**Political Systems Around the World**

**Different Political Systems around the World**

There are many different types of political systems around the world. Whereas the political system in the United States follows a mixture of direct and indirect election, the UK with its Westminster style of democracy is another type of political system. Most of the former colonial countries follow the UK model including India and many countries in Asia whereas the African countries follow the European model which is a mixture of the American and the British model.

The American style of democracy is characterized by the devolution of powers between the Federal Government and the State Governments.

The President of the United States is elected directly by the Electoral College though the division of electoral votes follows a pattern that is unique in the world. For instance, the American President takes all the electoral votes in a particular state if he or she wins the majority of the votes cast. To take an example, California has 52 Electoral Votes and whoever is the winner in the state (who secures the most votes) has 52 votes in his or her kitty. There is no division of seats as is done in the UK and India where each state or district has constituencies and hence, the election is determined constituency wise.

**The American Political System and the British Model**

The American political system is also notable because each state has Two Senators irrespective of its size and population whereas each state has congressional representatives based on its size and population. This distinction is crucial because a smaller state like Wyoming sends two senators whereas it has less than 10 congressional seats.

The states follow their own patterns of democracy with each state having a legislature and a governor who is directly elected. As mentioned earlier, the American political system is unique in the world because of these characteristics. On the other hand, the Westminster model of democracy is based on proportional representation as well as the first past the post principle. For instance, in the UK and in India, the constituency winner is the person who secures more votes than the nearest opponent does and hence, there is no concept of absolute majority in each constituency. Further, these seats are for the lower house, which is the House of Commons in the UK and the Lok Sabha in India. The members of the upper house are elected indirectly and the Rajya Sabha (in India) and the House of Lords in the UK are the upper houses of parliament.

**The European Model**

In contrast, the European system of democracy is different with many countries in Europe having a president who is elected directly or nominated and the members of parliament who are elected according to the Westminster model. The point here is that in the UK, the Queen (or the King) is the ceremonial head of government and in India; the President is the ceremonial head of government. The president in some European countries and in India is elected indirectly whereas in other European countries, both the president and the members of parliament are elected directly.

**Closing Thoughts: Reasons for Variety of Political Systems**

The reason for the variety and the different kinds of political systems around the world is mainly that the evolution of democracy around the world has been a process that has been influenced by the political systems of the US and the UK. Since they were among the first countries to have established procedures for elections and democracy, once the other countries became independent after the Second World War and became democratic following the Westphalian model of sovereign states in the 19th century, they chose to have political systems that had elements drawn from these two countries. Therefore, one finds variants of these models across the world in the kind of political systems that individual countries selected for themselves.