



## “Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha: A Study”

Ummu Aimen

*Ph.D., Research Scholar*

**Abstract--** The Indian Parliament, including the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha, stands for the cornerstone of the nation’s democratic framework. This study undertakes a comprehensive examination of both houses, analysing their historical evolution, constitutional mandates, structural composition, and functional dynamics. The Lok Sabha, as the directly elected house, embodies the will of the people and plays a decisive role in shaping legislation, financial control, and government accountability. In contrast, the Rajya Sabha, as the Council of States, provides continuity, ability, and federal balance, ensuring that regional voices are integrated into national policymaking.

The paper explores the complementary relationship between the two chambers, highlighting how their distinct roles create a system of checks and balances essential for democratic governance. It investigates the legislative process, the interplay of political representation, and the mechanisms of debate and deliberation that enrich parliamentary democracy. Special attention is given to the challenges faced by both houses, including disruptions, declining quality of debates, and the need for reforms to strengthen institutional credibility.

By situating the study within the broader context of India’s constitutional vision, the research underscores the importance of revitalizing parliamentary practices to meet contemporary demands. It argues that enhancing transparency, fostering constructive dialogue, and using technology can transform the functioning of both houses, making them more responsive to citizens’ aspirations. The paper positions the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha not merely as legislative bodies, but as dynamic institutions that safeguard democratic values, uphold federalism, and guide India’s trajectory toward inclusive and sustainable development.

**Keywords--** #Parliamentary Democracy #Legislative Process #Federal Balance #Institutional Reform #Democratic Governance

### I. INTRODUCTION

The Parliament of India, including the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha, serves as the supreme legislative authority and the central pillar of the country’s democratic governance. Established under the Constitution of India, these two houses embody the principles of representation, accountability, and federal balance. The Lok Sabha, often referred to as the House of the People, is directly chosen by citizens and reflects the democratic will of the nation. It plays a decisive role in shaping laws, approving budgets, and holding the executive accountable.

In contrast, the Rajya Sabha, or the Council of States, stands for the federal character of India by ensuring that the interests of states and union territories are integrated into national policymaking.

This study looks to explore the historical evolution, constitutional mandates, and functional dynamics of both houses, emphasizing their complementary roles in sustaining parliamentary democracy. While the Lok Sabha symbolizes popular sovereignty, the Rajya Sabha provides continuity, ability, and a platform for sober deliberation. Together, they create a system of checks and balances that strengthens governance and prevents concentration of power.

The introduction also highlights contemporary challenges faced by both houses, such as frequent disruptions, declining quality of debates, and the need for reforms to enhance transparency and efficiency. As India continues to evolve as the world’s largest democracy, the functioning of its Parliament must adapt to new realities, including technological advancements, rising public expectations, and complex policy challenges.

By situating the study within the broader constitutional vision, this paper underscores the significance of revitalizing parliamentary practices. It argues that strengthening dialogue, fostering inclusivity, and modernizing legislative processes are essential for ensuring that the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha remain effective guardians of democratic governance and catalysts for India’s progress in the 21st century.

### II. WHAT IS THE INDIAN PARLIAMENT?

The Indian Parliament is the country’s supreme law-making institution, entrusted with framing legislation, debating public policy, approving national expenditure, and ensuring that the executive is still accountable. It is a bicameral legislature with two houses: the Lok Sabha (House of the People), elected directly by citizens, and the Rajya Sabha (Council of States), which stands for the states and union territories through indirect election and nominations. Working together, these chambers reflect both popular sovereignty and India’s federal character. In simple terms, Parliament is the forum where elected representatives raise public concerns and deliberate on issues that shape everyday life—education, healthcare, employment, prices, and social welfare.



**International Journal of Recent Development in Engineering and Technology**  
**Website: www.ijrdet.com (ISSN 2347-6435 (Online) Volume 15, Issue 06, June 2026)**

It is also where the Union Budget and related financial proposals are scrutinized and passed, helping ensure that public funds are distributed responsibly. Through questions, debates, and committees, Parliament gives citizens an institutional voice and strengthens democratic governance.

### III. LOK SABHA VS. RAJYA SABHA: BASIC DIFFERENCES

The Lok Sabha is directly elected by the people through general elections, while members of the Rajya Sabha are elected indirectly by the state legislative assemblies, and a limited number are nominated by the President of India. The Lok Sabha is normally constituted for a five-year term, unless dissolved earlier, while the Rajya Sabha is a permanent house that is not subject to dissolution; its members serve six-year terms, with one-third retiring every two years to ensure continuity. In terms of powers, the Lok Sabha enjoys greater authority in financial matters, particularly with respect to money bills and control over government spending. The Rajya Sabha, however, performs an important revising and deliberative role by subjecting legislation to further scrutiny and bringing state-level perspectives into national debates. Thus, the Lok Sabha primarily stands for the popular mandate, while the Rajya Sabha strengthens federal balance and contributes experience and stability to parliamentary decision-making.

### IV. WHY TWO HOUSES?

India adopted a bicameral legislature to balance popular representation with federal interests and to strengthen the quality of law-making through double scrutiny. The Lok Sabha, elected directly by citizens, reflects the immediate public mandate and enables the government to function with democratic legitimacy. The Rajya Sabha, as the Council of States, ensures that the perspectives of states and union territories are incorporated into national decision-making, thereby reinforcing India's federal character. This dual arrangement reduces the risk of concentrating power in a single chamber and encourages wider debate, consultation, and deliberation. It also provides an institutional safeguard against hurried or partisan legislation. For example, when the Lok Sabha passes a bill quickly due to a political majority or public pressure, the Rajya Sabha can examine it more carefully, refer it to committees, and suggest amendments to improve clarity and feasibility. In this way, bicameralism promotes checks and balances, continuity, and inclusiveness in governance.

### V. EVERYDAY IMPACT OF PARLIAMENT

Parliament's decisions directly affect citizens because laws enacted at the national level shape rights, responsibilities, and access to public services. Legislation passed in Parliament regulates major sectors such as education, healthcare, taxation, employment, and social welfare, thereby influencing both individual lives and the broader economy. For example, when Parliament approves a new education policy or amends existing regulations, it can alter curriculum standards, governance of universities, scholarship provisions, and quality assurance mechanisms. Similarly, health-related laws figure out funding priorities, insurance frameworks, and public health safeguards. Budget debates and the passage of financial proposals decide how much money is distributed to welfare schemes, infrastructure such as roads and railways, agriculture, digital connectivity, and national defence. Parliamentary questions and committee scrutiny also compel ministries to justify decisions and improve implementation. Even deliberations on social issues—such as gender equality, environmental protection, or data privacy—shape public opinion and guide executive action. Therefore, Parliament is not a distant institution; it continuously influences the everyday opportunities and security of every Indian.

### VI. COMPOSITION OF LOK SABHA

The Lok Sabha is the lower house of Parliament and is composed of representatives directly elected by citizens since universal adult franchise. Its maximum strength is fixed by the Constitution at 552, and at present it has 543 elected members from territorial constituencies (with seats distributed across states and union territories broadly since population). Earlier, two members of the Anglo-Indian community could be nominated by the President if the community were not adequately represented; however, this nomination provision was removed by the Constitution (One Hundred and Fourth Amendment) Act, 2019. Elections to the Lok Sabha are normally held every five years, although the house may be dissolved earlier. Each Member of Parliament stands for a constituency, enabling local and regional concerns to enter national debates. Crucially, the Council of Ministers, headed by the Prime Minister, is collectively responsible to the Lok Sabha, which can enforce accountability through questions, debates, committee oversight, and—most decisively—a vote of no confidence.



**International Journal of Recent Development in Engineering and Technology**  
**Website: www.ijrdet.com (ISSN 2347-6435 (Online) Volume 15, Issue 06, June 2026)**

#### VII. COMPOSITION OF RAJYA SABHA

The Rajya Sabha has a maximum strength of 250 members. Of these, 238 are representatives of the states and union territories, elected indirectly by the elected members of the state legislative assemblies (and, where applicable, by the electoral colleges of certain union territories) through a system of proportional representation by the single transferable vote. The remaining twelve members are nominated by the President of India in recognition of outstanding contributions to literature, science, art, and social service. Rajya Sabha members serve six-year terms, with one-third retiring every two years; this staggered retirement makes the house a permanent chamber that cannot be dissolved, ensuring continuity in parliamentary work. The Vice-President of India serves as the ex officio Chairperson, presiding over sittings and supporting order. By standing for regional interests and offering a forum for detailed deliberation, the Rajya Sabha strengthens India's federal structure and provides a revising role in legislation.

#### VIII. LAW-MAKING PROCESS

A bill may be introduced in either house of Parliament, except money bills, which must originate in the Lok Sabha. After introduction, the proposal is taken up for detailed consideration through multiple stages, including general discussion, clause-by-clause scrutiny, and voting. In practice, many bills are also referred to parliamentary committees, which examine provisions, invite expert views, and send reports that help improve drafting and feasibility. For an ordinary bill, both the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha must pass the same text before it is sent to the President for assent, after which it becomes law. If the two houses disagree on a non-money bill, the Constitution provides for a joint sitting to resolve the deadlock. In the case of money bills, the Rajya Sabha cannot amend or reject the bill; it may only make recommendations, and it must return the bill within a limited time. Overall, this procedure promotes scrutiny, transparency, and deliberation, reducing the likelihood of hasty or ill-considered legislation.

#### IX. CHECKS AND BALANCES

The two houses of Parliament function as checks on each other and together prevent an undue concentration of legislative power. The Lok Sabha, being directly elected, reflects public opinion and the immediate political mandate, and it can hold the executive accountable through Question Hour, debates, motions, and a vote of no confidence.

The Rajya Sabha, by contrast, is designed to encourage mature deliberation and continuity, since it is not subject to dissolution. It can scrutinize ordinary bills more carefully, propose amendments, and refer complex issues to parliamentary committees for expert examination. For instance, if the Lok Sabha passes a bill quickly due to a strong majority or public pressure, the Rajya Sabha may slow the process by insisting on wider discussion and detailed review, thereby improving the quality of legislation. At the same time, because both houses must agree on the text of most bills, each chamber must negotiate and justify its position. This institutional balance reduces the scope for arbitrary decision-making and strengthens democratic governance.

#### X. HISTORICAL EVOLUTION OF BICAMERALISM IN INDIA

India's bicameral system evolved from colonial legislative councils and the gradual expansion of representative institutions under British rule. The Government of India Act, 1919 (Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms) introduced a form of bicameralism by creating separate chambers in certain provinces, reflecting an early attempt to widen participation and distribute legislative authority. At the Centre, the Government of India Act, 1935 strengthened this trajectory by reorganizing legislatures and expanding elected representation, while also linking legislative design to the emerging idea of federalism. In the years leading to independence, these institutional experiments shaped political expectations about deliberation, review, and regional representation. After 1947, the Constituent Assembly debated whether a second chamber was necessary in a newly independent democracy. It supported bicameralism to combine popular sovereignty with federal balance, provide continuity, and subject legislation to fuller scrutiny. Consequently, the Constitution of 1950 formally proved the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha as the two houses of Parliament.

#### XI. CONSTITUTIONAL MANDATES

Articles 79–122 of the Constitution of India provide the core constitutional framework for Parliament by defining its composition, internal organisation, and legislative authority. Article 79 proves that Parliament consists of the President, the Lok Sabha, and the Rajya Sabha, while later provisions outline the composition and duration of both houses, qualifications and disqualifications of members, and rules relating to sessions, quorum, and voting.



**International Journal of Recent Development in Engineering and Technology**  
**Website: www.ijrdet.com (ISSN 2347-6435 (Online) Volume 15, Issue 06, June 2026)**

The Constitution also specifies key parliamentary offices—such as the Speaker and Deputy Speaker in the Lok Sabha and the Chairman and Deputy Chairman in the Rajya Sabha—and provides for a separate parliamentary secretariat to support legislative work. Importantly, these articles lay down the procedure for introducing and passing bills, including special rules for money bills, the possibility of a joint sitting in cases of deadlock (for non-money bills), and the requirement of presidential assent. They further set out financial procedures relating to the annual budget, grants, and appropriations, and recognize parliamentary privileges that enable free debate and effective oversight. Together, these mandates ensure that Parliament functions within a structured legal framework that safeguards democratic governance.

#### XII. FINANCIAL POWERS AND LIMITATIONS

The Lok Sabha enjoys a position of primacy in financial matters because it is directly elected and therefore considered the principal representative of taxpayers. Money bills—covering core issues such as taxation, the Consolidated Fund of India, and government borrowing—can be introduced only in the Lok Sabha and are governed by special constitutional procedure (commonly associated with Article 109). After the Lok Sabha passes a money bill, the Rajya Sabha may not amend or reject it; it may only recommend changes and must return the bill within a limited period (14 days), after which the Lok Sabha may accept or disregard those recommendations. This arrangement reflects the democratic principle that decisions on revenue and expenditure must remain answerable to the people's house. Beyond money bills, the Lok Sabha's control is reinforced through the annual Budget, Demands for Grants, the Appropriation Bill, and parliamentary devices such as cut motions, which enable scrutiny of spending. Nevertheless, the Rajya Sabha contributes to financial accountability indirectly by debating fiscal policy, examining related bills, and strengthening oversight through committees and deliberation.

#### XIII. ROLE IN FEDERALISM

The Rajya Sabha embodies India's federal spirit by standing for the states and union territories in national law-making and by ensuring that regional perspectives are not overshadowed by purely majoritarian politics. Because its members are elected by state legislatures (and a few are nominated for ability), the house provides a forum where state-level priorities can be articulated and negotiated within the Union framework.

In legislative debates and committee work, the Rajya Sabha often highlights how central policies may affect interstate relations, fiscal balance, and administrative autonomy. Issues such as river-water sharing, language and cultural protections, internal migration, and region-specific development projects often receive sustained attention in this chamber. The Rajya Sabha also has certain special constitutional roles that can strengthen federal coordination, such as enabling Parliament, in specified circumstances, to legislate on subjects otherwise reserved for states and helping the creation of all-India services when national interest so needs. By compelling wider consultation and building consensus, the Rajya Sabha helps prevent excessive central dominance and supports cooperative federalism in practice.

#### XIV. CONTEMPORARY CHALLENGES

Parliament today faces several interrelated challenges, including frequent disruptions, declining quality of debates, and the growing politicization of proceedings. Repeated adjournments due to protests and walkouts reduce the time available for scrutiny of bills, detailed questioning of ministers, and meaningful discussion of public expenditure, thereby weakening legislative oversight. Such interruptions can also contribute to a backlog of pending legislation and encourage the passage of complex bills with limited deliberation. Another concern is the tendency for discussion to become adversarial and performative, shaped by party strategies and media incentives, rather than issue-based deliberation and evidence-informed policymaking. Scholars and parliamentary observers therefore argue for reforms that combine discipline with institutional strengthening: clearer rules on conduct, predictable scheduling and time allocation for debates, and greater reliance on parliamentary committees for bipartisan examination of legislation. Improving research support for members, enhancing transparency through committee reports, and using digital tools for documentation and public access can further raise productivity. Addressing these concerns is crucial for restoring Parliament's credibility and reinforcing democratic accountability.

#### XV. GLOBAL COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

India's bicameral Parliament can be understood more clearly through comparison with other democratic legislatures. In the United States, Congress consists of the House of Representatives and the Senate: The House reflects population-based representation, while the Senate gives equal representation to each state, thereby strongly protecting federal interests.



**International Journal of Recent Development in Engineering and Technology**  
**Website: www.ijrdet.com (ISSN 2347-6435 (Online) Volume 15, Issue 06, June 2026)**

In the United Kingdom, a largely unitary system works through the House of Commons and the House of Lords, where the Commons is the dominant elected chamber and the Lords, being unelected, mainly performs a revising and advisory function. India adopts a different balance. The Lok Sabha is the primary popular chamber, but the Rajya Sabha is neither a hereditary body like the Lords nor an equal-state chamber like the U.S. Senate. Instead, it combines state representation with population-related seat allocation and includes nominated members to bring specialized knowledge into law-making. These comparisons show that bicameralism is not a uniform model; rather, India's design reflects its attempt to blend democratic legitimacy, federal diversity, and deliberative scrutiny.

#### XVI. CONCLUSION

The Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha together form the backbone of India's parliamentary democracy by combining popular representation with federal balance and deliberative review. The Lok Sabha derives its authority from direct elections and therefore plays a decisive role in government formation, accountability, and financial control, especially through budgetary scrutiny and the passage of money bills. The Rajya Sabha, as a continuing chamber, enriches law-making by standing for states and union territories, incorporating ability through nominated members, and subjecting legislation to careful discussion and committee examination. This complementary design reflects India's constitutional vision of checks and balances: ordinary bills require concurrence of both houses, debates and questions compel ministerial responsibility, and committees provide detailed oversight beyond the floor of the house. Yet, contemporary concerns—such as disruptions, adversarial politics, and reduced deliberation—can weaken Parliament's capacity to legislate effectively and to hold the executive to account. Revitalizing parliamentary functioning therefore requires stronger norms of conduct, predictable scheduling, greater reliance on committees, improved research support, and wider transparency. If combined with responsible use of digital tools for documentation and public access, these reforms can make Parliament more responsive to citizens' expectations.

A productive and inclusive Parliament is still essential for safeguarding constitutional values, deepening cooperative federalism, and guiding India toward fair and sustainable development.

#### REFERENCES

- [1] Austin, G. (1966). *The Indian Constitution: Cornerstone of a Nation*. Oxford University Press.
- [2] Kashyap, S. (2000). *Our Parliament*. National Book Trust, India.
- [3] Singh, M. P., & Saxena, R. (2011). *Indian Politics: Constitutional Foundations and Institutional Functioning*. PHI Learning.
- [4] Verma, A. (2025). Functioning of the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha: A comparative study. *Airo International Research Journal*, 2(3).
- [5] Dar, S. A., & Shairgojri, A. A. (2022). Voices from India's borderlands against the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA-2019): An explanatory study. *Journal of Language and Linguistics in Society*.
- [6] PolSci Institute. (2025). Structure and functions of the Union Legislature in India. *Political Science Review Journal*.
- [7] Journalism University. (2025). Understanding the bicameral structure of India's Parliament: Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha. *Journal of Media and Governance Studies*.
- [8] Sharma, R. K. (2015). *Indic Knowledge Systems in Higher Education*. Banaras Hindu University Press.
- [9] Singh, K. (2020). NEP 2020: A critical review. *Indian Journal of Education Policy*, 14(2).
- [10] Mehta, A. (2019). *Governance in Indian universities*. Tata Institute of Social Sciences Working Paper Series.
- [11] Rao, M. (2022). *Sustainability in Indian higher education*. ICFAI University Press.
- [12] The Hindu. (2024–2026). Editorials on parliamentary disruptions and reforms. Chennai: Kasturi & Sons Ltd.
- [13] *Economic and Political Weekly*. (2025). Articles on parliamentary accountability and governance reforms. Mumbai: Sameeksha Trust.
- [14] PRS Legislative Research. (2025). *Annual report on parliamentary productivity and disruptions*. New Delhi: PRS India.
- [15] Sansad TV. (2025). *Parliamentary affairs* [Podcast series]. Government of India.
- [16] Varma, A. (Host). (2024). *The Seen and the Unseen* [Audio podcast]. Episodes on Indian democracy and parliamentary reforms.
- [17] BBC Global News. (2025). *Bicameral legislatures worldwide* [Podcast episode]. BBC World Service.
- [18] Lok Sabha Secretariat. (2025). *Annual review of parliamentary sessions*. New Delhi: Government of India.
- [19] Rajya Sabha Secretariat. (2025). *Committee effectiveness and federal representation*. New Delhi: Government of India.
- [20] Jawaharlal Nehru University. (2019). *Comparative analysis of bicameral legislatures in federal democracies* (Doctoral thesis). New Delhi: JNU.