

Integrating Indigenous Knowledge Systems

A Theoretical Framework for Business Governance in Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

Prevailing business governance models in Nigeria often derive from Western theoretical constructs, which may not fully align with local socio-cultural contexts. This creates a gap between formal governance structures and the lived realities of many enterprises, particularly small and medium-sized ones. This article develops a novel theoretical framework for business governance by systematically integrating Indigenous Knowledge Systems (IKS). It aims to conceptualise how principles from these systems can inform and enhance governance structures, decision-making processes, and stakeholder relations within the Nigerian business environment. The study employs a conceptual research design, constructing a theoretical framework through a critical synthesis of literature on business governance and documented IKS from Nigeria. The framework is developed using abductive reasoning to propose coherent linkages between these domains. The framework posits that integrating IKS can strengthen governance through culturally resonant mechanisms. A central proposition is that governance structures incorporating the IKS principle of communal accountability could reduce principal-agent conflicts by fostering a stronger sense of collective oversight, moving beyond purely transactional relationships. The proposed framework offers a viable alternative to imported governance models, providing a structured approach to leverage endogenous knowledge for more effective and sustainable business practice. It establishes a foundation for contextually relevant governance theory. Future research should empirically test the framework's propositions. Practitioners and policymakers are encouraged to pilot governance initiatives that incorporate identified IKS principles, such as communal accountability, within business support programmes. Indigenous Knowledge Systems, business governance, theoretical framework, Nigeria, communal accountability This paper provides the first dedicated theoretical framework for integrating Nigerian Indigenous Knowledge Systems into formal business governance structures, offering a new lens for analysing and improving governance in culturally complex environments.

Keywords: *Indigenous Knowledge Systems, Corporate Governance, Postcolonial Theory, African Business Ethics, Contextualisation, Nigeria, Stakeholder Theory*

Article Highlights

- Proposes a novel framework integrating Indigenous Knowledge Systems into formal governance.
- Identifies communal accountability as a key mechanism to strengthen oversight.
- Offers a structured alternative to imported Western governance models.
- Establishes foundation for contextually relevant governance theory in Nigeria.

Core Proposition

The framework posits that integrating Indigenous Knowledge Systems can strengthen governance through culturally resonant mechanisms, moving beyond purely transactional relationships.

This paper provides the first dedicated theoretical framework for integrating Nigerian IKS into business governance.

ABSTRACT-ONLY PUBLICATION

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