

Presidential vs. Parliamentary Debate in Pakistan.

Introduction:

In Pakistan the suitability of presidential and Parliamentary debate often remain the discourse of political analysis. The supporter of presidential form of government claims that Parliamentary form of govt has been failed in addressing the issues of Pakistan. Therefore this system should replace with presidential system. Before over jumping on any system it is necessary to renew the basic tents of both the system should consider that which one is suitable for the country.

(A) Parliamentary system:

Parliamentary system is that form of government in which head of the government is prime minister and head of the state is president. The former is vested with real authority who is elected by national assembly. For example in Pakistan prime minister is elected by national assembly under article 91.

(B) Presidential system:

A system of government in which head of the state is elected by an electoral college or by adult franchise. Such as in America president is not

electd by the congress.

Keeping in mind the basic feature of both the systems with this basic distinction other features should be kept in mind to understand the systems comprehensively.

② In Parliamentary system the head of the Govt has no fixed tenure. He/she can be removed from office through vote of no confidence. According to article 95 of the constitution of Pakistan he may be ousted from office by following the legal procedure by simple majority.

In Presidential system head of the state can't be easily removed from office before completion of his tenure. However, he may be removed through impeachment in presidential democratic polities.

③ In Parliamentary form of government head of government must be the member of legislature. For example in Pakistan prime minister is elect among the member of national assembly.

Contrary to it in presidential system head of the government is not the member of legislature for example in USA president is not the member of congress.

4) In Parliamentary system cabinet members are appointed from the members of legislature under the article 92 of the Constitution.

In presidential system this is the sole authority of the President to appoint his cabinet members whatever he wants.

5) In former head of the state and government lies with two different persons except some countries such as in South Africa, Botswana, and Kiribati etc. where head of the state and government vested with one person.

While in latter form head of the state and government lies with one person/head.

Suitability of Presidential or Parliamentary system:

As a matter of fact, it can be said that both the systems are not free from faults so, it can be examined with the merits and demerits of both the systems.

Merits of Presidential system & Demerit of Parliamentary system:

1) Direct mandate:

In presidential system president is directly elected by the people through vote therefore this system is based on direct mandate of the people.

while in Parliamentary system Prime minister is elected by the Assembly. Therefore he has no direct mandate of the masses. Pakistan witnessed such prime ministers who are unknown to the masses.

(2) Stability:

Stability is utmost part of democracy. In Parliamentary system Prime minister can be removed through vote of no confidence. According to Pakistan's constitution article 95 PM can be removed. Therefore this system is vulnerable to stability.

In presidential system, president can't be removed or impeach easily. Therefore this system bring stability for the country.

(3) Susceptibility to Undue Influence:

In Parliamentary system, ^{govt} ~~govt~~ is elected by legislators who can easily influence government for their vested interest and can remove Prime minister through vote of no confidence. In contrast, in presidential system president can not easily impeach. Therefore, legislator can not easily influence president for their vested interest.

(4) Separation of powers :

From the very fact it is known practice that in presidential system there is separation of power between legislature, executive and judiciary which perform their duties independantly. To compare this with parliamentary system, where executive is select from legislator in which both can not work independantly. So, the principle of democracy and separation power compromised in latter form of govt.

(5) Appointment of ministers :

In presidential system, president has sole discretionary power to appoint his minister and secrties whoever he wants. while in parliamentary system minister should be appoint from the member of legislature. Expert may not be available among the member of legislature Pakistan has witnessd such practice again and again. lack of expert in any department has for realising impacts on the performance of the system. Therefore, it can be said that presidential system seek expert for specific functions.

(6) Parochial vs national interest :

In parliamentary system, MNAs are elected as Prime minister. therefore their election campaign base on local issues such as police, badadism, feudal practices, etc. in contrast, in presidential system president is elect through masses. therefore,

his interest and campaign will be base on national issues rather than local and constituent issues because for president the whole country is a single constituency for president.

(6) Power of Electables

It is proven fact that in parliamentary system, government is elected by legislators. Thus in Pakistan, those politician who have more chances to be elect as MNA, priorities are given to them because they have greater influence on making & unmaking of government. In presidential system, president is elect on his own influence and agenda. Therefore this system can not be influenced by electable for their selfish interest.

De-merits of presidential system and Merit of Parliamentary system:

As discussed above the merits of presidential system which has been practiced and practicing by world countries. but it also has some faults therefore the critique on this believe this is not a good system of governance, and advocates parliamentary system. The features of parliamentary system are following:

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(i) Wider consensus on Parliamentary system:
For the sustainability of Parliamentary system, in Pakistan, wider consensus has been built since its constitution of 1973. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was in favour of presidential system, but it was badly criticized by opposition, even boycotted from the Constitutional Committee in 1973. Also there was opinion against presidential system within rank and file of Political Pakistan People Party. Therefore transformation of parliamentary system into presidential might leads to crises and political instability in the country.

(ii) Autocratic tendencies:

Another major fault of presidential system is its tendencies towards autocratic rule. In presidential system president wide range of power make him autocratic. For example in America the impeachment process is an lengthy and complex. Through 2/3 majority resolution must be passed which is a difficult to secure. Even in the history of USA a single president impeached. Nixon was only who himself resigned.

All these vested power make him autocrat he may take such decision which are against national interest. This phenomenon recently seen in USA when its president is behaving which is akin to despot. In the otherhand, in Parliamentary system,

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decisions are taken through mutual consensus of legislators. If such a decision is taken which is in contradiction with public interest, the Prime Minister can be removed through a vote of no confidence under Article 67 of the Constitution.

(iii) Nepotism :

In the appointment of a minister, it is the discretionary power of the President to appoint his minister by his own sweet will. To make his close one, he can violate merit, which directly impacts the performance of an institution. On the other hand, in a parliamentary system, the Prime Minister has no such power which ensures meritocracy in ministries.

(iv) Confrontation between Government and Parliament :

In a presidential system, the President may be from a different party, while the Government will be from another party, which leads to confrontation between the President and Parliament. In the history of America, it has been seen, such as when American President Woodrow Wilson formed the League of Nations himself, but it could not become its member due to Senate rejection of his admission in the League. While in a parliamentary system, such a practice is not allowed because the Prime Minister is the part of Parliament, which ensures performance in the country.

(iv) Approval of Budgets

In Parliamentary democracy budget is approved by legislature which can easily make amendments in budget. On the other hand, in presidential system if government is from one party, president might be from another which create hurdles in passing budget. President can use his veto power to delay budget. Such practice has experienced in Nigeria over and over. Therefore, Presidential system budget might create issue which has overwhelming impacts on the country's economy.

(v) Inclusivity:

In Parliamentary democracy, sometimes "coalition govt established" which give chance to alienated and smaller political entities. For example the current government in Pakistan is a coalition government in which all provinces hold its share. However, in Presidential system there is no concept of 'coalition'. Government power lies with a single head. Therefore this is not an inclusive form of government.

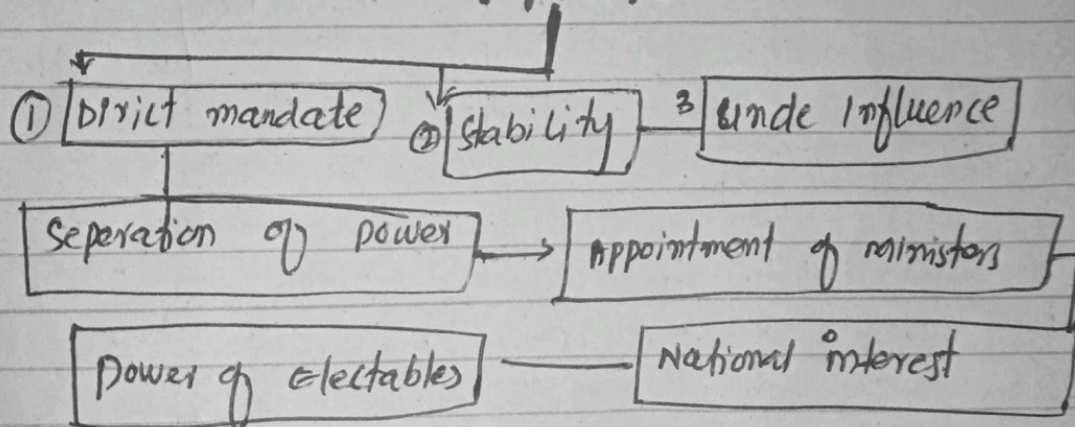
(vi) Suitability for heterogeneous societies:

In a heterogeneous society a Parliamentary system is suitable because multiple diversity should be given representation in government. by this

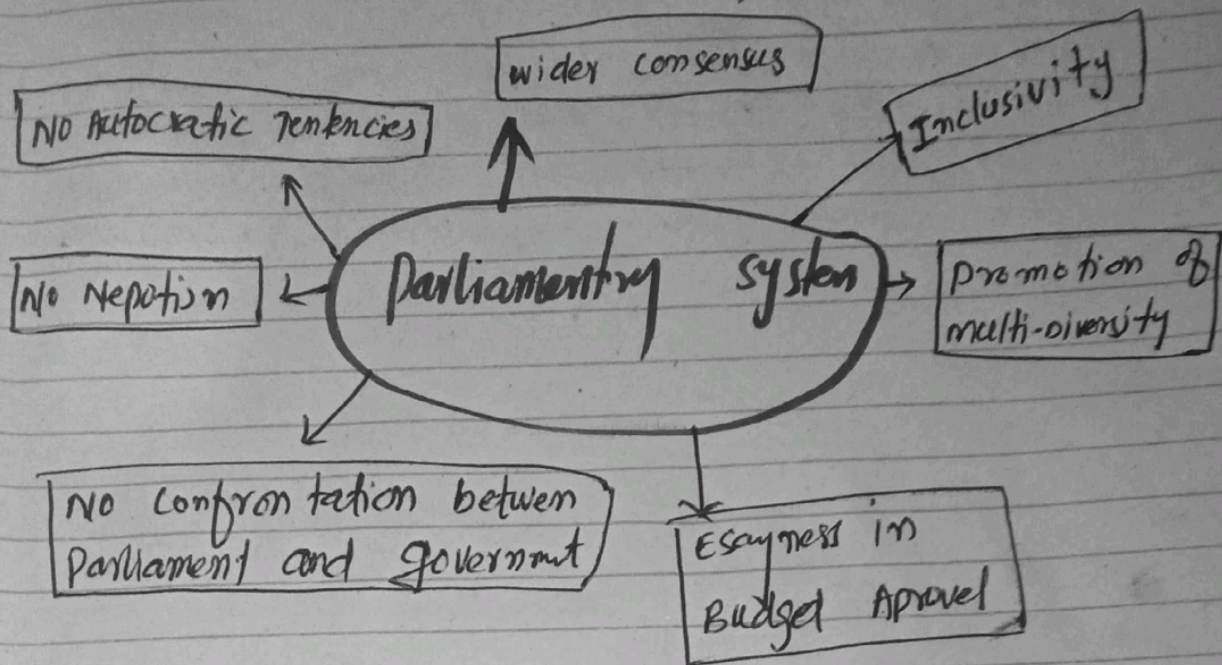
the feeling of alienation should be resolved and they will get their due share in govt. On the other hand powers are concentrated in one hand. There is no representation for small and multi-caste society in presidential system.

Features of presidential system

Merits



Merit of Parliamentary system



Conclusions

From the above discussion it can be said that both the systems are not free from defects in their nature. In case of Presidential system provided with stable government but it also has power concentrated features which make him a dictator. ~~not only~~ This power concentration also creates a feeling of alienation among the small entities of the society. On the other hand, Parliamentary system is suitable for heterogeneous society but it can not ensure a stable government system. Keeping in mind the heterogeneous trait of Pakistani society, it can be said that Parliamentary system is suitable for Pakistan because it gives representation to smaller groups.

of the country, who not feel aloofness. As past experienced showed that presidential system did not proved itself a successful model in Pakistan. As long as the flaws of Parliamentary system are concerned these should be addressed through principled politics and proper administrative planning.