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Beyond Lawmaking: Strengthening Legislative Oversight for Democratic Accountability and Good Governance

Dr. Gohar Ayaz¹ Muhammad Faizan Asghar²

¹ Additional Director Interpretation & Translation, Provincial Assembly of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan.

² Director (Technical), Fortis Security and Advisory L.L.C-FZ, Dubai, U.A.E.

Corresponding Author: Dr. Gohar Ayaz, Email: goharayaz.phd@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

Legislative institutions play a critical role in democratic governance by continuously scrutinizing executive actions, overseeing public expenditures, monitoring policymaking processes, and ensuring institutional accountability and effective governance. The study focused on the role of legislative oversight in strengthening democratic accountability and good governance beyond legislation. A qualitative documentary research design was used, and 100 documents were analyzed, comprising 40 parliamentary documents, 20 reports of legislative committees and oversight, 15 budget- and audit-related documents, 10 constitutional and legislative documents, and 15 scholarly studies. Thematic and structured document analysis were used to analyze the data. The results indicated that executive scrutiny (88%) was the highest, followed by parliamentary committee scrutiny (84%), financial and audit scrutiny (79%), parliamentary questioning (76%) and policy implementation monitoring (71%). In terms of accountability results, executive answerability was 86%, transparency 82% and enhanced checks and balances 81%. Polarization among politicians (78%), restricted information availability (75%), and inadequate follow-up mechanisms (73%) were major challenges. The most prominent reform priorities were strengthening parliamentary committees (85%), improving access to government information (83%), building research and technical capacity (80%), and strengthening follow-up mechanisms (78%). The study found that parliamentary institutions needed to be strengthened to become more effective tools of democratic accountability and good governance, which required continuous scrutiny, institutional capacity, access to reliable information, responsiveness of the Executive Branch, and meaningful follow-up.



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Introduction

Legislatures are a key feature of democratic governance because they have legislative functions beyond making laws and approving government spending; they also monitor government policy implementation and ensure institutional accountability. Legislative oversight is an institutional structure that enables elected members to question government bodies and demand answers from the government and the public. Recent studies have focused more on the role of oversight in promoting accountability and checks and balances in a democracy. According to Matebese-Notshulwana (2024), legislative supervision plays an important role in governance activities, acting as a watchdog over the executive, providing a forum for public representation, and serving as a subsidiary form of governance. Janda and Masango (2024) outline how oversight and accountability can maintain democratic principles and improve governance and public service delivery. Here are two thoughts on the role of a legislature that highlight that the only measure of the legislature's effectiveness cannot be the number or quality of the legislation; it's having the ability to oversee the government's actions.

The demand for the legislative branch to be involved in government oversight has increased over the years in the modern state, as states have become more complex, both in terms of their administrative arrangements and how they make policy. MPs make questions and receive responses, conduct hearings, hold information, analyse budgets and investigations to inform members of Parliament and to monitor government. Aboelwafa and Yaghi (2024) provide evidence that parliamentary questions could be a valuable tool for parliamentary oversight and could help shape parliamentary institutions, processes and behaviours. Additionally, Akbik and Migliorati (2024), whose research focused on parliamentary questions in the European Parliament, demonstrate that there are varying functions entailed in asking parliamentary questions, such as seeking information, justification and remedial measures. According to King, Gailmard and Wood (2023), the effectiveness of one oversight body is dampened if the responsibilities are divided among multiple committees of which the committees' interests differ from those of the legislative unit. The

findings reveal that apart from the formal parliament functioning, there is a need for institutional coordination, relevant information and competent committees to effectively oversee.

“Beyond Lawmaking” is not about law-making but instead is an expression of the meaning of the institutions of the law as they too are instruments that allow for the accountability of democracy. Parliamentary committees, procedural questions, financial review, oversight hearings, audit reviews and public hearings are used to enable legislatures to monitor the effectiveness of governmental policies and laws. Patra (2024) stresses the importance of the parliamentary committees' role in allowing scrutiny, evaluation and improvement in legislation and policy results, while Nater and Brock (2024) highlight the role of interaction between the various parliamentary committees and public-sector institutions to ensure the accountability of the executive. In the paper, L Ferry, Midgley and Haslam (2024) draw connections between overseeing government accounts and accountability in the democratic arena and public trust. This research will explore the role of legislative oversight as a type of governance that can improve transparency, accountability, institutional responsiveness and good governance.

Background of the Study

The traditional vision of the institutions of parliament highlights the notions of legislation, representation and deliberation. Conventional democratic legitimacy, rather, involves legislatures that have a broader monitoring role, since most of the action needed to implement public policies and decisions on spending occurs more through executive and administrative means. As elected officials, legislators can review actions of government, evaluate the effectiveness of policies, probe into issues for government, and ask questions of executive branch officials. This has led to the emergence of various definitions of oversight as found in the discussions which were outlined by Matebese-Notshulwana (2024) that apart from law making and participation, oversight is an integral function of legislatures. There was also a connection between oversight and the ideals of accountability, democratic ideals and good governance that were shared by Janda and Masango (2024). Thus, legislative oversight

can be given an important institutional role to serve the linkage between electoral representation and a continuing accountability to government.

In addition, parliamentary committees are given much importance as they offer a specific avenue and frame for detailed scrutiny which is hard to achieve in plenary sessions of the parliament. Committee bills can be discussed, Committee bills can be investigated, Committee bills can be reviewed of the expenditure of Government funds, Committee bills can receive officials and experts as witnesses, and Committee bills can be considered evidence on public policy. Patra (2024) argues that parliamentary committees serve an important function for scrutiny and evaluation because they tend to be specialists, thereby improving parliament and law/policy. Along similar lines, Nater and Brock (2024) also emphasize the need for the interactions between parliament committees and the public sector as a vehicle for policymaking and for being able to hold the executive accountable. But the level of supervision could depend on the institutional procedures and politics. But King, Gailmard and Wood claim that when one committee gives oversight to another committee, or they have competing political motives, decentralized oversight can result in inefficient outcomes, and it is these arguments that underlie “Decentralized Committee Oversight: A Demonstration of Efficient Outcomes” (2023). Eldes (2024) also establishes that oversight hearings are not only information-gathering process, but are also a political conflict event as well, which makes gathering and communicating information as a component of conducting effective oversight an important one.

Besides all the above, another important dimension of legislative monitoring which is screaming for being heard is by way of addressing questions in Parliament and questioning the officials. Parliamentary questions are the right of a sitting Member of Parliament to request information from the government, challenge the government and bring matters of administration to the public via Parliament. But Aboelwafa and Yaghi (2024) demonstrate that parliamentary questioning can contribute to institutional change (and to reinforce the oversight role of parliament) provided there is a positive relationship between legislative support and larger parliamentary

engagement, through increased public expectations. While Akbik and Migliorati (2024) divide questions into the following types to get information, to request a justification and to ask for corrections on government actions. Pakistani studies have also shown the relevance of parliamentary oversight towards improving institution effectiveness, transparency, public participation and rule of law in recent times. The present study focuses on the 15th National Assembly of Pakistan which showed its inefficiency and inabilities to check the government, due to weak parliamentary surveillance (Afzal, Khan, and Rafeeq, 2025). The results in particular highlight the significance of the role played by legislation as a tool for strengthening democratic consolidation when executive, capacity building, polarization and public trust are still important challenges in the governance of this type of regime.

Research Objectives

1. To explore how legislature can play a role in enhancing the democratic elements of accountability and good governance beyond that of law-making.
2. To assess the functioning and effectiveness of parliamentary oversight mechanisms, such as standing committees, parliamentary questions, budget scrutiny, investigations, audit examination and post-legislative scrutiny, in the monitoring of executive performance.
3. To determine key institutional, political, informational and administrative barriers to effective parliamentary oversight and to deliberate on ways of enhancing the capacity of parliament in terms of transparency, responsiveness and accountability.

Research Questions

- Q1.** What roles does the legislation play in making the Parliament more accountable in a democracy and in ensuring good governance beyond the business of making laws?
- Q2.** To what extent do parliamentary accountability devices, such as parliamentary committees, parliamentary questions, scrutiny of government expenditure, investigations, the audit review and the post-legislative scrutiny, work to hold the executive to account?

Q3. What are the key obstacles to effective legislative oversight and what institutional reforms can enhance the capacity, transparency, responsiveness and democratic accountability of Parliament?

Significance of the Study

This is an important study because it has captured key features of legislatures' mandate beyond legislative law-making to one of government monitoring and democratic accountability. Ongoing checks of executive powers and transparency in public affairs may be provided through effective parliamentary committees, parliamentary questioning, parliamentary financial scrutiny and post-legislative parliamentary review. Over the last ten years, there has also been a growing acceptance of this aspect as parliamentary committees in Pakistan have taken greater engagements in scrutiny of legislations, review of budget and oversight of the executive. Meanwhile, amidst all of this, the parliamentary data for Pakistan for 2025 reveals that just 23.4% of written questions were answered by the government and highlights the practical difficulties in parliamentary democracy. The study can therefore help in class discussions on democratic governance as well as offer practical recommendations on the individual aspects of increasing the autonomy of committees, informed oversight, improving access to information, audit follow-up, and improving the capacity of the Parliaments, as well as strengthen the institutions of the Executive, to ensure they are able to respond adequately to the recommendation of the Legislature.

Literature Review

Legislative Oversight and Democratic Accountability

In recent scholarships, however, oversight as mechanism for democratic accountability has been looked at and is now gaining traction as a tool for oversight. Scholarship, increasingly, is beginning to see a shift in the nature of oversight from being secondary to being a part of democracy. Legislative inquiry is dependent on formal power of parliament, but it is defined by the highly context-specific incentives of the institution, individual, policy and partisans, as argued by Selin (2023). Maganoe (2023),

however, agrees that the constitutional concepts of oversight and the accountability, transparency and responsiveness of the Executive, particularly in relation to governance matters of maladministration and the abuse of powers relate in the public sector. In this sense, the idea of oversight is embedded in an institutional mechanism for an elected public to monitor the activities of the executive and to ensure that the activities of the government are limited by democracy.

The purpose of providing information to legislatures is also a part of the public accountability-oversight relation. Eldes, Fong, and Lowande (2024) deconstruct the two aspects of oversight — namely information and confrontation — and find that an oversight hearing can have both aspects. However, the fact that they are somewhat at odds with the idea that substantive criticism is undermined by political confrontation means that the opposite view has emerged that confrontational exchanges can be helpful in deciding information for the monitoring activity's agenda within the legislature. For example, in democratic assemblies, the right financial information is the official one that will be used to analyze government actions, and this results in the people having trust for politics and holding the parliament responsible (Ferry, Midgley, and Haslam 2024).

Comparative studies within the past few years also show that legislative oversight can be effective in different ways based on institutional structures and the allocation of political power. Parliamentary Committees of Inquiry are significant tools of political control since they enable Parliament to find out detailed facts regarding the carrying on of government activities, and the conduct of the executive branch, (Keppel 2023). However, the mechanisms have only been effective when they are institutionalized, have political agendas, and work in practice to change information to accountability. As such it is suggested in the literature that the need for democratic accountability is more than just about the availability of 'checking powers', needs to be about the workings and processes whereby the legislature can investigate, also collect evidence, interrogate officers and monitor issues.

Parliament committees, Questions and Executive Scrutiny

A mechanism of in-depth review of executive activity is an important institutional form, namely parliamentary committees which give members the chance to gain a greater understanding of executive activity than can be achieved during plenary sessions. Nater and Brock (2024) emphasize reaching out effectively to the public-sector institutions, including the executive branch, to improve the policy process and connect between legislative oversight and executive action. According to their analysis, representative legislatures need to have access to public-sector knowledge and administrative information that's deemed meaningful in order to assess the government's policies appropriately. It is especially significant that individual legislators may not have their own information and technical expertise, as do the executive agencies.

A second important way in which parliamentarians can become informed, seek clarification and question executive action, that is through parliamentary questions. Akbik and Migliorati (2024) distinguish between questions for information, justification and rectification based on 1393 questions asked in oral questioning to the European Parliament. They argue that the types of parliamentary questions are sensitive to the institutional structure of the elected assembly and the parliament that asks, respectively, seeks explanation, and that policy questions are particularly related to explanations. This evidence reveals parliamentary questions can serve with various accountabilities, not just to provide information.

The importance of parliamentary questions in institutional building is demonstrated in other research studies in non-Western countries. In Aboelwafa and Yaghi (2024), the authors demonstrate how the use of parliamentary questions helped to bring about law, procedural and behavioral changes in the Federal National Council in the United Arab Emirates. They find that the legislatures can gradually create this quality of accountability against the Executive branch through questioning, on condition that the legislatures are institutionally strengthened and government is responsive, public expectations for accountability are met and parliamentarians are

competent. Political accountability, in the form of parliamentary oversight, has recently been found an important factor of Pakistan's rule of law and democracy. Legislative effectiveness of the National Assembly can be affected if the National Assembly is weak, which will affect transparency in governance, legitimacy of performance of the National Assembly and the overall public trust. (Afzal, Khan and Rafeeq, 2025)

Institutional issues and increased legislative supervision

In most democratic institutions, legislatures have declarative authority but great deficiencies between the law and the implementation of it are reported in the literature. It turns out that oppositional motives exist, linking between parties is not always very strong, people often do not know what the issues are, and they don't always know what to do, and are not always well enforced, as the recent research found. In studies of congressional investigation, Selin (2023) concludes that various political and institutional motivations underlie congressmen's actions. Likewise, Eldes et al. (2024) demonstrate that there is a tension between the task of gathering information and confronting politics in oversight activities although they can occur concurrently. This indicates institutional arrangements that help to strengthen the efficacy of oversight mechanisms that encourage evidence-based oversight, while simultaneously lessening the potential impact of partisan competition for meaningful oversight.

Design and organization of parliamentary monitoring institutions are also factors which affect these institutions' effectiveness. Research on parliamentary committees reveals that different parliamentary institutions have different structures and conference committees are different in terms of the amount of power they have. Research on parliamentary committees reveals that there are different parliamentary structures and that the distribution of power to parliamentary committees can influence parliament's role as a monitor of the use of power. The effectiveness of ex-post oversight is much influenced not only by the institutional power, but also by composition of a committee or the institutional location of oversight power, as well as by the political majority and the presence of

minorities. Very recent questions raised in the European Parliament also indicate that Parliament could have less information concerning the "normal activity" of agency work and more information regarding reactive (event-driven) oversight. In reference to this, a touch on the type of oversight that's carried out at a time of crisis, or when something is quite apparent as a failure versus tracking government performance on a regular basis is highly innovative and could be included under an 'important concern'.

The recent literature is consistent in the idea that the role of legislature is rather one of institutionalizing, and not yet to officiating, and that reviewing legislative power needs to be on an ongoing basis with continuous improvement. Thelele and Asha (2025) identified challenges that have hindered the effective functioning of a provincial legislative oversight in South Africa such as poor performance, maladministration, use of state resources and corruption. Oni, Adenuga and Dele-Dada (2025) provide a connecting thread between governance of legislation and accountability on one hand and government capacity on the other, emphasizing the importance of augmenting the capacity of government to build legislative capacity for that sake of accountability. Likewise, Afzal et al. (2025) emphasize reforms which can help in making parliamentary institutions more effective, transparent and engaging in Pakistan.

Research Methodology

Research Design

Research design used in the study was of Qualitative approach and the qualitative design was aimed at uncovering the role of legislative oversight in enhancing democratic accountability and good governance beyond legislatures' role as lawmakers. A qualitative approach suited the study as it was related to institutional practices, parliamentary mechanisms, executive accountability, transparency, political constraints and governance processes. Documentary research was applied to examine, in a systematic way, the parliamentary records, legislative documents, government reports, audit materials, policy documents and academic literature relevant to the research.

Study Population and Sample

The population comprised official legislative and government documents, parliamentary records, oversight reports, policy documents, constitutional provisions, parliamentary questions and responses, budget documents, audit reports and scholarly analyses on legislative oversight and democratic accountability. The documents were selected using a purposive sampling technique where documents that directly relate to the study objectives were selected. The final sample comprised of 40 parliamentary documents, 20 legislative committees and oversight, 15 budget and audit, 10 constitutional or legislative, and 15 scholarly studies. The documents were chosen to highlight elements relating to legislative oversight, accountability of the executive, transparency, institutional performance, public participation and good governance.

Sampling Technique

The study utilized purposive sampling as it is limited to studying those documents that have information relevant to the study of legislative oversight and democratic accountability. Documents were selected if they included comments regarding parliamentary committees, executive review, parliamentary questions, budget oversight, investigations, audit review, policy implementation, transparency or institutional accountability. Documents that were not relevant to the research goals were not included. The documents and studies included were given priority where they were published in the last five years (2021-2026) to account for legislative oversight and democratic governance as it has evolved over the past five years.

Data Sources

Secondary documentary data gathered from parliamentary, governmental, institutional, and academic sources were used in the study. The Parliamentary materials comprised legislative debates, parliamentary questions, Parliamentary committee debates and reports, oversight documents and official Parliamentary statements. The governmental materials consisted of budget material, audit material, policy material, constitutional provisions, administrative report and administrative messages. Works of academics comprised R&D papers on topics such as

legislative oversight, democratic oversight, parliamentary committees, transparency, accountability, good governance and executive oversight. Using more than one documentary source meant the researcher had multiple source views from the institutional, political, administrative, and governance perspectives that could provide a similar, if not better, analysis of legislative oversight.

Data Collection Procedure

Data collection went on systematically in several stages. The researcher identified the main concepts or themes concerned with the research topic which include; Legislative oversight, Democratic accountability, Executive scrutiny, Parliamentary committees, Parliamentary questions, Financial oversight, Transparency and good governance. Secondly, the relevant documents were identified and retrieved from official and academic sources. Thirdly, each of the documents was subjected to a screening based on the pre-established selection criteria that was developed. Lastly, the screening of the documents followed according to the predetermined selection criteria developed. Fourth, the documents selected were arranged in the sequence of their apparent source, publication date, the nature of the oversight mechanism, and researchers' questions. Lastly, the organized documentary material was put together for qualitative analysis.

Data Analysis

Qualitative thematic analysis was used as an approach in analyzing the collected documents. The selected documents were read multiple times by the researcher and analyzed for the presence of common ideas, practices of institutions, governance issues, and accountability mechanisms. These are the initial codes that were created around instances of executive accountability, committee effectiveness, parliamentary questioning, budget analysis, audit follow-up, transparency, political limitations, institutional capacity, public engagement and governance enhancement. These codes were then enumerated in larger themes. These key themes were subsequently examined across the various

documentary sources to find commonalities and variations, shortcomings of institutions, and even feasible suggestions for reform.

Parliamentary Question and Response

Two key instruments of parliamentary oversight, parliamentary questions and parliamentary executive responses were studied. They were classified based on the general purpose of the question such as "information inquiry", "explanation inquiry", "justification inquiry" and "corrective action demand". The responses from the executive were evaluated for clarity, completeness, relevance, responsiveness, and follow-up. An analysis was also conducted of legislators' actions or questions after receiving government answers. This process was used to assess the role of questioning in Parliament as a mechanism for holding government to account or as a purely parliamentary procedure.

Examinations of Parliamentary Committees

Parliamentary committees focused on their roles of overseeing government policy, administrative performance and examining and scrutinizing the institutions and actions of government. Committee reports, proceedings, recommendations, and follow-up activities were reviewed to determine how committees helped to build accountability. Institutional factors like committee autonomy, access to information, technical expertise and political influence, frequency of meetings and implementation of committee recommendations were also analyzed. This dimension allowed the study to evaluate the effectiveness and continuity of committees' quality of oversight of the executive institutions.

Results and Analysis

Overview of Legislative Oversight Mechanisms

Analysis of 100 selected documents revealed five broad categories of parliamentary oversight: parliamentary questioning, financial and audit scrutiny, policy implementation monitoring, parliamentary committee oversight and executive scrutiny.

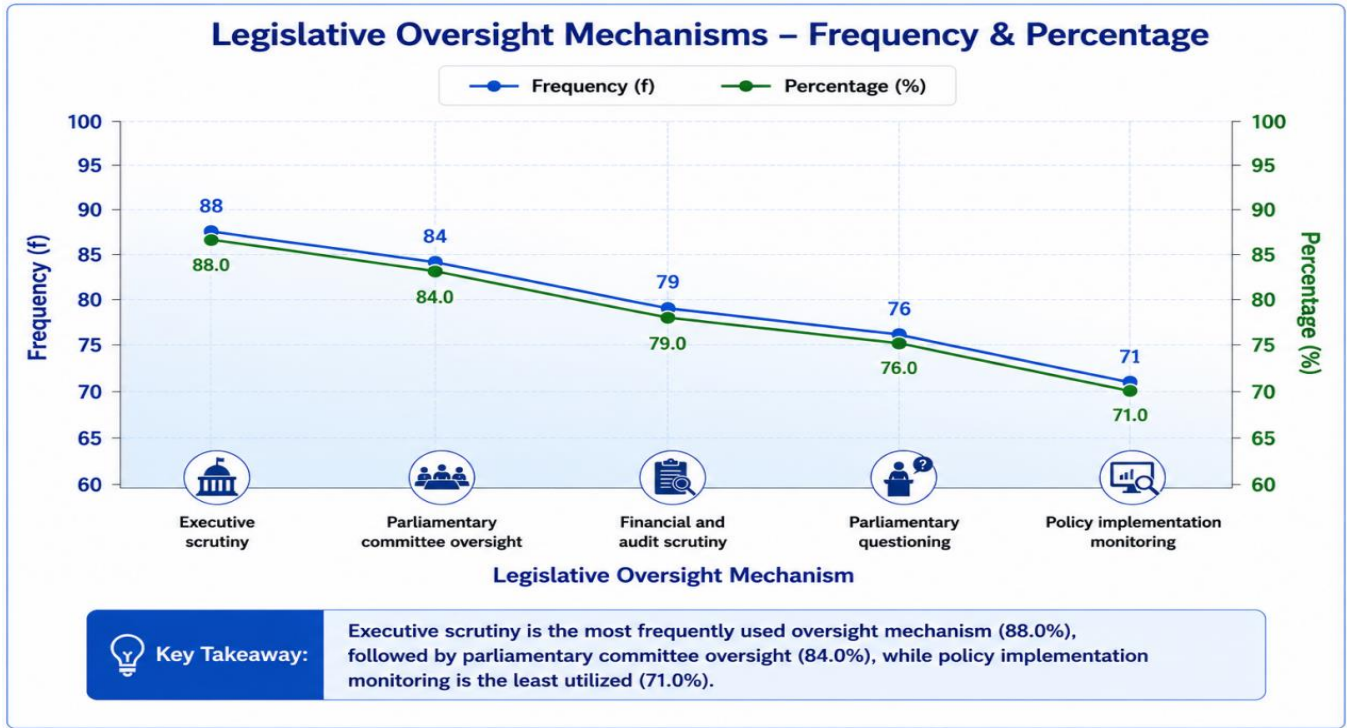
Table 1: Major Legislative Oversight Mechanisms Identified in the Documentary Sample (N = 100)

Legislative Oversight Mechanism	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Executive scrutiny	88	88.0
Parliamentary committee oversight	84	84.0
Financial and audit scrutiny	79	79.0
Parliamentary questioning	76	76.0
Policy implementation monitoring	71	71.0

As demonstrated in Table 1, the highest number of documents mentioned executive scrutiny (88%). This discovery was proof of the great significance of monitoring executive power as the key activity of parliamentary surveillance. It would often be the records of such matters as decisions and actions of Ministers, government policy and the performance of the Executive. Oversight by parliamentary committees was the second most common, with 84%. Committees were useful channels for in-depth study, for discussion of government policy, for probing government decisions, for scrutiny of government

work. Exhibited it that committees were an important means of a continuous checking procedure on the part of the legislature. Financial and audit examinations were found in 79% of the documents, and parliamentary questioning was found in 76%. These mechanisms allowed Parliament to scrutinize government expenditure and make inquiries of the Government. Policy implementation monitoring was mentioned in 71% of the documents, indicating less systematic efforts to track if governments' policies lead to intended outcomes.

Figure 1: Major Legislative Oversight Mechanisms Identified in the Documentary Sample (N = 100)



Legislative Oversight and Democratic Accountability

The analysis identified five major outcomes

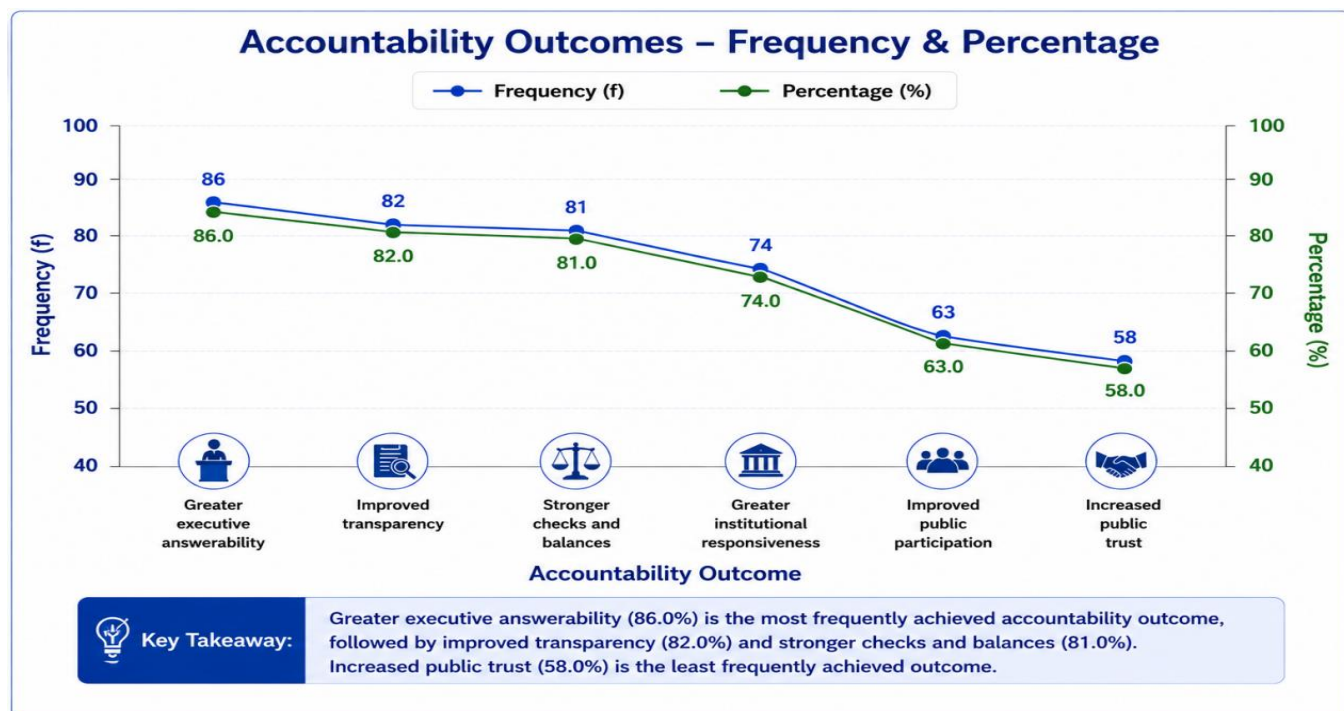
associated with legislative oversight: executive answerability, transparency, checks and balances, institutional responsiveness, and public participation.

Table 2: *Democratic Accountability Outcomes Associated with Legislative Oversight*

Accountability Outcome	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Greater executive answerability	86	86.0
Improved transparency	82	82.0
Stronger checks and balances	81	81.0
Greater institutional responsiveness	74	74.0
Improved public participation	63	63.0
Increased public trust	58	58.0

Executive answerability had highest percentage with 86%. The outcome of this showed that legislative oversight was mainly used to augment government accountability, through the need to account for and explain decisions. They were also available formally by parliamentary questions, committee hearings and investigations. Documents had improved transparency in 82% of cases, and stronger checks and balances in 81% of cases. The results showed that the more that the legislatures searched and the more that they exposed government, the more institutional boundaries grew on government. Information was

a tool that helped MPs review government actions. Legislation had access to information to help them scrutinize government actions. Public participation was mentioned in 63% of the documents, public trust in 58%, and institutional responsiveness in 74% of documents. The bottom numbers indicated that formal parliamentary supervision did not necessarily engender more public participation or public confidence. Enhanced links between the scrutiny of parliament, citizens and governments were thus still needed.

Figure 2: *Democratic Accountability Outcomes Associated with Legislative Oversight*

Challenges Affecting Legislative Oversight

The documentary analysis identified several

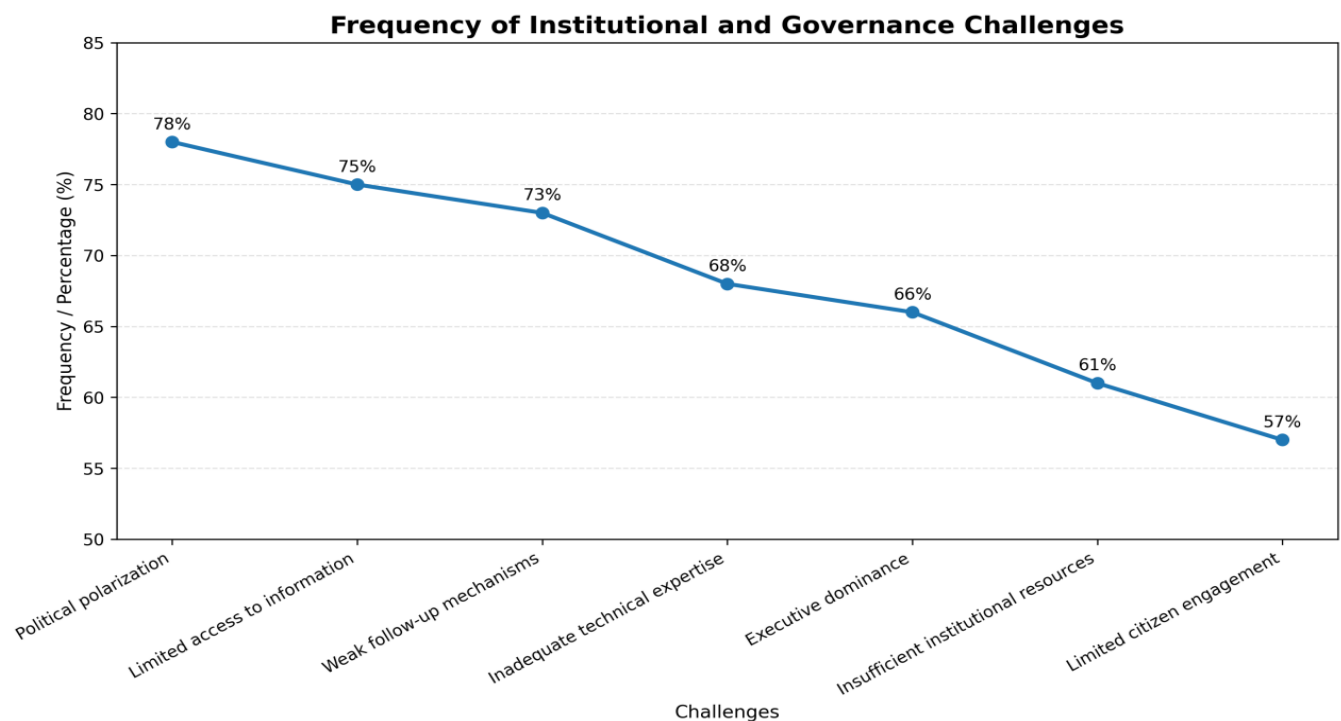
challenges that reduced the effectiveness of legislative oversight.

Table 3: Major Challenges Affecting Legislative Oversight

Challenge	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Political polarization	78	78.0
Limited access to information	75	75.0
Weak follow-up mechanisms	73	73.0
Inadequate technical expertise	68	68.0
Executive dominance	66	66.0
Insufficient institutional resources	61	61.0
Limited citizen engagement	57	57.0

At 78% the top challenge cited was political polarization. The results showed that partisan competition may lessen cooperation amongst Parliament and the effectiveness of oversight. Committee investigations, questioning and interpretation of government performance may be affected by the political differences. Poor information access was cited in 75% of the documents, while poor follow-up mechanisms were cited in 73% of the documents. All these findings showed that the legislature needed to be informed, quickly and reliably, about executive decisions and activities to be able to judge them. Weak follow-ups also encumbered the effect of

parliamentary recommendations, as government institutions were able to react in an ineffective manner. Lack of technical skill seemed to be present in 68% of the documents and lack of executive skill was present in 66% of the documents. 61% received an institutional resource deficiency, and 57% received an inactivity amongst citizens. The results showed that successful monitoring needs trained members of the Legislature, legislative research assistance, resource availability, institutional independence and more interaction between the legislative body and citizens.

Figure 3: Major Challenges Affecting Legislative Oversight

Measures for Strengthening Legislative Oversight

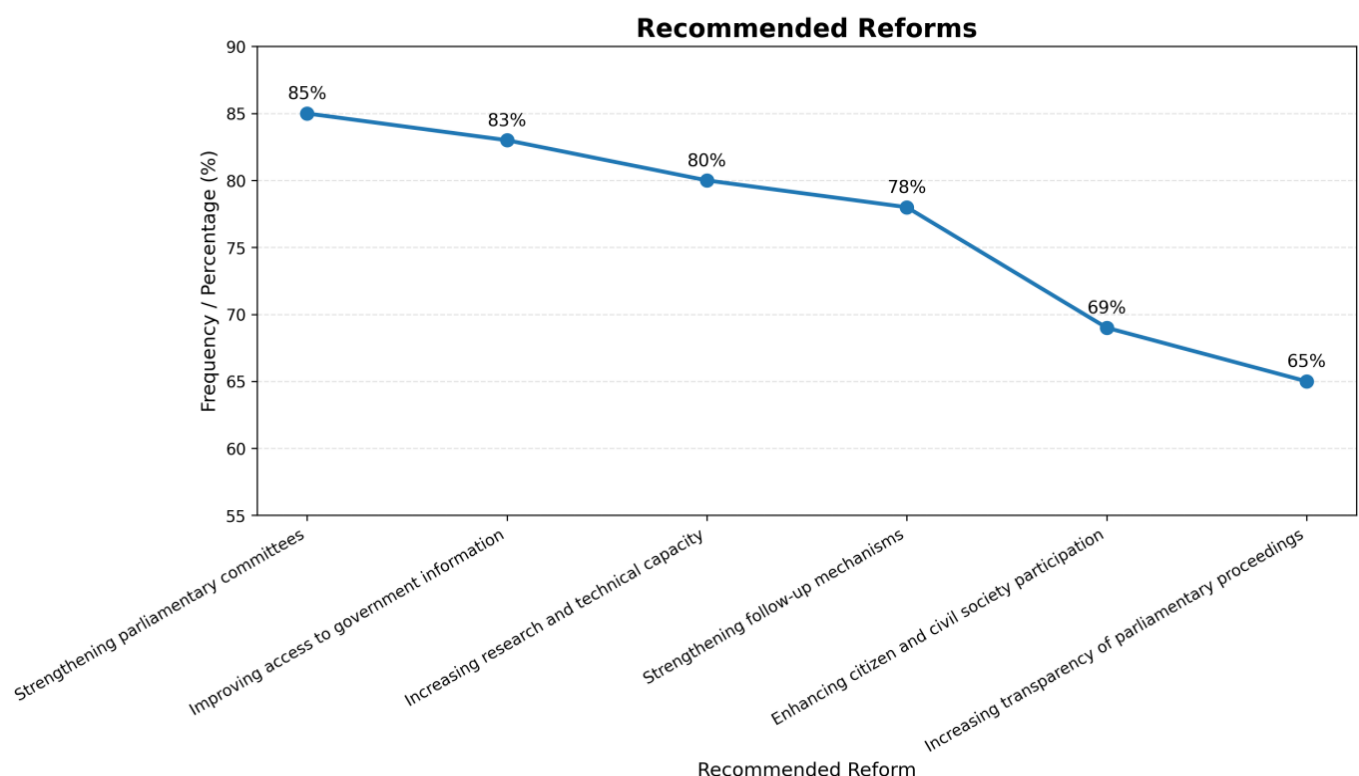
Table 4: *Recommended Measures for Strengthening Legislative Oversight*

Recommended Reform	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Strengthening parliamentary committees	85	85.0
Improving access to government information	83	83.0
Increasing research and technical capacity	80	80.0
Strengthening follow-up mechanisms	78	78.0
Enhancing citizen and civil society participation	69	69.0
Increasing transparency of parliamentary proceedings	65	65.0

Re-strengthening parliamentary committees came across as the most predominant at 85%. The discovery highlighted the need for the committee to be independent; have specialist knowledge; meet regularly; hold public committee hearings; and to hold that the performance of government should undergo continuous review. There were also frequent mentions of increasing access to government information (found in 83% of the documents) and increasing research and technical capacity (found in 80%). These results demonstrated that oversight was critical and required information and the capacity to analyze

that information. Research facilities to support the work of Parliament and technical experts may be strengthened for evidence-based parliamentary scrutiny. Enhancing follow-up procedures were mentioned in 78% of the documents. The presence of citizens and civil society was present in 69%, and transparency of parliamentary proceedings was in 65%. These findings showed that the supervision needed post-park recommendation process. Open hearings, reports and publicly transparent proceedings can also bring further connectivity between the citizens and the oversight of the legislative branch.

Figure 4: *Recommended Measures for Strengthening Legislative Oversight*



Discussion

Overall, the outcome of the document sampling analysis was that executive oversight was the most salient legislative oversight tool. This finding entailed that the legislative institutions started regularly fulfilling the function of accountability rather than their legislative function. This was in line with Ecoma, Ecoma, and Ecoma (2024) which explained that legislative oversight is one of the key tools in managing executive accountability, transparency and good governance. With good oversight, said Matebese-Notshulwana (2024), legislatures can carry out good oversight function and hold the executive to account for good governance. The present results extended this picture, for whilst the presence of oversight was linked to regular events of legislative and public debate, it was also linked to regular scrutiny of the executive action, not just during such debate.

The findings also showed that parliamentary committee scrutiny is one of the factors that affected detailed scrutiny (84%). Committees established for the purpose of further elaborating the discussion of Government performance, examining Administration matters, for discussing policy implements and for examining executive decisions. This finding seemed to support Zubek (2025) who showed that procedures of committees in the legislature could have a positive impact on raising the capacity of legislators to question ministers' proposals, especially in government coalitions. A more recent study by Leidorf-Tidå and Busuioc (2025) reinforced the position taken by parliamentary hearings and led to the same conclusion as above, albeit without going so deep into the issues of over- and under-emphasizing, and the very special look granted on the routine administrative practice. The present results therefore suggest that effectiveness of a committee is not only dependent on formal authority, but also its ability to undertake systematic and porno scrutiny.

The questions of the executive's answerability (86%) and transparency (82%), which would show the real importance of the legislative control yielded the best accountability results. Oversight provided by a Parliament allowed officials to provide explanations of decision-making, address concerns, and share information on government

activities. A previous study by Yong (2025) demonstrated that parliamentary questions could be used to question the government on institutional structures while more recent parliamentary oversight studies pointed out the importance of questions in questions merit and executive replies in securing accountability. These ongoing findings thus suggested that quality of oversight depended on the quality, comprehensiveness and receptiveness of executive answers to the questions asked by lawmakers.

Political polarization (78 %), lack of access to information (75 %) and lack of follow-up mechanisms (73 %) are felt challenges. This demonstrated that there could be a lessened version of the sense of accountability where institutional collaboration is less developed and the politicians are less informed, with and without formal monitoring/control of the officials. In fact, recent empirical findings from 28 European democracies pointed to a negative correlation between the two processes – polarization and democratic accountability suggesting that polarization is indeed a condition that restricts democracy. Another limitation of the Efficacy of Congressional Oversight study is that an oversight effect on the implementation of the policy might be relatively weak, a result of the difficulty of converting judicial oversight into substantive effects. Therefore, this research work emphasized the reduction of party boundaries and improving access and follow-up facilities to reduce particle boundaries.

Strengthening of parliamentary committees (85%), enhancement of information access (83%), enhancement of technical capacity (80%) and strengthening organizational follow-up mechanisms (78%) were mentioned as key priorities for reforms. The results showed that beyond the constitutional powers, there was a need for institutional capacity to be able to oversee, the findings showed. This question is very pertinent in Pakistan as in this regard Ahmad & Qamar (2024) have argued that stronger Senate's role of oversight over the executive may help gaining greater degree of accountability and good governance. Afzal et al. (2025) pointed out the problem of the monitoring function played by the parliament in Pakistan and emphasized that there is need of improving it in the name of

transparency and people's participation. The present study has therefore reiterated the importance of incorporating a broader perspective of the effectiveness of legislation as a policy-making process of legislating, monitoring, financial scrutiny, eliciting questions from the Executive, conducting policy audit, public criticizing and condemning.

Conclusion

The study demonstrated that in addition to its function as a lawmaking process, legislative oversight is an integral part of democratic accountability and accountability in good governance. The results showed that through executive review, parliamentary committees, financial and audit control, questioning of the executive, and monitoring of the implementation of policies, legislatures can review government decisions and performance continually. The most productive checks on the executive were through Executive scrutiny, and all that emerged in terms of accountability is Executive answerability and transparency. Meanwhile, heightened polarization, restricted information access, inadequate follow-up and monitoring, the lack of technical expertise, executive domination, and restricted resources reduced the public value and utility of oversight. Therefore, a legislature may not effectively perform its democratic accountability function of bill making, the study concluded. To promote good governance, it is necessary to continuously monitor the executive's activities, spending, policies and institutional performance. Enhancing the oversight can contribute to greater transparency, responsiveness of institutions and good use of public funds, as well as public trust in democratic institutions.

Future Directions

Conflict of Interest

The authors showed no conflict of interest.

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Legislative oversight in the future research empirical, comparative and mixed methods approach in research to enhance understanding of effectivity in practice. Key experiences related to parliamentary scrutiny and responsiveness of the executive can be developed based on information gathered from survey or interviews with legislators, parliamentary staff, civil servants, civil society representatives, journalists and citizens. Comparative research studies could focus on the difference between the National Assembly, Senate and the provincial assemblies in Pakistan about their powers to address the Executive and Executive's activities vis-à-vis other parliamentary democracies. Future research further might investigate effects of oversight intensity on GC outcomes such as implementation of budget; corruption control; public service delivery; transparency; effectiveness of policies; and public trust. Observations on the impact of Parliament's findings on Executive action over a period of time could be applied to draw empirical conclusions about the effect of Parliamentary scrutiny on heightened institutional effectiveness over time, and understand whether it has permanent impacts on the behavior of the Executive. The research would be extended to the possibilities of digital technologies, open Parliamentary data, use of artificial intelligence and electronic monitoring systems for better access to the government information, for monitoring implementation of the Parliamentary recommendations. Special emphasis should be given to the monitoring of laws after their passage through legislatures, where parliament can be able to determine whether the laws passed achieve the expected results, and whether good governance will be achieved when the laws are put into practice.

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