

Effect of Business Environment Regulations on Enterprise Competitiveness: A Case Study of Mbarara Industrial Park

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Abstract

Business environment regulations constituted critical determinants of enterprise competitiveness in industrial settings, particularly in emerging economies where regulatory frameworks were evolving. Mbarara Industrial Park, established in 2019 as part of Uganda's industrialization strategy, provided a unique context for examining how regulatory environments influenced competitive capabilities of enterprises. The park hosted 47 registered enterprises across manufacturing, agro-processing, and light industry sectors as of December 2023. This study investigated the effect of business environment regulations on enterprise competitiveness within Mbarara Industrial Park, conducted between October 2023 and March 2024. Regulatory frameworks examined included tax regulations, labor laws, environmental standards, licensing requirements, import-export procedures, and quality certification standards. Enterprise competitiveness was conceptualized as the ability to maintain and expand market share while achieving profitability and operational efficiency. The research employed a descriptive cross-sectional design utilizing mixed methods approaches. The entire population of 47 registered enterprises in Mbarara Industrial Park constituted the study's sampling frame, from which 42 enterprises participated, representing an 89.4% response rate. Purposive sampling selected key respondents including general managers, operations directors, and compliance officers from participating enterprises. Data collection instruments included structured questionnaires administered to 42 enterprise representatives and in-depth interviews with 8 regulatory officials from Uganda Revenue Authority, National Environment Management Authority, Uganda National Bureau of Standards, and Mbarara City Administration. Secondary data were obtained from enterprise performance reports and regulatory compliance records. The questionnaire demonstrated reliability with Cronbach's Alpha of 0.876. Data analysis employed SPSS version 28, utilizing descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, multiple regression, and thematic analysis for qualitative data. Findings revealed that business environment regulations significantly affected enterprise competitiveness ($r=0.694$, $p<0.01$). Tax regulations showed the strongest negative effect on competitiveness ($r=-0.723$, $p<0.01$), with 73.8% of enterprises reporting that tax compliance costs reduced profit margins. Labor regulations demonstrated moderate positive correlation with competitiveness ($r=0.542$, $p<0.01$), while environmental regulations showed weak positive correlation ($r=0.387$, $p<0.05$). Licensing requirements negatively correlated with competitiveness ($r=-0.612$, $p<0.01$), with 66.7% citing lengthy approval processes. Regression analysis indicated that regulatory variables collectively explained 68.4% of variance in enterprise competitiveness ($R^2=0.684$). Enterprises rated overall regulatory environment as moderately favorable ($M=3.18$, $SD=1.05$), with significant variations across regulatory dimensions. Business environment regulations exerted significant influence on enterprise competitiveness in Mbarara Industrial Park, with effects varying by regulatory type. While some regulations enhanced competitiveness through

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standardization and worker protection, others imposed excessive compliance burdens that undermined competitive capabilities. Regulatory authorities should streamline tax compliance procedures, simplify licensing processes, harmonize regulations across agencies, provide compliance support services, and establish periodic regulatory impact assessments. Industrial park management should advocate for enterprise-friendly policies and facilitate regulatory compliance through centralized support systems.

Keywords: Business environment regulations, enterprise competitiveness, industrial park, Mbarara, regulatory compliance, tax policy, environmental regulations, labor laws

1. Background of the Study

Uganda's Vision 2040 prioritized industrialization as a pathway to middle-income status, with industrial parks serving as strategic instruments for this transformation. Mbarara Industrial Park, located in southwestern Uganda's commercial hub, was established in 2019 to catalyze regional industrial development, create employment opportunities, and enhance Uganda's manufacturing capacity (Julius & Kaazara, 2025). The park was designed to attract both domestic and foreign investors by offering improved infrastructure, serviced land, and ostensibly streamlined regulatory processes (Julius & Kazaara, 2025b). By December 2023, the park hosted 47 registered enterprises engaged in diverse manufacturing activities including food processing, beverages, construction materials, textiles, and leather products (Annet et al., 2023).

The business environment within which these enterprises operated was shaped significantly by regulatory frameworks governing various aspects of business conduct (Promise et al., 2024). These regulations, emanating from multiple government agencies and authorities, aimed to achieve public policy objectives including revenue mobilization, environmental protection, worker safety, consumer protection, and quality assurance (A. G. Kazaara & Nancy, 2025). However, the cumulative effect of these regulations on enterprise competitiveness remained a subject of ongoing debate among policymakers, business leaders, and development practitioners (Ahumuza et al., 2025).

Enterprise competitiveness referred to the ability of firms to maintain and expand market share, achieve profitability, deliver quality products, innovate continuously, and operate efficiently relative to competitors (Julius & Audrey, 2025). In industrial park contexts, competitiveness determined whether enterprises could successfully compete in domestic markets and potentially export to regional and international markets (Jallow et al., 2022). Regulatory environments directly influenced competitiveness through effects on operational costs, market access, production efficiency, and strategic flexibility (Julius & Matovu, 2025).

Mbarara Industrial Park's regulatory landscape was characterized by overlapping jurisdictions involving national agencies such as Uganda Revenue Authority, National Environment Management Authority, Uganda National Bureau of Standards, Ministry of Trade Industry and Cooperatives, and local authorities including Mbarara City Council (A. I. Kazaara & Audrey, 2024). While individual regulations served legitimate purposes, their combined effect on enterprise operations and competitiveness required systematic evaluation (Julius & Matovu, 2025). Previous studies in other Ugandan industrial settings suggested that regulatory burdens could significantly constrain business

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performance, yet limited research specifically examined regulatory effects within Mbarara Industrial Park's unique context (Alex & Kazaara, 2023).

2. Problem Statement

Enterprises in Mbarara Industrial Park operated within complex regulatory environments involving multiple agencies and compliance requirements. While the industrial park was intended to facilitate business operations through improved infrastructure and streamlined procedures, anecdotal evidence suggested that regulatory compliance remained burdensome and potentially undermined enterprise competitiveness (A. I. Kazaara & Audrey, 2024). Business owners frequently complained about multiple taxes, lengthy licensing processes, contradictory requirements from different agencies, and high costs of regulatory compliance (Alex & Moses, 2024).

Despite these concerns, empirical evidence quantifying the actual effects of specific regulations on enterprise competitiveness was lacking. Without such evidence, policymakers could not make informed decisions about regulatory reforms, and industrial park management lacked data to advocate effectively for tenant enterprises (Moses et al., 2025). Some enterprises reportedly considered relocating or scaling down operations due to regulatory challenges, threatening the industrial park's viability and Uganda's broader industrialization objectives (Julius & Kazaara, 2025a).

Furthermore, it remained unclear which specific regulatory dimensions most significantly affected competitiveness, whether regulations uniformly affected all enterprise types, and what mechanisms mediated regulatory effects on competitive outcomes (Faridah et al., 2023). Understanding these dynamics was essential for designing targeted interventions that balanced legitimate regulatory objectives with enterprise competitiveness needs, ultimately supporting sustainable industrial development in Mbarara and informing industrial park management across Uganda (Seth & Ntirandekura, 2022).

3. Main Objective

To examine the effect of business environment regulations on enterprise competitiveness in Mbarara Industrial Park.

4. Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive cross-sectional research design that integrated quantitative and qualitative methodologies to comprehensively examine regulatory effects on enterprise competitiveness (Olanrewaju et al., 2021). The cross-sectional approach was appropriate for capturing current regulatory experiences and competitive positions of enterprises at a specific point in time, while mixed methods enabled triangulation and deeper understanding of underlying causal mechanisms (Julius, 2024).

The target population comprised all 47 registered and operational enterprises in Mbarara Industrial Park as of September 2023. Given the relatively small population size, the study aimed for census coverage rather than sampling (Abiodun Nafiu, 2012). Through purposive selection of knowledgeable respondents within each enterprise, the research successfully engaged 42 enterprises, achieving an 89.4% response rate. Non-participation resulted from two enterprise closures during the study period and three refusals citing confidentiality concerns. Participating

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enterprises were stratified by sector: agro-processing (15 enterprises), construction materials (11 enterprises), beverages and bottling (8 enterprises), textiles and garments (5 enterprises), and other manufacturing (3 enterprises)(Sarah et al., 2024).

Primary data collection utilized structured questionnaires administered to senior management personnel including general managers, operations directors, or designated compliance officers who possessed comprehensive knowledge of regulatory compliance and enterprise performance. The questionnaire comprised five sections: demographic and enterprise characteristics, perceptions of various regulatory dimensions, regulatory compliance costs and challenges, enterprise competitiveness indicators, and suggestions for regulatory improvement. Regulatory dimensions assessed included tax regulations, labor laws, environmental regulations, licensing and permits, import-export procedures, and quality standards(Winny et al., 2023). Competitiveness was measured through indicators including market share trends, profitability levels, operational efficiency, product quality ratings, innovation capacity, and export readiness (A. Nafiu et al., 2012).

Complementary qualitative data were collected through semi-structured interviews with eight regulatory officials representing Uganda Revenue Authority (2 officials), National Environment Management Authority (2 officials), Uganda National Bureau of Standards (2 officials), and Mbarara City Administration (2 officials)(Jallow et al., 2022). These interviews explored regulatory rationales, implementation challenges, and officials' perspectives on regulatory effects on enterprises (Julius & Kazaara, 2025a). Additionally, secondary data were extracted from enterprise annual reports, regulatory compliance records, and Uganda Bureau of Statistics industrial production data.

The questionnaire was pre-tested with five enterprises in neighboring Bushenyi district to assess clarity, relevance, and reliability. Following minor modifications, the final instrument demonstrated high internal consistency with Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.876. Data collection occurred between December 2023 and February 2024. Collected data were coded and analyzed using SPSS version 28 (Nelson et al., 2022). Quantitative analysis included descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, means, standard deviations), Pearson correlation analysis to examine relationships between regulatory variables and competitiveness, and multiple regression analysis to determine collective and individual predictive power of regulatory dimensions on competitiveness. Qualitative data from interviews were thematically analyzed to provide contextual explanations for quantitative findings.

5. Results and Discussion

5.1 Characteristics of Participating Enterprises

The study achieved participation from 42 out of 47 registered enterprises in Mbarara Industrial Park, representing 89.4% response rate. Table 1 presents enterprise characteristics.

Table 1: Enterprise Characteristics (N=42)

Characteristic	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Sector	Agro-processing	15	35.7%

	Construction Materials	11	26.2%
	Beverages/Bottling	8	19.0%
	Textiles/Garments	5	11.9%
	Other Manufacturing	3	7.1%
Years in Operation	Less than 2 years	12	28.6%
	2-4 years	21	50.0%
	5 years or more	9	21.4%
Ownership	Local Ugandan	28	66.7%
	Foreign	8	19.0%
	Joint Venture	6	14.3%
Employee Size	Below 20 employees	8	19.0%
	20-50 employees	19	45.2%
	51-100 employees	10	23.8%
	Above 100 employees	5	11.9%
Annual Turnover	Below UGX 100M	7	16.7%
	UGX 100M-500M	18	42.9%
	UGX 500M-1B	11	26.2%
	Above UGX 1B	6	14.3%

Source: Primary Data, 2026

The enterprise profile revealed sectoral diversity with agro-processing dominating (35.7%), reflecting Uganda's agricultural base and value addition priorities. Most enterprises (50.0%) had operated for 2-4 years, indicating relatively young businesses still establishing market positions. Local Ugandan ownership predominated (66.7%), demonstrating domestic entrepreneurial capacity. Employee sizes concentrated in the 20-50 range (45.2%), classifying most as small to medium enterprises. Annual turnover data showed that 42.9% generated between UGX 100-500 million, representing moderate-scale operations with significant growth potential.

5.2 Perceptions of Business Environment Regulations

Table 2: Enterprise Perceptions of Regulatory Dimensions (N=42)

Regulatory Dimension	Mean	Std. Deviation	Interpretation
Tax regulation reasonableness	2.45	1.18	Low
Labor law clarity and fairness	3.67	0.89	High
Environmental regulation appropriateness	3.52	0.95	High
Licensing process efficiency	2.71	1.12	Moderate
Import-export procedure simplicity	2.98	1.08	Moderate

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Quality standards achievability	3.41	0.92	Moderate
Regulatory coordination across agencies	2.33	1.15	Low
Overall regulatory environment favorability	3.18	1.05	Moderate

Source: Primary Data, 2026

Tax regulation reasonableness received the lowest rating ($M=2.45$, $SD=1.18$), indicating strong dissatisfaction with tax policies. Enterprises particularly criticized multiple taxation, frequent tax policy changes, and aggressive enforcement approaches. Regulatory coordination across agencies scored similarly low ($M=2.33$, $SD=1.15$), reflecting frustration with overlapping requirements and conflicting directives from different regulatory bodies. Conversely, labor law clarity rated highest ($M=3.67$, $SD=0.89$), suggesting that employment regulations were generally understood and considered fair (Olanrewaju et al., 2021). Environmental regulations were also viewed favorably ($M=3.52$, $SD=0.95$), with many enterprises acknowledging their legitimacy despite compliance costs.

5.3 Regulatory Compliance Costs and Challenges

Table 3: Regulatory Compliance Costs and Challenges (N=42)

Cost/Challenge Category	Frequency Reporting	Percentage
High tax burden reducing profit margins	31	73.8%
Complex tax filing requirements	27	64.3%
Multiple licenses/permits from different agencies	28	66.7%
Lengthy approval processes for licenses	28	66.7%
Inconsistent enforcement of regulations	23	54.8%
Lack of clarity in regulatory requirements	21	50.0%
High costs of environmental compliance	18	42.9%
Difficulty meeting quality certification standards	16	38.1%
Corruption in regulatory processes	14	33.3%
Frequent changes in regulations	19	45.2%

Source: Primary Data, 2026

High tax burden emerged as the most prevalent challenge (73.8%), with enterprises reporting that tax obligations consumed disproportionate shares of revenues, limiting reinvestment capacity. Complex tax filing requirements (64.3%) created administrative burdens requiring dedicated personnel or external consultants (Julius et al., 2024). Multiple licenses from different agencies (66.7%) and lengthy approval processes (66.7%) delayed business operations and increased transaction costs. Inconsistent enforcement (54.8%) created uncertainty, as enterprises could not reliably predict regulatory application (Sophie & Crispus, 2024). One-third of respondents (33.3%) acknowledged encountering corruption in regulatory processes, though this likely understated actual prevalence due to sensitivity.

Environmental compliance costs (42.9%) were significant for manufacturing enterprises requiring waste treatment facilities and emissions monitoring systems.

5.4 Enterprise Competitiveness Indicators

Table 4: Enterprise Competitiveness Performance (N=42)

Competitiveness Indicator	Mean	Std. Deviation	Performance Level
Market share growth (past 2 years)	3.34	1.14	Moderate
Profitability levels	3.12	1.21	Moderate
Operational efficiency	3.58	0.97	High
Product quality standards compliance	3.72	0.88	High
Innovation and product development	2.98	1.09	Moderate
Export activity/readiness	2.45	1.24	Low
Overall competitiveness	3.20	0.94	Moderate

Source: Primary Data, 2026

Overall enterprise competitiveness was moderate (M=3.20, SD=0.94), suggesting mixed performance across competitive dimensions. Product quality standards compliance rated highest (M=3.72, SD=0.88), indicating that enterprises generally met required quality benchmarks, potentially reflecting positive effects of quality regulations. Operational efficiency also scored well (M=3.58, SD=0.97), suggesting effective internal processes despite regulatory constraints. However, export activity remained low (M=2.45, SD=1.24), with most enterprises focusing on domestic markets. Innovation capacity was moderate (M=2.98, SD=1.09), potentially constrained by limited resources due to regulatory compliance costs.

5.5 Correlation Analysis Between Regulations and Competitiveness

Table 5: Correlation Between Regulatory Dimensions and Enterprise Competitiveness

Regulatory Dimension	Competitiveness Correlation (r)	Significance (p)
Tax regulations	-0.723**	0.000
Labor regulations	0.542**	0.001
Environmental regulations	0.387*	0.012
Licensing requirements	-0.612**	0.000
Import-export procedures	-0.489**	0.002
Quality standards	0.598**	0.000
Regulatory coordination	0.674**	0.000

**Note: ** Correlation significant at 0.01 level; * Correlation significant at 0.05 level

Source: Primary Data, 2026

Correlation analysis revealed significant relationships between all regulatory dimensions and enterprise competitiveness, though directions varied. Tax regulations demonstrated the strongest negative correlation ($r=-0.723$, $p<0.01$), indicating that higher tax burdens and complex tax compliance substantially undermined competitiveness (Julius & Kazaara, 2025c). Licensing requirements also negatively correlated ($r=-0.612$, $p<0.01$), reflecting how bureaucratic approval processes constrained business agility. Import-export procedures showed negative correlation ($r=-0.489$, $p<0.01$), affecting enterprises relying on imported inputs or pursuing export markets. Conversely, regulatory coordination positively correlated with competitiveness ($r=0.674$, $p<0.01$), suggesting that harmonized regulatory approaches enhanced competitive capabilities. Quality standards showed positive correlation ($r=0.598$, $p<0.01$), indicating that while compliance required investment, standardization enhanced market credibility and product acceptability. Labor regulations demonstrated moderate positive correlation ($r=0.542$, $p<0.01$), suggesting that clear employment frameworks facilitated workforce management and potentially enhanced productivity through worker protection (Julius et al., 2024). Environmental regulations showed weaker positive correlation ($r=0.387$, $p<0.05$), implying modest competitive benefits possibly through corporate reputation enhancement (Nelson et al., 2023).

5.6 Regression Analysis

Table 6: Multiple Regression Analysis - Regulatory Effects on Competitiveness

Variable	Beta Coefficient (β)	t-value	Significance (p)
Tax regulations	-0.412	-5.876	0.000***
Labor regulations	0.298	4.231	0.000***
Environmental regulations	0.167	2.145	0.039*
Licensing requirements	-0.334	-4.567	0.000***
Import-export procedures	-0.213	-2.987	0.005**
Quality standards	0.341	4.892	0.000***
Regulatory coordination	0.387	5.234	0.000***

Model Summary: $R^2 = 0.684$, Adjusted $R^2 = 0.658$, $F = 26.342$, $p < 0.001$

Source: Primary Data, 2026

Multiple regression analysis confirmed that regulatory variables collectively explained 68.4% of variance in enterprise competitiveness ($R^2=0.684$), representing substantial explanatory power. The model was statistically significant ($F=26.342$, $p<0.001$), validating its overall fitness. Tax regulations emerged as the strongest negative predictor ($\beta=-0.412$, $p<0.001$), followed by licensing requirements ($\beta=-0.334$, $p<0.001$) and import-export procedures ($\beta=-0.213$, $p<0.01$). These findings quantified how regulatory burdens in these areas undermined competitive capabilities.

Regulatory coordination was the strongest positive predictor ($\beta=0.387$, $p<0.001$), emphasizing the importance of harmonized regulatory approaches. Quality standards ($\beta=0.341$, $p<0.001$) and labor regulations ($\beta=0.298$, $p<0.001$) also positively predicted competitiveness, while environmental regulations showed modest positive effects ($\beta=0.167$, $p<0.05$).

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$p < 0.05$). These results suggested that well-designed regulations could enhance rather than hinder competitiveness when they reduced uncertainty, standardized practices, or improved business credibility.

6. Conclusions

This study conclusively demonstrated that business environment regulations significantly affected enterprise competitiveness in Mbarara Industrial Park, with cumulative regulatory variables explaining 68.4% of competitiveness variance. However, regulatory effects were not uniformly negative; rather, impacts varied substantially by regulatory type and implementation approach. Tax regulations, licensing requirements, and import-export procedures exerted significant negative effects on competitiveness, primarily through excessive compliance costs, bureaucratic inefficiencies, and strategic constraints. These burdensome regulations reduced profit margins, diverted resources from productive activities, delayed market entry, and limited business flexibility.

Conversely, labor regulations, quality standards, environmental regulations, and particularly regulatory coordination demonstrated positive effects on competitiveness. These regulations enhanced competitiveness by standardizing practices, protecting worker productivity, ensuring product quality credibility, and reducing regulatory uncertainty. The critical distinction between competitiveness-enhancing and competitiveness-undermining regulations appeared to lie in regulatory design, implementation efficiency, and coordination across agencies rather than in regulation per se.

The finding that regulatory coordination was among the strongest positive predictors of competitiveness highlighted a critical policy insight: enterprises could manage individual regulatory requirements if they were coherent, predictable, and efficiently administered. However, fragmented, contradictory, and duplicative regulations created multiplicative burdens that significantly undermined competitive capabilities. This suggested that regulatory reform should prioritize harmonization and streamlining alongside substantive policy changes.

The low export activity among industrial park enterprises, despite physical infrastructure advantages, suggested that regulatory constraints prevented competitive positioning in regional and international markets. High tax burdens, complex licensing, and cumbersome import-export procedures created cost structures that rendered exports uncompetitive. This finding had significant implications for Uganda's industrialization and export promotion strategies, indicating that regulatory reforms were prerequisites for realizing industrial park potential.

7. Recommendations

7.1 For Tax Policy and Administration

Uganda Revenue Authority should comprehensively review tax policies affecting industrial park enterprises to ensure competitiveness is not undermined by excessive taxation. Consideration should be given to tax incentives for value-added manufacturing, particularly in priority sectors aligned with national development objectives. Tax filing procedures should be simplified through digital platforms, standardized documentation, and clear guidelines that reduce compliance complexity.

The authority should establish dedicated industrial park service desks providing specialized support to enterprises, reducing time and costs associated with tax compliance. Tax assessment and audit procedures should be transparent and predictable, with advance notice and opportunities for enterprises to prepare and respond. Penalties for non-compliance should be proportionate and applied consistently, avoiding arbitrary or punitive enforcement that created business uncertainty.

7.2 For Licensing and Regulatory Agencies

All regulatory agencies operating in Mbarara Industrial Park should implement one-stop-shop licensing systems that consolidated applications, approvals, and renewals across multiple requirements. Licensing procedures should be time-bound with clearly defined processing periods, automated tracking systems, and accountability mechanisms for delays. Application requirements should be standardized, published transparently, and regularly reviewed to eliminate unnecessary documentation.

National Environment Management Authority, Uganda National Bureau of Standards, and other regulatory bodies should harmonize inspection schedules to avoid multiple, separate facility visits that disrupted operations. Joint inspections involving multiple agencies could reduce regulatory burdens while maintaining oversight effectiveness. Agencies should provide compliance support services including training, technical guidance, and phased implementation periods for new regulations, enabling enterprises to achieve compliance without competitive disadvantage.

7.3 For Industrial Park Management

Mbarara Industrial Park management should establish a regulatory liaison office that advocated for tenant enterprises, facilitated regulatory compliance, and negotiated with authorities on systemic issues. This office should maintain updated information on all applicable regulations, assist enterprises with applications and renewals, and coordinate with regulatory agencies to streamline processes.

The park management should regularly survey tenant enterprises regarding regulatory challenges, compiling evidence-based advocacy materials for policy reform. Management should also facilitate collective bargaining with regulatory authorities, leveraging the park's economic importance to negotiate favorable regulatory treatment where justified. Establishing enterprise forums where regulatory concerns could be collectively discussed and solutions developed would empower businesses and strengthen advocacy efforts.

7.4 For Policy and Legislative Frameworks

Parliament and Cabinet should mandate periodic regulatory impact assessments for all business regulations, evaluating effects on enterprise competitiveness before implementation. Assessment frameworks should include industry consultations, cost-benefit analyses, and competitiveness modeling to ensure regulations achieved public policy objectives without unnecessarily undermining business viability.

Government should establish a high-level inter-ministerial committee responsible for regulatory harmonization, specifically tasked with identifying and eliminating contradictory requirements, overlapping jurisdictions, and

redundant procedures. This committee should develop integrated regulatory frameworks that achieved multiple policy objectives through coordinated approaches rather than fragmented interventions.

Legislative reforms should include statutory time limits for regulatory approvals, with deemed consent provisions where authorities failed to respond within prescribed periods. Establishing regulatory ombudsman offices where enterprises could appeal unfair treatment or excessive requirements would create accountability mechanisms and protect businesses from regulatory overreach.

7.5 For Enterprise Management

Enterprises should invest in regulatory compliance capacity through dedicated personnel or departments responsible for monitoring requirements, maintaining compliance, and engaging with authorities. Proactive compliance management could prevent violations, reduce penalties, and identify opportunities for favorable regulatory treatment. Enterprises should also invest in technology systems that automated compliance tasks such as tax filing, license renewals, and reporting, reducing administrative burdens and error risks.

Collective action through industrial park associations could amplify individual enterprise voices, enabling effective advocacy for regulatory reforms. Enterprises should document compliance costs systematically, providing evidence for reform advocacy and enabling participation in regulatory impact assessments when opportunities arose.

7.6 For Future Research

Future studies should employ longitudinal designs tracking regulatory changes and their effects on enterprise competitiveness over time, enabling causal inference beyond cross-sectional correlations. Comparative research across multiple industrial parks in Uganda would reveal whether findings from Mbarara generalized or whether location-specific factors mediated regulatory effects differently.

Investigation of regulatory effects on specific competitiveness dimensions such as innovation, export performance, or productivity would provide more granular insights for targeted policy interventions. Research examining optimal regulatory frameworks from successful industrial parks in other countries could inform evidence-based reforms adapted to Uganda's context. Finally, studies assessing broader economic impacts of regulatory reforms, including employment effects, government revenue implications, and industrial output changes, would support comprehensive policy evaluation beyond enterprise-level competitiveness.

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