



Understanding the Influence of Governance on Higher Education Performance in Florida

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Introduction

With debates among academics on how higher education performance might be improved, the field of **performance management** is one which has become quite prevalent in scholastic circles. This study involves the analysis of theories from different disciplines related to management in search of ways to improve institutional performance, with some looking instead at overall institutional trends — what could be considered a macro or institutional approach.

This study **expands on the operationalization of governance** which measures the structure and processes of education institutions, whilst also seeking to understand the effect that **governance structure** has had on educational performance in Florida.

Methods

To help better understand how governance influences higher education institutions, **this project sought to determine whether certain structures of governance and their processes have specific relationships with trends in institutional performance.** This was done by analyzing a data set of twelve public universities throughout the state of Florida between the years 2000 to 2020, using collected panel data. Those twelve public universities include:

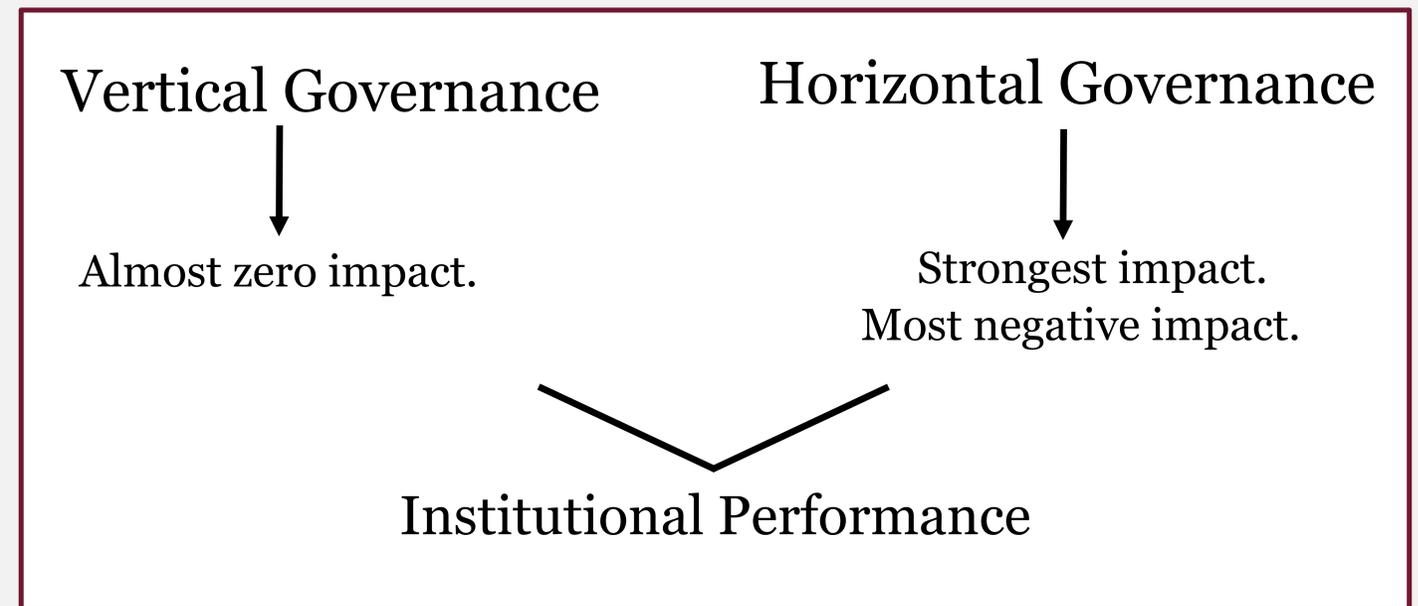
Florida A&M University	Florida Atlantic University
Florida Gulf Coast University	Florida International University
Florida Polytechnic University	Florida State University
New College of Florida	University of Central Florida
University of Florida	University of North Florida
University of South Florida	University of West Florida

The data used was collected through the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO), the State University System of Florida, and the Florida Department of Education.

Using these sources; we were able to find patent information, processes of governance specific to each university, and higher education performance variables. The demography of the student body, faculty, board of trustees, were also considered. This methodology allowed us to analyze **research performance, student performance, service performance** and **financial performance**, which allowed for a more wholesome evaluation of each institution.

Results

After conducting the research, we found that **governance structure is closely related to the performance of higher institutions.** It was also clear to see that the governance arrangements of higher education affect the performance of the individual institutions. To understand the process of governance in depth, this paper also looks at the universities horizontal and vertical interactions. Horizontal interactions focus on the decision-making process of universities in academic collaboration. This type of decision-making process was found to be most closely related to the performance for the institutions, even though it did not test significantly. Additionally, vertical interaction, which focuses on the number of organizations that participate in the governance process like the Florida Board of Governors meetings, was also found not to be significant. Horizontal governance was found to have a significant negative effect when interacting with the performance of institutions. **These results show that the structure of governance was found to be more important than the process of governance.**



Future Research

We recognize that the study is currently limited largely by the **narrow measurements obtained of horizontal governance**, and therefore does not provide diverse results to provide insight into the decision-making process. Future research conducted on this topic should expand the measurement of governance processes. And although this paper used agencies like IPEDS and USPTO, future studies can look at other agencies like the Florida Department of Education or federal agencies like the U.S. Department of Education. We also encourage future researchers to use other types of methods like qualitative, interviews, or structural equation modeling.

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