

2022 Edition

UPSC-CSE Optional

Political Science

**Topic-wise
Questions**

&

**Previous Year
Question Papers**

Last 27 Years [1995-2021]



A WORD WITH THE STUDENTS
PRACTICES ADOPTED IN THE BOOK
UNDERSTANDING GRAPHS
QUESTION CODE
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Previous Year Question Papers [1995 -2021]

Year 1995

Year 1996

Year 1997

Year 1998

Year 1999

Year 2000

Year 2001

Year 2002

Year 2003

Year 2004

Year 2005

Year 2006

Year 2007

Year 2008

Year 2009

Year 2010

Year 2011

Year 2012

Year 2013

Year 2014

Year 2015

Year 2016

Year 2017

Year 2018

Year 2019

Year 2020

Year 2021

CONCLUDING WORDS

A WORD WITH THE STUDENTS

Optional Subject plays a decisive role in the final result of UPSC-CSE. With an increasing number of students taking Political Science as an optional, a need was felt to have an analytical book to aid the student's preparation.

Time is an essential consideration in an exam like CSE. With more than ten subjects to study, each having its vast material, coupled with ever-accumulating current affairs, TIME MANAGEMENT is perhaps the most critical skill an IAS aspirant should possess.

Our book is designed with the same purpose in mind. Knowing previous year questions asked on the topic will help you in the direction of your studies. By understanding the **WEIGHTAGE OF EACH SECTION**, you will be able to prioritise better and make maximum use of available time. To give an example, **BASED ON ANALYSIS OF PREVIOUS 9 YEARS PAPERS, 90% OF QUESTIONS COME FROM JUST 75% OF THE SYLLABUS**. Given the optional nature of questions, this percentage goes even higher.

We have also classified different topics according to the syllabus provided by UPSC. This was a much-needed step and will help to avoid confusion & enhance clarity. We are also proud to say that this is the **FIRST AND THE ONLY EBOOK** available for Topic-wise Political Science Previous Years Questions.

So, if you have political science optional, this book is a must to aid and enhance your preparation. You will save a lot of time and maximize your marks in UPSC Mains. We highly recommend this book for beginners as well as experts.

With warm regards and best wishes,

Publisher, Politics for India

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PRACTICES ADOPTED IN THE BOOK

Political Science is a dynamic discipline, and so is the nature of question papers. The exam pattern has changed several times over the past 27 years. So, we felt it necessary to declare some practices we've adopted in this book.

1. Some old questions may not be part of the present syllabus, but we've decided to keep them. If the question seems strange and is from an old question paper, students should not worry about such questions being asked in exams.
2. Some questions cover more than one theoretical concept. We've tried to keep such questions in both sections of relevance.
3. The *TOPIC-WISE WEIGHTAGE OF EACH SECTION* is based on the last nine years (2013-2021) papers. This was done because of the changed syllabus and changing exam pattern over the years. The previous 9 years analysis is more helpful for the exam than that of 27 years.

UNDERSTANDING GRAPHS

All graph values can be categorized into four types.

1. High % in 2013-21, High % in 2020-21
The topic is vital from the UPSC perspective and should be prepared thoroughly.
2. High % in 2013-21, Low % in 2020-21
If the topic has been sidelined in politics in general e.g. NAM, the trend will continue.
If the topic is important in general (India Pak relations, Kautilya etc.), there is a very high chance of questions being asked on the topic in the coming exam.
3. Low % in 2013-21, High % in 2020-21
If topic has come to prominence in recent past e.g. India-SEA relations, the trend will continue.
If the topic is not important in general, the probability of questions being asked in the upcoming exam is low.
4. Low % in 2013-21, Low % in 2020-21
Topic is less important and unless something significant happens related to the topic, the trend will continue.

Also, please understand that this is a probabilistic model. The dynamic aspect always remains. **WE DO NOT ENCOURAGE YOU TO SKIP ANY TOPIC IN PREPARATION. THE PURPOSE OF THIS MODEL IS ONLY TO HELP STUDENTS SET PRIORITIES IN THEIR STUDIES.**

QUESTION CODE

the statement with economic diplomatic
.. What have been the main challenges
issues? [2013/20m/250w/7a]
!. Comment on the essential elements of
..

Year in which Q was asked

Marks allotted to Q

Word limit (if any)

Question number

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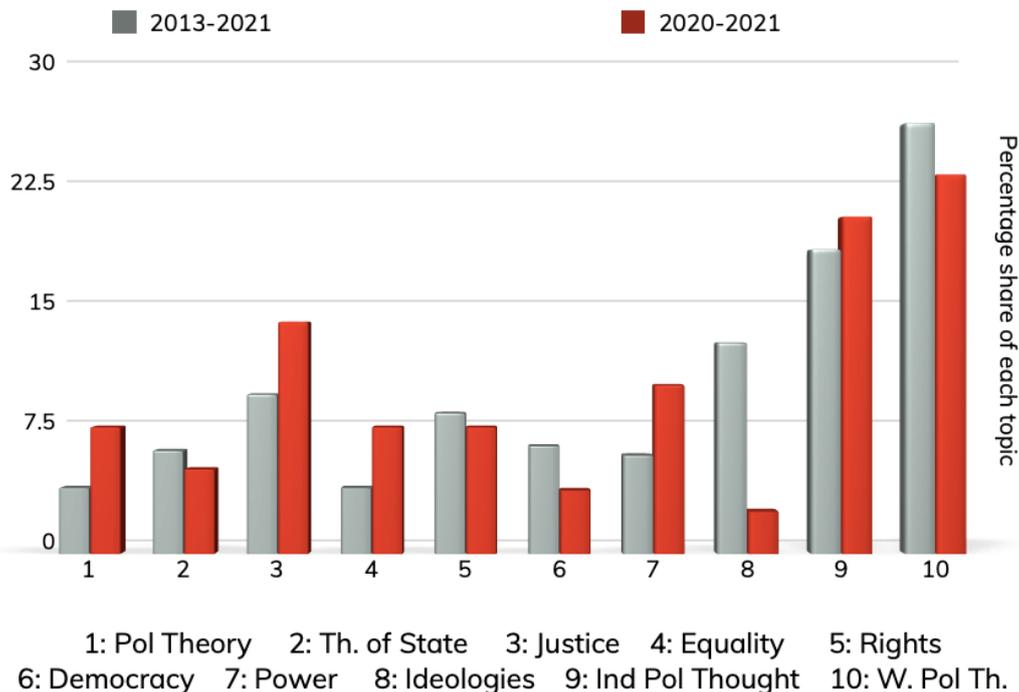
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Paper 1 Section A: Political Theory.

PSIR 1A: Political Theory



1] POLITICAL THEORY: MEANING AND APPROACHES.

1. Examine the importance of behavioural approach in political theory. What led to its decline? [2021/15m/200w/2b]
2. Discuss the significance of a normative approach to Political theory. [2020/15m/200w/4b]
3. Comment on resurgence of political theory. [2019/10m/150w/1a]
4. Comment on the decline of Political Theory. [2018/10m/150w/1b]
5. Comment on the post behavioural approach. [2016/10m/150w/1b]
6. Comment: '...Political theory is not an escape mechanism but an arduous calling'. (John Plamanetz). [2014/10m/150w/1a]
7. Discuss the differences between normative and empirical theories of politics. [2012/12m/150w/1a]
8. Examine the significance of the behavioural revolution in politics. [2011/30m/2b]
9. 'Political Theory is, quite simply, man's attempt to consciously understand and solve the problems of his group life and organization. It is the disciplined

investigation of political problems. Not only to show what a political practice is, but also to show what it means. In showing what a practice means, or what it ought to mean, political theory can alter what it is.' (Sabine). Comment. [2009/20m/200w/1a]

10. Explain the changing analytical perspectives in the development of political theory. [2008/60m/2]
11. Examine the arguments in the Normative vs Empirical debate in the study of political theory. [2002/60m/2]
12. Comment: Relevance of contextualist approach to the study of political theory. [2001/20m/200w/1a]
13. 'Post-behaviouralism is not a negation of the behavioural revolution but only its corrective'. How does it seek to raise the status of the discipline of Political Science. [2000/60m/3]
14. Critically evaluate and bring out the weakest aspects of behavioural and post-behavioural approaches to analysis of political systems. What measurable and quantifiable criteria are available in political science to evaluate political behaviour? [1999/60m/3]
15. What is meant by behavioural approach to politics? Is it a fool-proof approach? How far is it correct to say that the behavioural approach to political analysis appeared in order to counteract the Marxist approach? [1998/60m/2]
16. Discuss the basic assumptions of behaviouralism. In what way post-behaviouralism differs from behavioural theory? [1996/60m/2]
17. Examine the fact-value dichotomy in political science. To what extent has post-behaviouralism resolved the conflict in the dichotomy? [1995/60m/2]
18. Examine the place of 'obligation' in political theory. [1995/60m/4]

2] THEORIES OF STATE

1. Comment on feminist critique of the State [2021/10m/150w/1a]
2. Comment on post-colonial theory of the state. [2020/10m/150w/1a]
3. Write a short note on pluralist theory of the State. [2019/10m/150w/1b]
4. Critically examine the neoliberal theory of State. [2018/20m/250w/2a]
5. Comment on neoliberal perspective of the State. [2017/10m/150w/1b]
6. Discuss the feminist theory of the State. [2016/15m/200w/2b]
7. Examine the challenges to sovereignty of the State in the contemporary world. [2015/20m/250w/2a]

8. Discuss in what sense Marx's understanding of State can be considered as materialistic. [2013/15m/200w/3c]
9. What is meant by 'relative autonomy' of State in Marxist analysis? [2012/20m/250w/2a]
10. Make an assessment of the post-colonial understanding of State. [2011/30m/2a]
11. Evaluate Marx's instrumentalist approach to the State. [2010/30m/3a]
12. Do you think that the modern nation-state has been declining in the wake of globalisation ? Justify your answer. [2010/30m/4a]
13. Critically examine Hamza Alvi's formulation of the 'Overdeveloped State'. [2009/60m/4]
14. 'State is the result of the irreconcilability of class antagonism'. (Lenin) . Comment. [2007/20m/200w/1c]
15. 'Because the society is federal, the authority must also be federal'. (Laski) . Discuss. [2007/20m/200w/1d]
16. Discuss the impact of globalisation on State Sovereignty. [2006/20m/200w/1c]
17. Comment: 'The discovery of Sovereign in a federal State is an impossible adventure'. (Laski) [2005/20m/200w/1c]
18. "Since society is federal, authority must be federal". (Laski). Comment. [2004/20m/200w/1d]
19. Comment: 'Will, not force, is the basis of the state'. (T H Green) [2002/20m/200w/1d]

3] JUSTICE

1. How has Rawls enriched the idea of justice in liberalism? [2021/20m/250w/2a]
2. Representative democracy means the people as a body must be able to control the general direction of government policy. (J. S. Mill). Comment [2020/15m/200w/2b]
3. Make a comparative assessment of Greek perspective of Justice with the Rawlsian concept of Justice. [2020/20m/250w/2a]
4. Examine communitarian perspectives on justice. [2019/15m/200w/2b]
5. Comment on distributive justice. [2018/10m/150w/1c]
6. Analyse John Rawls' justification of discrimination to achieve the goals of justice. [2018/15m/200w/2b]
7. 'Rawls' theory of justice is both contractual and distributive'. Examine. [2017/20m/250w/2a]

8. Critically examine John Rawls argument for democratic equality. [2016/15m/200w/2c]
9. Comment on difference principle in the Rawls theory of justice. [2015/10m/150w/1c]
10. Explicate the conception of justice in the critiques of communitarian theorists. [2014/20m/250w/3a]
11. Comment on 'Original position'. [2013/10m/150w/1b]
12. Write a short note on 'veil of ignorance.' [2010/15m/150w/1d]
13. To what extent does the Rawlsian goal of achieving social justice depend on an overarching consensus among cultural, religious and ideological groups? [2000/60m/4]
14. "We believe that as a matter of principle each member of society has an inviolability founded on justice". (Rawls). Comment. [1999/20m/200w/4c]

4] EQUALITY

1. Comment on affirmative action [2021/10m/150w/1b]
2. Comment on equality of outcome as a political idea [2021/10m/150w/1c]
3. Comment on equality of opportunity. [2020/10m/150w/1b]
4. Equality means fair treatment rather than equal treatment. Comment. [2018/15m/200w/2c]
5. Comment on affirmative action. [2016/10m/150w/1c]
6. How is liberty a precondition for equality? Explicate the relationship between equality and liberty. [2014/15m/200w/3c]
7. Enumerate the differences between equality of opportunity and equality of outcome. [2012/12/150w/1b]
8. Why is 'affirmative action' important in provision of equal opportunity ? [2012/20m/250w/3c]

5] RIGHTS

1. Can there be universal conception of human rights? Give your arguments. [2021/15m/200w/2c]
2. Assess the significance of right to property in political theory. [2020/15m/200w/2c]
3. Discuss the doctrine of 'rights as trump'. [2019/15m/200w/4b]
4. What do you understand by three generations of human rights? [2018/20m/250w/3a]

5. What do you understand by multiculturalism? Discuss Bhikhu Parekh's views on multiculturalism. [2017/20m/250w/3a]
6. The implementation of human rights is regarded as a matter of changing the conduct of states. Comment. [2016/15m/200w/3c]
7. Comment on the idea of Natural Rights. [2015/10m/150w/1a]
8. Analyse the relation between natural rights and human rights. [2013/20m/250w/3a]
9. Explain Berlin's notion of value pluralism. [2013/20m/250w/4a]
10. Examine the multicultural perspectives on rights. [2012/25m/300w/2c]
11. Critically examine the cultural relativist approach to human rights. [2010/30m/4b]
12. Explain as to why Jeremy Bentham dismisses the theory of natural right as 'nonsense upon stilts'. [2009/20m/200w/2b]
13. "Human rights are basic moral guarantees that people in all countries and cultures possess, simply because they are people." Explain the statement. [2008/60m/3]
14. Discuss the evaluation of the theories of human rights from natural rights to collective and environmental rights. [2002/60m/3]

6] DEMOCRACY

1. "Free and fair deliberation is key to the foundation of democracy." Explain. [2021/15m/200w/4c]
2. Write a short note on Deliberative democracy. [2019/10m/150w/1d]
3. Comment on Substantive democracy. [2018/10m/150w/1d]
4. Critically examine MacPherson's views on democracy. [2018/15m/200w/3b]
5. Deliberative democracy does not have its salience without participation and Participatory democracy does not have its credence without deliberations. Comment. [2017/15m/200w/3b]
6. Explicate the features of representative democracy. [2016/15m/200w/4b]
7. Elaborate the difference between participatory and deliberative democracy. [2015/10m/150w/1d]
8. 'India has thrown up a form of judicial democracy that has no parallel anywhere else, and has nurtured a kind of civil society that is uniquely its own'. (Bhikhu Parekh). Comment. [2014/10m/150w/1d]
9. Explicate the features of Deliberative democracy. [2014/15m/200w/4c]
10. Discuss the issues of debate in contemporary democratic theory. [2012/12/150w/1e]

11. Examine the Participatory Model of Democracy. [2011/30m/4b]
12. Discuss Robert Dahl's concept of deformed polyarchy. [2010/15m/150w/1b]
13. Assess the deliberative theories of democracy. [2010/30m/2a]
14. Political process in a country is merely the manifestation of political culture. Elucidate. [2007/60m/2]
15. Comment: 'The general will is not so much the will of the State as the will for the State'. (Maclver). [2006/20m/200w/1b]
16. 'Democratic theory presupposes self-determination, human rights and social justice'. Discuss this with particular reference to MK Gandhi. [2005/60m/3]
17. The modern pluralist democracies have posed a great threat to the fabric of nation state. Discuss [2000/60m/2]
18. Examine the nature and limits of the rights of Resistance and Revolution recognized in modern political theory. [1997/60m/3]
19. Discuss the philosophical basis of doctrine of popular sovereignty, and its significance for mankind. [1997/60m/4]

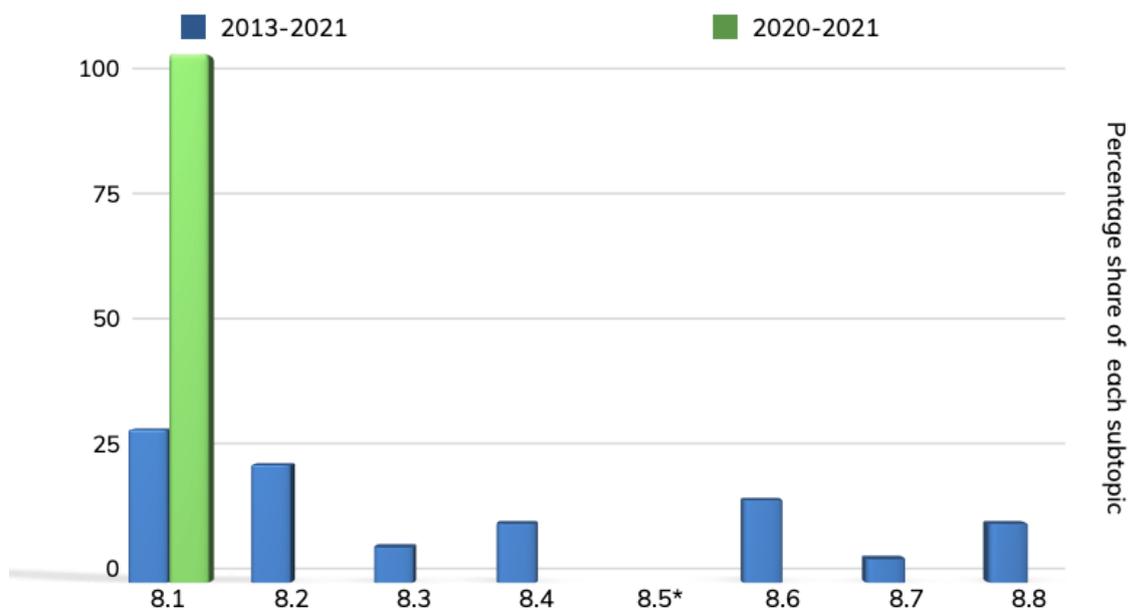
7] POWER

1. Political ideology is primarily concerned with the allocation and utilization of Power." Comment. [2021/15m/200w/3c]
2. Comment on tools of legitimating of the State [2021/10m/150w/1d]
3. Examine the nature and meaning of power. [2020/15m/200w/3b]
4. Explain the relationship between power, authority and legitimacy. [2018/15m/200w/3c]
5. Distinguish between power and authority. [2015/15m/200w/3c]
6. Discuss the 'crisis of legitimacy' in capitalist societies. (Habermas). [2015/20m/250w/4a]
7. Examine the conditions that are required for the maintenance of legitimacy in modern societies. [2014/15m/200w/2b]
8. Distinguish between the concepts of legitimacy and hegemony. [2012/20m/250w/3b]
9. Attempt a Comparative examination of the views of Marx and Weber on 'Power'. [2011/30m/4a]
10. Comment: "Power flows throughout the system like blood in the capillaries of our body." (Foucault) [2010/15m/150w/1a]
11. Discuss 'politics as a power' concept. [2008/20m/200w/1a]

12. 'In so far as national events are decided, the power elite are those who decide them'. (C Wright Mills). Discuss. [2002/20m/200w/1c]
13. Write a short note on Polyarchy. [2001/20m/200w/1b]
14. Discuss the Constitution as a power map. [2001/20m/200w/1d]
15. Distinguish power from authority. How does reliance on authority affect the nature of power? [1996/60m/4]

8] IDEOLOGIES

Topic 8: Ideologies



8.1: Liberalism 8.2: Socialism 8.3: Marxism 8.4: Fascism 8.5: Gandhism
8.6: Feminism 8.7: Postmodernism 8.8: End of Ideology

* All questions related to Gandhism have been put under 9.6] MK Gandhi

8.1] LIBERALISM

1. Comment on liberalism as a revolutionary idea. [2020/10m/150w/1c]
2. Compare negative and positive concepts of liberty. [2019/15m/200w/2c]
3. The political ideology of Globalisation is neoliberalism. Comment. [2016/20m/250w/2a]

4. Discuss the communitarian critique of liberalism. [2013/20m/250w/2a]
5. Comment on the proposition that liberal constitutionalism precedes liberal democracy. [2009/20m/200w/2c]
6. Do you agree with the view that liberal theories are based on atomism, whereas communitarians have a social thesis? Present your line of argument. [2005/60m/2]

8.2] SOCIALISM

1. Define socialism. Discuss the salient features of Fabian socialism. [2017/15m/200w/2c]
2. Discuss the key features of pre-Marxist socialist theory. [2015/15m/200w/2b]
3. Comment on the view that 'socialism in the 21st century may be reborn as anti-capitalism'. [2014/20m/250w/2a]
4. 'Socialism is a much used hat, whose original shape no one can define'. (CEM Joad). Comment. [2009/20m/200w/1d]
5. Analyse the post-Marxian developments in socialist thought. [1995/60m/3]

8.3] MARXISM

1. What is the contemporary relevance of Marxism ? [2019/15m/200w/4c]

8.4] FASCISM

1. 'Nothing against the state, nothing over it, nothing beyond it'. (Mussolini). Comment. [2018/10m/150w/1e]
2. Examine the conception of state in the ideologies of Fascism and Marxism. [2014/15m/200w/3b]
3. "Fascism is the destruction of liberal ideas and institutions in the interest of those who own the instrument of economic power." (Laski). Discuss. [2008/20m/200w/1b]

8.6] FEMINISM

1. Distinguish between liberal feminism and radical feminism. [2019/15m/200w/3c]
2. Comment on Ecofeminism. [2017/10m/150w/1d]
3. Comment on 'personal is political'. [2013/10m/150w/1a]