**Political System of Pakistan**

Pakistan has experienced different political systems through its constitutional history:

**1. 1956 Constitution - Unicameral Parliamentary System:**

- Unicameral means there is only one house of parliament, National Assembly.

- Parliamentary system, where the executive (Prime Minister) and the cabinet are drawn from the members of parliament.

- Members of the cabinet are also members of parliament.

- President as the head of state and Prime Minister as the head of government.

**2. 1962 Constitution - Unicameral Presidential System:**

- Unicameral system with a single house of parliament.

- Presidential system, where the president is the chief executive elected by an electoral college chosen by the people.

- The president has the freedom to select cabinet members who may or may not be members of parliament.

**3. 1973 Constitution - Bicameral Parliamentary System:**

- Bicameral system with two houses: Senate (equal representation for all provinces) and National Assembly (representation based on population).

- Parliamentary system, where the executive and cabinet are chosen from members of parliament.

- Multi-party system, reflecting the diverse political landscape of different provinces.

- Provinces also have their own parliamentary systems, allowing for regional autonomy.

In summary, Pakistan's political system has evolved from a unicameral parliamentary system to a unicameral presidential system and, eventually, to a bicameral parliamentary system under the respective constitutional frameworks. Each system has its unique characteristics, influencing the distribution of power and representation at the national and provincial levels.

**Defining a Political Parties**

**Definition:**

A political party is an organized group of individuals with common political goals and ideologies, seeking to influence public policy by gaining control over governmental offices through elections or other democratic means. They work to implement their shared vision for governance and public policies.

**Election Participation:**

Political parties actively participate in elections, putting forward candidates who represent their ideologies and goals.

Parties often have specific aims, such as advocating for religious rights, promoting equality, or seeking justice.

**Manifesto and Slogans:**

Political parties develop a manifesto outlining their promises and goals.

They use slogans and messages to convey their stance and attract voters.

**Alignment with Public Objectives:**

Political parties align their aims and prospects with the objectives of the public, addressing unfulfilled needs or aspirations.

They aim to represent the interests and concerns of the people.

**Exercise of Power:**

Political parties form the government when their candidates win elections.

They exercise power through government and policy-making, with the responsibility to implement their manifesto.

**Humility in Power:**

Political parties often claim that power should be used humbly, considering the opinions and needs of the people.

They may engage with the public to understand how power should be exercised.

**Organizational Structure:**

Political parties have internal structures, including leaders, members, and various organizational levels.

Leadership plays a crucial role in shaping the party's direction and policies.

**Political Parties in Pakistan**

In Pakistan, the political landscape is characterized by a mix of mainstream and fringe political parties. Here are some key aspects:

**1. Number of Parties:**

- Approximately 90 fringe political parties exist in Pakistan, often limited to specific districts.

- A few mainstream political parties, such as PMLN, Balochistan National Party, and PTI, have a broader presence across the country.

**2. Collaboration and Vote Bank:**

- Parties, both mainstream and fringe, may collaborate to enhance their vote bank.

- The primary goal for many parties is to find space and survive in the competitive political environment.

**3. Diverse Issues and Claims:**

- Pakistan faces diverse issues, and each political party claims to address specific problems.

- Political parties play a crucial role in addressing and resolving the multifaceted challenges in the country.

**4. Underdevelopment of Political Parties:**

- Political parties in Pakistan have faced challenges related to underdevelopment.

- Factors such as authoritarian political culture and an imbalance between a powerful state and weak political institutions contribute to this underdevelopment.

**5. Authoritarian Political Culture:**

- Unlike Western political parties, Pakistan's political culture often leans towards authoritarianism.

- Parties are sometimes formed by elites, leading to a lack of internal democracy within the parties.

**6. Examples of Party Origins:**

- Examples include the Pakistan People's Party (PPP), founded by landlord Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto.

- Internal democracy within parties can be a challenge, as introducing it might threaten the influence of elite class members.

**7. Political Education and Masses:**

- Many political parties, except right-wing religious ones, show little interest in educating the masses.

- Lack of political education can lead to uninformed voting decisions, as voters may not be aware of candidates' eligibility.

**8. Communication and Media:**

- Followers often rely on leaders' speeches in public gatherings and views disseminated through print and electronic media.

- The tradition of study circles, position papers by the leaders and the workers prevailed in the late 1960’s, however it vanished with the passage of time.

Addressing issues related to political education and internal democracy within parties could contribute to the development of a more robust political system in Pakistan.

**Historical Reasons of Weak Political Parties**

The historical reasons behind the weakness of political parties in Pakistan can be traced back to the colonial state structure and the early years of the newly formed nation. Here are some key points:

**1. Colonial Legacy:**

- Pakistan inherited a colonial state structure where institutions like the military and civil bureaucracy were more developed than political institutions.

**2. All-India Muslim League:**

- The All-India Muslim League, which assumed power in August 1947, struggled to transform itself from a movement advocating for the creation of Pakistan to a genuine national political party.

**3. Elitist Organization:**

- The All-India Muslim League remained an elitist organization even after the creation of Pakistan.

- It did not effectively transition into a party that practiced internal democracy, which is essential for the growth and strength of political parties.

**4. Lack of Internal Democracy:**

- The failure to adopt internal democratic practices within political parties hindered their ability to represent the diverse interests and voices within the country.

- Elitism within political parties limited the participation of the public in decision-making processes.

These historical factors set the stage for a political landscape where state institutions, particularly the military and bureaucracy, held significant power compared to the relatively weaker political institutions. Overcoming these historical challenges is crucial for the development of strong and vibrant political parties in Pakistan.

**Islamic politics**

Islamic politics in Pakistan, marked by a blend of self-interest and religious principles, posed challenges in establishing broad, inclusive political organizations. Attempts by opposing parties to challenge the dominance of the All-India Muslim League were prevented through physical restrictions on opposition politicians and accusations of being unpatriotic. The League governments employed repressive measures against groups like the Red Shirt, Majlis-i-Ahrar, Jama'at-i-Islami, and the Pakistan National Congress. This tumultuous dynamic shaped the early political landscape of Pakistan.