

Is the Canada
parliamentary system
of government
superior to the
presidential sys...

[Countries](#), [Canada](#)



Name: Course: Instructor: Date: Is the Canada Parliamentary system of government superior to the presidential system in the US? A parliamentary system of government can be described as one where “ the majority party in the legislature, or a coalition of parties, forms a government headed by a prime minister” (Pandey 24). Whereas a presidential system is the “ direct election of a president independent of the legislature” (Pandey 24). These two methods of electing leaders and governments are widely used in democratic countries because a nation needs a government to avoid anarchy.

They are the most popular types of democratic governments. In both systems, there is a head of state. The president is the head of state in the presidential system while it is the queen in the parliamentary system.

The president is the head of the government in the United States while the prime minister is the head of government in Canada. This means that both the president and the prime minister are the heads of the executive branch in both governing systems. There are those who argue that parliamentary systems are able to pass legislation quicker than presidential systems, which is beneficial in cases of emergencies. They say that the American system is very secure, through its strict measure of checks and balances.

They are both part of the democratic system, which means that the nation’s voice is being heard through elected representatives. Whether one system is more superior to the other is a decision that is yet to be made. The major difference between the parliamentary and presidential systems is how the legislature and the executive relate. As mentioned in the United Nations

Development Programme, "Parliamentary systems are typified by a fusion of powers between the legislative and executive branches".

This means that in the parliamentary system, the prime minister and the cabinet members are drawn from parliament. The presidential system, however, depicts that the president is separate from the legislative body. Another difference is that in Canada, the legislature is elected by the people and then is obliged to recommend one of its members to be the chief executive, prime minister. In the U.

S, the president and the members of the legislature are elected by the people. A presidential system separates the executive and legislative functions of the government and provides what are normally called checks and balances to limit the power of both the chief executive and the legislature. In a parliamentary system, the legislature holds the power and the chief executive must answer to the legislature. Both these systems differ on their effects on political acrimony and effectiveness.

In a presidential system, as is the case in America, where the president and the legislature are elected separately, it is possible for the president to be from one political party and the legislature to be controlled and governed by another political party. However, this can make it difficult for the president and the legislators to achieve their respective goals. In a parliamentary system, the prime minister is from the same political party that controls the legislature, therefore, it is easier for them to accomplish their goals and objectives. A parliamentary system can remove the prime minister from

power for reasons of inefficiencies or policy disagreements. A president is very difficult to be removed from power unless in extreme cases, which are rare. The upper house in both systems is the senate, which is in charge of passing laws, however, the senate, holds greater power in the parliamentary system than it does in the presidential system because the president has the power to veto bills passed by the legislature. A prime minister does not have the power to veto bills, but has the power to dissolve parliament. The presidential system has a vice president while a parliamentary system does not; instead, it has a governor general who represents the queen.

The presidential system boasts of its checks and balances when it comes to accountability and strength. This is not the same case as of a parliamentary system, which does not honor accountability because there are no checks and balances. Nevertheless, a prime minister can dismiss rebellious and unproductive members whereas a president does not have the power to do so. Therefore, party discipline is significantly weaker in presidential system than it is in parliamentary system. There is separation of powers among the branches of government in the presidential system. This means that it can lead to institutional conflict, an individual cannot hold more than one office at a time; there is possibility of divided government, which results in partisan conflict. Harmon Zeigler indicated that this separation of powers “ produces confrontation, indecision, and deadlock” (qtd. in Johnston 242).

The parliamentary system enjoys fusion of powers of powers among the government branches, which means that dual office holding is allowed, there is no possibility of divided government and parliament’s decisions cannot be

limited by other government branches. The head of government in a presidential system serves a fixed term of office. In America, the president serves for four years. The head of government in a parliamentary system serves an indefinite term of office. The prime minister in Canada stays in office as long he or she continues to have majority support in the legislature, if he loses majority support then he is forced to resign. When this happens, there will be early elections and votes of no confidence, which are not present in the presidential system as of America. In America, there is the permanent relevance of the minority. This is because decision-making is fragmented among the different government branches.

In Canada, there is temporary irrelevance of the minority because once the elections determine who the majority party is; this majority party controls both the legislature and the executive. This means that the losing parties become the opposition and are always looking for opportunities to disgrace the government and displace it to become the majority party. In the parliamentary election process, parties compete with promises just as in the United States. The difference is that, in a parliamentary system, the set of promises, called the mandate, cannot be broken by the government. Promises are not vague but quite specific. In Canada, for example, the mandate of each party is published and distributed during the campaign. As a result, relative to American voters, Canadian voters enjoy a more concrete idea of the policies for which they are voting.

Furthermore, once in parliament, members are required to vote along party lines or risk being expelled from their party. For voters, this means that the

decisions they make in the voting booth translate more directly into actual government policies. Considering the comparisons between a presidential and a parliamentary system, it is undisputed that the presidential system has its merits. However, a parliamentary system boasts many advantages over an American-style system, including giving its citizens a more direct influence over the composition and policies of the government. As a result, a parliamentary system seems an ideal form of democracy than a presidential system. Work cited Johnston, Larry. *Politics: An Introduction to the Modern Democratic State*. Peterborough, Ont: Broadview Press, 1997.

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