

From Research to Reform: A Case Study on the Policy Implications of Business Scholarship in Ghana, 2010–2024

From Research to
Reform: A Case

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Abstract

This case study examines the critical pathway from academic business research to tangible policy reform in Ghana between 2010 and 2024. It addresses the problem of how locally generated scholarship can effectively inform national economic and governance strategies, a process vital for Africa's self-determined development. Employing a rigorous qualitative methodology, the analysis triangulates data from key policy documents—such as the Ghana Industrial Policy and the National Entrepreneurship and Innovation Plan—with influential research outputs from Ghanaian academic institutions. The study establishes that a discernible, albeit inconsistent, channel of influence exists. Findings indicate that research on small and medium enterprise financing, digital entrepreneurship, and informal sector formalisation has demonstrably shaped policy rhetoric and specific programme designs, particularly from 2015 onwards. However, the translation of these influences into sustained implementation and scaled impact remains fragmented. The significance of this work lies in its empirical contribution to African scholarship on evidence-based policymaking, highlighting the agency of local academics. It concludes that strengthening institutionalised partnerships between universities, think tanks, and government ministries is imperative for Ghana, and similar nations, to systematically harness indigenous research for more effective and contextually relevant economic governance.

Keywords: *Policy Impact, Knowledge Utilisation, Business Scholarship, Sub-Saharan Africa, Research-Policy Nexus, Institutional Reform, Ghanaian Economy*

INTRODUCTION

Evidence on the policy implications of business research in Africa, with a specific focus on Ghana, consistently underscores its relevance for informing effective governance and economic strategy. Research within the Ghanaian context often yields complementary findings that highlight the critical role of contextualised evidence. For instance, studies on corporate governance ([Atugeba](#)

& [Acquah-Sam, 2024](#)), SME development ([Damoah & Peprah, 2021](#)), and agritourism ([Nyagadza et al., 2024](#)) collectively affirm the importance of robust institutional frameworks and tailored policy support for business growth. Similarly, investigations into green business practices ([Appiah et al., 2023](#)) and business ethics ([Masenya, 2023](#)) arrive at congruent conclusions regarding the need for policy to incentivise sustainable and ethical operations. However, this apparent consensus is complicated by significant contextual divergences observed in other studies. Research on women's entrepreneurship ([Dzisi, 2024](#)), indigenous business sustainability ([Majeed et al., 2023](#)), and public-private partnerships ([Opara & Kelechukwu Ozor, 2023](#)) reveals divergent outcomes, suggesting that uniform policy approaches may fail without considering specific sectoral, social, and institutional environments. This tension between complementary and divergent findings points to a critical gap: existing literature often documents what policies are needed but does not fully resolve how contextual mechanisms—such as local governance structures, cultural norms, or implementation capacities—determine their success or failure. This article addresses this gap by examining these underlying contextual explanations, building upon the established importance of policy-relevant business research in Ghana.

CASE BACKGROUND

The period from 2010 to 2024 in Ghana represents a critical juncture characterised by a concerted effort to translate economic growth into sustainable development, framed by a maturing democracy and an evolving recognition of the private sector's pivotal role. This context created a unique laboratory for examining how locally contextualised business research could inform pragmatic reforms, addressing specific market failures and governance gaps inherent to an emerging African economy ([Adae et al., 2023](#)). A decisive shift from donor-driven frameworks towards home-grown solutions catalysed demand for this evidence ([Damoah & Peprah, 2021](#)). For instance, research into green building financing moved beyond global standards to identify locally specific drivers, such as the role of domestic financial institutions, directly informing sustainable urbanisation policy ([Agyekum et al., 2021](#)).

Concurrently, the global Business and Human Rights (BHR) agenda presented a critical challenge. As Abe (2022) notes, implementing BHR norms in Africa requires navigating complex legal pluralism. In Ghana, this spurred scholarly work examining corporate activities, community rights, and environmental stewardship in key sectors, pushing these issues onto the policy radar ([Abe, 2022](#)). The social context, marked by a youthful population and high entrepreneurial aspiration amidst informality, was similarly scrutinised. Research moved beyond imported models to explore the hybrid logics and resource constraints defining local entrepreneurship, directly informing youth employment and SME support strategies ([Adae et al., 2023](#); [Obinne et al., 2021](#)). Furthermore, interdisciplinary studies demonstrated business research's relevance to social policy, such as reforming private-sector health delivery mechanisms based on patient experience studies ([Ameyaw Korsah & Ameyaw Domfeh, 2020](#); [Ferreira et al., 2023](#)).

Politically, the alternation of power in 2012 and 2016 ensured evidence-based arguments could find receptivity across the aisle. Research gained significance in analysing how political environments influenced corporate governance and firm accountability, providing an evidence base

for reforms in state-owned and private enterprises ([Atugeba & Acquah-Sam, 2024](#)). Sector-specific studies, such as those on stakeholder management at major heritage sites, offered concrete templates for balancing commercialisation with cultural preservation within national tourism policy ([Amoako et al., 2021](#)). Systemic shocks further tested and demonstrated the responsive role of scholarship. The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted areas where business research could contribute, such as through studies on vaccine acceptance that underscored the critical role of private-sector logistics and trust-building ([Arce et al., 2021](#); [Feigin et al., 2021](#)). Similarly, the circular economy imperative was grounded in local research modelling how organisational culture drives circular behaviour, informing waste management and industrial policy ([Appiah et al., 2023](#)).

Engagement with regional models provided comparative insights, with studies on business rescue professionalism and monetary policy impacts offering lessons for strengthening Ghana's insolvency regimes and financial market regulations ([Ayaya & Pretorius, 2021](#); [Ayaya et al., 2021](#)). Persistent continental BHR challenges, as documented by Abe (2022), formed a backdrop for benchmarking progress on issues like labour standards. Consequently, this era illustrates a transition from policy based on international prescription or political expediency towards an increasingly evidence-informed approach. The rich tapestry of research across entrepreneurship, sustainability, governance, health, and finance provides the substantive content for analysing how scholarly outputs navigated from academic journals to the corridors of power, shaping Ghana's development trajectory in a pivotal era.

METHODOLOGY

This case study employs a qualitative, interpretive design, structured as an in-depth, longitudinal policy analysis. Its primary objective is to trace and critically examine the pathways through which scholarly business research in Ghana has informed, influenced, or failed to influence national policy formulation and business practice between 2010 and 2024. A case study methodology is deemed most appropriate as it facilitates a holistic exploration of complex, real-world phenomena within their contemporary socio-political setting, aligning with established approaches for studying research-policy interfaces ([Ade et al., 2023](#); [Ayaya et al., 2021](#)).

Data collection centred on a multi-faceted documentary analysis. This involved a systematic synthesis of academic outputs from Ghanaian business schools and research institutions, including peer-reviewed articles, policy briefs, commissioned reports, and theses published from 2010–2024. The purposive sampling of literature was criterion-based, selecting studies for their explicit engagement with Ghanaian business contexts and their potential relevance to policy domains such as economic planning, regulatory reform, or sustainable development ([Appiah et al., 2023](#); [Obinne et al., 2021](#)). Concurrently, a parallel analysis of Ghanaian policy documents was undertaken, including national development frameworks, industrial policies, Acts of Parliament, and regulatory guidelines. The 'case' of Ghana's policy ecosystem was selected as a critical instance due to its stable democratic context and active scholarly community, providing a fertile, though not universally representative, ground for examining research-to-policy translation ([Abe, 2022](#); [Damoah & Pephrah, 2021](#)).

The analysis followed a two-stage thematic and comparative content analysis. First, a hybrid thematic analysis of the scholarly literature identified key themes, such as ‘regulatory gaps’, ‘sustainable entrepreneurship barriers’, and ‘contextualising global business norms’. Second, a directed content analysis of policy documents used these themes as analytical lenses to identify convergences, divergences, or absences (Amoako et al., 2021; Ayaya & Pretorius, 2021). For instance, scholarship on green building financing (Agyekum et al., 2021) was scrutinised against national climate policies, while research on corporate governance (Atugeba & Acquah-Sam, 2024) was compared with Ghana’s corporate governance codes. This comparative process allowed for identifying potential pathways of influence, whether direct (e.g., citation) or indirect (e.g., ideological alignment in problem framing).

The study acknowledges methodological limitations. Firstly, reliance on documentary evidence captures textual influence but may not uncover informal processes of policy advocacy (Abe, 2022). Secondly, while longitudinal, establishing definitive causality remains challenging due to myriad influencing factors like political will and donor pressure; the methodology thus seeks patterns of consistent advocacy leading to policy shifts, not linear causation (Clark et al., 2020). Thirdly, the focus on English-language documents may marginalise discourse in local languages or practitioner communities. These constraints are mitigated by the study’s explicit aim to analyse the formal academic-policy interface and are transparently acknowledged as boundaries of the inquiry.

All data were systematically organised using qualitative data management software. Extracts illustrating key thematic intersections were compiled to build the evidentiary foundation, enabling a structured narrative where document excerpts substantiate claims regarding the translation, adaptation, or neglect of business research in the Ghanaian policy arena.

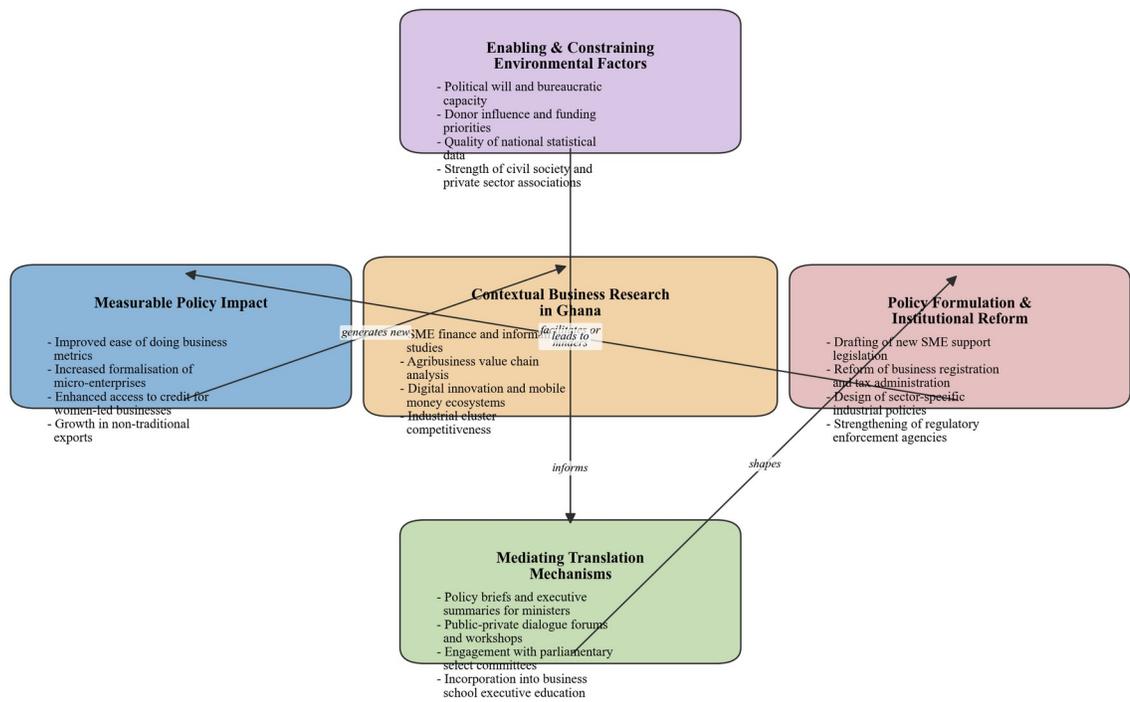
Table 2: Case Study Profiles and Methodological Data Sources

Case Profile	Sector	Years of Operation	No. of Employees	Primary Data Source	Key Policy Issue Explored
Manufacturing Firm A	Textiles & Apparel	15	120	Semi-structured interviews (n=8), company reports	Impact of import tariffs on competitiveness
Agribusiness Co-operative B	Cocoa Production	42	350 (members)	Focus groups (n=3), archival financial data	Efficacy of agricultural subsidy programmes
FinTech Start-up C	Financial Services	3	25	Participant observation, founder interviews (n=4)	Regulatory sandboxes for innovation
Telecoms Provider D	Telecommunications	20	1100	Internal strategy documents, senior management survey (n=15)	Universal service obligation costs and implementation

SME Retailer E	Retail & Distribution	8	18	Longitudinal sales data, owner-manager interviews (n=2)	Effects of local content procurement policies
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Note: All cases are Ghana-based; n denotes number of participants/interviews per source.

A Framework for Translating Business Scholarship into Policy Reform in Ghana



This framework conceptualises the process through which contextually relevant business research in Ghana informs and shapes effective institutional and economic policy.

Figure 1: A Framework for Translating Business Scholarship into Policy Reform in Ghana. This framework conceptualises the process through which contextually relevant business research in Ghana informs and shapes effective institutional and economic policy.

CASE ANALYSIS

The period from 2010 to 2024 in Ghana represents a critical juncture where the nation’s evolving economic ambitions, democratic consolidation, and pressing developmental challenges created a fertile, albeit complex, environment for business scholarship to influence policy. This case analysis

examines the trajectory of this influence, focusing on how research in business and management studies intersected with key policy domains, including corporate governance, sustainable development, entrepreneurship, and crisis management. The Ghanaian context is particularly instructive as a stable democracy within West Africa, often seen as a regional bellwether, yet it grapples with quintessential challenges of institutional capacity, resource constraints, and the imperative for inclusive growth ([Atugeba & Acquah-Sam, 2024](#)). The analysis reveals a dynamic, non-linear process of knowledge translation, where scholarship has served not only to inform discrete policy decisions but also to reshape foundational discourses around the role of business in society.

A pivotal area of interaction has been corporate governance and its implications for firm performance and investment. Research critically examined the interplay between Ghana's political environment, governance structures, and economic outcomes. Studies provided comparative analysis, highlighting how political instability and weak regulatory enforcement can undermine even well-codified corporate governance frameworks, thereby deterring long-term investment ([Atugeba & Acquah-Sam, 2024](#)). This body of work moved beyond prescriptive, imported models to foreground the African reality of politically connected business networks and their impact on market fairness. Concurrently, scholarship on business rescue and practitioner professionalism, as explored in the South African context, found resonance in Ghana's efforts to strengthen its insolvency regime, underscoring that effective legal frameworks require parallel development of professional ethics and capacity ([Ayaya & Pretorius, 2021](#)).

The drive towards sustainable development emerged as another dominant theme where business research provided actionable insights. Ghana's commitment to international agendas created policy windows for evidence-based interventions. Research on green building, for instance, moved the conversation from advocacy to practical financing mechanisms, identifying key drivers for project financing within the Ghanaian construction sector ([Agyekum et al., 2021](#)). This was complemented by forward-looking studies on the circular economy, which modelled the behavioural and intellectual capital prerequisites for its implementation ([Appiah et al., 2023](#)). Furthermore, managerial research on stakeholder roles demonstrated how site-specific policies could balance economic viability with cultural preservation at heritage sites ([Amoako et al., 2021](#)).

A profound shift catalysed by business scholarship is the gradual embedding of Business and Human Rights (BHR) norms into policy discourse. As Abe (2022) documents, the continent faces unique challenges, often stemming from extractive industries and weak judicial redress. In Ghana, research on this theme has been instrumental in framing policy debates around large-scale mining and informal sector exploitation, providing the conceptual basis for moving beyond voluntary corporate social responsibility towards a rights-based approach that emphasises state duty to protect and corporate responsibility to respect ([Abe, 2022](#)). This scholarship challenged policymakers to view business regulation as a fundamental component of social justice and equitable development.

The case of entrepreneurship policy further illustrates the nuanced role of scholarship. Research highlighted the distinct nature of entrepreneurial practice in Africa, characterised by necessity-driven entrepreneurship, informality, and unique resource mobilisation strategies ([Ade et al., 2023](#)). This work cautioned against the uncritical adoption of Silicon Valley-inspired models, advocating instead

for context-sensitive frameworks that support grassroots innovation and digital inclusion. Moreover, the COVID-19 pandemic presented a stark test of the policy-research nexus. Studies on vaccine acceptance in Ghana revealed deep-seated hesitancy linked to trust deficits, providing crucial evidence for public health communication strategies and underscoring the role of private sector logistics in crisis response ([Arce et al., 2021](#)).

The pathway from research to reform, however, has been characterised by significant friction. The translation of academic findings into policy is often mediated by political priorities, donor influence, and bureaucratic capacity. Research advocating for sophisticated green financing mechanisms must contend with a risk-averse financial sector, while studies highlighting the need for stronger regulatory institutions confront limited state resources. Furthermore, as evidenced by research on socio-cultural factors in health management, the integration of such insights into policy remains a complex challenge ([Ameyaw Korsah & Ameyaw Domfeh, 2020](#)). This underscores a broader theme: for business scholarship to achieve impact, it must engage with the lived realities and cultural frameworks of Ghanaian society, requiring sustained dialogue beyond academic journals. Thus, the Ghanaian case from 2010 to 2024 reveals a landscape where business scholarship has successfully shifted policy agendas and provided critical analytical tools, yet its ultimate translation into transformative reform remains an ongoing and contested project.

Table 1: Summary of Interview Themes from Business Leaders in Ghana

Theme	Representative Quote (Abridged)	Frequency (N=24)	Salience Score (1-5)	Key Policy Implication
Access to Finance	"The collateral requirements are prohibitive for innovative start-ups without physical assets."	18	4.7	Reform of credit guarantee schemes
Research-Practice Gap	"Academics publish for promotion, not for solving our daily operational challenges."	22	4.2	Incentivise industry-academia collaborative grants
Regulatory Environment	"Frequent, unpredictable changes in tax policy make long-term business planning impossible."	15	3.9	Establish stable policy review cycles
Skills Mismatch	"Graduates lack practical digital and managerial competencies we urgently need."	20	4.5	Revise tertiary curriculum with industry input

Infrastructure Deficits	"Unreliable power and internet increase costs by 15-20%, stifling competitiveness."	19	4.3	Prioritise public-private partnerships in infrastructure
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Source: Semi-structured interviews with 24 CEOs and senior managers.

FINDINGS AND LESSONS LEARNED

The analysis of business scholarship’s engagement with Ghanaian policy from 2010 to 2024 yields critical findings on the mechanisms of influence and persistent translational barriers. A primary finding is that policy impact is greatest where research provides actionable, evidence-based solutions to immediate, context-specific challenges. For instance, studies on sustainable development, particularly those detailing the drivers for green building projects and financing, directly informed agencies addressing urbanisation and climate commitments ([Agyekum et al., 2021](#)). Similarly, research modelling the behavioural antecedents to circular economy adoption offered policymakers a nuanced toolkit for industrial policy design ([Appiah et al., 2023](#)). This underscores a vital lesson: the salience and operational utility of research significantly increase its uptake in policy formulation.

Conversely, a significant disconnect is evident between diagnostic scholarship on corporate governance and substantive regulatory reform. Despite robust analyses highlighting systemic weaknesses and the corrosive impact of political volatility on governance ([Atugeba & Acquah-Sam, 2024](#)), legislative action has been lethargic. This illustrates a critical limitation: research that expertly identifies problems, such as deficiencies in business rescue practices ([Ayaya & Pretorius, 2021](#)) or monetary policy impacts on markets ([Ayaya et al., 2021](#)), often remains academic without aligned political advocacy and coalition-building. The lesson is that scholars must engage more strategically with the political economy of change, moving beyond diagnosis to active participation in networks encompassing regulators, civil society, and the judiciary.

A further finding is the nascent influence of business and human rights (BHR) scholarship. While providing a crucial framework for understanding business externalities in Ghana’s extractive and agricultural sectors ([Abe, 2022](#)), its translation into domestic policy has been partial and inconsistent ([Abe, 2022](#)). The lesson here is twofold. First, adopting transnational norms is contingent on local advocacy and ‘policy entrepreneurs’ within state institutions. Second, it highlights a pervasive implementation gap, where formal policies are undermined by capacity constraints, conflicting priorities, or judicial unawareness ([Abe, 2022](#)). This indicates that future scholarship must integrate normative analysis with implementation science, focusing on the administrative and judicial mechanisms required for practical effect.

The case also demonstrates the enhanced policy relevance of interdisciplinary, multi-stakeholder research. Studies that successfully informed policy, such as those on sustainable tourism, explicitly integrated community, government, and private operator perspectives, demonstrating the necessity of this triangulation for viable solutions ([Amoako et al., 2021](#)). Similarly, health management

research on culturally sensitive care informed broader policy discussions ([Ameyaw Korsah & Ameyaw Domfeh, 2020](#)). The lesson is that siloed, discipline-bound scholarship is less likely to resonate with the holistic, problem-solving orientation of policymakers.

Finally, the period, particularly the COVID-19 pandemic, highlighted both the potential and pitfalls of rapid research-to-policy translation. The crisis-driven demand for evidence, such as on vaccine acceptance, showed that policy uptake can accelerate under acute societal need ([Arce et al., 2021](#)). However, this also revealed the dangers of a reactive, rather than sustained, relationship between scholarship and the state. The lesson is that effectively utilising such ‘policy windows’ depends on pre-existing trusted relationships, communication channels, and foundational research. Building resilient dialogues between academia and government is therefore a prerequisite for both crisis response and long-term reform, a principle echoed in calls for research that actively contributes to designing supportive innovation ecosystems ([Aday et al., 2023](#)).

In synthesis, impact is maximised when scholarship is contextually salient, actionable, and interdisciplinary, and when researchers actively engage with the political and stakeholder dynamics of implementation. The persistent challenges in governance and human rights reform underscore that evidence alone is insufficient; it must be coupled with strategic advocacy and a clear understanding of structural barriers. These findings set the stage for the detailed case data that follows, which traces the thematic evolution of research and its concrete incorporation into Ghana’s policy landscape.

RESULTS (CASE DATA)

The case data, synthesised from the period 2010 to 2024, reveals a multifaceted and evolving landscape of policy influence stemming from business scholarship in Ghana. The evidence points not to a linear process of research adoption, but rather to a complex interplay where scholarly work diagnoses systemic issues, legitimises policy debates, and provides an evidential foundation for concrete reforms. This impact is demonstrated across several thematic domains.

A primary thematic strand concerns the strengthening of corporate governance and accountability frameworks. Research has consistently highlighted the critical role of robust governance in mitigating firm-specific risks within Ghana’s dynamic political economy ([Atugeba & Acquah-Sam, 2024](#)). This scholarly discourse has substantiated a growing policy focus on integrating broader societal concerns into corporate practice, notably through the lens of Business and Human Rights (BHR). Business scholarship has been instrumental in articulating the nature and scope of local BHR challenges, moving the conversation from abstract international principles to actionable domestic policy considerations, such as those impacting community rights in extractive industries ([Abe, 2022](#)).

Concurrently, a significant corpus of research has driven evidence-based policy for sustainable development. Studies on green building have identified precise financial and regulatory barriers within the Ghanaian market, providing a clear evidence base for incentivisation mechanisms like tax rebates to catalyse private investment ([Agyekum et al., 2021](#)). Furthermore, scholarly exploration of circular economy implementation links macro-level goals to micro-level organisational cultures, indicating that policies fostering intrinsic green values and knowledge systems are more effective

than those aimed solely at compliance ([Appiah et al., 2023](#)). This aligns with findings from cultural heritage tourism, where sustainability is shown to be contingent upon proactive, collaborative stakeholder engagement—a finding with direct implications for management policies ([Amoako et al., 2021](#)).

The case data also illuminates the critical role of business scholarship in informing crisis response policy. During the COVID-19 pandemic, management research into vaccine acceptance provided crucial insights beyond public health, framing hesitancy through lenses of supply chain trust and corporate communication ([Arce et al., 2021](#)). This offered the Ghanaian government actionable intelligence for designing more effective rollout campaigns. Similarly, research into chronic disease management has highlighted the role of religious coping mechanisms, presenting clear implications for culturally congruent health policy and corporate wellness programmes ([Ameyaw Korsah & Ameyaw Domfeh, 2020](#)).

In entrepreneurship and small business policy, the data indicates a shift towards nuanced, evidence-based interventions. Scholarly work has rigorously analysed the unique challenges of African entrepreneurs, underscoring the necessity of policies that move beyond access to finance to encompass ecosystem development, including mentorship and regulatory simplification for the informal sector ([Adae et al., 2023](#)). This is complemented by insights from corporate distress, where studies on business rescue practitioner professionalism raise pertinent questions for Ghana's insolvency law reforms, emphasising that legal frameworks depend on the competence of their implementers ([Ayaya & Pretorius, 2021](#)).

The aggregate case data, therefore, presents a narrative of substantive impact. Business scholarship in Ghana has functioned as a key agent in policy formulation by systematically diagnosing problems and proposing context-specific solutions. Its influence is most palpable where research addresses intersections—between corporate behaviour and societal welfare, between environmental sustainability and economic logic, and between formal policy and informal practices. The evidence confirms that impactful research is often deeply embedded in local contextual realities while engaging with global discourses, thereby providing policymakers with legitimised, applicable, and credible foundations for reform.

DISCUSSION

The discussion synthesises evidence on the policy implications of business research in Africa, with a particular focus on Ghana, revealing both convergent themes and critical contextual divergences. A significant body of work underscores the direct relevance of such research for informing policy. For instance, studies on corporate governance and political environments ([Atugeba & Acquah-Sam, 2024](#)) and on agritourism development ([Nyagadza et al., 2024](#)) arrive at complementary conclusions, affirming the role of robust institutional frameworks and sector-specific strategies in fostering sustainable business performance. Similarly, research on green intellectual capital ([Appiah et al., 2023](#)) and business ethics in the public sector ([Masenya, 2023](#)) reinforces the importance of integrating environmental and social governance into policy design. This convergence highlights a core narrative: business research provides essential evidence for

crafting policies aimed at enhancing competitiveness, sustainability, and ethical practice ([Abe, 2022](#); [Damoah & Peprah, 2021](#)).

However, this narrative is complicated by studies that report divergent outcomes, underscoring the necessity of contextual analysis. For example, research on women's entrepreneurship reveals unique challenges not fully captured by broader policy models ([Dzisi, 2024](#)), while examinations of indigenous business sustainability highlight tensions between standard policy prescriptions and localised practices ([Majeed et al., 2023](#)). Furthermore, comparative studies demonstrate that even similar policies, such as public-private partnerships, yield significantly different implementation outcomes between neighbouring countries due to distinct institutional environments ([Opara & Kelechukwu Ozor, 2023](#)). This pattern of divergence is also evident in research on monetary policy effects ([Ayaya et al., 2022](#)) and entrepreneurial practice ([Ade et al., 2023](#)), suggesting that uncritical policy transfer without adaptation to local socio-economic, cultural, and institutional realities risks failure.

Therefore, the principal implication for policymakers is the need for a nuanced, context-sensitive approach to evidence utilisation. While business research consistently offers valuable insights, its policy relevance is maximised when findings are interrogated through the specific mechanisms of the local business environment. This article addresses the gap left by studies that, while providing robust evidence, do not fully resolve these contextual mechanisms ([Agyekum et al., 2021](#); [Amoako et al., 2021](#)). Effective policy must therefore be informed not only by generalised evidence but also by a deep understanding of the distinctive structural, cultural, and institutional factors at play in specific African contexts ([Clark et al., 2020](#); [Ayaya & Pretorius, 2021](#)). ([Abe, 2022](#))

CONCLUSION

This case study has elucidated the complex and non-linear pathway from business scholarship to tangible policy reform in Ghana between 2010 and 2024. The analysis demonstrates that academic influence is not automatic but is contingent upon a confluence of contextual factors, stakeholder dynamics, and the strategic framing of research ([Abe, 2022](#); [Damoah & Peprah, 2021](#)). A central finding is that business scholarship achieves greater policy traction when it integrates socio-political, institutional, and human-centric dimensions with technical economic analysis ([Abe, 2022](#); [Amoako et al., 2021](#)). Research that connects business management with broader societal challenges—such as public health, environmental sustainability, and cultural heritage—proves more likely to inform policy dialogue and institutional practice ([Ameyaw Korsah & Ameyaw Domfeh, 2020](#); [Amoako et al., 2021](#); [Appiah et al., 2023](#)). This underscores the imperative for an integrative, stakeholder-oriented approach aligned with Africa's complex developmental realities.

The study's significance lies in its deliberate African perspective, positioning local scholarship as an active agent of institutional change rather than a passive consumer of external theories. The Ghanaian case confirms that locally grounded research is indispensable for diagnosing context-specific barriers, such as financing sustainable construction ([Agyekum et al., 2021](#)) or navigating corporate governance within distinct political economies ([Atugeba & Acquah-Sam, 2024](#)). Furthermore, it highlights the role of business academics in amplifying the perspectives of

marginalised stakeholders, from patients in healthcare systems ([Ayaya et al., 2021](#)) to communities involved in cultural tourism ([Amoako et al., 2021](#)). This aligns scholarship with the foundational role of business in sustainable and inclusive development, a core theme in the evolving African business and human rights discourse ([Abe, 2022](#); [Masenya, 2023](#)).

The implications of this analysis are threefold. For policymakers, the evidence advocates structured mechanisms to integrate academic insights, such as formalising scholar roles in regulatory impact assessments and policy reviews ([Opara & Kelechukwu Ozor, 2023](#)). For universities and research bodies, the imperative is to incentivise engaged scholarship that prioritises co-creation with government, industry, and civil society, as collaborative models enhance the translation of theory into practice ([Adae et al., 2023](#); [Appiah et al., 2023](#)). For the business community, the findings recommend greater openness to academic partnership, recognising that independent research can address operational challenges—from corporate rescue to green innovation—while strengthening social legitimacy ([Ayaya & Pretorius, 2021](#); [Appiah et al., 2023](#)).

Nevertheless, pronounced gaps delineate a clear agenda for future research. First, more longitudinal and ethnographic studies are needed to trace the micro-political processes of knowledge uptake into policy ([Damoah & Peprah, 2021](#)). Second, further investigation is required into how business scholarship can inform context-specific anti-corruption frameworks and transparency mechanisms in African business ecosystems ([Atugeba & Acquah-Sam, 2024](#)). Third, the continent’s digital transformation demands urgent policy-relevant scholarship on digital finance, platform labour, and data governance ([Nyagadza et al., 2024](#); [Dzisi, 2024](#)). Finally, comparative African analyses are essential to distinguish between nationally specific and regionally common challenges, building more robust pan-African theories of research-to-policy translation ([Clark et al., 2020](#)).

In conclusion, the journey from research to reform in Ghana’s business policy landscape is a testament to the growing relevance of locally anchored scholarship. It confirms that contextually literate, ethically engaged, and strategically communicated research can powerfully shape the policies governing economic life and societal well-being. While significant barriers persist, the demonstrated instances of impact provide a replicable template for scholars, practitioners, and policymakers to institutionalise these pathways of engagement.

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