

Original Article

An Analytical Study of Parliamentary Procedures in India: Evolution, Functioning, and Their Role in Strengthening Democratic Governance

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Manuscript ID:

Abstract

JRD -2026-180407

ISSN: 2230-9578

Volume 18

Issue 4

Pp. 55-62

April- 2026

Submitted: 15 Mar. 2026

Revised: 25 Mar. 2026

Accepted: 10 Apr. 2026

Published: 30 April. 2026

This research paper evaluates parliamentary procedures in India through a doctrinal legal approach, analyzing their development and institutional working of parliamentary procedures towards progressive constitutional governance. Parliamentary procedures are guided by constitutional provisions, mainly Articles 79–122 of the Constitution of India. These guide principles that underlie legislative accountability, deliberation and executive oversight at both central and state levels; This study tracks the historical evolution of these procedures from British parliamentary high times to their appropriation in India. The study examines the effectiveness of key procedural mechanisms through which Parliament ensures transparency and responsiveness in governance, among them—Question Hour, Zero Hour, a legislation debates(a), motions(b)and(c); List B: Legislative Debates; Motions (a); Committee System). It also examines judicial understandings and constitutional norms that have influenced procedural practices. The study finds serious barriers, including regular interruptions of business-as-usual (BAU) functions; declining quality of deliberation and crises in parliamentary consensus-building around important issues; fewer sitting days per annum and shrinking committee space. In a more policy-oriented mode, the paper critically reviews current reform proposals and it outlines institutional changes as well as procedural reforms that are aimed at increasing parliamentary effectiveness, accountability for democratic outcomes. These entail greater use of committees, formalising conventions, even breaking up disruptions and the role of technology for legislative purposes. The study finds that while parliamentary procedure remains a critical hub for Indian democracy, its success is contingent on long-term reforms, political commitment and constitutional mores. It is crucial in the context of contemporary information's society to strengthen this procedure for reviving India's parliamentary democracy.

Keywords: Parliamentary Procedures, Indian Parliament, Democratic Governance, Legislative Accountability, Parliamentary Reforms

Introduction and background related to the study

A parliamentary democracy underpinned by the Constitution of 1950, India was designed to structurally accommodate the institutions of representative governance, accountability, and deliberation through institutionalized legislative procedures (Articles 79– 122 of the Constitution of India) constituting the basic architecture of parliament functioning that included detailed Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in both the Houses (Kashyap, 2016; Jain, 2014). While procedural mechanisms in the legislature (Question Hour, Zero Hour, motions, debates, and committee systems) are critical institutional instruments for executive oversight, transparency, and participatory decision-making within a large and diverse polity like India (Mezey, 1991; Suri, 2019), the failure of these conditions to translate into real-life practice yields the core research problem of this study, which, based on declining sitting days (e.g., the 17th Lok Sabha averaged significantly fewer sittings annually than earlier decades), ever-increasing disruptions using taped legislative time, and an increasingly prevalent trend of bills being passed with limited debate or committee scrutiny (PRS Legislative Research, 2023;

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How to cite this article:

Naganoor, M. G. (2026). An Analytical Study of Parliamentary Procedures in India: Evolution, Functioning, and Their Role in Strengthening Democratic Governance. *Journal of Research & Development*, 18(4), 55–62. <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.20352211>



Quick Response Code:



Website:

<https://jrdvrb.org/>

DOI:

10.5281/zenodo.20352211

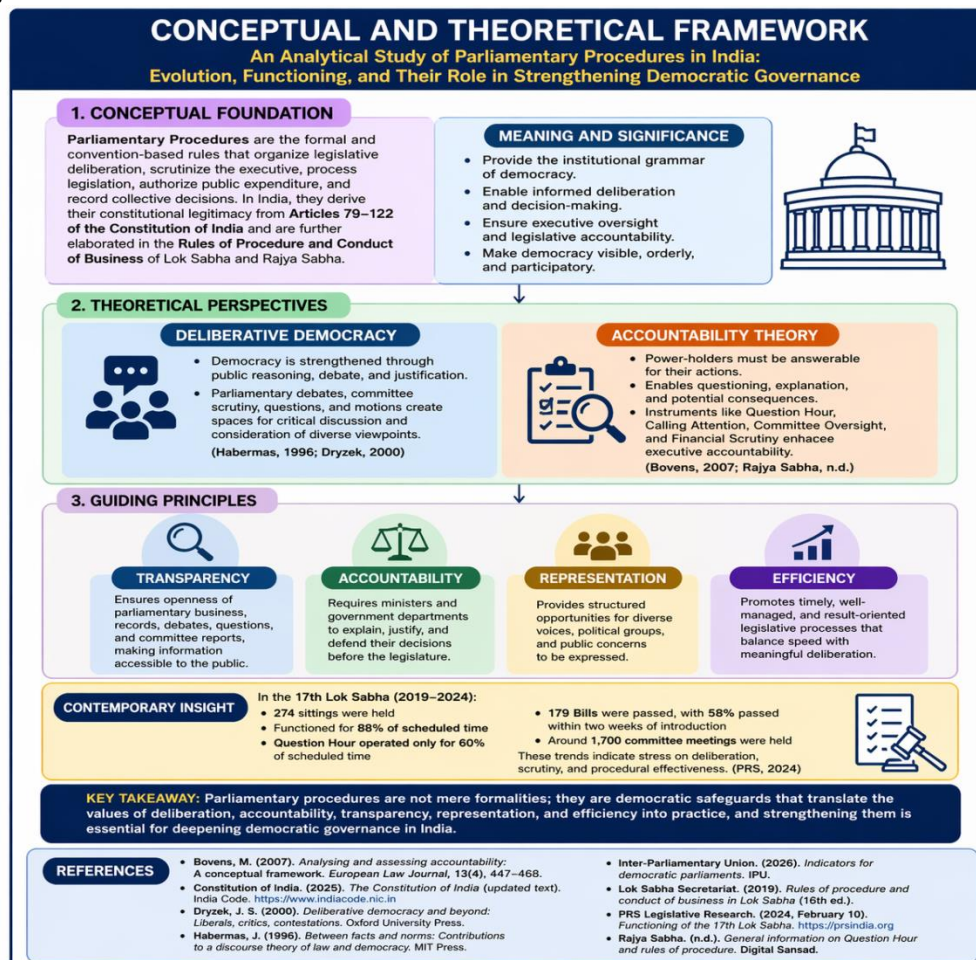


Rajya Sabha Secretariat, 2022), posits that: (1) there is a growing divergence between the formal design of parliamentary procedures and their operational realities in contemporary parliamentary practice; (2) the erosion of deliberative quality and institutional accountability that this entails is a problem that with its own challenges cannot be fully understood by deriving comparisons with sociological phenomena any more than by extending and reducing existing frameworks of democracy; (3) as insufficient discursive assistance for overcoming existing failures of institutional practice through reformed parliamentary procedures can be achieved thereby; and hence (4) should be studied through the conceptual lens of reconstructive attitudes towards parliamentary procedures in (1) their broader attitudes; (2) their cultural preferences; (3) organizational performance and acceptance, and (4) forms for monitoring and delivery through well-directed grants-in-efficient orders respected and enforced in return for observance of discursive engagements; the objectives of this study are therefore three-fold: (1) to critically examine the evolution and constitutional basis of parliamentary procedures in India, (2) to analyse these procedures' functioning and effectiveness in ensuring democratic accountability, and (3) in response to any perceived interstitial or systemic inefficiencies that might dispute their core democratic function, these studied practices should be contemplatively less concerning than the formal design of parliamentary procedures that they are meant to operationalize, logically fallible as such policies might be, hence the necessity of cognizance towards policies that lead to healthy order in policy propositions; on the subject of which, and thus the limitations of the study shall constitute: (1) its reliance on secondary data; and (2) doctrinal analysis as its easily-justifiable non-empirical methodology though its empirically zent S=0; while methodologically, it adopts a doctrinal approach involving systematic analysis of constitutional texts, parliamentary rules, authoritative commentaries, and landmark judicial decisions such as *Raja Ram Pal v. Lok Sabha* (2007) to yield normative and analytical insights on procedural functioning and reform needs within India's parliamentary system (Austin, 1999; PRS Legislative Research, 2023).

Conceptual and Theoretical Framework

The conceptual and theoretical framework of this study proceeds as follows: First, parliamentary procedures are defined as the formal and convention-based rules used by a legislature to organize deliberation, scrutinize the executive, process legislation, authorize public expenditure, and record collective decision-making, and in the Indian context these procedures are made legitimate constitutionally through the democratic structure of the Constitution; especially, the parliamentary scheme under Part V, Chapter II, while their operational content is elaborated through the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business of the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha, making procedure not merely technical but the institutional grammar through which democracy is made visible, orderly, and accountable (Constitution of India, 2025; Lok Sabha Secretariat, 2019; Rajya Sabha, n.d.); Second, theoretically this significance may be explained first through deliberative democracy that treats public reasoning, debate, justification, and competing claims as the heart of democratic legitimacy rather than optional complements to majority voting, and thus values parliamentary debate, committee scrutiny, question mechanisms, and motions more as spaces where law and policy should be tested by argument before decision, a position associated with deliberative theorists such as Habermas and later democratic scholarship (Habermas, 1996; Dryzek, 2000), and second through accountability theory that views democratic institutions as legitimate only if power-holders are answerable for conduct, can be made publicly questioned, and subjected to institutional consequences, making instruments such as Question Hour, calling attention, committee oversight, and financial scrutiny central to the constitutional control of the executive (Bovens, 2007; Rajya Sabha, n.d.); within this framework, four principles are analytically decisive transparency, accountability, representation, and efficiency because i) transparency requires that parliamentary business, records, debates, questions, and committee outputs are not only accessibly presented to the public but intelligibly disclosed as well; ii) accountability requires that ministers and government departments explain and defend decisions to elected representatives; iii) representation requires that diverse political voices and public concerns find structured expression in parliamentary forums; and iv) efficiency requires that legislative time, agenda-setting, and decision procedures are managed in a manner that secures not only timely but also reasoned but outcome-oriented deliveries rather than procedural paralysis or executive bypass, and these principles receive wider attention in global parliamentary assessment frameworks including the Inter-Parliamentary Union's Indicators for Democratic Parliaments which identify effectiveness, accountability, and transparency as core attributes of democratic legislatures (Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2026); however, contemporary Indian parliamentary data presents evidence that these principles are under stress in practice where the 17th Lok Sabha, which sat from June 2019 to February 2024, held only 274 sittings, functioned for 88% of scheduled time, had Question Hour operate only for 60% of scheduled time in the Lok Sabha, and passed 179 Bills while 58% of them were passed less than two weeks after being introduced, with broader issues persisting e.g. limited deliberative time and constrained scrutiny while parliamentary committees held some 1,700 meetings, indicating loss of normative utility of parliamentary procedure as instrument of democratic governance when procedural form remains but substantive deliberation contracts (PRS Legislative Research, 2024); thus this study uses these theoretical lenses to explore the viability of contention that Indian parliamentary procedures continue to serve their intended normative function or might require reform to restore their deliberative and accountability-enhancing value. At a conceptual level, parliamentary procedures perform an ordering function within democracy. They convert

political competition into structured deliberation by prescribing who may speak, when discussion may occur, how motions may be introduced, how votes are taken, and how legislative time is distributed. Without such procedural ordering, parliamentary democracy risks degenerating into arbitrariness, majoritarian domination, or disorder. Therefore, procedure is not merely administrative; it is the means through which democratic equality is operationalized inside the legislature.



Above diagram showing Conceptual and Theoretical Framework related to the study

Constitutional and Legal Framework

A comprehensive scheme of the Constitution of India, which sets down the structure, powers, privileges, and regular functioning of Parliament consisting of both express provisions and delegated rule-making power, provides the constitutional and legal framework for the parliamentary procedures in India where Articles 79–122 form the core framework by providing a bicameral legislature of the President, the Lok Sabha, and Rajya Sabha, and by laying down various essential procedures such as summoning and prorogation of Houses joint sitting of Houses, legislative process, voting in Houses, quorum for conducting House business and limits to judiciary in interfering in parliamentary proceeding (Jain, 2014; Kashyap, 2016) and Articles 105 and 118 play a significant role in this regard for implementation of parliamentary autonomy which grants free speech in Parliament, treats anything said or voted in any House as absolutely privileged so as to bar any action in any court, and empowers each House to make rules for regulating its own procedure and the conduct of its business, and thereby reinforces the concept of institutional self-regulation and autonomy (Lok Sabha Secretariat, 2019; Rajya Sabha Secretariat, 2020), where within this framework, the role of Speaker of the Lok Sabha and the Chairman (Vice-President) of the Rajya Sabha is institutionally central, wherein they hold authority for maintaining order in Houses, provides interpretation of rules, decides on the admissibility of motions and questions before Houses, issues the certificate of money bills under Article 110, and ensures orderly conduct of the proceedings while also acting as custodians of parliamentary privileges and integrity of parliamentary procedure, however, their discretionary powers have also come under the candor of constitutional scrutiny and political discourse in certain context (Raja Ram Pal v. Lok Sabha, 2007) and parliamentary privileges and immunities, which are indispensable in preserving the independence of the legislature, include freedom of speech,

immunity from court proceedings, and protection against arrest in civil cases while the House is sitting, and have been informed upon through a series of judicial pronouncements such as Keshav Singh's Case (Special Reference No. 1 of 1964), which emphasized that while Parliament is endowed with autonomy over its procedure, it is not beyond the purview of the basic structure of the Constitution (Austin, 1999; Jain, 2014), and the constitutional and procedural provisions with the parliamentary processes are a work in progress as evident from the recent institutional data on the increasing usage of delegated legislation, the frequent invocation of ordinances under Article 123 as a mode of transgression, along with the procedural adaptations through conducts of sitting in a digital mode and the introduction of paperless Parliamentary functioning (PRS Legislative Research, 2024) which indicates that the constitutional and legal framework of parliamentary procedures in India is normatively robust and dynamically interpreted but its efficaciousness still rests upon the constitutional values, institutional neutrality, and procedural discipline within the legislative process.



Above diagram showing the Constitutional and Legal Framework related to the study

Evolution of Parliamentary Procedures in India

The evolution of parliamentary procedure in India is a chronicle of layered constitutional and institutional development: colonial legislative practices, constituent reflections, adjustments since independence, and inherited British conventions have persisted, combined and resulted in a uniquely Indian parliamentary order (Constitution of India Archive, n.d.-a; Constitution of India Archive, n.d.-b), for the pre-independence period was first shaped by British legislative enactments that introduced limited consultative mechanisms without responsible government, beginning from at least the Indian Councils Act of 1861 and continued by the Acts of 1892 and 1909, the latter greatly transforming legislative councils and codifying the elective principle in a limited form, the Government of India Act,

1919 that effectively institutionalised bi-cameralism at the centre and enlarged deliberative opportunities, until the Government of India Act, 1935 furnished perhaps the broadest colonial template for federal and legislative governance while full parliamentary responsibility remained unrealized under imperial control (see e.g., [Online] Constitution of India Archive, n.d.-a; Constitution of India Archive, n.d.-b), and these antecedents informed the Constituent Assembly debates from 1946 to 1949, where members intentionally debated cabinet responsibility as suitable, bicameralism, legislative control over the executive, and procedural safeguards for orderly deliberation, where the Assembly decisively selected a parliamentary rather than presidential model, believing that this would better accommodate accountability, diversity and responsible government in India (see e.g., Constitution of India, 2025; Constituent Assembly Debates, 1948/2026), and post-independence development proceeded along two fronts: formal constitutionalizing under Articles 79–122 (Constitution of India, 2025) and the adaptation of Constituent Assembly (Legislative) Rules into the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha in 1952 (followed over time by repeated renewal in increments that included a comprehensive review of the Lok Sabha rules in 1989 (Lok Sabha Secretariat, 2019)), along with Committee recommendations and evolving practices, and (legislatively substantive) demands for debate, for it remains generally true that while British parliamentary conventions (including collective ministerial responsibility, neutrality of the presiding officer, structured debate, closure devices, financial control and the dependence on conventions along with written rules) continue to affect parliamentary behaviour, India has indigenized and innovated parliamentary conventions such as through Zero Hour, anti-defection regulation, stronger committee architectures, or expanded digital parliamentary resources (see e.g., Kashyap, 2016; Lok Sabha Secretariat, 2019), crystallized by the unprecedented Parliament shift to a new building in September 2023, and literary flashpoints on scrutiny, disruptions, and suitability, which embody parliamentary procedure in India as never static, but evolving in waves of interaction between inherited forms, constitutional redesign and contemporary democratic pressures (PRS Legislative Research, 2024a, 2024b).

Key Parliamentary Procedures and Their Functioning

India's key parliamentary procedures, encompass the fundamental operational core within which Parliament functions by means of these deliberative, legislative, and accountability functions; such procedures are organized through both constitutional principles and the detailed Rules of Procedure of the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha– with the former providing the institutional framework for executive accountability in India commencing with Question Hour and Zero Hour, in which Question Hour (the first hour of a sitting in which members ask starred, unstarred, or short-notice questions to compel ministers to disclose information and justify governmental action) and Zero Hour (not formally mentioned in either rule book but developed through parliamentary practice to enable members to raise matters of urgent public importance after Question Hour with the permission of the Chair) together ensure immediate and visible instruments of executive accountability (Lok Sabha Secretariat, 2019; Rajya Sabha Secretariat, 2021; Sansad, 2025); recent performance data also points to the continuing importance of these devices, as during the 17th Lok Sabha Question Hour functioned for only 60% of scheduled time in the Lok Sabha and 52% in the Rajya Sabha, indicating significant constraints on scrutiny despite the centrality of questioning to parliamentary control over the executive (PRS Legislative Research, 2024a); the legislative process itself, similarly, is particularly highlighted through ratification of the motion of Bills introduced, debated, considered clause by clause where applicable, and passed by Parliament subject to the constitutional roles of both Houses wherein the Lok Sabha exercises primacy in money matters while the Rajya Sabha performs a revising and reviewing role in ordinary legislation, whereas in terms of legislation data during the 17th Lok Sabha Parliament passed 221 Bills including 179 non-budget Bills, strikingly, however, 58% of these non-budget Bills were passed within two weeks of introduction an alarmingly brief duration raising concerns around adequate deliberation, scrutiny, (PRS Legislative Research, 2024a, 2024b); parliamentary control is further exercised through motions and resolutions, including adjournment motions, no-confidence motions, and calling attention procedures which all allow members to interrupt routine business bringing the House to focus on urgent public issues or the political responsibility of the Council of Ministers, but the no-confidence motions are especially important given they directly test whether the government retains the confidence of the Lok Sabha, while; finally, calling attention enables ministers to make authoritative statements on urgent matters of public importance followed by clarificatory exchanges (Rajya Sabha Secretariat, 2005; Rajya Sabha Secretariat, 2021); in addition basic floor procedures, the committee system standing committee, department-related standing committee and select committee– serves as the most detailed forum for legislative and policy scrutiny, in that committees examine Bills, budgets, demands for grants, and administrative performance in a less partisan and more specialized environment; yet the vitality and limits of this mechanism is underscored by recent data showing that parliamentary committees held around 1,700 meetings during the 17th Lok Sabha, whereas only 16% of Bills introduced in that period were referred to committees both findings suggesting that the effectiveness of India's parliamentary procedures is determined not only by their formal availability, but by the extent to which they are used meaningfully to secure informed debate, executive answerability, and legislative oversight (PRS Legislative Research, 2024a, 2024b).

Judicial Interpretation and Constitutional Conventions

Because the Constitution as a living document simultaneously grants legislative autonomy and safeguards constitutional supremacy, and because Articles 122 and 212 prohibit courts from questioning the validity of parliamentary or State legislative proceedings on the ground of mere "irregularity of procedure," thus barring judicial scrutiny of officers exercising procedural powers from a judicial review perspective but these provisions have not been interpreted as creating an absolute immunity from judicial review where illegality, unconstitutionality, mala fides, or substantive constitutional violations are alleged (Constitution of India, 2025), judicial interpretation and constitutional conventions figure prominently in an account of parliamentary procedure in India, for the general approach to judicial review has come to rest on a distinction between non-justiciable procedural irregularity and justiciable substantive illegality, a distinction that received authoritative articulation in *Kihoto Hollohan v Zachillhu* (1992), where the Supreme Court upheld the Tenth Schedule in substantial part but held that the finality accorded by that Schedule to decisions of the Speaker or Chairman in defection matters in not exclude judicial review under Articles 136, 226, and 227 after the final decision, and further treated proceedings under the Tenth Schedule as falling within the ambit of Articles 122 and 212 to the extent that courts cannot intervene for procedural irregularity but may intervene where there is perversity, violation of constitutional mandates, or jurisdictional error (*Kihoto Hollohan v Zachillhu*, 1992), and this line of reasoning received significant deepening in *Raja Ram Pal v Lok Sabha* (2007), arising from the expulsion of Members in the "cash-for-query" matter, where the Supreme Court held that parliamentary privilege and internal proceedings are subject to judicial review on limited grounds such as substantive or gross illegality, unconstitutionality, irrationality, and violation of fundamental constitutional principles, although it did reaffirm that Parliament retains exclusive control over its internal procedure in ordinary matters (*Raja Ram Pal v Hon'ble Speaker, Lok Sabha*, 2007); in succession with the judicial doctrines, constitutional conventions substantiate procedural functioning in areas where written rules lack coverage, articulation, or reliance on usage, including neutrality and restraint from the Speaker, scheduling of House business through consultation, recognition of the Leader of the Opposition, operation of Zero Hour of direct taxation, committee referrals, and observance of decorum, consequently reaffirmed in constitutional discourse, that customs, conventions, rulings of the Chair, and unregistered traditions are essential to parliamentary functioning and dignity, an order of formal realities that leaves the Constitution, as a living document, none the wiser (*Rajya Sabha Secretariat*, 2022), such that the contemporary constitutional position is that while Indian courts generally defer to legislative procedure, they retain a limited reviewing role that preserve essential constitutional boundaries, and that whilst constitutional conventions supply the living norms that enable substantive compliance with formal rules, personal habits, conduct of business, and verification of substantive achievement both remain highly relevant amidst continuing controversies about anti-defection adjudication, presiding officer neutrality, and procedural fairness in recent legislative sessions (Constitution of India, 2025; *Rajya Sabha Secretariat*, 2022).

Challenges in the Functioning of Parliamentary Procedures

In India, parliamentary procedures too have increasingly come under strain, not least owing to the interplay of institutional, political and procedural dynamics that jointly erode Parliament's capacity to fulfil its deliberative and accountability-enhancing functions, frequent disruptions and adjournments re-emerging as an episodic obstacle to effective legislative work in the case of the 17th Lok Sabha, 11 of its 15 sessions were adjourned early, rendering 40 out of its 78 scheduled sittings redundant, while between the 2025 Monsoon Session and July 2025, data suggests that disruptions caused both Houses to lose over two-thirds of working time on average with 74% of scheduled Lok Sabha Question Hour and 94% of scheduled Rajya Sabha Question Hour not taking place (PRS Legislative Research, 2024a, 2025a) further compounded by the declining number of sittings on record (the 17th Lok Sabha sat for only 274 days over its full term, the lowest number for any full-term Lok Sabha where legislative time available for scrutiny, debate and financial control has contracted over the long term, averaging approximately 55 sittings per year (PRS Legislative Research, 2024a)), as well as the unflattering quality of deliberation, as evidenced by 58% of Bills being passed no later than two weeks from their introduction and 35% being passed in the Lok Sabha both with less than one hour of discussion and an approximate three-month passage time, raising the spectra of a law-making process that prioritizes pace over considered examination (PRS Legislative Research, 2024b), which together amplify long-standing apprehensions of executive dominance over the legislature, where government control of the agenda, whip-based voting, and time-crunch formalities to expedite passage diminish the effective capacity of members to revise or contest executive propositions, reflected in the reality that between 2019 and 2020, a baseline of 80% of the Union Budget was voted with no discussion (PRS Legislative Research, 2024a), but even an institutional architecture considered one of the strongest tools for detailed scrutiny, the committee system, has seen its relative role wane in relation to earlier Lok Sabhas, with only 16% of Bills in the 17th Lok Sabha being referred to committees, where committees nevertheless managed to conduct around 1,700 meetings over the entire period, meaning that while committee infrastructure is in place, it is still not fully operational (PRS Legislative Research, 2024a, 2024b); overall, political polarization has embedded a tactical contestation of parliamentary procedure as a manner of organizing against the few pro-mass-floor method of Parliament to include protests to force issues and outcomes, mass suspensions and curtailing of acceptable

forms of meaningful cross-party cooperation and other time on the floor of the legislature, thereby eroding the credibility and institutional foundations of parliamentary democracy by default (PRS Legislative Research, 2024a; PRS Legislative Research, 2025a).

Policy Analysis and Reform Proposals

The parliamentary performance policy analysis suggests that although constitutional and institutional provisions are strong, cumulative trends of declining deliberative quality and accountability have prompted key bodies such as the National Commission to Review the Working of the Constitution (NCRWC), the Law Commission of India and various parliamentary committees to recommend several reforms aimed at restoring procedural integrity and strengthening legislative scrutiny of executive actions (NCRWC, 2002; Law Commission of India, 2018) (as observed in well-functioning parliamentary systems, e.g., several of the enhancements in legislative scrutiny and managerial predictability have been achieved through enforcing select committee autonomy and well-structured legislative timetables with entrenched rules codifying and facilitating debate [House of Commons, 2023; Institute for Government, 2022]), empirical analyses of current trends such as limited committee referral of Bills (only 16% in the 17th Lok Sabha), reduced time for deliberation (143 average speeches against 366 in the 16th Lok Sabha), and increase in disruptions indicate that parliamentary mechanisms will contribute increasingly less towards democratic priorities unless meaningful, institutionalized corrective measures are taken, leaving institutional disarray and nominalism behind the need for ensuring functional parliamentary scrutiny and accountability becomes diluted if there are no consistent practices across the system (PRS Legislative Research, 2024; Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2022); if we are to envision a continuous relationship with the Parliament, it will be necessary to address shifts away on both procedural as well as policy fronts the contours of a ‘reform agenda grounded in constitutional principles, comparative best practices and contemporary parliamentary realities’ are now emerging that call for structural reform, institutional capacity and research support (NCRWC, 2002; Law Commission of India, 2018).

Discussion related to the study

How one understands the current functioning of parliamentary procedures in India seems to depend on whether one regards them as institutionally meaningful or operationally uneven; for while the formal architecture of Parliament remains constitutionally sound as a platform for legislation, executive accountability, and public deliberation, the recent evidence (including the fact that across its full term the 17th Lok Sabha will have met for just 274 sittings, that 58% of Bills were passed within two weeks of introduction, and that only 16% of Bills were referred to parliamentary committees) suggests that the democratic value of these procedures rests increasingly less on their presence in the text than in the seriousness, time, and political commitment with which they are deployed—as framed, both implicitly and explicitly, in the format by which efficiency has increasingly been defined in terms of output and speed rather than scrutiny and reasoned deliberation (PRS Legislative Research, 2024). But procedures are not only about the (efficiency of) disposal of legislative business (which is one enemy of democratic parliaments); they are important because they ensure accountability, transparency, contestation and representation, and the Inter-Parliamentary Union current indicators for democratic parliaments explicitly define effectiveness, accountability and transparency as key benchmarks of parliamentary quality, thereby reinforcing the thesis of an indivisible link between the quality of democratic quality and the quality of parliamentary process itself, rather than the clinical reading that treats representation merely as an electoral matter isolated from the quality of parliamentary process. This matters therefore not as a narrow procedural matter, but as a tragic democratic picture that risks reducing the legislature to a mere stamp of approval on the designs of an over-dominant branch of government, given that when laws are passed with less rigorous debate and virtually no expert scrutiny, the role of the legislature as a forum of public reasoning collapses ensuring a deepening of the leadership of the executive, while countries with much stronger committee systems and sustainable scrutiny—where Committees regularly investigate policy, spending and legislative proposals with formal processes that receive expert evidence—exemplifies a reality where efficiency and deliberation are not opposing tendencies, if only institutional design offers places to think critically, on the condition that, as in the UK, the existing structures inevitably limit their availability and necessitate the functioning of recognizable business processes. Thus, the broad analytical finding is that while the normative qualities of India’s parliamentary procedures retain the potential to buttress democratic governance, their contemporary effectiveness is limited by abbreviated cycles, under-utilized oversight mechanisms, and combative floor politics—leading to the more precise challenge of rebalancing efficiency with deliberation that has to protect incremental legislative action from hollowing out discussion, committee review, and accountability, for a Parliament that functions quickly but deliberates weakly may be robust in procedure and sapless in democracy.

Conclusion

Indian parliamentary procedures are constitutionally essential for democratic governance but are currently under-performing their normative potential: first, because the research has shown that India’s procedural framework based on Articles 79–122, parliamentary rules, privileges, conventions and committee practice historically was built to provide deliberation, executive accountability, legislative oversight and representative participation in a system of

responsible government; second, since those procedures transitioned from colonial legislative models and Westminster conventions into a distinctively Indian parliamentary practice; and third, while its contemporary operationalization shows a growing disconnection between formal constitutional design and actual legislative performance in terms of sitting time, quality of debate, frequency of disruptions and the reduced employment of committee scrutiny as a pre-legislation filter (Constitution of India, 2025; PRS Legislative Research, 2024a). The concern is strongly substantiated with data and institutional evidence reviewed in this study, given that the 17th Lok Sabha (June 2019–February 2024), with only 274 sittings, recorded the fewest sittings of any full-term Lok Sabha (out of which a whopping 58% of non-budget Bills were passed within two weeks of introduction; even 16% of Bills were referred to committees, against an average of roughly 1,700 committee meetings held), providing evidence of the procedural architecture still being there without being effectively mobilized to achieve its accountability-enhancing purpose (PRS Legislative Research, 2024a). But even more recent official data suggests that even in individual sessions of the 18th Lok Sabha, productivity can be significant, for example, the Budget Session which concluded on April 4, 2025 witnessed 26 sittings with a productivity of 118 % in the Lok Sabha, but while productivity expressed in terms of hours spent cannot be the sole factor of democratic goodness, for that, heavy deliberation, opposition participation, Question Time for ministers and constructive legislative scrutiny are all fundamental litmus tests in the emerging standards of democratic-parliament (Press Information Bureau, 2025; Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2026). Thereby, the study reaffirms the view of parliamentary procedures not simply as technical devices for managing House business, but as constitutional constraints on power that moderate it, protect dissent and keep the legitimacy of lawmaking intact, and its overall conclusion is that the future of India's parliamentary democracy will be determined by any reforms that restore centrality to committees, by minimal sitting days, by regulating disruptions without stifling opposition rights, by codifying important conventions, and by extension of digitization and research back-up for members, as otherwise Parliament may remain formally sovereign in law but become procedurally thinner in democratic substance (Inter-Parliamentary Union, 2026; PRS Legislative Research, 2024a).

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