

Navigating Structural Constraints and Strategic Adaptation

A Survey of Ghanaian Enterprise Performance, 2000–2026

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ABSTRACT

The performance of enterprises in Ghana is significantly shaped by a complex interplay of structural constraints, including infrastructural deficits, regulatory burdens, and access to finance. Understanding how firms strategically adapt to these persistent challenges is critical for fostering sustainable growth, yet longitudinal insights combining these factors are limited. This study aims to systematically analyse the relationship between perceived structural constraints, strategic adaptation mechanisms, and reported enterprise performance. It seeks to identify the most salient constraints and evaluate the efficacy of different adaptive strategies employed by firms. A cross-sectional survey was administered to a stratified random sample of 450 formally registered small, medium, and large enterprises across multiple sectors. The instrument measured perceptions of constraints, adaptation strategies, and performance metrics using Likert scales and categorical variables. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics, factor analysis, and multivariate regression. Access to long-term capital was identified as the most severe constraint, cited by 78% of respondents. A key finding is that firms employing integrated adaptation strategies—combining technological adoption with formalised stakeholder engagement—reported a statistically significant 22% higher performance score than those relying on singular tactical adjustments. Enterprise performance is not solely determined by the intensity of structural constraints but is critically mediated by the sophistication and integration of strategic adaptation responses. Proactive, multi-faceted adaptation emerges as a decisive factor for resilience. Policy should prioritise deepening capital markets and reducing the cost of long-term credit. Enterprise support programmes must move beyond generic advice to promote integrated strategic planning frameworks that combine operational innovation with enhanced governance and stakeholder management. Strategic adaptation, structural constraints, enterprise performance, business environment, Ghana, survey research This study provides a novel, integrated framework and a unique longitudinal dataset linking perceived constraints, adaptation typologies, and performance, offering a granular analysis of strategic mediation effects in an emerging African economy.

Keywords: *Structural constraints, Strategic adaptation, Enterprise performance, Sub-Saharan Africa, Survey research, Institutional theory, Ghanaian business environment*

Article Highlights

- Access to long-term capital was the most severe constraint, cited by 78% of surveyed enterprises.
- Performance is critically mediated by the sophistication of strategic adaptation, not just constraint intensity.
- Proactive, multi-faceted adaptation emerges as the decisive

Policy Imperative

Support must evolve from generic advice to promoting integrated strategic frameworks that combine innovation with governance.

Presents a novel integrated framework linking constraints, adaptation typologies, and performance.

factor for enterprise resilience.	
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