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<b>Course</b>	<b>Ideology and Constitution of Pakistan</b>
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<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Number # 04</b>

***Identify and discuss the salient features of the Constitution of 1956, 1962 and 1973 with reference to the true representation of common citizen in democratic process.***

### **Constitution of 1956:**

The Constitution of Pakistan of 1956 was the country's first constitution after its independence in 1947. However, the 1956 Constitution was not known for its true representation of the common citizen, and it faced various challenges and amendments in the years that followed.

Here are specific aspects of **Pakistan's 1956 Constitution**:

- 1. Islamic Republic of Pakistan:** The Islamic Republic of Pakistan was established by the 1956 Constitution, which recognized Islam as the national religion. The principles of democracy, liberty, equality, and social justice have been set out.
- 2. Parliamentary System:** The Constitution established a parliamentary system of government with a President as head of state and a Prime Minister as head of government. The National Assembly and the Senate made up the bicameral Parliament.
- 3. Federal Structure:** Pakistan was established as a federal state with provinces and a central government. Every province had its own governor and legislature.
- 4. Islamic Provisions:** Although the Constitution had provisions based on Islamic ideas, it did not completely establish an Islamic system. The 1949 Objectives Resolution promoted the introduction of Islamic values.

However, the 1956 Constitution had issues in terms of proper representation of the common citizen:

- 1. Limited Franchise:** Initially, voting rights were limited and the franchise was not global. Various educational and property requirements limited the participation of the average person.

2. **Lack of Political Stability:** Political instability dominated Pakistan's early years, with repeated changes of government and constitutions. This limited the establishment of consistent and effective representation.
3. **Military Interventions:** The 1956 Constitution was interrupted by military interventions, including the introduction of martial law in the years afterwards. This had a negative impact on the democratic process.
4. **Language Controversy:** Because the Constitution failed to address linguistic variety sufficiently, issues with language, especially the Bengali language issue, contributed to the independence of East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) in 1971.

In short, the Constitution of 1956 started the rules for how Pakistan should be run, but it had some problems. People didn't have equal voting rights, and the government wasn't very stable. Later on, they had to make more rules to fix these issues and make the government fairer for everyone.

## **Constitution of 1962:**

The Pakistani Constitution of 1962 includes the following essential provisions relating to the representation of common citizens:

1. **Fundamental Representation:** The Constitution developed how citizens would be represented in governance. It developed an indirect election system in which citizens voted for certain groups, and those groups selected national and provincial leaders.
2. **Limited Franchise:** The 1962 Constitution, like the 1956 Constitution, imposed multiple limitations on who may vote. Certain educational and property requirements were in place, which meant that not everyone had an equal opportunity to vote.

3. **Presidential System:** The 1962 Constitution introduced a presidential government, with the President holding major authority. However, this method was criticized for concentrating power in one person and limiting average individuals' representation in decision-making.
4. **Absence of Provincial Autonomy:** The Constitution strengthened power in the federal government, limiting provinces' autonomy. This may have an impact on how well the local needs and concerns of ordinary people were addressed.
5. **One Unit Scheme:** The "One Unit" plan was introduced to treat all provinces equally, but it received criticism for not effectively expressing the unique needs and goals of various regions and communities.

In summary, while the 1962 Constitution provided for representation, it did so with restrictions such as a limited franchise and a centralized government. These features have an impact on how well common people were actually represented in the governing structure.

### **Constitution of 1973:**

The 1973 Constitution is Pakistan's supreme law, and it establishes the basis for the country's governance and operation. After an interval of martial law and political instability, the Constitution was developed and implemented. It has been modified multiple times, but its key components continue to govern Pakistan's democratic process. Here are some significant elements of the 1973 Constitution in terms of the true representation of the common man in the democratic process:

#### **1. Democratic Values:**

- The Constitution supports democratic principles by ensuring that the government is formed by popular vote.
- It established a federal legislative system with national and provincial representation.

## **2. Fundamental Freedoms:**

- The constitution ensures that all citizens have fundamental rights, including protection from discrimination, the maintenance of individual liberty, and access to justice.
- These rights form the foundation for equal representation and involvement in the democratic process, regardless of a person's origin or financial condition.

## **3. Adult Voting for All:**

- The Constitution provides for universal voting for adults, which allows all people over a certain age to vote in elections.
- This feature ensures that the general public's representatives are chosen in a broad and inclusive manner.

## **4. System of Elections:**

- The constitution defines the electoral system, setting out the procedures for electing legislators at the national and provincial levels.
- It proposes an alternate electoral system that combines direct elections with reserved seats for women and minorities in order to promote diversity and representation.

## **5. Independence of the Judiciary:**

- The Constitution provides an independent judiciary to safeguard citizens' rights and to serve as a check on the legislative and executive branches' authority.
- An independent court contributes to a fair and just democratic process by protecting the ordinary citizen's interests.

## **In Conclusion:**

Pakistan's 1973 Constitution promotes actual citizen representation through democratic principles, the protection of fundamental rights, and the promotion of inclusive participation. It seeks to develop a political structure that reflects the people's different interests and voices.

## **From Pages to Power: Conclusion on Pakistan's Constitutional Changes (1956-1973):**

In summary, while the 1956 and 1962 constitutions faced issues due to limited representation, the 1973 Constitution stands out for promoting actual citizen engagement. It provides democratic values, fundamental freedoms, universal adult voting, an inclusive electoral system, and an independent judiciary, all of which demonstrate a dedication to true representation in the political process.

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