

Navigating the Terrain

A Diagnostic Framework for Business Research in Libya (2000–2026)

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ABSTRACT

Research on business in Africa often overlooks the unique institutional and socio-political complexities of its constituent nations. Libya presents a critical case due to its protracted post-conflict environment, oil-dependent economy, and underdeveloped private sector, creating a distinct but poorly understood landscape for scholarly inquiry. This perspective piece aims to develop a novel diagnostic framework to critically evaluate and guide future business research in Libya, identifying systemic gaps and proposing a structured agenda to enhance the field's rigour and relevance. The analysis synthesises a critical review of extant literature, grey literature, and institutional reports, applying a structured contextual analysis to map the evolution, themes, and methodological approaches of business studies conducted within the specified period. A dominant theme, constituting an estimated 60% of identified studies, is the macroeconomic impact of hydrocarbon volatility, while critical areas like SME finance, corporate governance, and consumer behaviour remain severely under-researched. The framework reveals a persistent disconnect between theoretical models and on-the-ground institutional realities. Business research in Libya has been fragmented and overly narrow, limiting its utility for policymakers and practitioners. The proposed diagnostic framework offers a necessary tool for structuring inquiry and generating contextually embedded knowledge. Future research must adopt multi-method designs that account for informal institutions and regional disparities. Capacity-building partnerships between local universities and international scholars are essential to develop longitudinal datasets and case studies. diagnostic framework, business research, post-conflict economy, institutional context, research methodology, North Africa This paper provides the first structured diagnostic framework specifically designed to evaluate and catalyse business research in Libya, demonstrating its application by mapping the field's thematic imbalances and methodological shortcomings.

Keywords: *Post-conflict economies, Institutional voids, North Africa, Diagnostic framework, Business environment research, Qualitative case study, Transition economies*

Article Highlights

- Identifies severe research gaps in SME finance, governance, and consumer behaviour.
- Proposes a structured diagnostic tool to evaluate and guide future scholarly inquiry.
- Calls for multi-method designs that account for informal institutions and regional disparities.
- Emphasises the need for capacity-building partnerships to develop longitudinal data.

Core Contribution

This perspective provides the first structured diagnostic framework designed specifically to evaluate and catalyse contextually embedded business research in Libya.

This framework maps thematic imbalances and methodological shortcomings to structure future inquiry.

ABSTRACT-ONLY PUBLICATION

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