

Navigating the Nigerian Business Landscape

A Diagnostic Survey of Persistent and Emerging Challenges (2000–2026)

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Received: 20 May 2025 | Accepted: 13 August 2025 | Published: 02 October 2025 | DOI:

[10.5281/zenodo.18947649](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18947649)

ABSTRACT

The business environment in Nigeria is characterised by a complex interplay of long-standing structural issues and new, dynamic pressures. While existing literature often examines these challenges in isolation, there is a lack of comprehensive, longitudinal diagnostic surveys that capture their evolving nature and relative severity from the perspective of enterprise operators. This study aims to systematically diagnose and rank the persistent and emerging challenges faced by businesses operating within the country. It seeks to identify shifts in the constraint hierarchy over time and analyse sector-specific variations. A large-scale, stratified survey of 1,850 registered small, medium, and large enterprises was conducted across six geopolitical zones and multiple sectors. Data were collected via structured questionnaires, with analysis employing descriptive statistics, factor analysis, and rank-order scaling to determine the prevalence and perceived severity of identified challenges. Infrastructure deficits, particularly erratic power supply and poor transport networks, were persistently ranked as the most severe constraint by over 80% of respondents. However, a significant emerging challenge is digital security, with 65% of firms reporting cyber-fraud incidents as a major operational threat. The hierarchy of constraints shows notable variation between manufacturing and service-sector firms. The business landscape continues to be dominated by entrenched infrastructural problems, but the rapid digitisation of the economy has introduced a new layer of critical, technology-related risks that compound traditional operational difficulties. Policy interventions must adopt a dual-track approach: accelerating foundational infrastructure development while concurrently establishing robust legal and technical frameworks for cybersecurity and digital commerce. Sector-specific support programmes are required, rather than blanket policies. business environment, diagnostic survey, operational constraints, infrastructure, cybersecurity, Nigeria This paper provides a novel, ranked diagnostic dataset that quantifies the shifting hierarchy of business constraints, offering evidence for targeted policy formulation.

Keywords: *Sub-Saharan Africa, business environment, diagnostic survey, institutional voids, emerging markets, strategic challenges*

Article Highlights

- Infrastructure deficits ranked as most severe constraint by over 80% of surveyed enterprises.
- Digital security emerges as major operational threat, with 65% of firms reporting cyber-fraud incidents.

Methodological Note

Large-scale stratified survey of 1,850 registered enterprises across six geopolitical zones and multiple sectors, employing descriptive statistics, factor analysis, and rank-order scaling.

- Constraint hierarchy shows significant variation between manufacturing and service-sector firms.
- Policy interventions require dual-track approach addressing both foundational and digital challenges.

This study provides a novel, ranked diagnostic dataset quantifying the shifting hierarchy of business constraints in Nigeria.

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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