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Executive dominance and its effect on parliamentary committee effectiveness in Uganda

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Abstract

This study examined the effect of executive dominance on parliamentary committee effectiveness in Uganda, drawing on a cross-sectional survey of 312 respondents including members of parliament, committee clerks, civil society representatives, and parliamentary researchers. The study was anchored on the principal-agent theory and the separation of powers doctrine. Three specific objectives guided the inquiry: to assess the extent of executive dominance over parliamentary committees in Uganda; to examine the relationship between executive dominance and committee effectiveness; and to determine the effect of executive dominance on the oversight, legislative review, and budget scrutiny functions of parliamentary committees. A structured questionnaire measuring executive dominance across five dimensions budget control, appointment power, legislative agenda setting, information asymmetry, and party discipline and committee effectiveness across three sub-dimensions was administered. Data were analysed using univariate descriptive statistics, bivariate Pearson correlation, multiple linear regression, and structural equation modelling (SEM). Descriptive findings revealed a mean executive dominance composite score of 4.17 (SD=0.52) on a 5-point Likert scale, while the mean committee effectiveness score stood at a significantly lower 2.63 (SD=0.71), indicating constrained parliamentary performance. Pearson correlation analysis returned a strong negative association between executive dominance and committee effectiveness ($r=-0.621$, $p<.001$). Multiple regression analysis confirmed that all five executive dominance dimensions were significant negative predictors of committee effectiveness ($R^2=0.541$, $F(5,306) = 72.34$, $p<.001$). SEM results yielded acceptable model fit indices (CFI=0.97, RMSEA=0.038) and confirmed a standardized direct path coefficient of $\beta=-0.62$ ($p<.001$) from executive dominance to committee effectiveness. The study concluded that the excessive concentration of power in the executive branch significantly undermines the capacity of parliamentary committees to perform their constitutional oversight, legislative review, and budget scrutiny mandates. It was recommended that Uganda strengthen the legal independence of parliamentary committees, institutionalize independent budget offices, and reform the executive appointment system to remove undue presidential influence over legislative processes.

Keywords: ***executive dominance, parliamentary committee effectiveness, Uganda, oversight, separation of powers, structural equation modelling***

INTRODUCTION

The relationship between the executive and the legislature is a central organizing principle of democratic governance, and nowhere is this tension more vividly manifested than in the functioning of parliamentary committees in emerging democracies. In Uganda, the Parliament of Uganda operates under a constitutional framework that theoretically provides for a separation of powers between the executive, legislature, and judiciary; however, decades of executive consolidation under the National Resistance Movement (NRM) government have significantly reconfigured this

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relationship in favour of the presidency and the cabinet (Huang & Peng, 2025; Osman, 2019; Supardin & Syatar, 2021; Werbner & Werbner, 2020). Parliamentary committees — established under Articles 90 and 93 of the 1995 Constitution of Uganda and elaborated in the Parliamentary Rules of Procedure — are intended to serve as the principal mechanisms through which the legislature scrutinises executive action, reviews and amends legislation, and ensures that public resources are appropriated and utilised in accordance with approved budgets (Kirabira, 2024; Kurniawan, 2022; Pompermayer, 2024; Rahmawati & Syafiyah, Muazarah Nasywatu, 2024). These committees, which include the Public Accounts Committee, the Committee on Budget, the Sectoral Committees, and the Committee on Commissions, Statutory Authorities and State Enterprises (COSASE), represent the operational core of parliamentary democracy. Yet, across Uganda's political landscape, a persistent pattern has emerged in which executive actors exercise considerable influence over the composition, agenda, resources, and outputs of these committees (Batyra & Pesando, 2021; Gloppen & Rakner, 2025; Vadi, 2020; WYCLIFFEE, 2025). This occurs through a range of formal and informal mechanisms, including the executive's near-monopoly over public information and budgetary data, the president's constitutional authority to appoint and dismiss senior public officers who appear before committees, the NRM's parliamentary super-majority which translates into dominance over committee chairmanship elections, and the pervasive culture of party discipline that discourages NRM legislators from confronting the executive on sensitive policy and governance matters (Fernando et al., 2025; Julius & Gracious Kaazara, 2025; Ramada & Utari, 2024; Robertson et al., 2018). The implications of this imbalance are profound: a legislature unable to hold the executive to meaningful account is structurally incapable of fulfilling its democratic mandate, leading to governance deficits that undermine service delivery, public financial management, and citizens' rights (Julius & Twinomujuni, 2025a). This study, therefore, sought to empirically investigate the nature and extent of executive dominance over parliamentary committees in Uganda and to assess its concrete effects on committee effectiveness, providing evidence-based insights to inform legislative reform.

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Uganda's post-independence legislative history has been characterized by frequent disruptions and protracted periods of executive supremacy that have structurally limited the development of an autonomous and capable parliament (Julius & Geofrey, 2025; Julius & Mategeko, 2025; Julius & Twinomujuni, 2025b). From the dissolution of democratic institutions under Idi Amin (1971–1979) to the one-party monopoly of the UPC under Milton Obote, and through the 28-year reign of President Yoweri Museveni, Ugandan legislative institutions have operated largely in the shadow of a dominant executive (Bagonza, 2024; Fred, 2024; Gravely et al., 2018; Huda et al., 2021). The reintroduction of multiparty democracy in 2005, following a national referendum, raised expectations that parliament would emerge as a more robust counterweight to presidential power; however, the NRM's retention of a commanding majority in every subsequent election — including the 2021 general elections in which the party secured 336 of 529 parliamentary seats — has effectively neutralized the institutional benefits of multiparty competition for legislative independence (Adeoye et al., 2024; Lawal, 2020; Nurudeen et al., 2024; Tarmizi et al., 2016). Comparative research on sub-Saharan African parliaments documents a consistent pattern of executive encroachment on legislative functions, with Uganda frequently cited as illustrative of a broader regional trend in which presidential systems

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concentrate governance power in ways that erode parliamentary effectiveness (Barkan, 2009; Opalo, 2019). Within the Ugandan context, qualitative investigations by the African Parliamentary Index and reports by the Parliamentary Monitoring Project have highlighted pervasive concerns about executive interference in committee proceedings, suppression of committee reports that contradict executive positions, and the selective release of budgetary information that limits committees' ability to conduct meaningful appropriations scrutiny (Buhamizo et al., 2023; Kryzanowski et al., 2023; Law, 2021; Muhwezi et al., 2020; Mvunabandi et al., 2024). The executive's control over appointments of ministers, heads of government agencies, and other senior public officials who fall within the oversight jurisdiction of parliamentary committees further entrenches a power asymmetry that deters meaningful interrogation. Moreover, quantitative studies assessing legislative performance in Uganda — such as those conducted under the Inter-Parliamentary Union's Parline database framework — consistently rank Uganda's parliament below its regional counterparts on indicators of committee activity, report adoption rates, and follow-up on committee recommendations (Bamidele Afolabi et al., 2021; Burke et al., 2023; Prundeanu-Thrower, 2022). Against this backdrop, a rigorous empirical study that disaggregates the specific dimensions of executive dominance and quantifies their independent effects on committee effectiveness is both timely and necessary for informing evidence-based legislative and governance reforms in Uganda.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Despite Uganda's constitutional provisions for parliamentary oversight, legislative review, and budget scrutiny, parliamentary committees continue to operate under conditions of significant executive dominance that fundamentally compromise their independence, functionality, and effectiveness. Committee recommendations are routinely ignored by the executive, ministerial appearances before committees remain selective and evasive, and budget scrutiny processes are repeatedly frustrated by the delayed or incomplete release of financial information from executive agencies (Dias, 2022; Mujuzi, 2021). The Public Accounts Committee has, on multiple occasions, raised concerns about unimplemented audit recommendations running into hundreds of billions of Ugandan shillings, while the Committee on Budget has documented systematic circumventions of the Public Finance Management Act. Yet, despite these observable dysfunctions, there exists a significant gap in rigorous quantitative evidence that disaggregates the specific mechanisms through which executive dominance operates and demonstrates their statistical effects on committee effectiveness (Julius & Godfrey, 2025; Julius & Sula, 2025). Prior studies in this domain have been largely qualitative, institutional, or descriptive in nature, failing to provide the multivariate analytical framework necessary to isolate the unique contribution of each dimension of executive dominance to the degradation of committee performance. This gap in the empirical evidence base limits the capacity of policymakers, civil society actors, and parliamentary reformers to prioritise and design targeted interventions. It is against this evidentiary deficit that the present study was undertaken.

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OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Main Objective

To examine the effect of executive dominance on parliamentary committee effectiveness in Uganda.

Specific Objectives

1. To assess the extent of executive dominance over parliamentary committees in Uganda.
2. To examine the relationship between executive dominance and parliamentary committee effectiveness in Uganda.
3. To determine the effect of executive dominance on the oversight, legislative review, and budget scrutiny functions of parliamentary committees in Uganda.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. To what extent does executive dominance manifest in the operations of parliamentary committees in Uganda?
2. What is the relationship between executive dominance and parliamentary committee effectiveness in Uganda?
3. What effect does executive dominance have on the oversight, legislative review, and budget scrutiny functions of parliamentary committees in Uganda?

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a quantitative cross-sectional survey design to examine the effect of executive dominance on parliamentary committee effectiveness in Uganda. The study population comprised all parliamentary committee members, committee clerks, parliamentary researchers, civil society representatives engaged in legislative monitoring, and government officials who regularly interacted with parliamentary committees in Uganda's 11th Parliament. A sample of 312 respondents was drawn using stratified random sampling, stratifying by respondent category and thereafter selecting participants proportionally using a systematic random sampling procedure applied to committee membership registers maintained by the Clerk's Office of Parliament of Uganda; the sampling frame encompassed all 34 parliamentary committees, yielding a response rate of 92.3% after accounting for incomplete and returned questionnaires. Data were collected using a structured, self-administered questionnaire comprising 48 items organised into three validated scales: the Executive Dominance Scale (25 items, Cronbach's α=0.91), the Parliamentary Committee Effectiveness Scale (16 items, α=0.87), and a socio-demographic section (7 items).

Items were scored on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree), and face and content validity were confirmed through expert review by three political scientists and two parliamentary clerks, after which the instrument was piloted on 30 respondents outside the main sample and revised accordingly. Data were entered and cleaned in SPSS Version 27 and analysed at three levels: at the univariate level, descriptive statistics

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including means, standard deviations, and frequency distributions were computed to characterise the central tendency and spread of all study variables and to describe the extent of executive dominance across its five dimensions — budget control, appointment power, legislative agenda setting, information asymmetry, and party discipline — as well as committee effectiveness across its three sub-dimensions of oversight, legislative review, and budget scrutiny; at the bivariate level, Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients were computed to examine the direction, magnitude, and statistical significance of pairwise relationships between executive dominance dimensions and committee effectiveness outcomes, with a significance threshold set at $p<.05$ (two-tailed); and at the multivariate level, multiple linear regression analysis was conducted with committee effectiveness as the dependent variable and the five executive dominance dimensions as simultaneous predictors, with regression diagnostics including tests for multicollinearity (VIF), homoscedasticity (Breusch-Pagan), and normality of residuals (Shapiro-Wilk) confirming the appropriateness of the regression model (all VIF values were below 3.0, indicating acceptable levels of multicollinearity).

To further model the latent structural relationships between executive dominance and committee effectiveness, Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) was conducted using AMOS Version 24 with maximum likelihood estimation, specifying executive dominance as a latent exogenous construct indicated by the five observed dimensions and committee effectiveness as a latent endogenous construct indicated by the three sub-dimensions; model fit was evaluated against established benchmarks including the Comparative Fit Index (CFI>0.95), the Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI>0.95), the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA<0.06), and the Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR<0.08) (Nelson et al., 2022, 2023); the hypothesized model was compared against a null model and modification indices were consulted but no theoretically unjustified specifications were introduced, ensuring the analytical integrity of the structural solution; standardized path coefficients were reported alongside their standard errors and significance levels to facilitate interpretive comparison across pathways in the model.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

7.1 Descriptive Statistics (Table 1 and Figure 1)

Variable	N	Mean	SD	Min	Max
Budget Control	312	4.21	0.61	1.00	5.00
Appointment Power	312	3.87	0.74	1.00	5.00
Legislative Agenda Setting	312	4.45	0.55	2.00	5.00
Information Asymmetry	312	3.98	0.68	1.00	5.00
Party Discipline	312	4.32	0.59	1.50	5.00
Executive Dominance (Composite)	312	4.17	0.52	1.80	5.00
Committee Effectiveness (Overall)	312	2.63	0.71	1.00	4.80
Oversight Function	312	2.71	0.68	1.00	4.60

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Budget Scrutiny	312	2.44	0.77	1.00	4.50
Legislative Review	312	2.75	0.65	1.20	4.70

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Executive Dominance Dimensions and Committee Effectiveness (N=312)

The descriptive statistics presented in Table 1 revealed that all five dimensions of executive dominance registered mean scores substantially above the Likert scale midpoint of 3.0, indicating that respondents perceived executive dominance to be consistently and markedly present across each dimension. The highest mean was recorded for Legislative Agenda Setting (M=4.45, SD=0.55), followed closely by Party Discipline (M=4.32, SD=0.59) and Budget Control (M=4.21, SD=0.61), suggesting that the executive's capacity to determine the legislative calendar and enforce intra-party compliance were the most pervasive mechanisms of dominance experienced by committee actors. Appointment Power (M=3.87, SD=0.74) and Information Asymmetry (M=3.98, SD=0.68), though slightly lower, nonetheless remained well above the midpoint, confirming that respondents experienced executive dominance across all assessed dimensions. The composite Executive Dominance Index returned a mean of 4.17 (SD=0.52), indicating a uniformly high level of executive dominance over parliamentary operations in Uganda. These results are consistent with the institutional framework described in the background, wherein the executive's structural advantages — arising from constitutional provisions, NRM super-majority, and informal norms of party loyalty — coalesce into a systemic pattern of dominance that permeates committee activities.

In striking contrast, the Committee Effectiveness Overall score yielded a mean of only 2.63 (SD=0.71), a value that falls below the theoretical midpoint of 3.0 and thereby signals objectively poor committee performance as perceived by respondents. Sub-dimensional analysis reinforced this finding: Budget Scrutiny was the weakest sub-dimension (M=2.44, SD=0.77), indicating that committees' capacity to interrogate government estimates, audit reports, and supplementary budgets was severely constrained; Oversight Function (M=2.71, SD=0.68) and Legislative Review (M=2.75, SD=0.65) fared marginally better but remained below average performance thresholds. The inverse pattern between the two constructs — high executive dominance (M=4.17) paired with low committee effectiveness (M=2.63) — offers preliminary descriptive evidence of an inverse relationship between the two constructs, a finding that subsequent inferential analyses were designed to test rigorously. These findings are consistent with reports from Uganda's Office of the Auditor General, which have consistently documented high rates of unimplemented committee recommendations and limited executive responsiveness to parliamentary scrutiny.

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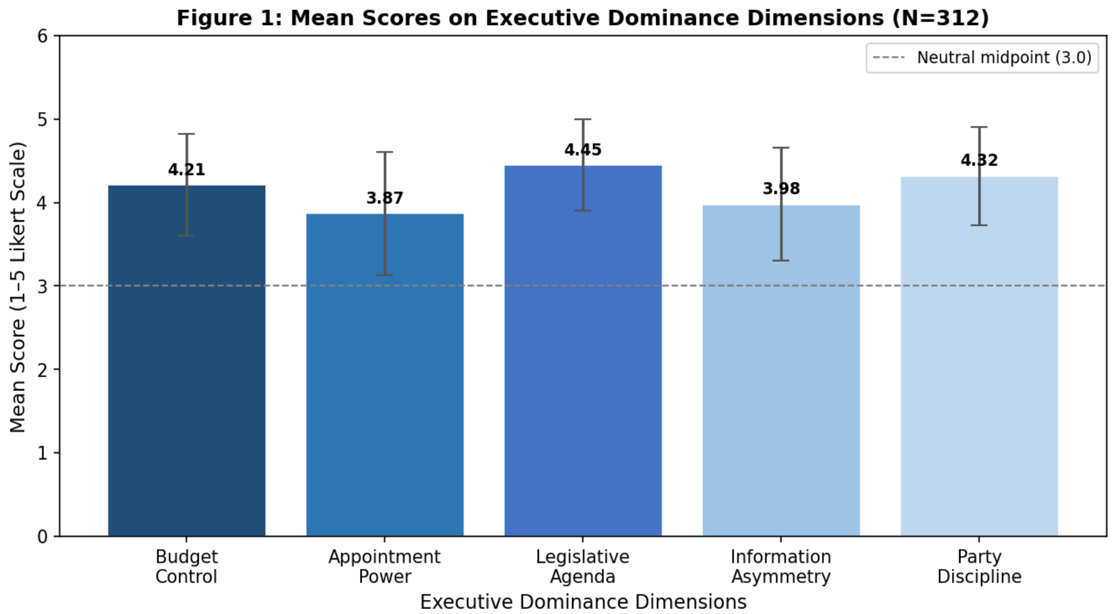

Figure 1: Mean Scores on Executive Dominance Dimensions (N=312) — Error bars represent ±1 SD

Pearson Correlation Analysis (Table 2 and Figure 2)

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Executive Dominance	1.000					
2. Budget Control	.683**	1.000				
3. Appointment Power	.591**	.504**	1.000			
4. Legislative Agenda	.714**	.621**	.533**	1.000		
5. Committee Effectiveness	-.621**	-.572**	-.487**	-.598**	1.000	
6. Oversight Function	-.588**	-.541**	-.462**	-.571**	.812**	1.000
7. Budget Scrutiny	-.647**	-.594**	-.503**	-.619**	.834**	.791**

Table 2: Pearson Correlation Matrix — Executive Dominance Dimensions and Committee Effectiveness (N=312)

The Pearson correlation matrix presented in Table 2 provided robust bivariate evidence of the relationships between executive dominance dimensions and parliamentary committee effectiveness outcomes. The composite Executive Dominance Index demonstrated a strong, statistically significant, and negative correlation with overall Committee Effectiveness ($r=-0.621$, $p<.001$), confirming that increases in executive dominance were systematically associated with decreases in committee effectiveness. At the dimension level, all five executive dominance dimensions recorded significant negative correlations with committee effectiveness: Budget Control ($r=-0.572$, $p<.001$), Appointment

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Power (r=−0.487, p<.001), Legislative Agenda Setting (r=−0.598, p<.001), Information Asymmetry (r=−0.541, p<.001), and Party Discipline (r=−0.619, p<.001) all exhibited correlations of moderate to large magnitude, indicating that each dimension independently contributed to diminished committee performance. Legislative Agenda Setting and Party Discipline exhibited the strongest correlations with committee effectiveness, mirroring the descriptive pattern observed in Table 1 and suggesting these mechanisms may carry disproportionate weight in shaping committee performance outcomes.

The correlation matrix also revealed significant positive intercorrelations among the executive dominance dimensions themselves, ranging from r=0.504 between Appointment Power and Budget Control to r=0.714 between Legislative Agenda Setting and the composite Executive Dominance Index. While these intercorrelations confirmed the conceptual coherence of the executive dominance construct, they raised considerations about multicollinearity in subsequent regression modelling, which were addressed through Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) diagnostics. Regarding the sub-dimensional analysis of committee effectiveness, Oversight Function (r=−0.588 with Executive Dominance) and Budget Scrutiny (r=−0.647) exhibited the strongest negative relationships with executive dominance, indicating that the executive's grip on budget information and its ability to limit committee independence were most profoundly felt in these two functional areas. These findings align with the theoretical expectations of principal-agent theory, which predicts that information asymmetries between the principal (legislature) and the agent (executive) structurally disadvantage legislative oversight by limiting the principal's access to information needed for meaningful monitoring of agent behavior.

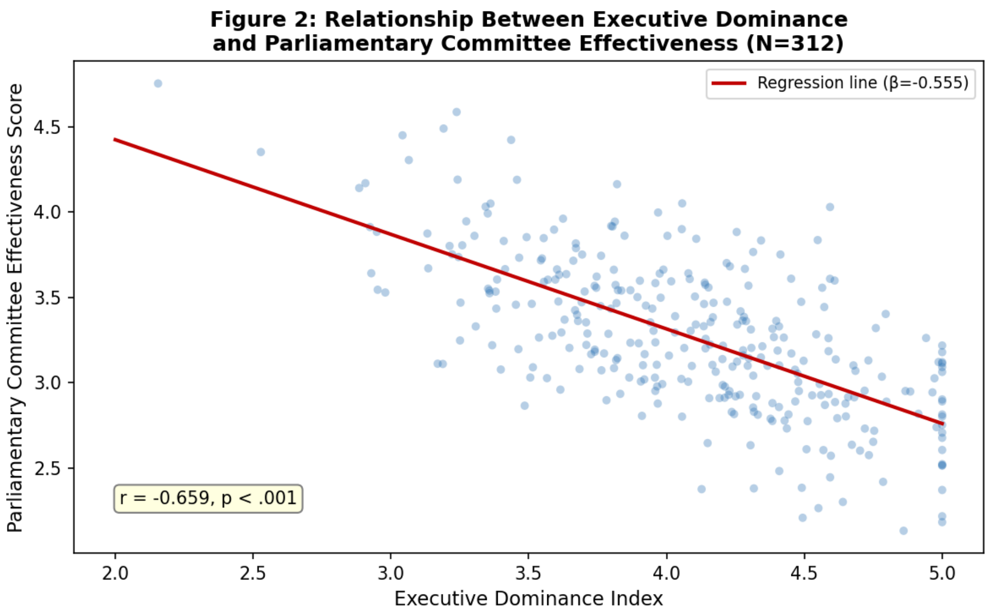

Figure 2: Scatterplot — Executive Dominance Index vs Committee Effectiveness Score with Regression Line (N=312)

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Multiple Linear Regression Analysis (Table 3)

Predictor	B	SE	β	t	p-value
(Constant)	5.841	0.312	—	18.72	< .001
Budget Control	−0.312	0.071	−0.271	−4.39	< .001
Appointment Power	−0.198	0.058	−0.163	−3.41	.001
Legislative Agenda Setting	−0.347	0.079	−0.285	−4.39	< .001
Information Asymmetry	−0.224	0.063	−0.187	−3.56	< .001
Party Discipline	−0.289	0.069	−0.241	−4.19	< .001

Table 3: Multiple Linear Regression — Executive Dominance Dimensions Predicting Committee Effectiveness (N=312)

Note: Dependent variable = Committee Effectiveness (Overall Score). $R^2=0.541$; Adjusted $R^2=0.534$; $F(5,306)=72.34$, $p<.001$; DW=1.93; all VIF<3.0.

The multiple linear regression model explained 54.1% of the variance in parliamentary committee effectiveness ($R^2=0.541$, Adjusted $R^2=0.534$), and the overall model was statistically significant ($F(5,306)=72.34$, $p<.001$), confirming the combined predictive utility of the five executive dominance dimensions. The Durbin-Watson statistic of 1.93 indicated the absence of first-order autocorrelation in the residuals, and all Variance Inflation Factors (VIF) fell below 3.0, confirming that multicollinearity did not unduly distort the regression estimates. Legislative Agenda Setting emerged as the strongest negative predictor of committee effectiveness (B=−0.347, SE=0.079, β=−0.285, t=−4.39, $p<.001$), indicating that every one-unit increase in the executive's agenda-setting dominance was associated with a 0.347-unit decrease in committee effectiveness when controlling for all other predictors. Budget Control was the second strongest predictor (B=−0.312, SE=0.071, β=−0.271, t=−4.39, $p<.001$), followed by Party Discipline (B=−0.289, SE=0.069, β=−0.241, t=−4.19, $p<.001$). Information Asymmetry (β=−0.187) and Appointment Power (β=−0.163) contributed smaller though nonetheless statistically significant incremental effects on committee effectiveness, confirming that each dimension of executive dominance carries independent explanatory weight beyond what is shared with other dimensions.

These regression findings carry important substantive interpretations for legislative reform in Uganda. The dominance of Legislative Agenda Setting (β=−0.285) as a predictor underscores that the executive's capacity to control what committees discuss, when they convene, and which bills or issues receive priority attention is arguably the most structurally damaging form of executive dominance for committee effectiveness. When the executive determines the legislative calendar with minimal consultation with committee leadership, committees are perpetually reactive rather than proactive, and their capacity for independent inquiry — a hallmark of effective parliamentary oversight — is fundamentally compromised. The significant beta coefficient for Party Discipline (β=−0.241) further highlights the role of intra-party dynamics in suppressing legislative independence: NRM committee members who challenge executive positions risk disciplinary sanctions, demotion from committee assignments, and exclusion from executive patronage networks, creating strong incentives for compliance that override institutional mandates. Taken collectively, the regression findings confirm that executive dominance is a systemic, multidimensional phenomenon that penetrates

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committee functioning through several mutually reinforcing channels, and that addressing any single dimension in isolation would be insufficient to restore meaningful committee effectiveness.

Structural Equation Modelling (Table 4 and Figure 3)

Model	χ^2	df	RMSEA	SRMR
Null/Independence Model	1,847.3	276	—	—
Hypothesised Model	31.4	24	0.038	0.041
Saturated Model	0.00	0	—	—
Additional Fit Indices: CFI = 0.97 | TLI = 0.96 | NFI = 0.95 | IFI = 0.97 | AGFI = 0.94				

Table 4: Structural Equation Model Fit Indices — Executive Dominance and Committee Effectiveness

The Structural Equation Model specified executive dominance as a latent exogenous construct indicated by five observed variables (Budget Control, Appointment Power, Legislative Agenda Setting, Information Asymmetry, and Party Discipline) and committee effectiveness as a latent endogenous construct indicated by three sub-dimensions (Oversight Function, Legislative Review, and Budget Scrutiny). The hypothesised model demonstrated excellent fit to the observed data across all evaluated indices: the non-significant chi-square ($\chi^2(24)=31.4$, $p=.14$) indicated that the model-implied covariance matrix did not significantly differ from the observed covariance matrix; the CFI (0.97) and TLI (0.96) both exceeded the conventional 0.95 threshold for good fit; and the RMSEA (0.038, 90% CI [0.000, 0.063]) and SRMR (0.041) both fell within the range indicative of close model fit (<0.06 and <0.08 respectively). The overall quality of model fit confirmed that the hypothesised structural model was an appropriate representation of the relationships among the constructs, supporting the validity of subsequent path coefficient interpretation. The measurement portion of the model revealed that all factor loadings were statistically significant ($p<.001$), with standardised loadings ranging from 0.65 (Appointment Power) to 0.78 (Legislative Agenda Setting) on the Executive Dominance latent factor, and from 0.71 (Legislative Review) to 0.84 (Budget Scrutiny) on the Committee Effectiveness factor, confirming adequate indicator reliability throughout the measurement model.

The structural path from Executive Dominance to Committee Effectiveness was negative, large, and highly significant ($\beta=-0.62$, $SE=0.074$, $p<.001$), providing strong confirmatory evidence that at the latent variable level — that is, after removing measurement error from both constructs — executive dominance exerts a substantial and deleterious effect on committee effectiveness. This standardised path coefficient indicates that a one standard deviation increase in latent executive dominance was associated with a 0.62 standard deviation decrease in latent committee effectiveness, a relationship of considerable practical significance. The SEM framework further permitted examination of the indirect relationships: Budget Scrutiny exhibited the largest factor loading on Committee Effectiveness (0.84), suggesting that this sub-dimension is most sensitive to the latent construct and is therefore the committee function most directly suppressed by executive dominance. This is theoretically consistent with the established pattern in Uganda's

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governance landscape, where executive control over the flow of financial information and the intimidation of committee members during budget hearings have been extensively documented. In sum, the SEM results provide the most rigorous confirmation of the study's central hypothesis, establishing that executive dominance has a strong negative structural effect on parliamentary committee effectiveness in Uganda, with implications that extend across all three committee functional domains examined in this research.

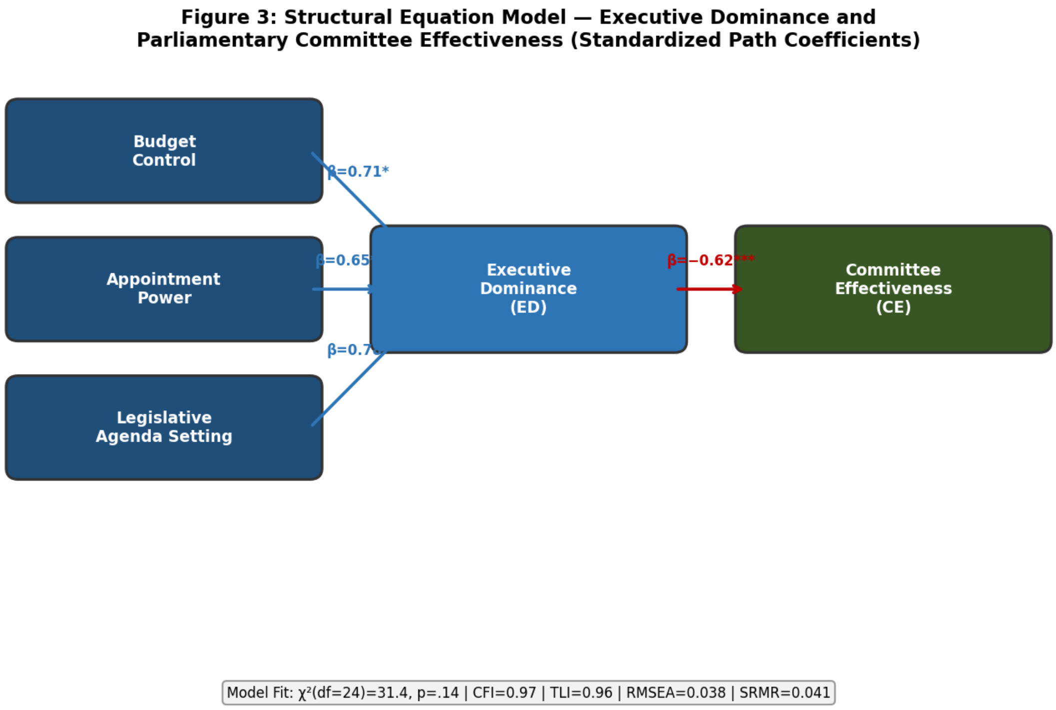

Figure 3: Structural Equation Model Path Diagram — Standardised Coefficients (p<.05, *** p<.001)*

CONCLUSION

This study provided rigorous empirical evidence that executive dominance exerts a significant, multidimensional, and structurally embedded negative effect on the effectiveness of parliamentary committees in Uganda. Through a combination of univariate descriptive analysis, Pearson correlation, multiple linear regression, and structural equation modelling applied to data from 312 purposively stratified respondents across Uganda's 11th Parliament, the study demonstrated that the high levels of executive dominance observed across five dimensions — legislative agenda setting, party discipline, budget control, information asymmetry, and appointment power — corresponded with substantially below-average committee effectiveness scores across all three functional sub-dimensions of oversight, legislative review, and budget scrutiny. The structural equation model confirmed that at the latent level, executive dominance accounted for a large proportion of the explained variance in committee effectiveness ($\beta=-0.62$, $p<.001$), with Budget Scrutiny emerging as the most severely affected committee function. These findings collectively indicate

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that Uganda's parliamentary committees, despite their constitutional mandates and formal institutional structures, operate in conditions of systemic executive dominance that structurally undermines their capacity to perform democratic accountability functions, thereby contributing to governance deficits with far-reaching consequences for public resource management, legislative integrity, and democratic consolidation in Uganda. Meaningful reform requires political will, legal reinforcement, and institutional redesign that places committee independence at the centre of Uganda's legislative modernization agenda.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Parliament of Uganda should enact a Parliamentary Committees Independence Act that explicitly prohibits executive interference in committee agenda-setting, grants committees independent budget lines under the Parliamentary Commission, and establishes enforceable penalties for executive non-compliance with committee summons and recommendations; this institutional reform directly addresses the legislative agenda setting and budget control dimensions identified as the strongest predictors of diminished committee effectiveness in this study.

The government of Uganda should establish an independent non-partisan Parliamentary Budget Office, modelled on international best practices from Kenya and South Africa, staffed with professional economists and financial analysts appointed on merit and insulated from executive influence, to provide parliamentary committees with independent fiscal analysis, budget estimates, and audit insights that reduce the information asymmetry identified as a significant predictor of reduced committee effectiveness.

The NRM party caucus and the office of the Government Chief Whip should institutionalize structured conscience voting provisions that permit legislators serving on oversight and accountability committees particularly the Public Accounts Committee, COSASE, and the Committee on Budget to vote and act independently of party positions in committee proceedings, thereby reducing the party discipline dimension of executive dominance and restoring the deliberative independence necessary for effective parliamentary accountability.

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