gets its will enforced on other nations.
- National power is the collective power of a nation which includes economic, political, emotional and military of the nation.
- National power has the following kinds-
- 1 Psychological power- 2 Military power, technological power political power
- It comes from the psychological unity of the people and it establishes unity among the people belonging to different relations, castes and speaking different languages
- It is imp for nation to become strong and powerful.

Other types – besides above types of power, there are others....

- 1 On Legal basis the power is of the two types
 - Legitimate power- 3 types
 - Constitutional, Traditional and charismatic power
 - Illegitimate power
- 2 On the basis of Manifestation- Manifest and latent power
- 3 On the Basis of use
 - Direct and Indirect power
- 4 on the basis of the flow of power-
 - Unilateral and bilateral

- 5 on the basis of the location of power
- Centralized and de...



Situational

**Depends
on its
Use**

**Features
of Power**

**Backed
by
Sanction**

Relational

