

Measuring the Performance of MPs through objective methods

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Preface

I am Meenakshi Khosla, a second year undergraduate student studying electrical engineering at IIT Kanpur. This project is a part of my summer internship with Rakshak Foundation. Rakshak Foundation is a non-profit organisation that researches different public policy issues and creates awareness about them. The basic objective of Rakshak is to help strengthen the foundations of our society and bolster the confidence of a common man in the system by creating awareness about the issues affecting him.

I chose to work with Rakshak Foundation as I consider it an opportunity to take a step forward in promoting the society the forefathers of our nation like Gandhiji would have envisioned- A society free of all social evils, a society where everyone, irrespective of their caste, creed, gender, stand as equals, a society where everyone, be it the poor or the disabled, has the right to education. I believe that every small contribution we make has the potential to make an everlasting impact in the society. It is the desire to make a difference that counts. This internship has given me an opportunity to work with the best of the minds of the country that have had prior experience in the social sector and hence have more knowledge of the ground realities of the issues facing the country. Nothing gives me more satisfaction than being able to help people, to bring about a change fruits of which can be reaped by many.

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I would like to thank Rakshak Foundation for giving me this wonderful opportunity. I have learnt a lot through the course of this internship and it has been a really enriching experience.

Last but not the least, I am very grateful to my internship coordinators and fellow interns who have helped me from time to time during the course of the internship with their support and valuable suggestions.

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List of Abbreviations:

ADR: Association for Democratic Reforms

AFLI: African Leadership Institute

COMFREL: Committee for Free and Fair Elections in Cambodia

DRSC: Departmentally Related Standing Committee

MLA: Member of Legislative Assembly

MP: Member of Parliament

MPLADS: Member of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme

PMNRF: Prime Minister's National Relief Fund

PMO: Parliament Monitoring Organizations

PRS: Parliamentary Research Services

PRI: Panchayati Raj Institution

RTI: Right to Information

SAHR: South Asians for Human Rights

SNS: Satark Nagrik Sangathan

Executive Summary

The sole idea behind democracy is that the citizens should be able to hold their elected representatives accountable for their activities. Citizens should be able to make informed choices during elections. Citizens should be made aware of the performance of their elected representatives.

In this project, the aim is to develop certain parameters based on which an MP's performance can be assessed. In order to assess an MP's performance, it is first imperative to understand the roles and responsibilities of Members of Parliament. An MP is a representative of the people of his constituency. He is a legislator- a member of the law-making body of our country. He is also a scrutinizer- It is his duty to keep the government in check and oversee the functioning of the executive. There are four basic roles that an MP is expected to play- he has to make/review/debate on laws, he has to represent the interests of the people of his constituency, he has to pass the budget and he has to hold the government accountable. There are various mechanisms available to the MPs to perform each of these desired roles. For example, in order to represent the people of his constituency, MPs can ask questions directly to ministers to raise concerns of their constituents, they can raise matters under 377 for discussion in parliament, and they can also recommend developmental projects under MPLADS. For the law-making role, MPs can review/debate/amend government bills or they can introduce their own bills known as Private Member Bills. MPs hold the government accountable by questioning the ministers directly during Question Hour, and also by supporting or criticizing draft legislation.

There are certain parameters that can be used to assess the participation of MPs inside the Parliament like- attendance records, number of questions asked, participation in debates, private member bills introduced, attendance in Parliament Committee meetings, etc. But it is also important to assess how far he has succeeded in representing the interests of the people of his constituency. Amount of MPLADS funds utilised can be one of the parameters to assess how much contribution an MP has made to the development of his constituency. But it is not only the amount of MPLADS funds utilised but also where they have been utilised, i.e., the sector-wise breakdown of the funds utilisation that is important to identify the focus of the MPs. MPs raise issues of concern for the people of their constituency by raising Matters under Rule 377 inside the Parliament. A count of the instances when the MP raised these matters inside the Parliament can also be a measure. Also, the time spent by the MP in his constituency/ no. of trips to the constituency could also be included as a parameter however, it is very difficult to

keep a track of it. Some MPs are also a part of certain Parliamentary Forums or Consultative Committees that equip MPs with information and knowledge on certain critical issues facing our country. MPs are also part of various district level committees which provide a platform to them to address local issues like District Planning Committees (DPC), District Level Vigilance and Monitoring Committee (DLVMC) etc. However, it is a common practice for the MPs to appoint some officials who can attend these district level committee meetings on their behalf.

Key Findings:

- **Duties of MPs:** MPs have a duty to uphold the law. It is their duty to act in the interests of the nation as a whole with a special duty towards their constituents. They should behave with integrity, including in their use of public resources.
- **Activities of MPs inside the Parliament:** MPs ask questions during Question Hour, participate in debates, scrutinize debates, motions and laws and cast their votes, introduce Private Member Bills, participate in Parliament Committees. Some MPs also participate in Parliamentary Forums, Consultative Committees etc. MPs also have to review and pass the budget of our country.
- **MPLADS:** Under the MPLADS Scheme, each MP can recommend developmental projects to the tune of Rs. 5 crore per annum to be taken up in his constituency. Rajya Sabha MPs can select one or more districts of the state for recommending developmental projects. The main objective of the MPLADS is to address the 'locally felt needs' of the people. However, due to the absence a participatory mechanism, MPs often allocate funds for developmental projects using their own discretionary power. If the percentage of funds utilised is to be used as a yardstick, then the MPs have fared quite well in MPLADS.
- **Declaration of Assets and Liabilities Rules 2004:** Under these Rules, MPs are supposed to declare the details of the movable and immovable property owned by them or their spouse or dependent children within 90 days of taking their seat inside the Parliament.
- **Register of Interests:** Under Rule 293 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Council of States, the Rajya Sabha is required to maintain a Register of Interests which includes the details regarding the Remunerative Directorship, Regular Remunerated Activities, Shareholding of controlling nature, Paid consultancy and Professional engagement of Rajya Sabha MPs.

- During the course of this project, a comparative study was conducted to analyse how far the educational qualifications of an MP affect his performance inside the Parliament. For the purpose of this analysis, the MPs were divided into different categories on the basis of their educational qualification like Under Matric, Matric, Inter/Higher Secondary or Undergraduates, Graduates and Post Graduates or Doctorates. The results showed that to a large extent, the educational qualifications do have a bearing on the performance of an MP. For example, no 15th Lok Sabha MP from the Under-Matric category has introduced a single private Member bill in the Parliament yet. Further, the MPs from the Under-Matric and Matric have an average participation in debates of around 13.6 and 19.5 respectively (a total count of instances when they spoke in Parliament- on bills, during zero hour, special mentions, matters under Rule 377, 193 etc.), very low compared to the national average of around 33.4 whereas the participation of Post Graduates in debates has averaged around 49.6.

- An analysis was also carried out to study the kinds of issues raised by the MPs inside the Parliament. For the purpose of this analysis, a sample of 35 MPs were selected with due consideration to both ruling and opposition parties and a number of procedural devices available to them to raise issues of concern were considered- Matters under Rule 377, Special Mentions, Short Duration Discussions and Calling Attention. The issues raised were classified into 4 broad categories- constituency, regional, national and special interest. It was found out that about 35% of the total issues raised pertained to the respective constituencies of the MPs while another 28% were regional in nature mostly pertaining to the states in which their respective constituencies lie. This finding particularly highlights the constituency focus of the MPs.

- An analysis of the Parliament Monitoring Organizations also revealed interesting trends in monitoring individual MPs across the world. A majority of the PMOs have used the voting patterns of MPs on important pieces of legislation as the main parameter for depicting the performance of MPs. This enables the citizens to identify the policy positions of MPs on important issues. However, in India, the number of instances of division (recorded voting) is substantially low, especially after the anti-defection law. Further, the votes cast by the MPs on important pieces of legislation are substantially influenced by their party's directive. Several PMOs have also tried to establish a link between the constituents and the MPs by providing a platform for communication or a platform for citizens to express their opinions on important issues. However, no such platform as yet exists in India that would link the MPs with their constituents.

1. Introduction

1.1 Background Information

The Parliament of India consists of the President and the two Houses known as the Council of States (Rajya Sabha) and House of the People (Lok Sabha). Rajya Sabha can have a maximum of 250 members. Out of these, 12 members are to be nominated by the President while the remaining 238 or less representatives from the state are elected by the elected members of the State Legislative Assemblies by means of the single transferable vote. The Constitution also stipulates that the nominated members of Rajya Sabha must have special knowledge or practical experience in matters like literature, science, art and social service. The maximum number of elected members of Lok Sabha is 550. The Constitution provides that not more than 530 members will be elected from the States and not more than 20 members from Union Territories. It also provides that upto 2 members from the Anglo-Indian community can also be nominated by the President. Under the Section 14 of the Representation of People Act 1951, the Lok Sabha members are directly elected by the electors of the Parliamentary Constituencies. As per the Constitution, elections to the Lok Sabha take place on the basis of adult suffrage. Rajya Sabha is a Permanent House and is not subject to dissolution whereas Lok Sabha has a normal term of 5 years from the date appointed for its first meeting although it can be dissolved earlier by the President¹.

Members of Parliament primarily have four roles they are legally mandated to play: make laws, represent the interests of the people of their constituency, oversee the functioning of the executive/keep the government in check and pass the budget.

These Members of Parliament (MPs) in our country often operate without overview and little is known about their performance to serve their constituencies and people of the country. MPs in India nowadays receive a large amount of perks. Compared to developing countries, Indian MPs have unparalleled freedom to fix their own salaries and perks. With the Salaries, Allowances and Pension of Members of Parliament (Amendment) Bill, 2010, the MPs entitled themselves to a whopping 150 percent hike in salary. MPs get a lot of stature and respect- they have the authority to question government officials and civil servants, they can access resources and information that most citizens cannot, they act as bridge between the people they represent and the Government. The MPs represent the

¹ Article 79, 80, 81, 331, 326, 83(1), 83(2) , Constitution of India

people, and on their behalf, govern the nation. Article 245 in the Constitution of India empowers the Parliament to make laws for the whole or any other part of the territory of India. Hence, the legislative or law making role of the Members of Parliament is particularly very important. It is very important to analyse how well the MPs are discharging the responsibilities they are legally mandated to perform. This could also be useful to acknowledge the efforts of MPs who work day in and day out to prepare for their work both inside the Parliament and outside it. MPs often complain that their work inside the Parliament is not adequately covered by the media. No news is shown about a member of Parliament who regularly asks questions and keeps the Government in check but if an MP tears some documents during the debate on some bill, it is sensationalised.

There are certain quantifiable entities like their attendance in sessions, questions asked, participation in debates, private member bills introduced, service on committees etc. that are a measure of their participation inside the parliament. Until 2008, even this basic quantifiable information about the MPs wasn't available in the public domain. However, with the Right to Information (RTI) Act and the efforts of active citizens' organisations, this information is now available in the Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha websites and is now easily accessible to the public. Several civil society organisations have also attempted to assess the performance of MPs in the recent time and present it to the citizens for their information. For example, PRS Legislative Research² has been very popular in this regard. It tracks the performance of MPs inside the Parliament and depicts all this information on their website along with the comparison of MPs in these respects with the national and state average. The Association for Democratic Reforms has been working for a greater transparency in the political system and it has made sincere efforts to make the information regarding the educational qualifications, criminal cases, assets and liabilities records available to the public. Several other Parliament Monitoring Organisations in India like the Satark Nagrik Sangathan³, Praja Foundation⁴ or Mumbai Votes⁵ have also prepared Report Card to enable the citizens to gauge the performance of their MPs. However, there is still a lack of transparency and there is a need for a broader evaluation of an MP beyond the quantifiable methods. There are some other parameters which are difficult to quantify but are very essential to gauge the performance of an MP like how well did the MP represent the interests of the people of his constituency, what difference has he made to its development, his delivery of promises during the election campaign etc. In this project, the aim is to develop appropriate performance measures based on which an MP's objective assessment can be made

² <http://www.prsindia.org/>

³ <http://snsindia.org/>

⁴ <http://praja.org/>

⁵ <http://mumbaivotes.com/>

and also identify other parameters which are crucial for the citizens to monitor their elected representatives.

1.2 Main Problems, their scope and impact on the society

One major problem prevalent in our country is that people are not even aware of the roles and responsibilities of their Member of Parliament. There is no provision either in the Constitution or in the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the two Houses that clearly states the roles and responsibilities of a Member of Parliament. For a proper performance assessment, it is very essential to first understand their roles and responsibilities. As a result of this lack of knowledge, people think that the only role of MPs is to take measures for the development of their constituency. Hence, for many people, this becomes the main parameter for performance assessment during elections. Also, quite often, it happens that due to this lack of knowledge, people start expecting their MP to single-handedly provide drinking water in their constituency, lay the village roads, build up primary health care centres etc. Also, citizens sometimes have extremely unreasonable expectations from their MP- they expect their representative to pay the school fees of their children, attend weddings, funerals etc. As a result of people's expectation, MPs end up micro-managing their constituency and start neglecting their legislative role.

Another problem is the lack of transparency in the system. People don't know how their elected representatives are performing. Until recently, even the basic quantifiable information about the participation of an MP inside the Parliament like -attendance in House sittings, questions asked during Question Hour, participation in debates, Private Member Bills introduced - was not available in the public domain. With the Right to Information Act 2005 and the efforts of active citizens' groups, the Rajya Sabha and Lok Sabha sites now display this kind of information for each MP. This was a major step towards greater transparency of the political system. Now, with the political parties also coming under the purview of the Right to Information Act, this would definitely be a benchmark in transparency in politics. However, with a majority of the Indian population not even knowing how to use a computer, how do we expect them to make informed choices during elections as the information related to the participation of MPs inside the Parliament can only be accessed online. The government should itself take proactive measures to make this information available to the general public via other means like local newspapers, radio etc. They can also use the public libraries as a means to disseminate this information. The individual Members of Parliament should themselves take measures to proactively inform the citizens about their performance via their personal websites or distributing pamphlets during election campaigns etc. The Parliament Secretariat providing this

information is not sufficient, what is important is that how the various stakeholders- civil society groups, Parliament Monitoring Organizations and even the citizens decide to use this information.

It is often due to the lack of awareness amongst people that we have an increasingly large number of criminals coming into power. And this includes not just crimes of rallies and protests that the elected representatives often get charged against, this also includes heinous crimes like attempt to murder, murder, rape etc. and also charges under the Prevention of Corruption Act. These criminals acquire power purely on the basis of their money and muscle power. They appeal more to the poor voters because of their farfetched and sometimes unconstitutional promises. It often does not matter to the poor people whether the electoral candidate has a past criminal record or not. They are just lured by the promises made by their prospective leader. It is very important to make the citizens realize the disadvantages of having a criminal MP in power. He would more likely spend his tenure returning favors to those who helped him in the election campaign. Citizen awareness is very crucial to address this issue of criminalisation of politics.

1.3 Goals and Objectives

The main aim of this project is to identify the key parameters required for assessing the performance of MPs and evolve a mechanism to measure the performance that can be presented to the citizens for their information.

The following are the goals and objectives :

- To identify the roles and responsibilities of Members of Parliament.
- To conduct a detailed analysis to find out all the parameters based on which an MP's work can be evaluated.
- To find out all the activities that MPs are a part of inside the Parliament like asking/answering questions, participating in debates, introducing bills and participation in motions etc.
- To study the information that the Parliament Secretariat, various ministries, election commission already provides and how it can be used to monitor individual MPs
- To identify other sources/parameters based on which an MP's work can be quantified.
- To make recommendations as to what other information the Parliament Secretariat must provide in order to enable the citizens to monitor all aspects

of the working of their MPs and further how this information may be used by various stakeholders.

2. Methodology

2.1 Literature Search

Literature Search was an integral part of this research study. Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the two Houses helped gain an insight into the functioning of the Parliament. Through this book, different procedural devices available to the MPs to raise issues of concern inside the Parliament like Special Mentions, Calling Attention, Adjournment Motions, Rule 377, Rule 193 etc were familiarised with. Several research papers were also read to understand the roles and responsibilities of MPs and how certain developments (like the Anti-Defection Law or the introduction of Standing Committees) have affected the work of MPs inside the Parliament. A detailed literature review of the Member Of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme (MPLADS) was also conducted. Reading the Planning Commission Report on MPLADS helped gain insight about the various loopholes in the Scheme and why the MPLAD Scheme has failed, to some extent, to achieve the desired goals.

A few Research Reports were also read where several citizens' groups (or Parliament Monitoring Organisations) have attempted to assess the performance of MPs. These reports were particularly helpful in learning about some important parameters that can be very useful for performance assessment. Some of these include methodology followed by Praja Foundation for measuring the performance of MPs/MLAs/councillors of Mumbai, Mumbai Votes Project for performance appraisal of Mumbai MPs, Report Cards of MPs/MLAs prepared by Satark Nagrik Sangath(SNS)⁶.

Further, the Research Report by South Asians for Human Rights (SAHR) on "Transparency in Parliament: A Review of the Procedures and Practices in South Asia" was particularly enlightening and informative about the state of transparency in parliaments in Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. It was learnt that compared to these other countries, India has a greater transparency in Parliament. The Report highlighted how the business of the Houses is recorded in all these countries. One key finding was the concept of Hourly Chart in India. In India, the lobby officer is required to maintain an Hourly Chart showing the number of members present in either Houses during different hours of the day. Also, at the end of each session, the Parliament Secretariat also prepares an

⁶ <http://snsindia.org/>

analytical abstract showing statistical data with regard to the maximum and minimum attendance for every sitting, highest and lowest head count per hour and the average attendance per sitting during the session. However, this data is not put up on the Parliament website.

Further, a detailed literature review of the Declaration of Assets and Liabilities Rules 2004 under The Representatives of People Act 1951 also facilitated an understanding of the rules that put obligations on MPs to furnish the details of their movable and immovable property.

A reading of the book "India's Elected: Our MP's Report Card" which is a public record of an MP's performance inside Parliament introduced and highlighted one additional parameter for assessing the MPs- the constituency development indicators. This book was the result of a mutual collaboration between Indicus Analytics, Indian, Express, PRS Legislative Research and Liberty Institute. Indicus Analytics presented information regarding the constituency development indicators on socio-economic variables (health plus education) as well as physical infrastructure (electricity, roads and water). These values were compared between the years 2004 and 2008 to indicate the development of the constituencies during the 14th Lok Sabha and hence, as a measure of the performance of elected representatives. However, as was pointed out in an article in Economics and Political Weekly on "Electoral Politics and Manipulation of Statistics" , this constituency data is not always reliable. Sometimes, this data is often extrapolated under certain considerations from old data, which may no longer hold true. Also, since Indicus Analytics is an independent private agency, it is also important to verify the authenticity of the data as it has been extensively used by various media organisations.

Reading the report of National Democratic Institute and World Bank Institute on Parliament Monitoring Organizations (PMOs) across the world also brought about certain interesting trends in monitoring individual MPs across different countries. In most European countries and in the U.S., the most prominent parameter for monitoring the MPs is their voting record in Parliament. Several PMOs have also correlated it with their party loyalty. Quite a few PMOs have also developed scorecards or indices to rate their MPs. These PMOs have successfully encouraged MPs to participate more actively in the legislative process. A scorecard worth mentioning is the one developed by African Leadership Institute (AFLI). It rates the performance of MPs in three areas of work- plenary, committee, constituency. The "Parliamentary Scorecard 2009-2010: Assessing the performance of Uganda's Legislators" published by Africa Leadership Institute further elaborated the methodology followed by AFLI to prepare the scorecards. It also goes further to grade the MPs in all these respects. An interesting technique employed by AFLI

was that of peer assessment where each MP's feedback was taken from 20 other randomly selected MPs.

2.2 Meetings and Interviews

Mentor Discussions:

The discussions with the mentor, Prof. Arvind Verma, helped me gain background knowledge on the current performance assessment parameters for MPs in India. There are several factors that are quantifiable- attendance in the Parliament and time spent with the constituents, questions asked, service on committees etc. Some others may be difficult to quantify- how well did the MP represent the interests of the people of his constituency, what difference has he made to its development etc. It was discussed that it would be useful to develop a format based upon inputs from various sources that could be the basis for measuring performance. This format would have a recommendations section where empirical data about some measures like fund utilization/ developmental work done for the constituency etc could be suggested. Since there is little data available to evaluate how the MPs are representing their people, it was discussed that it is important to highlight this and provide suggestions regarding what kind of data and information should be provided by the Parliament or related agencies to keep the citizens well informed. Issues like the constituency- centred outlook of the MPs as well as absenteeism during Question Hour were also discussed. Based upon this, it was realised that there is a need to suggest how MPs should be focusing upon national issues and pursue their questions by being present at the time of the answer.

Name	Designation	Institution	Topic of Discussion
Shri J. K Rithesh	Member of Parliament	Lok Sabha	Discussed about the typical work of MPs inside Parliament, frequency with which MPs attend committee meetings, how MPs allocate funds under MPLADS, question hour, zero hour etc.
Ms. Amrita Johri	Activist	Satark Nagrik Sangathan (SNS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussed MPLADS in great detail. Talked about the absence of an institutionalised participatory mechanism for MPLADS in our country as a result of which MPs often recommend developmental project using their own discretion.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For Report Cards, SNS obtained all the information through RTI for both MPs and MLAs. • In order to disseminate this information to the public, SNS printed the Report Cards in local newspaper and certain magazines like Outlook.
Mrs. Pallavi Govil	Director	Prime Minister's Office	<p>Discussed about some new parameters that could possibly be used for performance assessment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • District Level Committees: MPs are a part of District Level Committees like District Planning Committee, District Monitoring and Vigilance Committee. Keeping a track of their attendance in these committees can help to know how actively they participate at the district level in these committees. • MP's Recommendations for PMNRF:
Ms. Mandira Kala	Head of Research	PRS Institute for Policy Research Studies	Discussed about the works of MPs inside the Parliament and about the Consultative Committees that provide a platform for an informal exchange between the Ministers

Table 1: Meetings and Interviews

3. Current NGO and Government Efforts

There have been several efforts by various NGOs across India to tackle this problem of performance assessment of MPs. Some of these efforts are described below:

3.1 PRS Institute for Policy Research Studies:

PRS Legislative Research (PRS) seeks to strengthen the legislative process by making it better informed, more transparent and participatory⁷.

An important part of their research studies is the 'MP Track' which helps to keep a track of the participation of MPs inside the Parliament.

The methodology followed by PRS currently focuses on the following parameters for the performance assessment of MPs:

- Attendance in Parliamentary Sessions: It is computed as a percentage of the days the MP signed the attendance register as a percentage of the days he was eligible to sign the register.
- Questions asked during the Question Hour: This includes the total number of questions- starred and unstarred- posed by the MP inside the Parliament during the Question Hour which have to be answered by the ministers.
- Debates: These include all the occasions when the MP spoke in Parliament- on bills, during zero hours, special mentions, matters under Rule 377 etc.
- Private Member Bills introduced by the MP

For example., for the Lok Sabha MP J.P. Agarwal, PRS gives the following data regarding Parliamentary Performance:

⁷ <http://www.prsindia.org/>

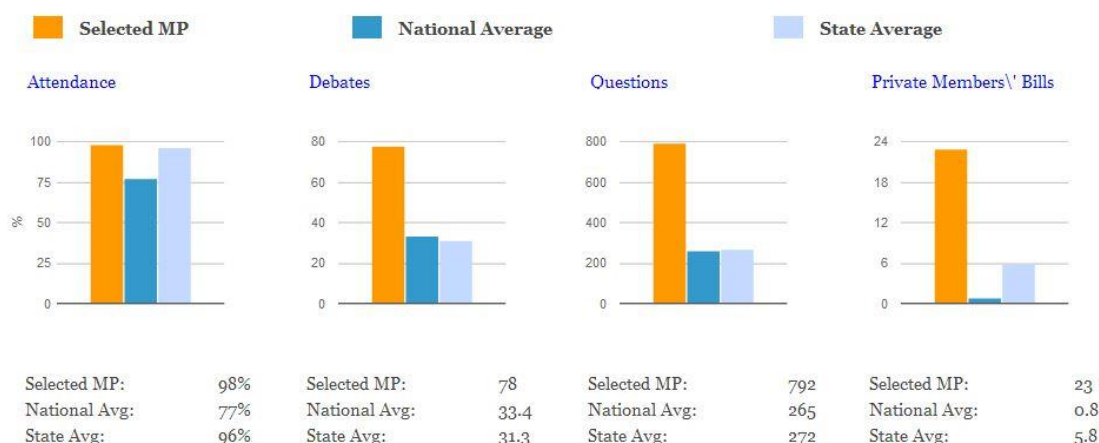


Figure 1: Participation of Shri J.P. Agarwal in Parliament: PRS Legislative Research

3.2 Satark Nagrik Sangathan (SNS) :

SNS is a citizens' group working to promote transparency and accountability in government functioning and to encourage active citizen participation in governance. They assist people in exercising their right to information⁸.

SNS has been using Right to Information Act to develop report cards on the performance of individual elected Representatives.

In 2009, prior to the general elections, SNS developed Report Cards on the performance of sitting MPs of the Lok Sabha. The Report Cards focussed on 3 broad parameters-

- **Performance in the Lok Sabha-** The performance of MPs in the Lok Sabha was assessed on the basis of the number of sittings that they attended, the number of questions they raised, the number of times they participated in the proceedings and the number of bills they introduced. The questions raised by them and their participation in the proceedings were analysed issue-wise to identify the priorities of the MP. This information was collated for their performance across all 3 sessions (Budget, Monsoon and Winter sessions) of the Lok Sabha held in 2007.
- **Performance in Parliamentary Standing Committees-** For the purpose of the Report Cards, the membership of each MP in the Parliamentary Standing

⁸ <http://snsindia.org/>

Committees was compiled from 2004 to 2008. These Committees are permanent and regular committees. In the Report Cards, the performance of MPs in Parliamentary Standing Committees was assessed on the basis of the number of committee meetings that the MP attended in 2007. Attendance of MPs in Financial and Departmentally Related Standing Committees meetings was compiled.

- Performance in allocation of MPLADS - Under the MPLAD scheme each MP was allocated Rs. 2 crore per year to carry out development works in their constituency until 2011. An analysis of all the projects sanctioned by the MP from the MPLADS between 2004 and 2008 was also used as an indicator of the performance of the MP.

MILIND MURLI DEORA

Constituency: Mumbai South, Maharashtra

Educational qualification: BBA
 Criminal charges: Nil
 Attendance in 2007: 52/66
 No. of questions: 2 starred, 192 unstarred
 Bills introduced: 0
 No. of times MP took part in LS proceedings excluding questions asked: 4
 Membership in parliamentary committees: 1 (defence)
 Attendance in committee sittings: 12/38



Head	Amount (in Lakhs)
Road, Lane & Footpath	Not Available
Drain	*
Electricity	*
Park	*
Water	*
School, College infrastructure	*
Misc.	*
Grand Total	*

DEEPENDER SINGH HOODA

Constituency: Rohtak, Haryana

Educational qualification: MBA
 Criminal charges: Info not available
 Attendance in 2007: 50/66
 No. of questions: 0 starred, 9 unstarred
 Bills introduced: 0
 No. of times MP took part in LS proceedings excluding questions asked: 1
 Membership in parliamentary committees: 1 (agriculture)
 Attendance in committee sittings: 9/13



Head	Amount (in Lakhs)
Road, Lane & Footpath	50.9
Drain	2.9
Electricity	11.7
Park	20.3
Water	48.1
School, College infrastructure	105.4
Misc.	433.2
Grand Total	672.5

RAHUL GANDHI

Constituency: Amethi, Uttar Pradesh

Educational qualification: MPhil
 Criminal charges: Nil
 Attendance in 2007: 33/66
 No. of questions: 0 starred, 0 unstarred
 Bills introduced: 0
 No. of times MP took part in LS proceedings excluding questions asked: 0
 Membership in parliamentary committees: 2 (HRD, home)
 Attendance in committee sittings: 3/13 in HRD



Head	Amount (in Lakhs)
Road, Lane & Footpath	232.3
Drain	0.0
Electricity	6.4
Park	0.0
Water	89.2
School, College infrastructure	47.8
Misc.	18.4
Grand Total	394.1

SACHIN PILOT

Constituency: Dausa, Rajasthan

Educational qualification: MBA
 Criminal charges: Nil
 Attendance in 2007: 52/66
 No. of questions: 0 starred, 1 unstarred
 Bills introduced: 0
 No. of times MP took part in LS proceedings excluding questions asked: 5
 Membership in parliamentary committees: 1 (home)
 Attendance in committee sittings: 5/28



Head	Amount (in Lakhs)
Road, Lane & Footpath	44.3
Drain	0.0
Electricity	0.0
Park	0.0
Water	26.5
School, College infrastructure	33.3
Misc.	2.4
Grand Total	106.5

Figure 2: Report Card of MPs: "Your MP in the House": Outlook India

3.3 Praja Foundation:

Praja is a non-partisan organisation whose vision is to re-establish transparency and accountability in governance. It aims to provide tools and mechanisms which enable citizens to monitor the work done by their elected representatives, with a

belief that they will deliver better when they become aware that their work is being scrutinized by the people.⁹

Praja Foundation has made efforts to measure the performance of all elected representatives of Mumbai- MPs, MLAs, councillors.

They have a special feature on their website- 'Know Your Neta' that reveals a lot of information about the MPs of Mumbai- their attendance in Parliament Sessions, MPLADS funds utilisation breaking it down into 3 categories- civic, community welfare and Education, questions asked during Question Hour, issues in ward which covers 4 broad categories-civic, crime, health, education.

An important initiative taken by Praja Foundation is the Mumbai Report Card- MLA Ratings 2012, which is a comprehensive and objective rating of the elected Representatives' performance. Praja Foundation accessed data of proceedings in the Vidhan Sabha, data from city and suburban collectors' offices, Mumbai Police and State Election Commission through RTI. The parameters followed for the performance assessment included educational qualifications, filing of Income Tax returns, criminal record, number of sessions attended, number of questions asked, importance of questions asked, utilisation of the total local area development funds between December 2009 and March 2011 and perceived accessibility and level of corruption by voters in the constituency. Sixty per cent weightage was given to performance of MLA as defined by the RTI applications and 40 per cent on the perception amongst the citizens.

Praja Foundation published this Report Card in 2012 and they plan to do it every year.

⁹ <http://praja.org/>

4. Results and Discussions

4.1 Results (Findings from Literature Review and Field)

4.1.1 Roles and Responsibilities of MPs

The Constitution of India does not clearly state the roles and responsibilities of a Member of Parliament. According to an article in the Times of India¹⁰, a series of RTI queries filed with the central government and state assemblies show that there are no predefined or stated duties and responsibilities for elected representatives of the people. However, with past experience, an MP is generally expected to perform the following roles and duties:

1) An MP is a representative of the people of his constituency:

MPs provide a link between the citizens and their legislatures. They serve as a liaison between the government and citizens. MPs represent the interests of the people of their constituency in the Parliament. One of the ways in which they do so is by raising issues of concern for the people of their constituency during the Question Hour. They also recommend developmental projects for their constituency through the Member of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme (MPLADS). It is the fundamental duty of a Member of Parliament to take care of the constituency he represents in every way and help it to progress in every field.

2) An MP is a legislator:

MPs are expected to enact laws which ensure that our democracy operates openly and freely. The basic aim of the laws is to address our country's problems. In order to exercise their legislative powers, MPs can introduce a private member bill to address certain issues, or review, debate and amend government bills presented by the executive branch. Article 245(1) in Constitution of India empowers Parliament to make laws for the whole or any part of the territory of India.

3) An MP is a scrutinizer:

¹⁰ 'MPs, MLAs have no duties and responsibilities', Times of India (Apr 15, 2011), http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2011-04-15/india/29421016_1_mlas-duties-accountability, Accessed 10-07-2013

An important role of the legislature is to oversee the functioning of the executive. MPs scrutinize whether the government has correctly used the funds for its parliamentary operations. One means of achieving this scrutiny is by supporting or criticizing draft legislation. MPs are also a part of Parliament Committees. These committees help in increasing the efficiency and accountability of the government. Committees supervise the internal workings of the House. They investigate matters of public policy, examine the activities of government and make recommendations for change in the form of a report. The committees study various issues in detail- be it a government policy or a new law.

There have also been several developments in the late 20th century that have brought about a significant change in the role of Parliament. One such development is the introduction of Standing Committees in 1993 which gives an opportunity to the Parliament to oversee the functioning of the executive. Another such development is the anti-defection law. This Act which was included in the Constitution in 1985 sets the provisions for disqualification of elected members on the grounds of defection to another political party. It is believed that this law has somewhat made the work of MPs inside the Parliament less necessary because the MPs now have the fear of losing their seat in Parliament if they go against their party's wishes.

4.1.2 Activities of MPs inside the Parliament

The Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the two Houses helped me understand the major role of MPs inside the Parliament and what are the different activities inside the Parliament in which MPs participate

❖ MPs ask Questions:

The first hour of a sitting of the House is the Question Hour. Asking of questions is an inherent parliamentary right of the members. By asking questions, members raise issues of concerns of the people of their constituency and hold the government accountable. Questions provide an opportunity to the MPs to seek information on matters of public interest, ventilate grievances and shortcomings of the executive or indirectly suggest that proper action needs to be taken by asking for explanation. Questions are of 4 types:

- **Starred Questions:**
These are the questions to which an MP desires an oral answer from the Minister to whom it is addressed during the Question Hour.
- **Unstarred Question:**

These questions don't demand an oral answer but they seek a written answer from the Minister concerned.

- **Short Notice Questions:**
These are the questions related to matters of urgent public importance.
- **Question to a Private Member:**
These are the questions addressed to a private member relating to any bill or resolution for which he is responsible.

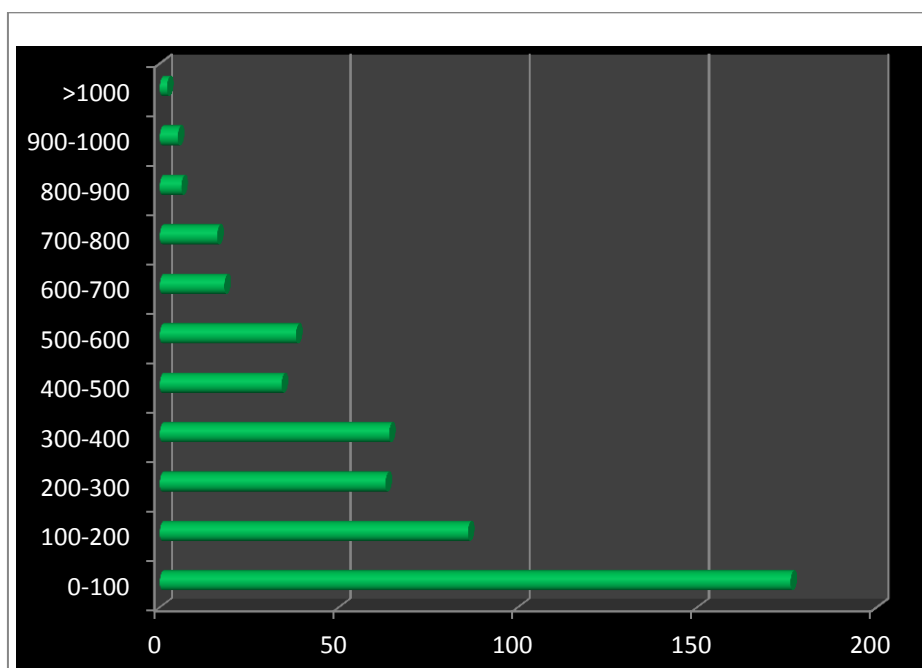


Figure 3: Number of questions asked by MPs in 15th Lok Sabha (X-axis- Number of MPs, Y-axis-Number of Questions asked)

❖ MPs participate in debates:

There are various types of debates in the Parliament. MPs can contribute to the passing of the budget by being a part of budget type debates. Members also debate on Government Bills and they can support or criticize draft legislation. MPs can also raise issues of concern of the people of their constituency through Matters under Rule 377. There are several procedural devices available to the members through which they raise matters of urgent public importance, like discussion on the 'Motion of Thanks on the Address by the President', Adjournment Motions, No-Confidence Motion, Calling Attention, Short Duration Discussions, Half-Hour Discussion, Resolutions. MPs debate on issues of National Policy Matter under Rule 193 by being a part of Short Duration Discussions. Members can call the attention of a Minister to matters under Rule 197. MPs can raise matters of public importance through Special Mentions also. It is a procedure available to a Member

who wishes to mention a matter of public importance in the House by reading out from the text not exceeding 250 words.

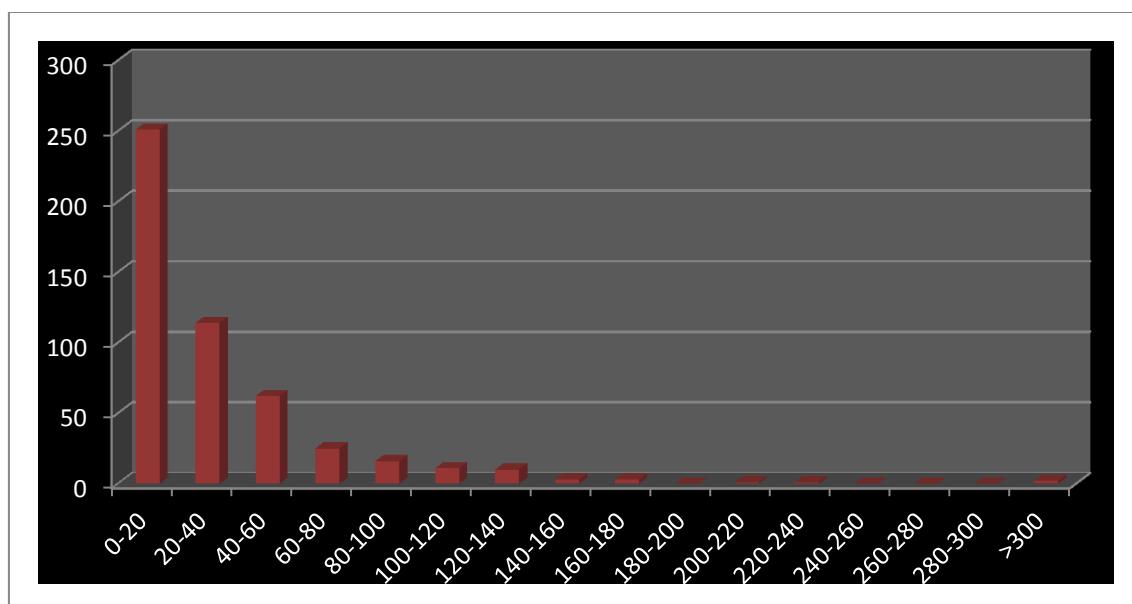


Figure 4: Participation of MPs in debates(x-axis: Number of MPs, y-axis- Number of Debates)

❖ MPs(non-minister) can introduce Private Member Bills:

Members can also introduce bills in Parliament, known as Private Member Bills. Unfortunately, no private members' bill has been passed by the Parliament since 1970¹¹. In the 14th Lok Sabha, barely 4 % of the private member bills introduced were discussed and 96 % lapsed without even a single debate in the Parliament.¹²

The following figure shows the number of Private Member Bills passed by the Parliament since 1952¹³.

¹¹ Kumar, Rohit(28 Feb, 2010). "Vital Stats: Private Member Bills in Lok Sabha, PRS Legislative Research.

¹² "Shocker: Not a single Private Members' Bill passed since 1970", Sify News (14 Feb. 2010)

¹³ Data Source: PRS Legislative Research

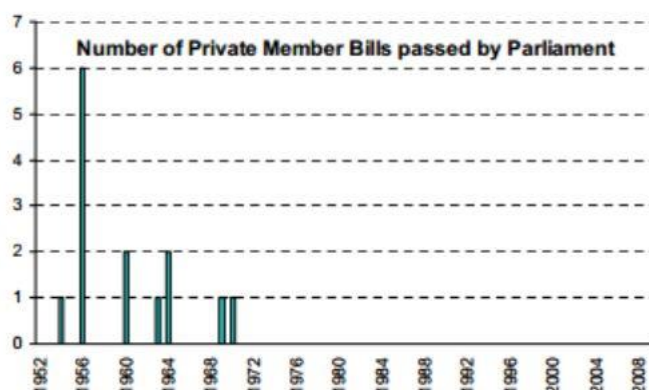


Figure 5: Private Member Bills passed since 1952, Source: Kumar Rohit, "Vital Stats: Private Member Bills", PRS Legislative Research

In the 14th Lok Sabha, about 54% Private Member Bills aimed to effect new legislation while 30% aimed at constitutional amendments. Also, only 67 private members introduced these bills in the 14th Lok Sabha¹⁴.

Figure 6: Private Member Bills-14th Lok Sabha

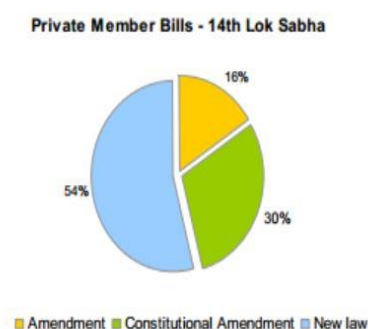
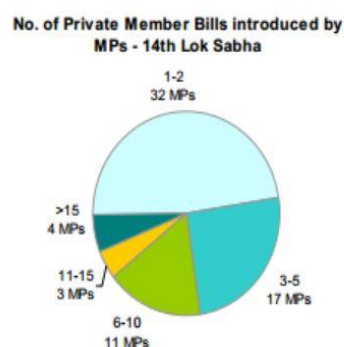


Figure 7: Private Member Bills Number: 14th Lok Sabha



Source: Kumar Rohit, "Vital Stats: Private Member Bills", PRS Legislative Research

Only a handful of the MPs have introduced Private Member Bills in the 15th Lok Sabha as can be seen from the following graph.

¹⁴Kumar Rohit, "Vital Stats: Private Member Bills", PRS Legislative Research

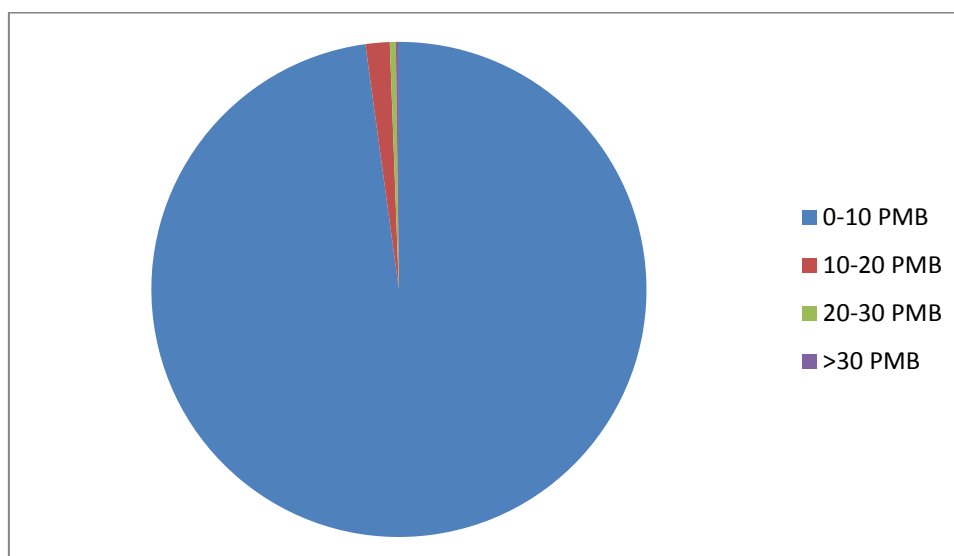


Figure 8: Private Member Bills introduced by MPs, 15th Lok Sabha

Number of Private Member Bills introduced by 15th Lok Sabha MPs¹⁵

❖ MPs participate in Parliament Committees:

Members of Parliament are also a part of Parliament Committees. These committees help in increasing the efficiency and accountability of the government. Committees supervise the internal workings of the House. The functions of committees are 3 fold- investigatory where it finds out facts or collect opinions by examining persons as witnesses, deliberative where the members of the committee discuss and consider what conclusions to draw from the material before them and recommendatory where the committee considers what recommendations, if any, to make to the House. The committees study various issues in detail- be it a government policy or a new law.

Parliament Committees are of two types: Ad-hoc Committees and Standing Committees. Ad-hoc committees are the temporary committees that are appointed for a specific purpose and are dissolved when they complete the task assigned to them and submit the report. For eg., Select and Joint Committee on bills. Standing committees are permanent and regular committees which are constituted from time to time in pursuance of the provisions of an Act of Parliament or Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in Lok Sabha¹⁶. Standing Committees include Department Related Standing Committees (DRSCs), Financial Committees and some others. 17 DRSCs were constituted in 1993 upon consideration of the reports of the Rules Committees of the Tenth Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha by both Houses.

¹⁵ Data Source: PRS Legislative Research

¹⁶ "Parliament Committees, http://164.100.47.134/committee/Committee_Home_Page.aspx, Accessed 10-07-2013

After over a decade with the DRSC system, the number of DRSCs was increased from 17 to 24 in 2004. There are three financial committees: Committee on Estimates, Committee on Public Accounts and Committee on Public Undertakings. Public Accounts Committee examines the financial affairs of Departments after the money has been spent while the Estimates Committee examines the expenditure proposed.

❖ MPs participate in Consultative Committees:

Consultative Committees are different from Parliament Committees and come under the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs. These Committees provide a platform for an informal exchange between a Minister and few other MPs (non-ministers). These committees provide opportunities to MPs to have some glimpse into the working of the Government. The membership of these committees is voluntary and an MP can be nominated on only a single committee.

❖ MPs participate in Parliamentary Forum:

Parliamentary forums serve the following purposes:

- To equip MPs with information and knowledge on specific issues of national concern and assist them in adopting a result oriented approach towards related issues.
- Platform for MPs to interact with Ministers, experts and key officials from nodal ministries in order to have a focused discussion on critical issues facing the country so as to enable them to effectively raise these issues on the floor of the House and in the meeting of Departmentally Related Standing Committees.

Each Parliamentary Forum has about 30 Lok Sabha Members and 10 Rajya Sabha Members who have been nominated to these Forums because of their special knowledge of, or keen interest in these subjects.

There are 5 Parliament Forums:

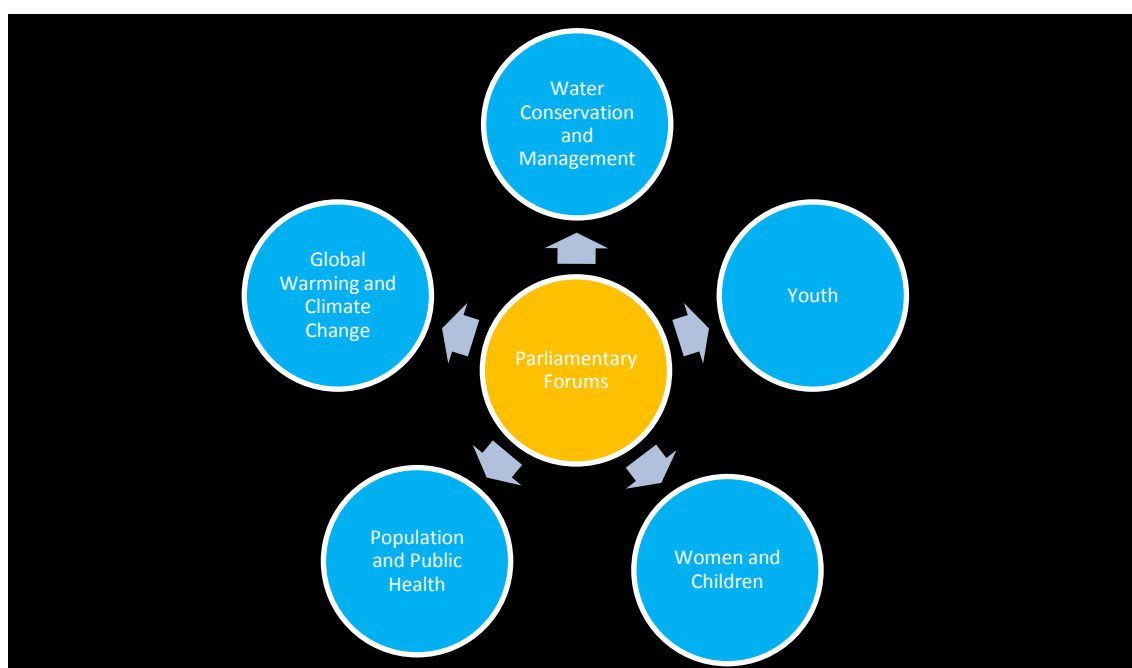


Figure 9: Parliamentary Forums

4.1.3 A Day in Parliament

When the Parliament is in session, typically, a day of a Member of Parliament looks like:

Table 2: A Day in Parliament

Time	What happens in Parliament?
11:00-12:00	Question Hour
12:00-13:00	Zero Hour
13:00-14:00	Lunch Break
14:00-17:00 (Rajya Sabha)	Government Business,
14:00-18:00 (Lok Sabha)	Private Member Business on Fridays

The first hour of a sitting is the Question Hour when the MPs can ask questions and ministers have to answer them orally. Only 20 oral questions are listed for a day to be answered during the Question Hour. By asking questions, MPs perform their role of representing the people as well as holding the Government accountable. The Question Hour is followed by the Zero Hour when MPs can raise issues of concern of the people without prior notice. The Zero Hour is followed by a one-hour lunch session, which is also mostly utilised by the MPs to read the numerous documents laid on the Table so that they can effectively raise matters of public interest. Before the lunch break, the MP acts an individual member raising issues

according to his own choice. However, after the lunch break, he no longer an individual Member of Parliament and this is where party politics come into play. While dealing with the Government Business in the post lunch session, he has to act keeping the party ideologies in mind, else he faces the risk of disqualification on grounds of defection. Every Friday, the post-lunch session is not completely utilised for Government business, rather the last two and a half hours of a sitting on every Friday are generally allotted for transaction of "Private Members' Business", i.e., Private Members' Bills and Private Members' Resolutions. If there is no sitting of the House on a Friday, the Speaker may direct that two and a half hours on any other day in the week may be allotted for the transaction of Private Members' Business¹⁷.

4.1.4 Member of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme (MPLADS):

Member of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme (MPLADS) is a scheme formulated by Government of India in 1993 through which MPs can recommend developmental works to the District Collector to the tune of Rs. 5 crore to be taken up in their constituency. Rajya Sabha MPs can select works for implementation in one or more districts of the State they represent.

MPLADS was started due to the following major reasons:

- It was observed that the areas represented by opposition MPs remained backward in development and it was said that all MPs should be given resources to undertake developmental projects in their areas.
- Central Planning Authority, because of the huge size of the country, could not provide a regional perspective for planning development so that the people's representatives should be given the power to recommend development works in their areas.

The main objective of the MPLADS is to get executed 'developmental works of capital nature based on locally felt needs with emphasis on creation of durable assets.'

A major drawback of the MPLAD Scheme is its poor monitoring. The data regarding the utilisation of funds under MPLADS is not updated regularly on the website of Ministry of Statistics and Programmable Implementation. Even as per the guidelines, the details of the project works recommended by the MPs under the

¹⁷ Chakshu Roy, PRS Legislative Research, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ODR0DuH89fg>, Accessed 10-07-2013

Scheme should be in the public domain. However, due to the poor maintenance of the website, no such data can be accessed¹⁸.

An analysis of the project works recommended by 15th Lok Sabha MPs during the years 2009-10, 2010-11 and 2011-12 shows the following sector-wise distribution¹⁹:

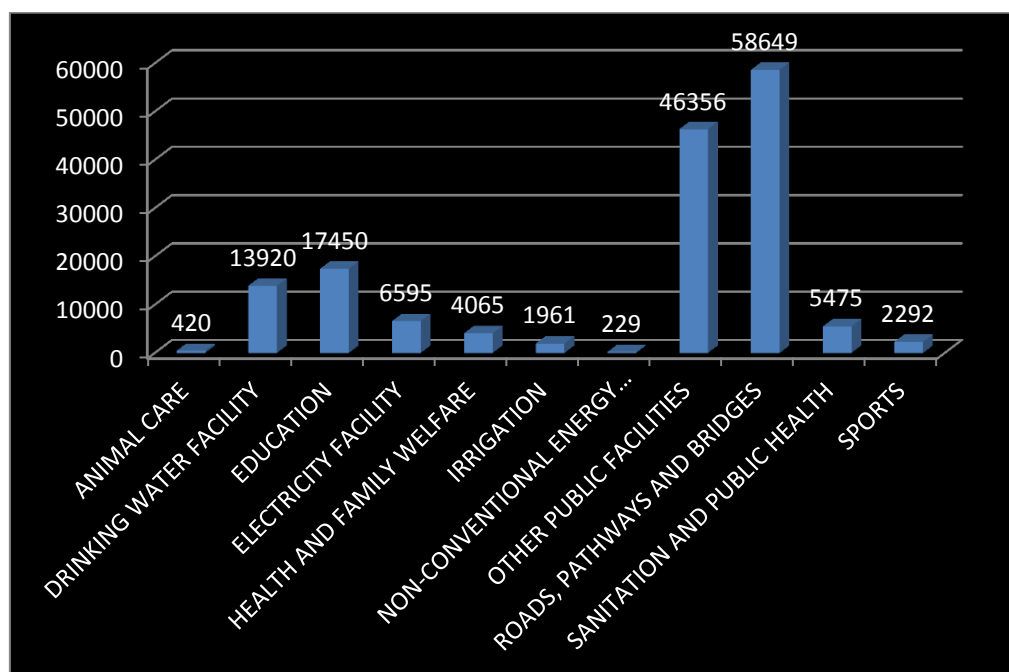


Figure 10: Amount of MPLADS funds utilised (Rs. in lakhs)

The figure shows that the maximum of the MPLADS funds utilised fall under the sector of Roads, Pathways and Bridges (37.3 %) followed by Other Public Facilities. Non conventional energy sources account for a very small proportion of the MPLADS funds utilised. Education and Health/ Family Welfare account for about 11.1% and 2.6% of the MPLADS funds utilised respectively.

A state-wise analysis of the MPLADS funds utilised by the 15th Lok Sabha MPs is shown in the following table (as on 01/07/2013 by Ministry of Statistics and Programmable Implementation):

¹⁸ MPLADS, <http://mplads.nic.in/>, Accessed upto 09-07-2013

¹⁹ Data accessed from Lok Sabha Unstarred Question No. 6778, 15th Lok Sabha

Table 3: State-wise Utilisation of MPLADS funds

Serial Number	State	Funds Utilised(%)
1	Nominated	82.8
2	Andhra Pradesh	92.98
3	Arunachal Pradesh	95.31
4	Assam	89.19
5	Bihar	81.32
6	Goa	85.93
7	Gujarat	91.59
8	Haryana	89.15
9	Himachal Pradesh	91.51
10	Jammu & Kashmir	89.89
11	Karnataka	88.39
12	Kerala	92.33
13	Madhya pradesh	92.72
14	Maharashtra	93.07
15	Manipur	94.53
16	Meghalaya	92.76
17	Mizoram	91.14
18	Nagaland	91.4
19	Odisha	86.33
20	Punjab	91.04
21	Rajasthan	89.54
22	Sikkim	96.35
23	Tamil Nadu	94.01
24	Tripura	95.26
25	Uttar Pradesh	87.25
26	West Bengal	88.86
27	A & N Islands	105.62
28	Chandigarh	85.51
29	D & N Haveli	92.6
30	Daman & Diu	90.59
31	Delhi	92.9
32	Lakshdweep	112.47
33	Puducherry	96.01
34	Chhattisgarh	92.47
35	Uttarakhand	82.81
36	Jharkhand	85.94

A critical Analysis of the MPLADS:

The MPLAD Scheme has received a lot of criticism since the time it was started. There have been demands to scrap off the Scheme because it fails to achieve the desired objective which is to address the locally felt needs of the people by creating durable assets for the community. The concept of MPLADS itself has been challenged in a Public Interest Litigation (PIL), which is being considered by a five-judge panel of the Supreme Court on the grounds that this scheme violates the principle of separation of powers, as members of the legislative makes executive decisions. Also, MPs would be recommending schemes, which fall under the purview of local bodies (panchayat).

The pressing issue here is that due to the absence of an institutionalized participatory mechanism, the MPs sometimes recommend development projects based on their own discretionary power irrespective of the locally felt needs of the people of his constituency. One problem in addressing this issue could be the fact that the locally felt needs vary across socio- economic background. It is not possible for an MP to look into the needs of the 20 lakh people of his constituency. It was recommended in the Planning Commission Report on MPLADS that in order to help the MPs to prioritise the felt needs of various groups of population, the PRIs may be asked to provide a list of works to be recommended to the MP annually. This list may also be displayed conspicuously for public information²⁰.

Several noted politicians and policy researchers have also criticized the Scheme on various grounds:

- Yamini Aiyar, Director of the Accountability initiative at the Centre for Policy Research, criticized MPLADS saying that the *Municipalities and Panchayats are starved of funds while the MPs enjoy a continuous flow of funds to perform the job of Panchayats and Municipalities.*²¹
- Former Lok Sabha Member, Somnath Chatterjee, describes MPLADS as '*a sort of attempted bribery of the electorate by their representatives*'.²²
- According to Nilotpal Basu, former Rajya Sabha MP, *Parliament is an institution to ensure the accountability of the executive to the people and MPLADS has*

²⁰Planning Commission Government of India, "Evaluation Report on Member of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme"

²¹ K.R. Subramanyam, "LADS fail to deliver", Business Today (March 6, 2011)

²² K.R. Subramanyam, "LADS fail to deliver", Business Today (March 6, 2011)

further reinforced the misconception that Parliamentarians do have executive powers.²³

The following are some of the loopholes in the implementation of the Scheme:

- Lack of adequate information available to the MPs. As a result of which, several MPs have suggested developmental works in the same district due to which a disproportionately large amount of money is flowing into these districts from MPLADS alone.
- Weak Monitoring and Improper Maintenance of records.
- Due to the absence of a participatory mechanism, MPs quite often allocate funds without actually taking the locally felt needs into account.
- Allocation of funds by MPs is generally done without considering the cost estimates as a result of which the funds allocated by MPs are often inadequate. Thus, quite often, projects are incomplete and maintenance is also poor.
- Lack of awareness among the people about MPLADS.

There have also been several fraudulent cases of corruption because of the Scheme. For example:

- 2005 Sting Operation²⁴:
'Operation Chakravyuh' by Star News- Detective Intelligence Guild (DIG) showed 7 MPs demanding cuts for recommending developmental projects under MPLADS.
- Sakshi Maharaj MPLADS funds scam²⁵:
Sakshi Maharaj, a former Rajya Sabha MP, is said to have taken Rs 25 lakh from Samajwadi Party MP Devendra Singh Yadav, a few years ago in the name of development of his educational institution Ma Madalsa Inter College.

4.1.5 Kinds of issues raised by MPs inside the Parliament:

Conducted a sample study to find out the kind of issues raised by the MPs inside the Parliament in debates. For the purpose of this sample study, 35 MPs were selected with due consideration to both ruling and opposition parties (for the names of MPs considered for the sample study, see appendix) and 3 important

²³ Nilotpal Basu, "Towards a performance-oriented participatory democracy", GovernanceNow (Oct 1-15,2011)

²⁴ "Operation Chakravyuh- Star News", <http://news.outlookindia.com/items.aspx?artid=342971>, Accessed 10-07-2013

²⁵ "Sakshi Maharaj MPLADS funds scam", <http://www.indlaw.com/guest/DisplayNews.aspx?164127CE-9797-44D5-95EB-D96F55B37167>, Accessed 10-07-2013

procedures available to the MPs to raise issues of concern were considered. These are: Matters under Rule 377, Special Mentions, Short Duration Discussions (Rule 193). It was found that Matters under Rule 377 have mostly been used to address constituency-related issues while Short Duration Discussions address national policy matter. Special Mentions have been used by MPs to raise constituency related issues as well as issues of regional or national importance and in some instances, for some special interests. While doing the analysis, the issues raised by each MP were categorised into 4 broad categories- constituency, regional, national, Special interests. The following graph shows the findings:

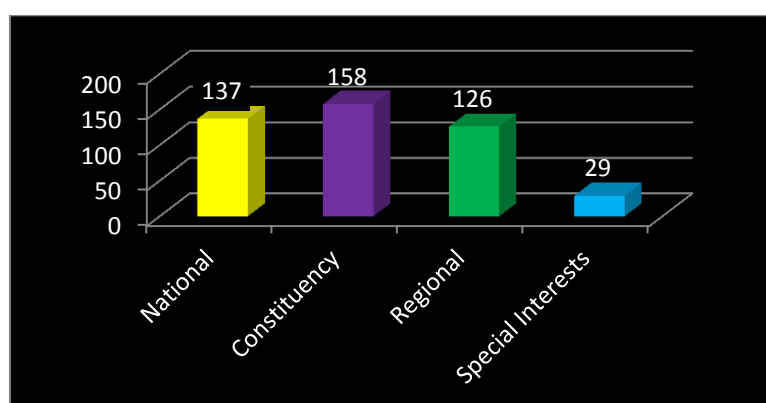


Figure 11: Classification of issues raised by MPs inside the Parliament

The above figure highlights the constituency-centric outlook of MPs. The constituency issues raised inside the Parliament account for about 35% of the total issues, as observed from this sample study. Also, the regional issues account for another 28%. These regional issues in most cases pertain to the states of the constituencies that the MPs represent. The MPs are elected by a particular constituency and they are very likely to contest elections again for the same constituency. These constituency related issues raised inside the Parliament thus seem to have an electoral connection. Parliament is a platform for framing laws and policies with a national perspective hence, due considerations should be given to national policy matter too.

4.1.6 A look into the Parliament Monitoring Organisations across the world

According to the survey of Parliament Monitoring Organizations (PMOs) conducted by NDI and World Bank Institute, individual MPs are a primary focus of parliamentary monitoring activities for 86% of the PMOs surveyed across the world. Many PMOs across the world have also tried to establish a link between citizens and elected people by providing a platform for the citizens to give their input to the MPs on legislation or other types of constituent requests. This is the area where India is lacking in respect of other countries. For example,

TheyWorkForYou²⁶ is a parliamentary monitoring website started by mySociety²⁷ which is an e-Democracy project of a UK based registered charity UK Citizens Online Democracy. The website also has a special feature WriteToThem²⁸ which provides a platform for the citizens to interact with their MP and HearFromYourMP²⁹ which allows the user to get messages from his MP. These projects have facilitated online communication between citizens and their representatives. A very popular website <http://www.opencongress.org/> makes it possible for ordinary citizens to interact with Congress in ways which can influence the laws being made as well as the people making them. The users of this website can express their support or rejection for every bill by voting "aye" or "nay" respectively. The website also allows the users to rate their MPs on a scale of 1-100 by using the slider bar on the members' webpage. Users can also discuss details, share links, and give their opinions on the pages of every bill, Senator and Representative.

Majority of the PMOs have used the votes cast by the MPs on important legislations or amendments as the primary focus for monitoring individual MPs. For example, VoteWatch³⁰ is a project that allows citizens to monitor the votes cast by Members of the European Parliament on matters of legislation. For example, the following figure shows a snapshot from votewatch.eu for a Member of European Parliament (MEP) from Bulgaria. Similarly, Openpolis Association³¹ is a PMO that facilitates comparison of voting records between MPs while some other PMOs like Politools³² (Switzerland) allows users to take a questionnaire and compare their policy positions to the votes of MPs.

²⁶"They Work For You", <http://www.theyworkforyou.com/>, Accessed 10-07-2013

²⁷"My Society", <http://www.mysociety.org/>, Accessed 10-07-2013

²⁸"Write To Them", <http://www.writetothem.com/>, Accessed 10-07-2013

²⁹Hear From Your MP, <http://www.hearfromyourmp.com/>, Accessed 10-07-2013

³⁰Vote Watch, <http://www.votewatch.eu/>, Accessed 10-07-2013

³¹Openpolis, <http://openpolis.it/>, Accessed 10-07-2013

³²Politools, <http://politools.net/>, Accessed 10-07-2013

Date	Name of document	MEP's vote	Loyal / Rebel to political group
04.07.2013	Preparation of the Commission Work Programme 2014 - Motion for resolution : Paragraph 35		Loyal
04.07.2013	Arms exports: implementation of Council Common Position 2008/944/CFSP (S&D, Greens/EFA, GUE-NGL) - Joint motion for resolution : Paragraph 21		Loyal
04.07.2013	US NSA surveillance programme, surveillance bodies in various Member States and impact on EU citizens' privacy (EPP, S&D, ALDE, Greens/EFA) - Joint motion for resolution : Paragraph 4, amendment 4		Loyal
04.07.2013	Motions for resolutions - Increase in Norwegian duties on agricultural products - Motion for resolution : Paragraph 6, amendment 9		Loyal
04.07.2013	Arms exports: implementation of Council Common Position 2008/944/CFSP (S&D, Greens/EFA, GUE-NGL) - Joint motion for resolution : Paragraph 5		Loyal
04.07.2013	Connected TV - Motion for resolution : Paragraph 20		Loyal
04.07.2013	Opening of negotiations on a plurilateral agreement on services - Motion for resolution : Paragraph 11, indent 4, amendment 2/2		Loyal
04.07.2013	Impact of the crisis on access to care for vulnerable groups - Motion for resolution : Paragraph 32		Loyal
04.07.2013	Opening of negotiations on a plurilateral agreement on services - Motion for resolution : Paragraph 1, amendment 7		Loyal
04.07.2013	Practical arrangements for the holding of the European elections in 2014 - Motion for resolution : Paragraph 5		Loyal

Figure 12: VoteWatch: Votes cast by an MEP from Bulgaria,

Source: <http://www.votewatch.eu/en/iliana-malinova-iotova.html>

An interesting way to monitor an MP was adopted by a PMO in Brazil- "Adote um Vereador" meaning "Adopt a Congressman"³³. It enlists citizens to monitor MPs. The website allows citizens to themselves edit the content by signing up. Citizens can draft articles themselves or provide a link of existing newspaper articles and more.

An alternative method to monitor the constituency services of MPs is used by COMFREL-The Committee for Free and Fair Elections in Cambodia³⁴. This PMO monitors the field visits of MPs in Cambodia. This committee also regularly prepares a Parliament Watch Report which gives out information about the purpose of the visits, promises made during these visits to the constituents and other information. The following figure is a snapshot from the Parliamentary Watch Report published by COMFREL³⁵. Legistorm, launched in 2006, is another such PMO monitoring the U.S. Congress and it is particularly well known for being the only online source for staff salaries, financial disclosures, trips, gifts and earmarks³⁶.

³³ "Adopt a Congressman", <http://www.adoteumvereadorsp.com.br>, Accessed 10-07-2013

³⁴ COMFREL-Cambodia, <http://www.comfrel.org/eng/>, Accessed 10-07-2013

³⁵ "Parliamentary Watch Report, 1st Annual Report of 4th Legislature (September 2008-September 2009)", http://www.comfrel.org/eng/components/com_mypublications/files/79133803_PW_Report_Oct2008_Sept2009_PW_Report_En_With_cover_final.pdf, Accessed 10-07-2013

³⁶ "Legistorm Pro", <http://www.legistorm.com/index/about.html#> Accessed: 10-07-2013






Purpose of field visit of the 98 MPs 1080 visits	Political Party					Total
	 69 MPs	 22 MPs	 3 MPs	 2 MPs	 2 MPs	
Visiting, gift giving and inaugurations	580	48	6	0	1	633 (62%)
Strengthening party network	144	81	14	6	3	250 (25%)
Accompanying their leaders as a group	77	4	1	0	1	83 (8%)
Participant in Public Forum/Workshop	11	19	3	3	2	38 (4%)
Intervention in constituent's problems	10	4	0	0	0	14 (1%)
Total	822 (81%)	156 (15%)	24 (2%)	9 (1%)	7 (1%)	1,018 (100%)

Figure 13: COMFREL: Watch over field visits of MPs

Many PMOs across the world have also adopted the technique of developing a scorecard or index to rate the performance of MPs. One such scorecard was developed by the African Leadership Institute (ALI)³⁷ which assessed the performance of Uganda's legislators. These legislators were given grades for their performance in Plenary sessions as well as in Committees. Even in India, an initiative was taken by the National Social Watch³⁸ in which an MPs Composite Performance Index was developed for the 14th Lok Sabha MPs. The parameters considered for developing this composite index were attendance in sessions, questions asked, supplementary questions asked, participation in debates and private member bills introduced with corresponding weightages of 2, 1.25, 1.75, 3 and 2 respectively. Such a composite index developed helped in ranking the different MPs.

4.2 Discussions

This section aims to analyse how far the details regarding the MP Background of education qualifications, criminal records, assets and liabilities are relevant while assessing the performance of an MP.

4.2.1 Criminal Records of MPs:

In recent years, we observe an increasingly large numbers of criminals coming into power. It is very disheartening to see that our law-makers themselves cannot abide

³⁷ "African Leadership Institute", <http://www.alinstitute.org/default.aspx>, Accessed 10-07-2013

³⁸ National Social Watch, "Citizens Report on Governance and Development 2010", SAGE Publications India Pvt. Limited

by the law. The degree and the kind of crime also varies. MPs are often charged for rallies and protests and in some sense, it can be said they are exercising their democratic rights. MPs are not always to be blamed if a peaceful demonstration soon turns into a violent protest. Some MPs are also charged for provoking communal disharmony through speeches. Some of these criminal cases also come under the category of political vendetta when MPs have cases hoisted on them by those in power. However, these days, we even have MPs who have cases of heinous crimes like murder, rape, kidnapping, rioting etc. against them and many who have been charged under the Prevention of Corruption Act.

Criminal records of MPs in the 14th and 15th Lok Sabha³⁹:

Among the 537 Lok Sabha MPs analysed by the National Election Watch (NEW), MPs with declared criminal cases were 161, which is about 30% which is a significant increase compared to the 25% of criminal MPs in the 14th Lok Sabha. Of the 161 MPs with criminal cases, 78 had declared serious criminal cases against them.

	14th Lok Sabha MPs	15th Lok Sabha MPs
Number of MPs analysed by NEW	499	537
MPs with declared criminal cases	125	161
MPs with declared serious criminal cases	58	78
Crorepati MPs	142	309
MPs who are graduates or above	374	407
MPs who have not declared PAN	161	82

Table 4: Criminal Records of MPs in the 15th Lok Sabha , Source: ADR

³⁹ "Winners of Lok Sabha 2004 and 2009", http://myneta.info/ls2009/index.php?action=show_winners&sort=default (Accessed 10-07-2013), http://myneta.info/loksabha2004/index.php?action=show_winners&sort=default (Accessed 10-07-2013)

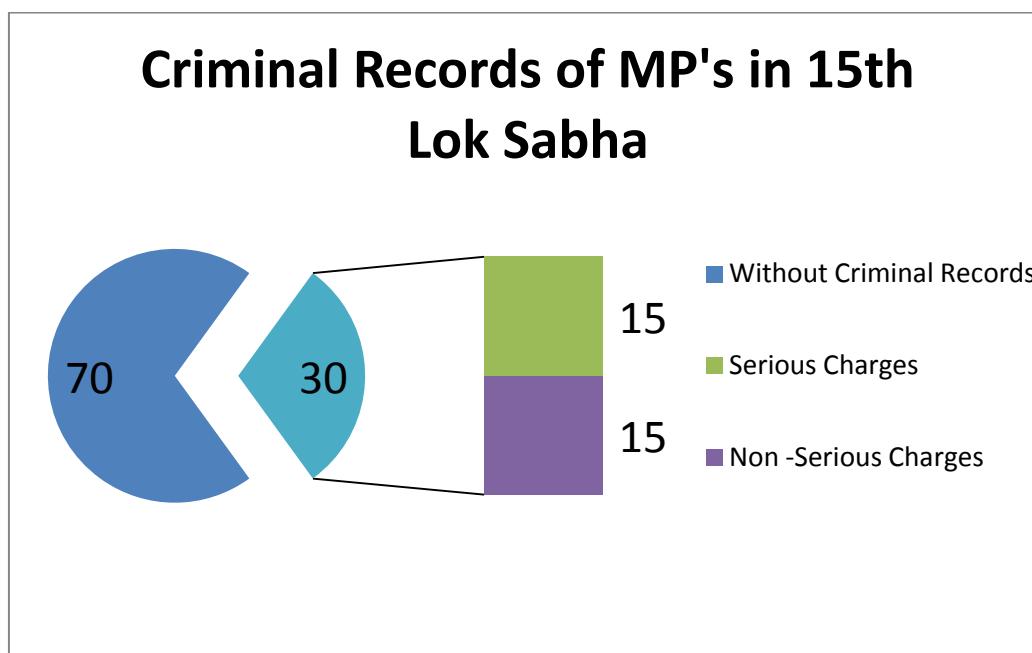


Figure 14: Criminal Records of MPs, 15th Lok Sabha

Research has shown that during the 2009 Lok Sabha elections, a candidate with criminal charges, all else being equal, had a far greater probability of winning elections in comparison to a candidate with no criminal record.

In a recent article by Prof. Chibber of University of California, Berkeley in the Indian Express⁴⁰, he suggested that *criminalisation of politics may not be the cause, but only a symptom of dysfunctional democracy*. The research study showed that MPs with criminal charges are statistically no different than their peers in terms of parameters like attendance, questions asked, participation in debates, MPLADS funds utilisation and in terms of some of these parameters, even better.

However, the main question is that if an MP manages to get work done in the constituency and has a fairly good performance inside the Parliament but has been charged for a serious criminal offence, is he still worthy of being a Member of the Parliament? Would just reflecting his performance inside the Parliament as well as in his constituency be adequate to give a complete and comprehensive picture of the MP? The answer is No. An MP is a 'representative' of the people, he is a lawmaker. If he himself cannot abide by the law, he should not be empowered to make laws on behalf of the people he represents. But here, only serious criminal offences should be considered as MPs being charged for rallies or protests should not be perceived as criminals of same order. It can be said that the MPs are entitled to a benefit of doubt in the sense that they have only been accused and not convicted. But the cases of MPs go on for years without a clear verdict. The judicial system must take certain measures to ensure a speedy trial in these situations.

⁴⁰ Pradeep Chhibbar, "Missing the real malaise of the body politic", Indian Express (June 12th, 2013)

The conclusion is that in order to comprehensively depict the performance of an MP, it is very essential to look into his criminal records too.

4.2.2 Assets and Liabilities Declaration of MPs:

As per an asset comparison report by the Association of Democratic Reforms (ADR)⁴¹ and National Election Watch (NEW), the percentage growth in the assets of the 304 14th Lok Sabha MPs re-contesting for the 2009 Lok Sabha Elections was around 289%. The average assets for these MPs as declared in the 2004 elections were around Rs. 1.9 crores whereas their average assets as per the 2009 election declarations were around Rs. 4.8 crores resulting in an average asset growth of Rs. 2.9 crores for these re-contesting MPs.

There were a few MPs who had recorded an asset increase of over 1000% after the completion of their term. There could be various reasons for the increase in assets also like maybe the stock market had boomed during this period or the property prices had escalated sharply or due to inheritance but there can legally doubtful means too. Income Tax Department must perform regular verification exercises with the income tax returns filed by these MPs.

The data used by ADR was compiled from the candidate affidavits but there is yet another declaration regarding the assets and liabilities that MPs are required to furnish after getting elected.

Declaration of Assets and Liabilities Rules (2004): Under these Rules, MPs are supposed to declare the details of the movable and immovable property owned by them or their spouse or dependent children. Also, the MPs have to furnish the details of liabilities to public financial Institutions/ Central Government and State Government. These Rules were made under the Representatives of Peoples Act, 1951. These declarations have to be made within 90 days from the date on which he makes and subscribes an oath or affirmation for taking his seat. Further, the Rajya Sabha MPs have to make this declaration on a yearly basis whereas the Lok Sabha MPs are only required to declare this information once after getting elected. The declarations of neither the Lok Sabha nor the Rajya Sabha MPs are put up on the website. However, the declaration for the Rajya Sabha MPs can be accessed anyone after seeking information from the Chairman but the Lok Sabha declarations are kept confidential.

It was observed by ADR that even after repeated reminders, some MPs did not make this declaration. Further, no action was taken against the defaulting members, including action for breach of privilege of the House. The reason was the non-receipt of any complaint from any other member or any citizen of India in this

⁴¹ "Association for Democratic Reforms", <http://adrindia.org/>, Accessed 10-07-2013

regard as is required by the Rules 5(1) and (2) of the Members of the Lok Sabha (Declaration of Assets and Liabilities Rules) 2004⁴².

Register of Interest of Rajya Sabha MPs and the conflict of interest

Under Rule 293 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Council of States, the Rajya Sabha is required to maintain a Register of Interests which includes the details regarding the Remunerative Directorship, Regular Remunerated Activities, Shareholding of controlling nature, Paid consultancy and Professional engagement of Rajya Sabha MPs. The Register of interests was enforced through the adoption of the 4th Report of the Ethics Committee in May 2005. The details furnished by the Rajya Sabha MPs in this register were kept confidential until the Rajya Sabha Secretariat finally made the register of interests of Rajya Sabha MPs available to ADR on its RTI Application in 2011.

The following table shows the findings from the Register as observed by ADR⁴³:

Type of Pecuniary Interest	No. of MPs who have given details	No. of MPs who have given details as NA/NIL
Remunerative Directorship	28	204
Regular Remunerated Activity	28	204
Shareholding of controlling nature	33	199
Paid Consultancy	7	225
Professional Engagement	43	189

Table 5: Register of Interests: Rajya Sabha MPs

Out of the 232 MPs of Rajya Sabha, 140 have declared that they have no pecuniary interest whatsoever in any of the mentioned heads which means that only 92 MPs have declared that they have financial interests⁴⁴.

The main purpose of this register was so that the issues of having private financial interests which come in conflict with the public interest should come out in the public domain. Also, this issue of conflict of interest must be kept in mind while nominating members to certain panels/committees. However, in the Indian

⁴² "MPs who have not revealed assets exposed", <http://adrindia.org/media/relevant-news/mps-who-have-not-revealed-assets-exposed>, Accessed 10-07-2013

⁴³ "Press Release: Analysis of Register of Interest of Rajya Sabha Members", [http://adrindia.org/sites/default/files/Register%20of%20interest_Report_Final%20\(3\)_0.pdf](http://adrindia.org/sites/default/files/Register%20of%20interest_Report_Final%20(3)_0.pdf), Accessed 10-07-2013

⁴⁴ *ibid*

Parliament, this issue still remains unresolved. There are still instances when businesspersons/traders/industrialists get nominated to the Committees on Finance and Industry. This issues of conflict of interest is much more serious in India, especially after the recent media reports which have shown increasing potential of conflict of interest in the membership of committees. The conflict of interest is difficult to detect without a strong parliamentary mechanism to define interests and oversee the growing number of legislators with business interests⁴⁵.

The conclusion is that although the asset records do not have a direct relation with the performance of an MP, it is very important to monitor their growth in assets. While many MPs with a very high increase in assets during their term may be able to account for this growth, there is still a possibility that many MPs have achieved this growth in assets as a result of legally doubtful means. Whatever it is, this information must come out in the public and the citizens deserve to know. The Income Tax Departments must conduct regular verification exercises with the income tax returns filed by these MPs who have recorded a disproportionate increase in assets. The Register of Interest maintained by the Rajya Sabha Secretariat for Rajya Sabha MPs can also be used in this regard to note the names of MPs who have not mentioned any pecuniary interest in the Register yet, have recorded a very high growth in assets. The names of MPs who have not been able to account for this growth should come out in the public domain. If an MP is unable to account for this growth, it is a misuse of power by the MP and thus, is an indicator of the abuse of office privileges. It is the citizen-cum-taxpayers money at stake and hence, this information would be an indicator of the sincerity and honesty of the MP.

4.2.3 Educational Qualifications of MPs versus their performance:

A detailed analysis was conducted regarding the performance of MPs based on their educational qualification. For the analysis, MPs were divided into 5 categories- Under Matric, Matric, Inter/Higher Secondary and Undergraduates, Graduates, Post Graduates and Doctorates. Four parameters were chosen for the comparison of performance- Attendance, Questions Asked, Participation in Debates and Private Member Bills introduced. Another crucial parameter for assessment could have been the MPLADS funds spending record. However, since current data regarding the MPLADS funds utilization is not available in the public domain, this parameter was excluded for the purpose of this study. For the purpose of this analysis, only non-minister MPs were considered whose entire

⁴⁵ Shafi Rahman, "Business of the Day", India Today 12 November 2009

records are available. The following figure shows the percentage of each category of MPs considered for the analysis:

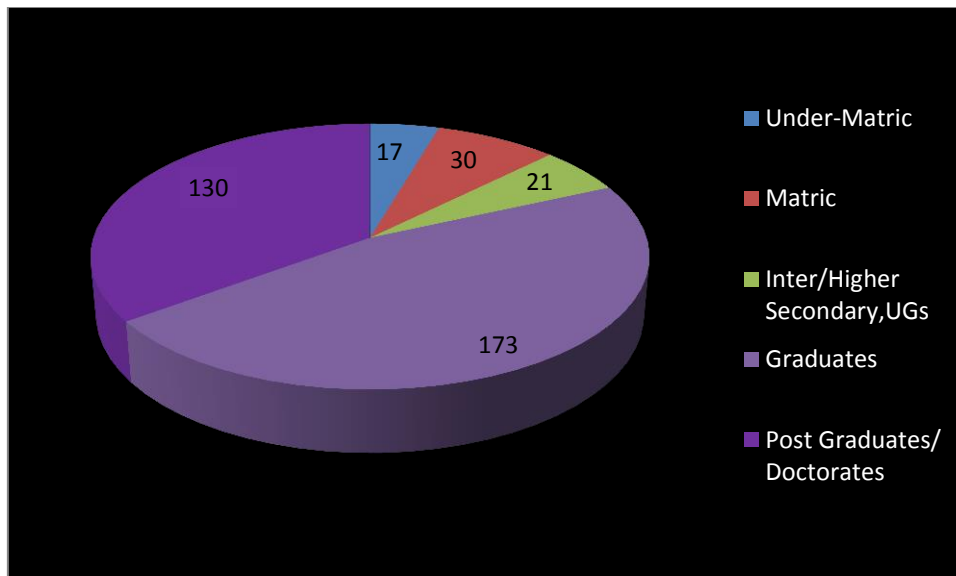


Figure 15: Classification of MPs on the basis of educational qualifications

The following figures illustrate the performance of the MPs in each of the four parameters:

1) Attendance:

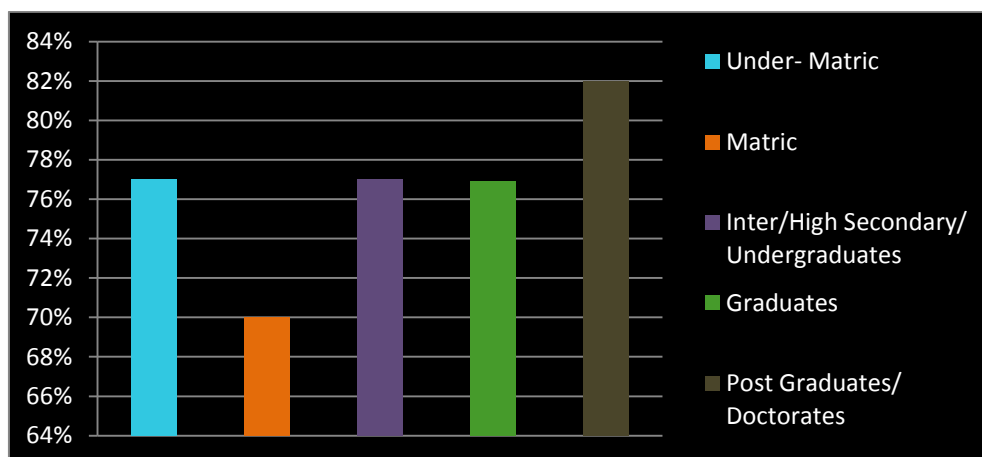


Figure 16: Education Qualifications vs performance: Attendance

2) Questions Asked:

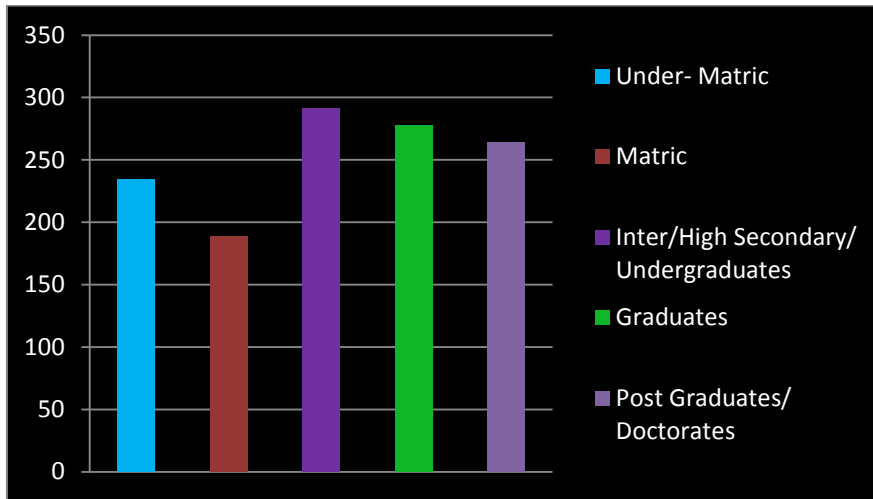


Figure 17: Educations vs Performance Analysis: Questions Asked

3) Debates:

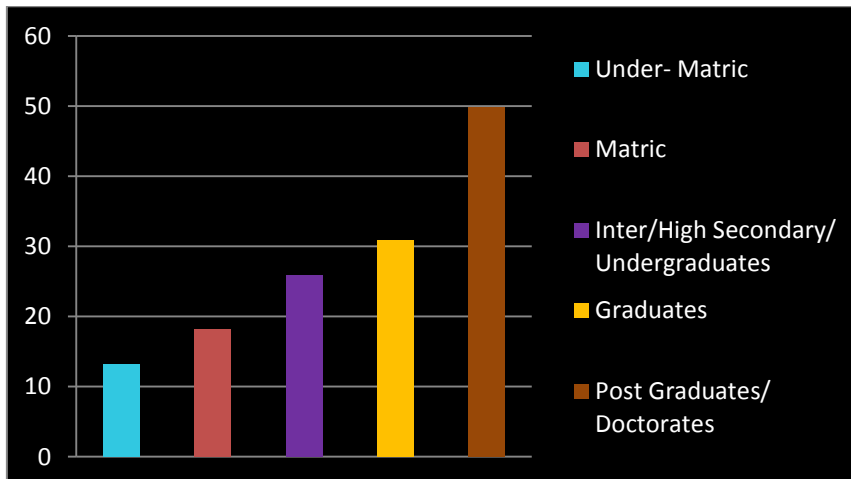


Figure 18: Educations vs Performance Analysis: Debates

4) Private Member Bills introduced:

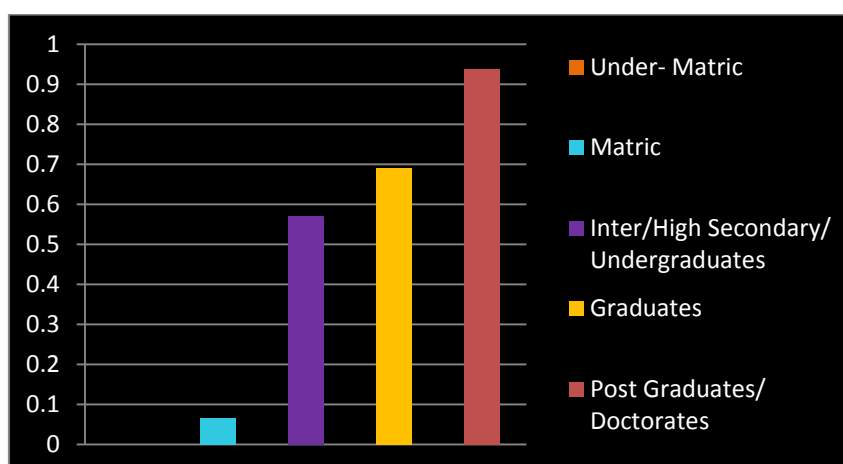


Figure 19: Educations vs Performance Analysis: Private Member Bills

It can be observed from these graphs that in terms of the parameters of participation in debates and Private Member Bills introduced, the performance of MPs improves as the level of education is higher. It is surprising to note that no MP from the Under Matric category has introduced a Private Member Bill since the beginning of the 15th Lok Sabha. Their participation in debates (a total count of the instances when the MP spoke in Parliament- on bills, during zero hour, special mentions, matters under rule 277, 193, 197 etc.) is also fairly low with an average of 13.23 compared to the national average of 33.4. In terms of attendance and questions asked inside the Parliament, the performance of all MPs is more or less comparable. The doctorates have a fairly high average attendance of about 89% compared to the national average of 77%. These values are however just indicative of how frequently the MPs signed the attendance register.

It has very often been recommended that a restriction be set on the minimum educational qualification of an MP. There are minimum educational qualifications required for most of the professions today but none so far for an MP or MLAs. As can be seen from this analysis also, educational level does have an impact on the performance of MPs inside the Parliament. A well educated MP is likely to represent the interests of the people in a better manner inside the Parliament. Citizens must know about the educational qualifications of their MP as it is very much related to their performance too, as can be seen from the analysis.

4.3 Gap analysis:

In the last 6 years, Government has made several efforts towards greater transparency. Now, the Parliament website shows significant information about

the MP's participation inside the Parliament, for example, the homepages of the Members now show the questions asked by them during the Question Hour, participation in debates, special mention records, private member bills introduced. The attendance records of all MPs is also available in the public domain on the Parliament website.

However, there are several other records like the attendance of MPs in Parliamentary Committee Meetings, their MPLADS funds spending pattern, developmental projects undertaken under MPLADS etc. the information regarding which can still not be accessed from the Parliament website or the website of Ministry of Statistics and Programmable Implementation which is responsible for monitoring MPLADS.

A major proportion of the parliamentary work these days is done in the parliamentary committees. Yet, the attendance records of the MPs in these parliamentary committees is not available in the public domain. Also, the attendance records of MPs in other committees like the Consultative Committees as well as in Parliamentary Forums is not available. As a result of the lack of monitoring, the attendance of MPs in these Parliamentary Committees is abysmally low. According to an analysis by the National Social Watch on the attendance in Standing Committees for the third session of the 15th Lok Sabha, it was observed that no committee had witnessed even 60%⁴⁶. The following figure shows some of the findings⁴⁷:

⁴⁶ National Social Watch, "Citizens Report on Governance and Development 2010", SAGE Publications India Pvt Ltd.

⁴⁷ Resume of Work done by Lok Sabha: 15th Lok Sabha, Third Session

Committee	Average % of attendance
Financial Committees	
Estimates Committee	36.6
PAC	52.3
CoPU	45
Standing Committees	
Agriculture	35
Chemical and Fertiliser	33.3
Coal and Steel	50
Defence	38.7
Energy	46.7
External Affairs	49.3
Finance	46.4
Food, Consumer Affairs and Public Distribution	51.1
IT	33.3
Labour	47.5
Petroleum and Natural Gas	50
Railways	46
Rural Development	39
Social Justice and Empowerment	56

Figure 20: Average Percent of Attendance in Committees in 15th Lok Sabha

Further, under the MPLAD Scheme, each MP has a huge amount of Rs. 5 crores at hand on an annual basis to recommend developmental projects to be taken up in his constituency. Yet, the website of the Ministry of Statistics and Programmable Implementation which is responsible for monitoring the Scheme has a very poor maintenance. The funds release summary as well as the expenditure incurred are often outdated. Also, no data regarding the individual works recommended by each MP are available in the public domain. The voter-cum-taxpayer has the right to know about the individual works recommended by his/her MP to be taken up in his constituency.

Further, the details regarding the movable and immovable property owned by the MP and his/her spouse and dependent children furnished by him in his declaration is kept confidential for the Lok Sabha MPs. Further, for the Rajya Sabha MPs, this information can be accessed by the citizens but it is not as such put up in the public domain by the Secretariat.

A crucial way for the citizens to know about the stand of their MPs on critical issues is by observing their voting patterns. However, most legislations are passed by voice vote and votes aren't recorded. Even when the division takes place, only the total number of 'ayes' and 'nays' are recorded and no record of the votes cast by individual MPs is maintained. An important drawback here arises because of the anti-defection law. A majority of the votes cast by the MPs are not a result of their individual choice but only a reflection of their party's ideologies. Most MPs

vote according to the directives of their political party. The number of divisions has also decreased significantly after the anti-defection law because in some sense, it has introduced the notion that no matter what the MPs think about an issue, they are going to vote according to the directions issues by their party otherwise they can risk losing their seat in the legislature.

The following figure shows the number of divisions in Lok Sabha in the 13th, 14th and 15th Lok Sabha.

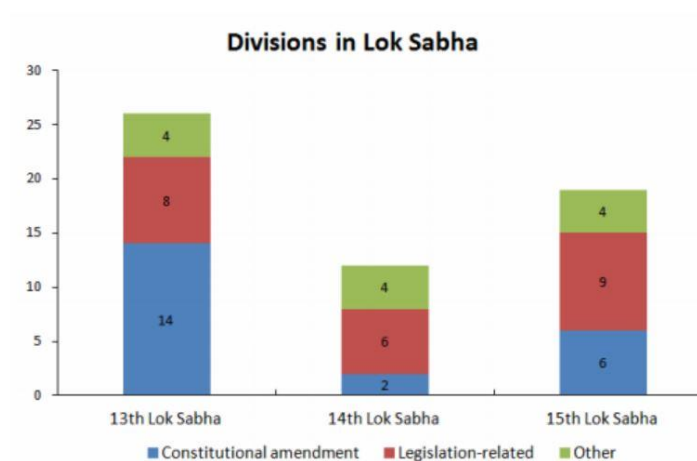


Figure 21: Divisions in Lok Sabha

There is no mechanism in place to keep a check on the field visits taken by the MPs to their home constituency. There is no record of the amount of time spent by the MPs in their home constituency.

5. Recommendations, Scope and Strategy for Implementation

5.1 Recommendation & Scope

On the basis of a detailed literature review of the topic and inputs from a number of people working closely with MPs, the following are the recommendations outlining the role of the Parliament as well as that of the multi-stakeholders in increasing transparency/accountability and enabling the citizens to monitor their elected representatives. A proper monitoring cannot be simply achieved by the Parliament becoming more transparent with open data and information. It is equally important how the civil society organisations or the various PMOs use this data and present it to the citizens.

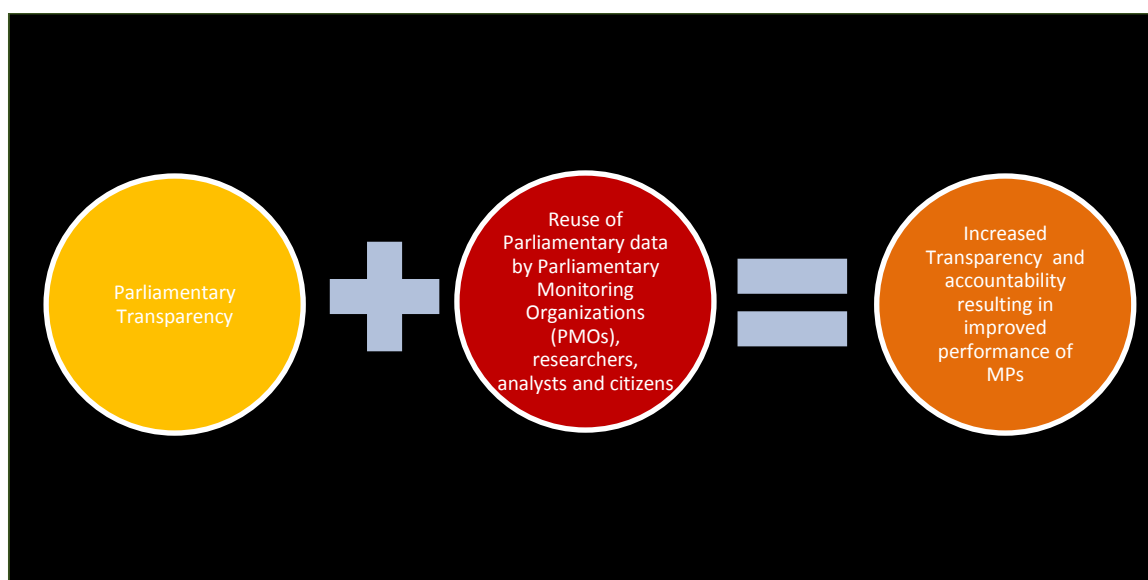


Figure 22: Recommendation Model

The following are the parameters which are essential for the citizens to monitor their elected representatives. For each of these parameters, the recommendations include what all data in respect of these parameters must be provided by the Secretariat. Further, the recommendations also outline how this data can be used by the civil society organisations monitoring Parliament and made more useful to the citizens to assess the performance of their MPs.

5.1.1 House Attendance Records:

Member wise attendance for each session of the Parliament is available on the Parliament website. It is expressed as the number of days the MP signed the register along with the number of days he/she did not sign. However, the attendance only reflects whether the MP signed the register or not. It does not mean that he/she sat throughout the day of the sitting. The Parliament Secretariat prepares an hourly chart indicating the number of members present in both houses during different hours of the day. However, this chart is not put up on the Parliament website along with the attendance records.

It is recommended that the hourly chart be displayed on the Parliament website along with the attendance records for each sitting. Also, the hourly chart should further be modified to indicate the names of the MPs present during each hour of the sitting. This could be used to see the actual amount of time spent by each MP in the Parliament after each session. Generally, it is observed that the attendance of MPs is maximum during the Question Hour and is very low at the time of Government Business. The above mentioned modification of Hourly Chart could also be used to analyse how often the MP was present at the time of Government Business in Parliament.

Attendance Records can be used to analyse whether the MPs regularly attended the Parliament sessions or not and it is an important parameter to assess the diligence of the MPs in attending sessions.

5.1.2 Questions Asked:

The first hour of a sitting of the House is the Question Hour. Asking of questions is an inherent parliamentary right of the members. By asking questions, members raise issues of concerns of the people of their constituency and hold the government accountable. Unlike many other parliamentary activities like voting on bills, amendments, the questions asked by a Member of Parliament is generally not controlled by the party and hence, can be an effective tool for gaining an insight into the areas of interest of individual MPs. Party politics does not come into play during the question hour. The Member-wise questions asked inside the Parliament to different ministries can be accessed from the Parliament website. A track of the number of questions asked by the MP in the Parliament compared with the national and state average can be an effective tool for performance assessment, as is done by PRS Legislative Research⁴⁸. This data regarding the questions asked can be used by civil society organisations/ PMOs to bifurcate the questions asked by MPs inside the Parliament into different categories like education, transport, infrastructure, water and electricity etc. and also to identify the main focus of MPs in this regard if applicable. Further, the questions asked by the MPs can be divided

⁴⁸ "PRS Legislative Research", <http://www.prsindia.org/>, Accessed 10-07-2013

into different categories- constituency related, regional, national and special interests. Alongside the questions asked by an MP inside the Parliament, it is also important to look at the supplementary questions, if any, asked by the MP. The number of supplementary questions are certainly more effective indicators of performance as it shows that the MP has made a lot of effort in preparing the question.

5.1.3 Debates in proceedings:

Debates provide a count of occasions when the MP spoke in Parliament. An important role of MPs is in the passing of budget. They can actively contribute by being a part of budget type debates. Members also debate on Government Bills and they can support or criticize draft legislation. MPs can also raise issues of concern of the people of their constituency through Matters under Rule 377. There are several procedural devices available to the members through which they raise matters of urgent public importance, like discussion on the 'Motion of Thanks on the Address by the President', Adjournment Motions, No-Confidence Motion, Calling Attention, Short Duration Discussions, Half-Hour Discussion, Resolutions. MPs debate on issues of National Policy Matter under Rule 193 by being a part of Short Duration Discussions. Members can call the attention of a Minister to matters under Rule 197. MPs can raise matters of public importance through Special Mentions also. It is a procedure available to a Member allowing him to mention a matter of public importance in the House by reading out from the text not exceeding 250 words.

A count of all the instances of participation of MPs in debates can be used to gauge the extent of participation of the MP inside the Parliament.

Further, one can also separate the Matters under 377 from the other types of debates to provide a count of the instances when the MP represented the interests of the people of his constituency inside the Parliament as Rule 377 is generally used to raise constituency-related issues.

All this data pertaining to the participation of MPs in debated and also the kind of debates is available on the Parliament website.

Recent studies and analysis of Parliament has showed the divergence of MPs from raising issues of national concern. An analysis of the 14th Lok Sabha conducted by PRS showed that about half the issues raised inside the Parliament were constituency related. Parliament is a platform available to MPs for framing laws and policies with a national perspective so it is important to consider the focus of the MP while raising matters. Efforts can be made to categorise the debates in which an MP participated into different categories based on whether these were debates on bills, i.e., proposed new laws or whether they pertained to centrally

sponsored schemes, flagship policies of the Government or whether these debates were related to current issues (matters of urgent public importance). Further, the matters raised by the MPs inside the Parliament can be bifurcated into different categories based on their nature- constituency related, regional, national or the special interests.

5.1.4 Private Member Bills:

Members can also introduce bills in Parliament, known as Private Member Bills. Number of Private Member Bills introduced by the MP can be a good parameter to measure the Legislative Activity of the MP. However, an important point to note here is that no private member bill has been passed by the Parliament since 1970. However, Private Member Bills serve a very important purpose by raising issues which need to be addressed and calling the attention of the Government toward the need in addressing these issues which can subsequently be taken up in the form of Government Bills. However, this practise of getting Private Members to be withdrawn and later passing them as Government Bills should really be done away with as it discourages individual MPs to introduce these bills.

The Private Member Bills introduced by the MPs along with the status of each Bill in the Parliament can be accessed from the Parliament Website. However, for an ordinary citizen, going through the text of each bill to identify the main problem that the MP is aiming to address is a tedious task. The civil society organisations/ PMOs can further try to simplify and summarise each Private Member Bill raised by the MP for the ease of understanding by a common citizen. Further, a platform can also be opened for an open discussion on these Private Member Bills by civil society organisations. This could also help in building support for a bill. Citizens can express their concerns over the issue of the bill. Further, they would also become more aware of the kinds of bills introduced by their MPs by having open discussions with others.

5.1.5 Parliament Committees:

Members of Parliament are also a part of Parliament Committees. These committees help in increasing the efficiency and accountability of the government. The committees study various issues in detail- government policies, new laws. One parameter for assessing the performance of MPs could be to check the names of committees that individual MPs are a part of and then analysing their attendance in Parliament Committee Meetings. The committee membership can be accessed from the Parliament website. Although the meeting minutes in the reports of these Parliament committees indicate which MPs attended the meeting, there is no MP-

wise data available stating formally the attendance of MPs in these committees. As a major proportion of the work of the Parliament is now carried out by these committees, it is very important to keep a track of how many times the MP attended these meetings and how many times he did not. This information should be provided by the Parliament Secretariat. The civil society organisations can use this data to compare the attendance of each member of a committee with other members of the committee also. Further, an average attendance for each Committee can also be calculated and thus, Committee-wise attendance can also be compared. Also, the details regarding the study tours of these Committees along with the number of MPs attending these study tours must also be provided. Further, similar to U.S., on occasions of examining witnesses, these Committee Meetings can also be made open to the public or the proceedings can be even televised so that people becomes aware as to how work gets done in these committees.

5.1.6 MPLADS fund spending pattern:

A useful parameter for assessing the performance of MPs could be the percentage utilisation of MPLADS funds of their constituency. One can also breakdown the MPLADS funds into different sectors like roads, infrastructure, education, electricity, sanitation etc. and then analyse the MPLADS funds utilised for each sector. The details regarding the amount sanctioned and expenditure incurred along with the total amount released to the constituency can be accessed from the website of the Ministry of Statistics and Programmable Implementation for each MP. However, due to poor maintenance and monitoring of the website, this data is often outdated. The details about the works recommended by individual MPs under this scheme is not available on the website. It is recommended that the Ministry should provide, for each MP, the list of projects recommended by the MP along with the list of projects sanctioned and the status of ongoing projects on its website on a regular basis. The civil society organisations/PMOs can use this data to do a sector-wise breakdown of the MPLADS funds utilisation for each MP. This would help the citizens identify the main focus of the MPs while recommending developmental projects for MPLADS and also compare it with their locally felt needs.

5.1.7 Criminal Records of MPs:

This is a crucial parameter for assessment. In recent years, we observe an increasingly large numbers of criminals coming into power. It is very disheartening to see that our law-makers themselves cannot abide by the law.

It is very important to identify the criminal charges (if any) against the MPs while presenting their information to the citizens. The degree and the kind of crime also

varies. A lot of prominent MPs face criminal charges because of the various dharnas or protests they organise or participate in and in some sense, it can be justified as they are exercising their democratic rights. Many of them face charges of defamation or provoking communal disharmony through speeches etc. MPs are not always to be blamed if a peaceful demonstration soon turns into a violent protest. These are the criminal charges due to political reasons. Some cases come under the category of political vendetta where we find that a few MPs have cases hoisted on them by those in power for political reasons. However, these days, we even have MPs who have cases of heinous crimes like murder, rape, kidnapping, rioting etc. against them and many who have been charged under the Prevention of Corruption Act. Several civil society organisations like the Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR)⁴⁹ have been trying to make this information available to the public by analysing the candidate affidavits that are even put up on the website by Election Commission. However, during the term, there is no mechanism to keep a check on the criminal cases that the MP may have been charged for during the tenure. It is recommended that a Register be maintained by the Parliament Secretariat in which the MPs must update their criminal records, if any, during the term.

One problem here is with the judicial system which cannot give a clear and quick verdict. Even the cases of MPs who are charged for serious offences go on for years and these MPs manage to acquire bail or await the conclusion of their appeal against conviction by a lower court. A speedy trial or fast-track trial is recommended for MPs implicated in criminal cases.

5.1.8 Assets and liabilities Record of MPs

Under the Declaration of Assets and Liabilities Rules(2004), MPs are supposed to declare the details of the movable and immovable property in their name or in the name of their spouse or dependent children. Also, the MPs have to furnish the details of liabilities to public financial Institutions/ Central Government and State Government. These Rules were made under the Representatives of Peoples Act, 1951. These declarations have to be made within 90 days of obtaining a seat in the Parliament. However, it is observed that even after repeated reminders, some MPs do not make this declaration on time yet, no action is taken against them because the Rules 5(1) and (2) of the Members of the Lok Sabha (Declaration of Assets and Liabilities) Rules, 2004 require that action would be taken on receipt of a complaint from any other member or any citizen of India in this regard.

According to the Rajya Sabha Rules, the declarations made by Rajya Sabha MPs can be accessed by anyone after seeking permission from the Chairman. But for the

⁴⁹ "Association for Democratic Reforms", <http://adrindia.org/>, 10-07-2013

Lok Sabha MPs, this declaration is kept confidential. It is recommended that the declarations made by the MPs be made available in the public domain because only that will facilitate the timely declaration by these MPs and regular verification checks. It is important to note that the details of the assets and liabilities furnished by MPs at the time of filing elections is made available by the Election Commission in the form of candidate affidavits which are put up on the website. Based on this, it is recommended that if the candidate affidavits are already in the public domain, then there is no reason for the declarations made by the MPs to be kept confidential. The voter-cum-taxpayer has the right to know about the financial assets of the MPs especially after recent observations by various organisations like the Association for Democratic Reform (ADR)⁵⁰ regarding the disproportionate increase in the assets of MPs during their tenure.

Also, the Rajya Sabha MPs have to update this information on a yearly basis whereas no such requirement is posed on Lok Sabha MPs. It is recommended that the Declaration of Assets and Liabilities Rules 2004 for the Lok Sabha be modified to make it mandatory for the Lok Sabha MPs to furnish their details on a yearly basis so that regular verification checks by the Income Tax Department can be facilitated. This would also help the civil society organisation and the citizens to gauge the increase in the assets of even the MPs who are not re-contesting during the next elections to check for any discrepancies.

5.1.9 Register of Interests:

Under Rule 293 of the Rules of Procedure and Conduct of Business in the Council of States, the Rajya Sabha is required to maintain a Register of Interests which includes the details regarding the Remunerative Directorship, Regular Remunerated Activities, Shareholding of controlling nature, Paid consultancy and Professional engagement of Rajya Sabha MPs. However, this information is not put up on the Parliament website.

It is recommended that along similar lines, a Register of Interests should also be adopted by the Lok Sabha. The details furnished by the MPs in this register can also be used by the Parliament itself to avoid conflict of interest while selecting members for certain committees. Incidents have occurred in the past when this issue of conflict of interest was not duly addressed. For example, Vijay Mallya, Rajya Sabha MP was once a member of the Committee on Industry. Also, the details furnished by the MPs in this Register should also be put up in the Parliament website so that they are made accessible to civil society organizations analysing

⁵⁰ "Association for Democratic Reforms", <http://adrindia.org/>, Accessed 10-07-2013

this data as well as the citizens. Further, a thorough scrutiny of these declarations should be carried out by the Parliament Secretariat itself.

5.1.10 Voting Patterns of MPs:

The US House of Congress keeps a record of how each Congressman or Senator voted on every question put before the respective Houses. This data is also made available on their Congress website. This is a very crucial parameter for the citizens to assess the performance of their representative and to know how his/her MP voted on an important piece of legislation. A similar practice should also be adopted by the Indian Parliament Secretariat. It should disclose the nature of vote cast by every MP whenever division of vote on any question is allowed. However, one problem here is the number of votes division in U.S. and in India. India has a very smaller number of divisions compared to U.S. or U.K. The number of divisions (recorded voting) declined significantly after the Anti-Defection Law because in some sense, the Law introduced the notion that MPs vote according to their Party's Directive and not on the basis of their individual choice.

However small the number of divisions be, the details regarding the vote cast by an individual MP must be made available to the public. A citizen has the right to know how his/her MP voted on an issue and it is not often reliable to use the speeches of MPs as a proxy of their voting records. Also, efforts must be made to make recorded votes compulsory on occasions when important pieces of legislation are being considered. Due to the lack of recorded voting, citizens are deprived of the opportunity to know whether their representatives in Parliament cared to be present at the time of voting on an important bill.

Some additional parameters that can be considered while presenting the information of MPs to the citizens could be:

5.1.11 Time Spent by the MP in his home constituency:

This is a parameter that is difficult to gauge. It is recommended that the Parliament Secretariat should maintain some official records which keep a track of the number of trips made by the MP to his home constituency. This could be an effective parameter to gauge the time spent by the MP with his constituents.

5.1.12 Consultative Committees:

The data regarding the membership in the Consultative Committees is available committee-wise on the Parliament website. However, no attendance records in these committee meetings are maintained. It is recommended that the Parliament

Secretariat maintain an attendance register for each Consultative Committee that the MPs must be required to sign when they attend the meeting. These records could also be used by the Minister of Parliamentary Affairs to decide if a member should continue being a member of a Consultative Committee when very poor attendance of that MP in the committee meetings is observed.

5.1.13 Parliamentary Forums:

The data regarding the membership in the Parliamentary Fora is available forum-wise on the Parliament website. However, no attendance records in these forum meetings are maintained. It is recommended that the Parliament Secretariat maintain an attendance register for each of the 5 Parliamentary Forums that the MPs must be required to sign when they attend the meeting. These records could also be used by the Hon'ble Speaker, Lok Sabha and Hon'ble Chairman, Rajya Sabha to decide if a member should continue in that Parliamentary Forum when very poor attendance of that MP in the forum meetings is observed. Also, these forums provide a platform for the MPs to discuss certain critical issues facing the country and later adopt a result-oriented approach by effectively raising them on the floor of the House. One could also see how far the MP has actually succeeded in adopting this result-oriented approach by analysing how many issues the MP has raised pertaining to his/her Parliamentary Forum inside the Parliament.

5.1.14 MP's Recommendation for the Prime Minister's National Relief Fund (PMNRF):

One can keep a tab of the number of recommendations made by the MP for the PMNRF. There are certain states where the MPs are not even aware of this feature and hence, no recommendation has ever been received from these states. People from these states are hence, unable to reap the benefits of this fund. This could be just listed down as an additional parameter for assessment as obviously, one could expect that the recommendations would be more from flood prone or earthquake prone areas. The details regarding the number of recommendations made by each MP are maintained by the Prime Minister's Office.

Bringing out all this information about the MPs in the public domain will ensure that the citizens make an informed and wise choice during the elections. It would be a major step towards a greater transparency and accountability in the system. This performance assessment would also motivate the MPs to work harder as they would know that all their activities are being monitored.

6. Future Work:

There is a lot of scope for future work on this topic. The data from various data sources mentioned in the recommendations could be compiled and a website could be created to display the information regarding the performance of MPs comprehensively. Further, efforts can also be made to develop a scorecard or a performance index in order to rank the MPs based on their performance on similar lines as is done by several Parliament Monitoring Organisations across the world like African Leadership Institute (AFLI). However, this aspect was skipped in this current project as developing a performance index involves a lot of subjectivity in terms of what weightage should be given to different parameters. Also, the work of an MP covers many different areas so coming up with a single number as a performance index to effectively indicate the performance of an MP is a tedious task. Finding out the correlation between certain parameters and the chances of winning elections by MPs is also an interesting topic to explore. Also, the anti-defection law and its effect on the changing role and the changing focus of MPs is also a vast topic not fully studied during this project work.

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8. Appendix A

Email Communication with Mentor

From: meenakshik1993@gmail.com (Meenakshi Khosla)

17th May'13

To: averma1978@gmail.com (Prof. Arvind Verma)

Content:

Dear Sir,

I am Meenakshi, an Electrical Engineering undergraduate student at the Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur. I have just finished my second year at the institute and I am doing the summer internship with Rakshak Foundation this summer. I am very grateful to you for agreeing to be my mentor for the summer project under Rakshak Foundation. I am sure it would be a worthwhile experience working under your guidance.

I have always been very passionate about bringing about a social change and making a difference to the society. That is precisely the reason why I was so keen on working with Rakshak Foundation. I found the project topic-"Measuring the performance of MPs in India" very interesting and I'm very enthusiastic about this project. I hope I am able to do full justice to the project assigned and come up with solutions that benefit the society and can be implementable in the long run.

My internship starts from today and I plan to do some initial basic research work in the first week. It would be very helpful if you could give some suggestions as to how to proceed with the project. Also, sir, since you are based abroad, kindly let me know what would be the most convenient means of communication for you.

Please find attached my resume and the project outline along with this mail.

Looking forward to doing quality work this summer.

Thanking You

Sincerely

From: averma1978@gmail.com (Prof. Arvind Verma)
May'13

17th

To: meenakshik1993@gmail.com (Meenakshi Khosla)

Content:

Dear Meenakshi

Welcome to Rakshak! Incidentally, Sachin and I are both from IITK- I graduated in 1977.

Since initially I suggested the project to Rakshak let me share my thoughts and ways to go about it. Feel free to follow your own path too.

MPs/ MLAs are now receiving a large amount of perks and of course required to serve their constituency. The objective is to understand how well they are doing it. What we need are to develop some measurable scales so that an objective assessment can be made. There are several factors that are quantifiable- attendance in the Parliament and time spent with the constituents; questions asked; service on committees; etc. Some others may be difficult to quantify- how well did the MP represent the interests of the people of his constituency; what difference has he made to its development etc. Some thinking is needed here. What is needed first is to see what kind of data is available- please go through web pages of Parliament/ ministry of stats and program implementation/ finance ministry/ law ministry etc: these provide a variety of info about MPs and funds allotted to their constituencies. Some effort is needed to build a data base- for example questions asked are provided on a daily basis and you will need to check them one by one to identify what each MP has done. There is a site for attendance at the parliament too.

You should also visit the Parliament library and speak to someone who can identify other sources of info. Once you have access to these info sources and have become familiar with these we can discuss ways of developing appropriate performance measures.

There is also considerable research done on this topic- please access some of these publications from library sources- I am presuming you have access to jstor and such other reference indecies [or google for key words]

Feel free to email anytime you need assistance

best wishes

From: Meenakshi Khosla

To: Prof. Arvind Verma 22nd May'13

Content:

Dear Prof. Arvind,

It is so great to be doing a project under an alumnus from my own institute!

I have done some basic background research on the project topic. As you suggested, I have also studied the kind of data available on the net. There are some sources like PRS legislative research which uses data from the parliament site and keeps a track of the MPs based on metric methods like attendance (in terms of percentage), number of questions asked which is also shown relative to the state average and national average, participation in debates and private member bills introduced (again relative to the state and national average so they can be used for comparison). Their service on committees is also shown in the parliament website. These provide a measure of the participation of MPs inside the parliament. Also, the association for democratic reforms helps in keeping a track of the criminal records of the MPs along with their assets and liabilities. The details of the expenditure of funds allocated under MPLADS for an MP are also available. However, it is a bit difficult to find out the project work suggested by an MP under MPLADS or the status of the project work in his constituency. I was thinking of filing an RTI request regarding this.

I have started going through some articles and papers regarding performance appraisal for an MP.

However, I wished to access the Parliament Library first to go through some journals. But, according to the rules, I think I need a written permission to access the library. Sir, could you please help me in obtaining a written permission in order to access the library?

Thanking You,

Sincerely

From: Prof. Arvind Verma 22nd May'13

To: Meenakshi Khosla

Content:

Dear Meenakshi

Good work!

I think the letter needs to be from some MP. Further some Prof from IIT Delhi may be more appropriate being local and part of national institution. A letter from me based in the US may raise unnecessary eyebrows and cause delay.

Please check with the librarian and let me know. If my letter can help I will send it at once.

I think it will also be useful to set a meeting with some MP. Also- please keep a daily diary recording all the information that you are compiling.

Perhaps a brief of this could be sent to us on a regular basis.

best wishes

From: sbansal@rakshakfoundation.org 23rd May'13

To: Meenakshi Khosla

Content:

Hi Meenakshi,

This is another senior of yours from IIT Kanpur. I graduated from IIT Kanpur in 1998, 21 years after Prof. Verma. Access to Parliament library is no problem, I have contacts who will be able to have you access the library. Can you please let me know for how long and when you plan to use the library?

The person to talk with in this regard is Smt. Vandana Garg, Addl. Secretary, Rajya Sabha Secretariat.

Look at some of these websites, it would be great if as a part of the project you could organize your data

in form of the website similar to the following (please check it with Prof. Verma on this request):

<http://www.legistorm.com/>

<http://house.gov/representatives/>

<http://www.opencongress.org/people/representatives>

Keep up the good work.

Thanks,

Sachin

From: Meenakshi Khosla 3:09 PM,

23rd May'13

To: Prof. Arvind Verma

Content:

Dear Prof. Verma,

Thank you for the help. I got in touch with Smt. Vandana Garg, Addl. Secretary, Rajya Sabha Secretariat and it seems that the Parliament library is only accessible to the MPs. However, she has kindly agreed to help me with any books I might be needing from the Parliament library for the project.

I also really wished to speak to an MP regarding the project. I am looking out for approachable MPs in Delhi. I would let you know as soon as the meeting gets fixed.

We have the concept of weekly report and weekly presentation submission here. My first submission is due tomorrow. I will surely keep sending these documents to you on a regular basis.

Thanking You,

Meenakshi

From: Prof. Verma 7:04 PM, 23rd May'13

To: Meenakshi Khosla

Content:

Dear Meenakshi

Please try to search and read for some journal articles about performance of elected representatives- lot of research has been done in Scandinavian countries.

Also- try Arun Shourie- he is a Rajya Sabha MP and perhaps easier to contact
best

From: Meenakshi Khosla (meenakshik1993@gmail.com)

To: Prof. Arvind Verma (averma1978@gmail.com)

Dear Prof. Verma,

I'm trying to set up a meeting with an MP. However, I've not yet received any reply to the emails I had sent to certain current/former MPs.

I'll try to meet them as soon as I can.

Sir, I was going through the task list of the project and I came across this point which says I have to find out the budget allocation for each MP and study how effective the allocation is. Also, it said that I need to go through the amount of funds allocated to different projects and whether they are being utilised wisely or not. So for this, should I select a few, say 5-6, MPs and then carry out the analysis? Also, I think the data regarding the funds allocation for different projects is not available

on the net. So, I would have to file an RTI but it seems that it would take about a month for the information to come. It would really help if you could please guide me on how to proceed ahead.

Thanking You,
Sincerely

From: meenakshik1993@gmail.com
To: averma1978@gmail.com

Dear Sir,

There was one thing I forgot to ask in the previous mail. To assess how happy or satisfied the people of a constituency are with their respective MP, we would need some sort of public appraisal mechanism, something similar to a jansunwai. Or are there other alternatives to this?

This public appraisal could also be used to analyse to what extent the MPs have delivered what they had promised during the election campaign or to assess the MP's accessibility.

Sir, in your opinion, would it be much helpful in assessing their performance?

Thanking You,
Sincerely

From: averma1978@gmail.com

To: meenakshik1993@gmail.com

Hi Meenakshi

Good points! Yes, just select a few MPs for this study of fund utilization. Please check the Finance Min web site- I think they have some description within or the data published by stats Ministry.

Several surveys about people's perception regarding life, governance etc are regularly published- please find some latest one to make the assessment.

You may wish to have 12- MPs who have retained their seats in the last election- perhaps they enjoy greater support of the people as compared to those who lost- this may provide some mechanism for comparison.

Do remember that in a project like this data mining, relating one set of data to another and developing of factors to measure an outcome may be necessary. This

will be the most desirable outcome if some such measure can be conceptualized.
best wishes

From: meenakshik1993@gmail.com

To: averma1978@gmail.com

Dear Prof. Verma,

I looked for surveys on people's perception of governance but I was unable to find one on the net. I found one such survey of UK but none of India so far.

Also sir, I was thinking that for assessing the performance of MPs on the basis of MPLADS, what other factors could we include besides the percentage of funds utilised. We could perhaps breakdown the MPLADS funds utilization into different sectors such as civic issues, roads, education, electricity etc. Also, the main purpose of MPLADS is to address locally felt needs with emphasis on the creation of durable assets. However, due to the absence of any participatory mechanism, I think this whole purpose is not being fulfilled. So, in order to assess, we can also try to see if the MP is indeed taking local needs into account while allocating funds or simply using his own discretionary power. But, for this kind of an assessment, we would need local surveys to be done.

I just saw a website of UK parliamentarians where each parliamentarian had an online survey form so that the MP gets an idea of the most pressing issue. Maybe, something similar to that could be incorporated. But, considering that the majority of the population does not have internet access, a major drawback of such a mechanism could be bias.

Also, just as Sachin Sir suggested, we could think of organising the data in a format similar to the one followed by US websites, especially, the opencongress.com. They have a special feature called User Approval Rating, which probably depicts how much people accept the representative. It could be useful as a measure of public appraisal.

Sir, I tried searching jstor and few other digital libraries, but I was unable to find enough research material. I don't know how to proceed ahead with the project. What things to focus on at the current stage. It would be really helpful if you could guide me on how to go ahead with the project.

Thanking You.

Sincerely,

Meenakshi

From: averma1978@gmail.com

To: meenakshik1993@gmail.com

Hi Meenakshi

I am also surprised that so little academic publications are available about measuring performance of elected representatives. However, parliament, accountability, evaluation governance etc do provide many articles that could be examined.

I found good attempts being made here in India by many concerned NGOs- am attaching a report from Mumbai about MLAs.

I think it will be useful to develop a format based upon inputs from various sources that could be the basis for measuring performance. It will have a recommendations section where empirical data about some measures like fund utilization/ developmental work done for the constituency etc may be suggested.

Even if some good practical guidelines could be developed to suggest ways of measuring the performance of MPs- it will be a useful summer internship.

So please think along those lines.

best wishes

From: meenakshik1993@gmail.com

To: averma1978@gmail.com

Dear sir,

Thank you for the MLA Report from Mumbai. It would be very helpful.

Sachin sir has suggested that I start working on a website that depicts all this information related to MPs similar to the US websites that I had mentioned in the previous mail. So, sir, should I start working on the website with the parameters that I've been able to come up with? He has asked me to leave gaps wherever that data is unavailable so that it can be filled in later whenever the data is available. I have just prepared a brief word document listing these parameters. Please correct me if I'm wrong anywhere.

He has also given me the contact details of few very prominent people who might be able to help me with identifying and obtaining data. I'm trying to set up meetings with them for the next week. I'm also planning to visit Mr. Arun Shourie next week.

I visited an NGO this Monday- Satark Nagrik Sangathan (SNS)- to talk to an activist, Ms. Amrita Johri regarding the SNS initiatives and also got a chance to discuss my project with her.

I have also attached my Field Visit Report along with the mail.
Looking forward to your valuable suggestions.

Thanking You.
Sincerely,
Meenakshi

From: meenakshik1993@gmail.com
June'13

Date: 21st

To: averma1978@gmail.com

Dear Prof. Verma,

I was thinking of doing a qualitative analysis of the questions asked by the MPs inside the Parliament. Perhaps, these could be bifurcated into separate sectors like health, education, roads, transport etc. and questions which are not directly related to a matter of public interest, for example, a question about something happening in Saudi Arabia could be considered to be just for merely information seeking and we could separate such questions from those which seek to address certain problems or ventilate the grievances or shortcomings of the executive.

I was going through a book- "India's Elected: Our MPs Report Card" published by The Express Group and I found out that about 50% of the matters raised inside the Parliament were constituency related. Parliament is a framework for framing laws and policies with a national perspective so we should also try to identify what has been the contribution of individual MPs towards national issues. I was thinking of bifurcating the matters raised as well as the questions asked by the MPs into 3 categories constituency related, national concern, miscellaneous (which don't fit into either category). For example, looking at the performance of Sushma Swaraj inside the Parliament, I found out that she has mostly raised issues of national concern inside the Parliament.

Also, sir, I read that it is very common that when the MPs question is listed for an oral answer on a day, they tend to absent themselves for that day. It is the moral responsibility of an MP to be present during the Question Hour when his question is listed for a particular day and I was thinking that maybe we could keep a count of the number of times he has missed it.

I was having this doubt whether my project also aims to define a relation between these parameters for assessment and his win during the election.

Looking forward to your valuable suggestions.

Thanking You.

From: averma1978@gmail.com Date: 21st June'13

To: meenakshik1993@gmail.com

Hi Meenakshi

This is a good subject to explore but i suggest that you incorporate it within your larger issue of measuring performance. As you have experienced there is little data available to evaluate how the MPs are representing their people. Your report should highlight this and provide suggestions regarding what kind of data and info should be provided by the Parliament or related agencies to keep the citizens well informed.

One part of this could be to suggest how MPs should be focusing upon national issues and pursue their questions by being present at the time of the answer.

I am hoping that you will be able to provide a good window about functioning of the MPs and a road map that can suggest how we can proceed to make them accountable to their constituents.

best wishes

From: meenakshik1993@gmail.com

Date: 22nd June'13

To: averma1978@gmail.com

Dear Sir,

For the above mentioned issues, I was thinking of a sample study. I could pick up a sample of around 20 MPs and study the issues they raised inside the Parliament during one session of the 15th Lok Sabha and bifurcate these into three categories- constituency related, national concern and others. Also, to study the absenteeism during the Question Hour, I could study the questions listed for an oral answer on a day for a period of time and compare it with the attendance records of the MPs on that particular day when their questions were listed.

Kindly let me know if this methodology is appropriate.

Looking forward to your suggestions.

Thank You.

Sincerely,

Meenakshi

From: averma1978@gmail.com

Date: 22nd June

To: meenakshik1993@gmail.com

Hi Meenakshi

From the list of all MPs select a random sample of at least 35 [for large N]- perhaps ensuring due weightage to ruling and opposition parties and then do your analysis.

Meetings and Interviews

Date: June 3, 2012

Time: 3:15 PM

Duration of Discussion: 2 hours and 30 minutes

Person to meet: Ms. Amrita Johri, Activist, Satark Nagrik Sangathan (SNS)

Discussion:

- Ms. Amrita Johri , initially emphasized the importance of transparency in any system, and how it is due to the endeavour of citizens groups like SNS that the Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha sites now display the attendance records, information regarding questions posed by MPs and their participation in debates. Under section 4 of the RTI, government should itself take measures to disseminate information related to the performance of elected representatives to the general public. SNS procures this kind of information through the RTI. However, it takes many months to gather this information since SNS is small group of people. Amrita Ma'am also said that being a small group of people, SNS is able to prepare the report cards for MPs/MLAs once in 5 years. However, they are planning to prepare some kind of mid-term report also. She also highlighted the fact that only government can perform this task on an ongoing basis since only they have required resources.
- We also had a brief discussion regarding the MPLADS funds. As per the guidelines on MPLADS, these are meant to address the 'locally felt' needs of the people. However, due to the absence of a participatory mechanism, MPs as well as MLAs use these LADS funds according to their own discretion. The main purpose of the LADS funds is not being fulfilled, They are being used by MPs to expand their electoral prospects. We also discussed about the sign boards displaying the information regarding the MLA- LADS funds

expenditure in each constituency. These boards have a very poor maintenance and few of them have been torn apart many times. The main reason why SNS thought it would be necessary is so that a social audit could be done on a regular basis. She said that SNS is working towards having similar boards for the MPs in Delhi also. One major drawback of the MPLADS scheme is its very poor monitoring. There is vast difference between what the developmental projects are on paper and what they are in reality. Amrita Ma'am also showed me certain pictures of the developmental projects undertaken using the MLA-LADS funds and what it is on paper and MLA-LADS documents.

- We also discussed regarding successful institutionalized participatory mechanisms. One such successful participatory mechanism is the one in Brazil and she advised me to read more about it. She also suggested me to go through the surgery meetings in Singapore, which is again an example of a participatory mechanism where members of the public collectively decide about the budgeting process. Such a mechanism could be very helpful for the MPLADS funds utilization so that the locally felt needs of the people are also taken into account.

Date: June 10, 2012

Time: 3:00 PM

Duration of Discussion: 1 hour

Person to meet: Mrs. Pallavi Govil, Director, Prime Minister's Office

Discussions:

Discussed about some new parameters that could possibly be used for performance assessment:

- District Level Committees: MPs are a part of District Level Committees like District Planning Committee, District Monitoring and Vigilance Committee. Keeping a track of their attendance in these committees can help to know how actively they participate at the district level in these committees.
- MP's Recommendations for PMNRF: One can obtain the list of the number of recommendations made by each MP for the PMNRF.

Date: June 11, 2012

Time: 11:00 AM

Duration of Discussion: 1 hour

Person to meet: Mrs. Mandira Kala, Head Of Research, PRS Institute for Policy Research Studies

Discussion:

- Discussed about the works of MPs inside the Parliament
- Discussed about the Consultation Committees that provide a platform for an informal exchange between the Ministers and MPs.
- Discussed about Matters under Rule 377 (Raising concerns of the people of their own constituency), Rule 193 (addressing National Policy Matter)

9. Appendix B

The MPs considered for the analysis in Section 4.1.10 are as follows:

Name	Party	Constituency
J.M Aaroon Rasheed	INC	Theni(Tamil Nadu)
Yogi Adityanath	BJP	Gorakhpur(U.P.)
Sandeep Dikshit	INC	East Delhi(Delhi)
Haribhau Madhav Jawale	BJP	Raver(Maharashtra)
Rattan Singh Ajnala	Shiromani Akali Dal (SAD)	Khadoor Sahib(Punjab)
Sudip Bandyopadhyay	AITC	Kolkata Uttar(West Bengal)
Ghanshyam Anuragi	Samajwadi Party	Jalaun (U.P.)
Rajagopal Lagadapati	INC	Vijayawada (Andhra Pradesh)
Ajay Kumar	Jharkhand Vikas Morcha	Jamshedpur(Jharkhand)
Sk. Saidul haque	CPI(M)	Bardhaman-Durgapur(West Bengal)
Kunvarjibhai Mohanbhai Bavaliya	INC	Rajkot(Gujarat)
Gangasandra Siddappa Basavaraj	BJP	Tumkur(Karnataka)
Dilip Singh Judeo	BJP	Bilaspur(Chhattisgarh)
P. Karunakaran	CPI(M)	Kasaragod(Kerala)
Hassan Khan	Independent	Ladakh(J&K)
Vishwa Mohan Kumar	Janata Dal(United)	Supaul(Bihar)
Ijyaraj Singh	INC	Kota(Rajasthan)
Sidhant Mohapatra	Biju Janata Dal	Berhampur(Odisha)
P. R. Natarajan	CPI(M)	Coimbatore(Tamil Nadu)
S. Pakkappa	BJP	Raichur(Karnataka)
Gorakh Nath Pandey	Bahujan Samaj Party	Bhadohi (U.P.)
Lalubhai Babubhai Patel	BJP	Daman and Diu
Prem Das Rai	Sikkim Democratic Front	Sikkim
Inderjit Singh Rao	INC	Gurgaon(Haryana)
Jaipal Sudini Reddy	INC	Chelvella (A.P.)
Satabdi Roy	AITC	Birbhum(West Bengal)
Gopal Singh Shekhawat	INC	Rajsamand(Rajasthan)
Yashodhara Raja Scindia	BJP	Gwalior(M.P.)
Balkrishna Khanderao Shukla	BJP	Vadodara(Gujarat)
Arjun Charan Sethi	Biju Janata Dal	Bhadrak(Odisha)
J. Shantha	BJP	Bellary(Karnataka)
Neeraj Shekhar	Samajwadi Party	Ballia(U.P.)
Dhananjai Singh	Bahujan Samaj Party	Jaunpur(U.P.)
Jagadanand Singh	Rashtriya Janata Dal	Buxar(Bihar)

“The highest measure of democracy is neither the
‘extent of freedom’ nor the ‘extent of equality’ but
rather the highest measure of participation.”

- A.D. Benoist

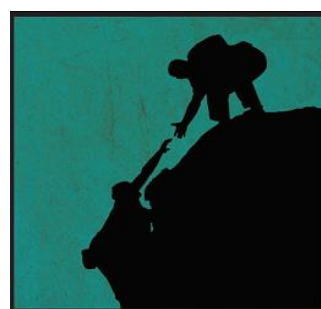
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