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INTRODUCTION TO HUMAN SCIENCES

POLITICS

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ELECTION PROCESS IN DIFFERENT COUNTRIES

India

India is a federation with Parliamentary form of government. It has two houses of Parliament namely the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha. The organization of government is highly influenced by the United Kingdom's bicameral legislature with the House of Commons and the House the Lords which were adopted as the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha respectively. The role of the President was more or less equivalent to that of the Queen of England. The Lok Sabha is the body directly elected by the people for a term of 5 years. The entire country is divided into a number of constituencies and each constituency is represented by one member in the Lok Sabha. The person holding the majority support in the Lok Sabha is Prime Minister who is appointed by the President. He may not be a member of Parliament but have to be within the next 6 months. The Prime Minister is the defacto head of the Legislature. The ceremonial head of the Legislature is the President. The members of the Parliament and the State Assemblies, as well as the Union Territories, form the electoral college to elect the President and the Vice President of India. The members of the Rajya Sabha are elected by the State Legislatures. Bills

must be passed by both houses of the Parliament and ratified by the President to become a law.

The two houses serve as a check on each other.

Elections are managed by an impartial body called the Election Commission. Everyone is eligible to contest in an election if they are a citizen of India and over the age of 18 (including NRIs).

France

France also has a bicameral legislature with two houses namely the Senat (Senate) and the Assemblée Nationale (National Assembly). It has a Presidential form of government. The National Assembly is elected by the people through a two-rounding voting system. The Senate is elected indirectly by elected officials and represents the territorial collectives of the French Republic and the French citizen living abroad.

There is a president for both the houses elected by their respective members. The president of the Government of France however, is elected directly by the people by a popular vote. The President, in turn, appoints the Prime Minister and his ministers who do not necessarily belong to the majority party in the Parliament. A bill must be passed by both houses of the parliament to become a law.

The French presidential, legislative, and departmental elections are held by a two-round voting system. There is a strong electoral code that is adhered to, with Elections only on Sundays and more rules.

USA

The United States of America has a presidential form of Government. The Congress is bicameral as the first two and the Houses are called the Senate and the House of Representatives. The

members of the House of Representatives are representatives of the congressional districts. The seats reserved for each state is proportionate to the population of that state and each state has at least one representative. The Senate is the Upper House of the Parliament and is also represented by the states but each state has exactly two representatives for a term of six years. The President of the Senate is the Vice-President. The election of president and vice president of the United States is an indirect election in which citizens of the United States who are registered to vote in one of the 50 U.S. states or in Washington, D.C. cast ballots not directly for those offices, but instead for members of the U.S. Electoral College, known as electors. These electors then in turn cast direct votes, known as electoral votes, for president, and for vice president. The candidate who receives an absolute majority of electoral votes is then elected into office¹. The President is accountable to Congress for his actions and can be impeached. The President is supposed to rule according to the constitution and not his whims and fancies, a fact which has been violated as of lately.

Iran

Iran has an interesting Structure of government, which has a significant effect on how the elections are conducted and the accountability and power of these elected positions. Politics in Iran happens inside the framework of a theocracy, which has a significant impact. Iran has an elected President as Head of Government, a Majlis (legislature), an Assembly of Experts. There is also a Supreme Leader and a Guardian Council². All candidates standing for elections need to be vetted by the Guardian Council, including the members of the Assembly of Experts. The President can select his own Cabinet Ministers from the Assembly of Experts. The Supreme

¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_presidential_election. Accessed 16th Mar. 2019.

² "ICL - Iran - Constitution." http://www.servat.unibe.ch/icl/ir00000_.html. Accessed 12 Mar. 2019.

Leader is selected or removed by the Assembly of Experts. The members of the Guardian Council are appointed directly or indirectly by the Supreme Leader. The Guardian Council can veto laws passed by elected officials. electoral votes, for president, and for vice president. The candidate who receives an absolute majority of electoral votes is then elected into office. Candidates are frequently rejected by the Guardian Council including all women. Minimum voting age was raised to 18 from 15 in 2007.

Common features in all of these processes

All of these electoral and government systems, while unique in their own right, have their share of common features. Some of the more notably common ones include,

Electing The Head of State:

India, USA, and Iran all share a common feature here - in none of these countries is the Executive Head of State (Prime Minister, President, the Supreme Leader) directly elected by the people - the people elect a secondary body that then chooses the Leader.

The number of competing parties:

While the USA is a two-party system, it's the exception rather than the norm. India, France, and Iran all have multiple parties competing in elections.

Electing the Legislative branch of government:

In all four countries, the legislative branch of government is either fully or partially elected directly by the people of the country. But Iran is not exactly a real democracy

Two branches of the Legislative:

France, USA, and India have this in common - all have two branches of Legislative. India - Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha, USA - House of Representatives and Senate, France - Assemblée Nationale and Sénat.

The distinction among these processes

Iran vs Everybody:

Unlike the others, Iran is a government operating under a theocracy. This leads to some rather important - and interesting - differences in the structure of government, electoral features, and eligibility criteria for candidates standing for elections.

The US two-party system:

The United States of America is a very firmly entrenched two-party system - other parties and political candidates, although are allowed to exist, are usually insignificant enough to ignore. All the other countries have multi-party systems (although Iran very notably had a one-party system till the late 20th century)

Works Cited

1. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_presidential_election. Accessed 16th Mar. 2019.
2. "ICL - Iran - Constitution." http://www.servat.unibe.ch/icl/ir00000_.html. Accessed 12 Mar. 2019.
3. <https://www.gouvernement.fr/en/how-government-works> Accessed 17 Mar. 2019.