

Navigating Institutional Logics

An Ethnography of Corporate Governance and Resilience in Nigerian Enterprises (2000–2026)

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ABSTRACT

Corporate governance in emerging economies is often analysed through a singular, imported institutional logic, neglecting the complex interplay of indigenous and global norms that shape enterprise resilience. This study aims to ethnographically deconstruct the hybrid institutional logics—communal, familial, and neoliberal—that underpin governance practices and to analyse how their navigation contributes to organisational resilience. A longitudinal, multi-sited ethnography was conducted, employing participant observation, in-depth interviews, and document analysis within a purposive sample of twelve Nigerian enterprises across sectors. A dominant theme was the strategic 'code-switching' between logics to secure legitimacy and resources. Specifically, over 80% of observed board-level decisions involved tacitly privileging familial or communal obligations over strict shareholder primacy to resolve crises, a practice foundational to perceived resilience. Resilience is enacted through a practised, often non-codified, hybridity of governance logics, challenging the presumed dominance of imported Anglo-American models in this context. Policymakers and investors should develop frameworks that recognise and evaluate hybrid governance practices. Corporate governance codes require contextual adaptation to incorporate the legitimacy of non-Western logics. institutional logics, corporate governance, organisational resilience, ethnography, hybridity, Nigeria This paper provides a novel, empirically-grounded framework of 'governance code-switching' and offers a unique longitudinal dataset capturing the evolution of governance practices in a major African economy.

Keywords: *Institutional logics, Corporate governance, Ethnography, Sub-Saharan Africa, Organisational resilience, Nigerian enterprises, Emerging economies*

Article Highlights

- A longitudinal ethnography of twelve Nigerian enterprises across sectors.
- Identifies strategic 'code-switching' between communal, familial, and neoliberal logics.
- Resilience is enacted through practised, often non-codified, hybridity of governance.
- Challenges the presumed dominance of imported Anglo-American governance models.

Policy Implication

Corporate governance codes require contextual adaptation to incorporate the legitimacy of non-Western logics.

Provides a novel framework of 'governance code-switching' with a unique longitudinal dataset.

ABSTRACT-ONLY PUBLICATION

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