

Presidential v/s parliamentary democracy: A comparative analysis

Dr. Shri Parkash

Asso. Prof. Dept. of Political Science MLN College , Yamuna Nagar

dr.majorshri1969@gmail.com

Abstract:

More than half of the globe is currently governed by democratic systems that allow voters to cast votes. Such democratic governments could be either direct or representative. Today, representational democracies can be divided into two categories: both presidential and parliamentary democracies. The birth and continued existence of the popular branches are the fundamental characteristics that set parliamentary governance apart from presidential government. In addition to the parliamentary and presidential systems, a hybrid system that combines elements of both is also possible. The degree of authority separation between the legislative, executive, and executive branches is the main distinction between such systems. A further important difference between presidential and parliamentary systems is how the executive and legislative branches interact. Comparing the presidential system to the parliamentary system, the former is significantly more stable. The Prime Minister is in charge in a parliamentary system of government. The parliamentary system in place in India offers representative government, which is perfect.

Index Terms:

Democracy, Development, political violence, parliament, Presidential v/s parliamentary democracy, Semi-parliamentary government.

Introduction:

Today, democratic governments, which enable citizen engagement through elections, are present in more than 50% of the world. These democratic regimes can either be direct or representative. Democratic governments often take one of two forms: presidential or parliamentary. In a presidential system, the chief executive, who is directly chosen by the populace and is not subject to the legislature, serves as the nation's head of state. So under parliamentary form of government, the head of state and the head of government are distinct. The freedom of the executive, legislative, and judicial departments of the government is constitutionally protected. India adopted the parliamentary system from the UK with certain modifications. The parliamentary system was created in England. In a parliamentary system or parliamentary democracy, the executive is answerable to the legislative and gets its political legitimacy from its capacity to command that confidence.

As a distinct arm of government or as the people's representatives, parliaments and MPs have historically been a part of domestic politics [1]. The Indian Constitution establishes parliamentary rule at the national level and in the states [2]. Either democracy survives and proves to be tenacious in the era that follows, or an autocratic backslide happens [3]. Majoritarian voting systems, like presidential ones, typically lead to more frequent changes in power [4]. The purpose of election debates in parliamentary systems is particularly unclear [5].

Ministers in parliamentary governments hold a very distinct status from secretaries in presidential governments. By definition, a democracy is a pro-tempore government in which the people have the power to enforce change and hold the administration to account on a regular basis [6]. Leaders in parliamentary systems should be subject to more constraints than those coalitions under presidential systems ought to be subjected to even greater restrictions than single-party governments, according to a number of academics [7].

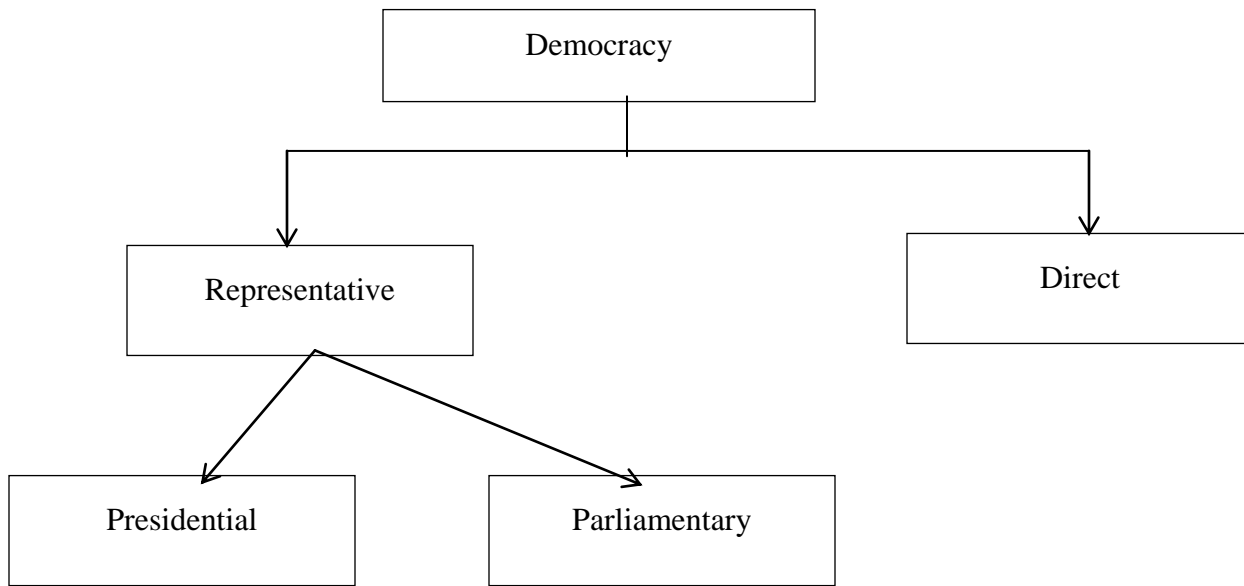


Fig.1. Basic structure of the Presidential and Parliamentary system

Literature Review:

Louise Tillin et.al 2017 explained by under more decentralised parliamentary federal systems citizens are more prone to assign policy responsibility to their regional or subnational government in countries like India and Canada where there are strong territorialized regional and ethnic identities. India's federal structure is, in several significant respects, constitutionally comparatively centralised. Given the vast number of parties, coalitional presidentialism at the federal level helps to foster cooperation inside Parliament. Even during the Lok Sabha elections, state-level issues dominate the conversation. Except perhaps the elections that saw the Narendra Modi-led BJP take office, that felt more like a presidential election[8].

Ganghof et.al 2018 stated by Semi-twin, presidentialism semi-parliamentary government, is a unique executive-legislative structure. In comparison to the traditional parliamentary and presidential systems, this one has a lot of benefits because it divides authority among branches and can strike a balance between majoritarian and proportional views of democracy without concentrating administrative authority in one individual. Despite retaining several of the fundamental elements of both pure presidential and parliamentary governments, semi-

parliamentary government might reduce significant faults, thus constitutionalists and democratic theorists should pay particular attention to it [9].

Anibel et.al 2018 stated by globally, democracy is at a turning point. Unfortunately, one of most popular way used by the opponents to unseat unpopular presidents has appeared: presidential impeachment proceedings. The traditional party leaders have drastically lost public support and legitimacy in advanced industrial democracies, preparing the stage for the rise of a new conservative right. The very same societal and political factors that resulted in military takeovers during the Cold War are likely to lead to presidential impeachment procedures in the current era [10].

Berk Esen et.al 2019 stated by A presidential election was held in 2014, two general elections were held in 2015, a new administration was chosen in 2017, and presidential and parliamentary elections were held in 2018. Second, the electoral system has experienced revisions just a few months prior to the 2018 presidential and legislative elections [11].

Toby S. James et.al 2020 evaluated by regular elections are a crucial component of democratic procedures. Although one of the most popular fields of research in political science has been elections. If democracy and election integrity are defined procedurally, the ideas are determined by whether or not a specific set of institutional norms are followed. The "focusing events" of the crisis and how the current administration handled them may dominate public discourse. The democratic process depends on elections [12].

Elena Griglio et.al 2020 explained by because of the Covid-19 situation, communication between the legislative and executive branches of government has been significantly impeded: whereas executives have taken on a major role in lawmaking, parliaments are becoming progressively marginalised. Given the situation, a number of elements make legislative control over the executive an important strategic role for the democratic legitimacy of policymaking. When it comes to statutory and sub-legislative instruments, parliaments have the authority to monitor and examine how the government is operating [13].

Methodology:

The democracy that is practised in India is a Parliamentary Democracy. Although the UK was the source of this design, there have been some changes:

- The prime minister of India may be elected from both the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha, in contrast to the UK, where that position must be filled by a member of the lower house.
- The speaker in India must remain unbiased throughout the proceedings even though they are still a party member. In the UK, a person no longer belongs to their party after being chosen as the speaker.

Important	Governmental Structure: Parliament	Governmental Structure: Presidential
Meaning	The legislative and executive parts of government are intertwined in this system of governance. Under this system of government, the people elect the MPs they choose to represent them.	It is a form of government where the legislative, executive, and judicial branches all have separate powers. The President is the official head of state and is chosen by popular vote.
Executive	Dual executive because state and federal leaders have diverse roles.	Both the head of state and the head of the government are one executive.
Ministers	Both members of parliament and members of the ruling party. Typically, no outsider is permitted to train to be a minister.	Chosen from outside the legislature, and they are typically professionals in their fields.
Accountability	Legislative oversight of the executive	The executive is not answerable to the legislature
Dissolution of the lower house	The lower house may be dissolved by the prime minister.	The lower house cannot be dissolved by the president. .
Tenure	Parliamentary majorities are required for the Prime Minister to serve a full term. It is not fixed as a result. .	President's term is set.
Separation of Powers	There is no real separation of powers.	The separation of powers principle is closely adhered to.
Party Discipline	More rigid party rules	Comparatively, there is less party discipline.
Autocracy	Less authoritarian	Greater autocracy

Presidential and parliamentary forms of government differ from one another:

Presidential System of Government

Under a presidential system, the executive branch, which is distinct from the legislative branch, is under the control of the head of state. The head of state and the head of the government in this instance are the same person. The fact that the executive is not answerable to the legislative is another important aspect.

Some Features of the Presidential System :

1. The President has the ability to veto legislation that the legislature has passed.
2. A vote of no confidence in Congress cannot end the President's fixed term.
3. Generally speaking, The President has the authority to reduce or eliminate prison terms.
4. The electorate selects the president, either directly or through an electoral college.

Merits of Presidential System

Following are some benefits of the presidential system:

- **Separation of the powers:** Due to the independence of the three departments of government, administration efficiency has significantly enhanced.
- **Super Expert government:** The President can appoint experts in numerous professions to lead pertinent departments or ministries since the executive branch is not required to consist of legislators. This will ensure that the government is composed of competent and skilled people.
- **Resilient Stability:** This kind of governance can be trusted. Also because president's term is definite and not dependent on legislative support, he need not be afraid about losing the government. No sudden collapse of the government exists. The president is not being pressured politically to make decisions.

- Because since the government's tenure is fixed, political parties do not attempt to topple it, the party system has less of an impact.

Demerits of Presidential System

The following list of presidential system drawbacks is provided:

- **Executive with low responsibility:**The executive and the president can become authoritarian since the legislative has no control over them.
- **Deadlocks between the legislative and executive branches:**There might be some frequent conflicts between the two parts of government because the demarcation of responsibilities is much more properly delineated here, especially if the president's political party is not the majority in the legislature.Due to time wastage, this may cause efficiency to decline.
- **Strict governance:** The rigidity of presidential systems has frequently criticised. It's not flexible enough.
- **System spoils:** The arrangement grants the president broad patronage rights. He is free to pick the executives he wants here. As a result, those connected to the president such as relatives, associates, and etc. to get jobs in the government. This is known as the spoils system.

Governmental Structure: Parliamentary

The main reason India decided on a parliamentary form of government was because the English system had a big influence on the constitution's writers. The people who drafted our nation's constitution also understood that the parliamentary system could only serve to accommodate the many different ethnic and racial groupings that make up our nation.Furthermore, conflicts between the legislative and executive branches would result from the presidential system's strict division of powers, something our freshly independent country.

Worldwide, there are more parliamentary governments than presidents. In this system, the legislative typically has the last word and is held accountable by the executive.

The parliamentary system's characteristics

1. **Close collaboration between the legislative and executive branches:** Inside this case, the executive is comprised of the Prime Minister and the Council of Ministers, and the legislative branch is the Parliament. It appears that its legislative branch creates the executive branch because the prime minister and ministers are picked from among the MPs.
 2. **The executive is more responsible to the legislature:** The legislature holds the executive accountable. This is a collective duty, which means that each minister's acts are held accountable by the Council as a whole.
 3. **Two executives such as Genuine and Nominal:** The real executive is the Prime Minister, who is the head of government rather than the head of state.
 4. **Procedure secrecy:** This style of administration requires that cabinet meetings be private and not intended for public disclosure.
 5. **The Leadership of Prime Minister's:** The Prime Minister is in charge of this type of government. Generally, the prime ministerial positions are filled by the leaders of the parties that gain a majority in the lower chamber.
 6. **Limit of No set term:** The length of the government's duration depends on whether it has a majority in the lower chamber. The council of ministers must resign if a motion of no confidence in the government is unsuccessful.
- The Indian prime minister may be chosen by either the Lok Sabha or the Rajya Sabha. The British Prime Minister will always be a Commons member, or member of the lower house.
 - In Britain, after being elected, the speaker formally leaves their political party. Even though the speaker in India is intended to be unbiased during the proceedings, he or she nonetheless belongs to the party.

- A shadow cabinet is not a concept that exists in India. In order to look into the policies and actions of the ruling party, the opposition in Britain creates a shadow cabinet. It also provides replacement programmes.

Merits of Parliamentary System

The following are some benefits of the parliamentary system:

- **Improved communication between the legislature and the executive:** It is simpler to enact laws and implement them because the executive is a component of the legislative and the majority of lawmakers frequently favour the executive branch of government.
- **Prevents authoritarianism:** Because the legislature can vote the executive branch of government out through a motion of no confidence, authoritarianism is avoided. Furthermore, power is not centralised like it is under the presidential government.
- **Responsive government:** The legislators have the power to interrogate the executive branch, address issues of public concern, and exert pressure. The executive's actions are subject to scrutiny by the parliament.
- **Representing various groups:** Under this arrangement, the parliament provides various national groupings with representation. This is particularly significant for a nation like India.

Demerits of Parliamentary System

The following are some drawbacks of the parliamentary system:

- **Process separation:** The legislative branch cannot always hold the executive branch responsible since there is no real separation of powers. Anti-defection rules also prevent parliamentarians from using their free will to vote in accordance with their convictions and understanding.

- **Unqualified legislator:** This system produces legislators whose sole goal is to join the executive. They lack the credentials required to pass laws.
- **Instability:** If there is no clear winner after the elections, there is instability because majority in the house is a requirement for administrations to continue. Coalition governments are frequently short-lived and very unstable.
- **Ministers:** The ruling party should be represented in the executive. Due to this, recruiting subject-matter specialists is no longer an option.
- **Delay in making a decision:** Because the Council of Ministers has no set term, it frequently delays making significant, long-term policy choices.
- **Party politics:** Since partisanship motivations have a greater impact on lawmakers than global issues, party politics are far more obvious under the parliamentary system.

Conclusion:

Whether it is a presidential or parliamentary system, each has advantages and disadvantages. The system that will work best for a given country is determined by the government of that country. It is crucial to understand the needs of the nation because every country is unique in terms of its people, structure, and culture. Whether a country has a presidential or parliamentary system determines the type of government that exists there. Most of these tactics have been integrated by some countries. Such regimes can be identified, among other factors, by their executives, accountability, and separation of powers.

Bibliography:

- [1] A. Malamud and S. Stavridis, "Parliaments and Parliamentarians as international actors," *Ashgate Res. Companion to Non-State Actors*, pp. 101–115, 2016.
- [2] G. There, P. Minister, P. Minister, U. Kingdom, T. Constitution, and G. There, "Parliamentary vs Presidential Form of Government," pp. 1–4.
- [3] M. Somer, "Turkey: The Slippery Slope from Reformist to Revolutionary Polarization and Democratic Breakdown," *Ann. Am. Acad. Pol. Soc. Sci.*, vol. 681, no. 1, pp. 42–61, 2019,

doi: 10.1177/0002716218818056.

- [4] A. H. Schakel and E. Massetti, “A world of difference: the sources of regional government composition and alternation,” *West Eur. Polit.*, vol. 41, no. 3, pp. 703–727, 2018, doi: 10.1080/01402382.2017.1400237.
- [5] N. Anstead, “WITHDRAWN: A Different Beast? Televised Election Debates in Parliamentary Democracies,” *Int. J. Press.*, vol. 25, no. 2, pp. NP2–NP20, 2020, doi: 10.1177/1940161216652141.
- [6] J. J. Linz, “Presidential or Parliamentary Democracy? Does It Make a Difference?,” *Fail. Pres. Democr. Case Lat. Am.*, no. July, pp. 3–87, 1994.
- [7] T. Haesebrouck, “Democratic participation in the air strikes against Islamic State: A qualitative comparative analysis,” *Foreign Policy Anal.*, vol. 14, no. 2, pp. 254–275, 2018, doi: 10.1093/fpa/orw035.
- [8] L. Tillin and A. W. Pereira, “Federalism, multi-level elections and social policy in Brazil and India,” *Commonw. Comp. Polit.*, vol. 55, no. 3, pp. 328–352, 2017, doi: 10.1080/14662043.2017.1327928.
- [9] S. Ganghof, “A new political system model: Semi-parliamentary government,” *Eur. J. Polit. Res.*, vol. 57, no. 2, pp. 261–281, 2018, doi: 10.1111/1475-6765.12224.
- [10] A. Pérez-Liñán, “Impeachment Or Backsliding? Threats To Democracy In The Twentyfirst Century,” *Rev. Bras. Ciencias Sociais*, vol. 33, no. 98, pp. 1–15, 2018, doi: 10.1590/339801/2018.
- [11] B. Esen and S. Gumuscu, “Killing Competitive Authoritarianism Softly: The 2019 Local Elections in Turkey,” *South Eur. Soc. Polit.*, vol. 24, no. 3, pp. 317–342, 2019, doi: 10.1080/13608746.2019.1691318.
- [12] T. S. James and S. Alihodzic, “When is it democratic to postpone an election? elections during natural disasters, covid-19, and emergency situations,” *Elect. Law J. Rules, Polit. Policy*, vol. 19, no. 3, pp. 344–362, 2020, doi: 10.1089/elj.2020.0642.
- [13] E. Griglio, “Parliamentary oversight under the Covid-19 emergency: striving against executive dominance,” *Theory Pract. Legis.*, vol. 0, no. 0, pp. 49–70, 2020, doi: 10.1080/20508840.2020.1789935.