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QUALITATIVE STUDY

Navigating the Business Environment

A Qualitative Analysis of Strategic Challenges and Governance in Tanzania (2000–2026)

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ABSTRACT

The strategic and governance landscape for enterprises in Tanzania has undergone significant transformation, influenced by evolving regulatory frameworks, market liberalisation, and regional integration. Existing literature often lacks in-depth qualitative insights into the lived experiences of business leaders navigating this complex environment. This study aims to identify and analyse the principal strategic challenges and governance issues confronting businesses, exploring how executives perceive, interpret, and respond to these constraints to sustain operations and growth. A qualitative, multi-case study design was employed, utilising purposive sampling. Data were collected via in-depth, semi-structured interviews with 24 senior executives and board members from diverse sectors. Thematic analysis was conducted using NVivo software. Analysis revealed three dominant thematic challenges: regulatory unpredictability, infrastructural deficiencies, and access to capital. A prominent finding was that approximately 70% of participants cited opaque bureaucratic processes as a critical impediment to strategic planning, leading to a pervasive 'wait-and-see' investment approach. The findings illustrate a business environment where strategic agility is often constrained by systemic governance issues. Executive decision-making is heavily shaped by the need to mitigate non-market risks, which can divert focus from core commercial objectives. Policymakers should prioritise enhancing regulatory transparency and consistency. Firms are advised to develop robust stakeholder engagement strategies and diversify funding sources to build resilience against identified systemic vulnerabilities. Strategic management, corporate governance, business environment, qualitative research, East Africa This paper provides novel empirical evidence on the cognitive and behavioural strategies Tanzanian executives employ to navigate governance constraints, contributing a nuanced behavioural perspective to the institutional analysis of African business environments.

Keywords: *Qualitative analysis, Strategic management, Corporate governance, Sub-Saharan Africa, Business environment, Case study research, Emerging markets*

Article Highlights

Core Finding

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Regulatory unpredictability emerged as a dominant constraint on strategic planning.• 70% of participants cited opaque bureaucratic processes as a critical impediment.• Infrastructural deficiencies and access to capital were key systemic vulnerabilities.• Findings reveal a pervasive 'wait-and-see' investment approach among executives.	<p>The study identifies three principal challenges constraining strategic agility: regulatory unpredictability, infrastructural deficiencies, and access to capital.</p> <p><i>This qualitative analysis offers a nuanced behavioural perspective on navigating institutional constraints.</i></p>
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ABSTRACT-ONLY PUBLICATION

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