

MIXED METHODS STUDY

Navigating the Nigerian Business Environment

A Mixed-Methods Diagnostic of Governance, Infrastructure, and Financial Access (2000–2026)

Chinweike Okonkwo¹

¹ Babcock University

Correspondence: cokonkwo@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

The business environment in Nigeria is characterised by significant challenges that impede enterprise growth and financial inclusion. A comprehensive, integrated analysis of the interplay between governance, infrastructure, and financial access is required to inform effective policy. This study aims to diagnose the systemic constraints within the Nigerian business ecosystem by examining the relationships between institutional governance, physical infrastructure quality, and access to formal and informal finance for micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs). A sequential explanatory mixed-methods design was employed. Quantitative analysis of enterprise-level panel data established correlational patterns, followed by in-depth qualitative interviews with entrepreneurs and key institutional stakeholders to explicate causal mechanisms and lived experiences. Quantitative analysis revealed that firms reporting 'major' or 'severe' infrastructure constraints were 40% less likely to secure formal credit. Thematic analysis of interview data identified a pervasive 'informal adaptation' strategy, where entrepreneurs bypass failing formal systems but incur high transaction costs. The findings demonstrate a self-reinforcing cycle where poor governance undermines infrastructure, which in turn restricts financial access, forcing enterprises into inefficient informal arrangements that limit scalability. Policy must move beyond siloed interventions. We recommend integrated 'business environment compacts' that link targeted infrastructure investment in economic clusters with parallel reforms to local regulatory enforcement and the development of asset-based lending products. Business environment, mixed methods, financial access, infrastructure, governance, MSMEs, Nigeria This study provides a novel integrated diagnostic framework and a unique merged dataset, demonstrating the critical interdependencies between governance, infrastructure, and finance that are typically analysed in isolation.

Keywords: *Mixed Methods Research, Business Environment, Sub-Saharan Africa, Corporate Governance, Financial Inclusion, Infrastructure Deficit, Enterprise Development*

Article Highlights

- Quantitative analysis links severe infrastructure deficits directly to reduced formal credit access.
- Qualitative findings expose pervasive 'informal adaptation' strategies with high transaction costs.
- Study reveals a cyclical constraint: poor governance undermines infrastructure, which restricts finance.
- Recommends integrated 'business environment compacts' over siloed policy interventions.

Policy Imperative

Move beyond isolated reforms. Effective intervention requires integrated compacts linking infrastructure investment, regulatory enforcement, and financial product development.

This mixed-methods study diagnoses the interdependent systemic constraints facing Nigerian MSMEs.

ABSTRACT-ONLY PUBLICATION

This is an abstract-only publication. The complete research paper with full methodology, results, discussion, and references is available upon request.

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