

Navigating Structural Constraints

A Diagnostic Framework for Enterprise Governance in Ghana (2000–2024)

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ABSTRACT

Enterprise governance in emerging economies operates within a complex web of structural constraints, including institutional voids, regulatory burdens, and socio-cultural norms. The specific configuration and impact of these constraints on firm-level governance practices in West Africa remain underexplored, creating a gap in both academic literature and practical guidance for policymakers and entrepreneurs. This paper develops and applies a diagnostic framework to systematically identify and analyse the key structural constraints affecting enterprise governance. It aims to categorise these constraints, assess their relative influence on governance efficacy, and elucidate the adaptive strategies firms employ in response. The study employs a longitudinal, multi-method design, integrating archival analysis of policy documents and corporate reports with in-depth, semi-structured interviews with founders, directors, and senior managers from a stratified sample of enterprises across sectors and scales. Analysis reveals that regulatory instability and informal kinship networks constitute the most salient constraints, directly influencing board composition and strategic decision-making. A dominant theme was the strategic navigation of these constraints through hybrid governance models, blending formal compliance with culturally embedded relational practices. Structural constraints are not merely barriers but constitutive elements of the governance landscape, necessitating context-specific frameworks rather than the direct application of imported models. Effective governance is shown to be a dynamic process of adaptation rather than static adherence to principles. Policymakers should focus on enhancing regulatory predictability and supporting the development of localised governance codes. Practitioners are advised to conduct structured audits of structural constraints and invest in building board-level capabilities for strategic navigation. corporate governance, structural constraints, institutional voids, hybrid governance, emerging economies, West Africa This paper provides a novel diagnostic framework for analysing enterprise governance in constrained environments and presents original empirical evidence on the primacy of regulatory instability and kinship networks as shaping forces.

Keywords: *Enterprise Governance, Structural Constraints, Sub-Saharan Africa, Institutional Voids, Diagnostic Framework, Emerging Economies*

Article Highlights

- Identifies regulatory instability and informal kinship networks as primary governance constraints.
- Proposes a novel diagnostic framework for analysing enterprise governance in constrained environments.
- Reveals adaptive hybrid models blending formal compliance with relational practices.
- Calls for context-specific governance codes and structured constraint audits for practitioners.

Core Finding

Effective governance is a dynamic process of adaptation, not static adherence to principles, shaped by the strategic navigation of local structural constraints.

This study offers a longitudinal, multi-method analysis of enterprise governance in Ghana from 2000 to 2024.

ABSTRACT-ONLY PUBLICATION

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