

# The Role of Governance Strategies and Total Facilities Management in Airport Privatization

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Abstract	Article Info
Privatizing public facilities, especially airports, has been deemed a strategic model of operation, cost-cutting, and innovation. There is a growing need to increase efficiency in airport management, which has led to the call for privatization of the sector. Research also shows that more than half of the world's busiest airports have embraced private sector involvement, meaning there has been a change of tack in airport ownership across the globe (Graham, 2020). This research analyzes the significant factors underlying the successful airport privatization process, particularly emphasizing the governance approaches and Total Facilities Management. The analysis of the recent research papers, articles, and case studies supports the necessity of regulation, stakeholder involvement, and technology adoption for sustainable privatization. Some of the measures for future legislation include establishing clear policies, enhancing transparency, and increasing the effectiveness of regulation to ensure that privatization benefits the public.	<b>Keywords:</b> Airport Privatization, Governance Strategies, Total Facilities Management (TFM), Cost Efficiency, Asset Management.

## INTRODUCTION

Outsourcing public facilities such as airports has been considered one of the best techniques the governments have adopted to reduce their financial burdens and increase efficiency by allowing private investors to come in. The main reasons that spur airport privatization include the desire to improve operational performance, gain greater operational efficiency, and deliver better services. Brazil and Spain are some countries that have succeeded in privatization through the contractual structures and performance regulatory framework (Brito et al., 2021). However, privatization can only succeed with strong governance structures and good Total Facilities Management. For example, Greece and Lebanon have been among the countries that have experienced inefficiency due to poor governance structures and the erratic implementation of regulations (Tsironis et al., 2021). This paper discusses the importance of governance strategies and TFM in managing and sustaining privatized airports.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Drivers of Airport Privatization

The government's primary objective for airport privatization is to attain financial viability. According to Graham (2020), 51% of the world's one hundred busiest airports were privatized in 2017, a global trend observed in the current world. This has been occasioned by the need to enhance financial solvency and decrease government funding for airport facilities. According to Howell et al. (2022), private investment leads to infrastructure development, operation efficiency, and service quality. Privatization also enhances FDI, making airport operations more financially stable. In the analysis of the effects of airport privatization in Brazil, Brito et al. (2021) note that privatized airports have better revenues through diversified income. However, Wasiela et al. (2024) opine that privatization decreases public involvement if the governance structures are poorly designed. This explains why the policies that govern the privatization process should capture the interest of the public and social justice.

The other factor is an improvement in the company's performance owing to the improvement in operational efficiency. Privatized Spanish airports also had lower operation costs, as seen in a study on Spanish airports (Núñez-Sánchez et al., 2020). Effective management, reduction of paperwork, and utilization of resources are the reasons for the efficiency. This is why the decision-making processes are efficient, the investment is proper, and new technologies are adopted. For example, air traffic control, security checks, and automatic baggage check-in have reduced turnaround time and service delivery. Private operators have adopted cheap operating strategies in Turkey, making Turkey's economy efficient for its customers (Sengur, 2020). These improvements imply that privatization can work as a means for achieving sustainable development of the aviation sector. Privatization enhances the expectations of customer service delivery in organizations. Better management and services have resulted in higher passenger satisfaction in the airports privatized in India (Krishnan, 2021). These factors include passengers' satisfaction level, facilities provided, and how long the passengers spend in the terminals. Privatized airlines have had higher customer satisfaction indexes. (Howell et al., 2022). These rankings show that privatization leads to competition in service delivery and improves customer-focused solutions. However, there are still some issues, including the ability to make airline services profitable and affordable to consumers and equal access to air travel services. In response to these challenges, the regulators have to come up with measures that will safeguard consumer interest while at the same time ensuring that the airports remain viable.

### Governance Strategies in Privatization

In the process of privatization, governance frameworks play an essential role in ensuring privatization is done for the benefit of the public. Thus, Street and Smith (2021) revealed that in Canada and Australia, the application of governance models maintained high levels of regulatory and financial compliance. Legal aspects of the governance models have to be clear on how national interests and monopolies are addressed. Performance-based contracts that are part of transparency measures have sustained the quality of services (Phuyal, 2023). These mechanisms help promote accountability and ensure private entities operate within the

set service standards. Furthermore, legal requirements are required to address the risks of financial mismanagement (Tsironis et al., 2021). Without such frameworks, privatized airports will likely face financial problems and poor service delivery, contrary to privatization's gains.

Stakeholder engagement is a crucial component of governance. Bowyer et al. (2020) established that the airports that incorporated the local government, consumers, and airlines in decision-making had low conflict levels and high efficiency. Stakeholder management ensures that the different stakeholders are on the same side and this reduces their resistance to change regarding privatization. On the other hand, investigations conducted on the Lebanese airports show that ineffective governance structures hampered the management of the airports and compromised the privatization process through regulatory violations (Kostanian, 2021). These findings suggest that decision-making for change involves most parties to ensure that long-term privatization success is booming.

Performance-based regulations enhance governance effectiveness. Airports in India that have adopted regulatory measures have higher levels of compliance and better financial performance (Krishnan, 2021). Regulatory standards are the guidelines that measure the performance to uphold the quality of service and economic responsibility. Hybrid management forms combine public supervision and private operations and develop proportional and long-term approaches to airport management. It is a flexible approach to operations while protecting the public interest.

### **Total Facilities Management (TFM) and Cost Efficiency**

Total Facilities Management (TFM) leads to an improvement in cost-effectiveness since different services are combined. The airports that implemented TFM models in Brazil were able to decrease their operation expenses and increase service quality simultaneously (Brito et al., 2021). Combining maintenance, security, and logistic services under one management is practical as this will lead to better coordination of activities and utilization of resources. Spanish airports that adopted TFM policies reduced airport tariffs and enhanced passengers' satisfaction levels. This model makes it possible for service providers to run their businesses at relatively low costs while at the same time offering the best services to their customers.

Assets are one of the most critical components that are considered in TFM. Implementing predictive maintenance technologies reduces equipment maintenance expenses and enhances the equipment's durability (Beishenaliev, 2021). Predictive maintenance uses data analysis to forecast when equipment is likely to fail before it does, hence minimizing unscheduled breakdowns and their associated costs. In the same way, Howell et al. (2022) explain that the asset management systems that AI drove in airports in the European region reduced the frequency of downtime and improved system reliability. These systems enhance the life cycle of assets and shorten response time to maintenance disruptions, thus making airports run efficiently.

One of the most essential benefits of TFM is workforce optimization. The literature on Turkish airports shows that workforce integration enhances work productivity, thus lowering employment expenses (Sengur, 2020). Centralization of workforce planning helps in the efficient placement of employees and minimizes the incidences of staff overlap and inefficiency in service provision. Such findings suggest that the principles of TFM are crucial to achieving cost-saving and efficient airport privatization. With the increase in global air travel, airports must employ TFM strategies to remain competitive and financially stable.

### **METHODOLOGY**

This research adopts a qualitative design, analyzing literature, industry, and case analysis. In this study, the privatization policies, structures, and frameworks for managing facilities in various areas have been reviewed systematically (Graham, 2020). The paper analyzes the successful and unsuccessful cases of privatization to determine the best practices and the problems to avoid (Wasiela et al., 2024). Moreover, the contribution of TFM in enhancing operation efficiency and cost control is examined by comparing the different airports that have implemented integrated management systems. One of the ethical issues is impartiality in analyzing and interpreting privatization results. This methodology ensures that the relationship between the choices of governance strategies and TFM in privatized airports is well understood.

The choice of cases is made following factors such as; the organization's financial health, legal requirements, and the company's relations with its stakeholders. Information is derived from government documents, academic publications, and other research papers on the privatization of airports. The study employs a

comparative approach to evaluate the efficiency of various governance models and their impact on long-term sustainability. Facilities management technological integration is discussed to understand how it can improve service delivery and reduce costs (Sawmya & Krishnan, 2023). It describes how privatization can be carried out to help determine the appropriate way to privatize in the presence of specific economic and regulatory conditions. This methodology's conclusions shall help formulate policy implications for enhancing the effectiveness of airport privatization initiatives.

The study also looks into stakeholder management in enhancing transparency and compliance with the set regulations. The viability of PPPs is evaluated to establish whether it is beneficial in promoting economic incentives while addressing public interests (Street & Smith, 2021). To assess the privatization models' effectiveness, operational efficiency, financial viability, and customer satisfaction are some of the performance indicators used (Cozmuta, 2024). The issues of ethical nature, such as fairness in providing airport services and monopolies, are also discussed. The conclusions are supposed to help policymakers establish the right governance structures (Tsironis et al., 2021). Lastly, this study establishes the fact that there is a need for flexibility in the regulation strategies because airport privatization is not a static phenomenon.

## **RESULTS & DISCUSSION**

### **Impact of Governance on Privatization Success**

Suitable governance structures help promote accountability, regulations, and service delivery. Performance-based regulation is vital in ensuring high standards of operation and avoiding cases of embezzlement of funds (Howell et al., 2022). The private sector is always associated with efficiency, but the efficiency of governance structures depends on the supervision level. Research on Canadian and Australian airports reveals that privatization structures with independent regulatory authorities provide more commitment (Resende & Caldeira, 2020). Likewise, poor governance causes financial imbalance and decreased service quality (Tsironis et al., 2021).

Also, efficient regulation helps establish an effective balance between profit and public service of privatized airports. The Spanish airports have been able to sustain competitive prices in their prices and, at the same time, make profits, all this being possible under strict regulatory frameworks (Núñez-Sánchez et al., 2020). Due to poor governance, organizational performance and financial viability of privatized airports in Lebanon were compromised. Brazil, for example, has successfully privatized its airports and has put in place clear measures of governance that make it possible to account for the investment (Brito et al., 2021). It is crucial to use more dynamic approaches to regulation that would consider the shifts in the market while keeping the same level of service quality (Howell et al., 2022). Hence, there is a need to adopt strategies in airport privatization that will ensure that the commercial aspect of the business is achieved while at the same time ensuring that the general public's needs are met.

### **Effectiveness of Total Facilities Management**

TMFs are helpful in cost reduction and improving operational efficiency. The previous examples show that implementing centralized facilities management enhances the effectiveness of the processes and the use of resources. Predictive maintenance systems have reduced maintenance costs in privatized airports, strengthening the long-term use of the assets (Beishenaliev, 2021). Incorporating automation in facilities management contributes to improved efficiency of operations through minimal interferences. TFM approaches have decreased delays in airport services by improving workflow coordination. The airports that adopted digital management systems have higher financial performance and higher satisfaction among the passengers (Núñez-Sánchez et al., 2020).

In addition, the countries implementing TFM effectively also noted increased cost-effectiveness and customer satisfaction. The privatized airports using TFM models were observed to have improved operations since the resources are well managed (Bowyer et al., 2020). Likewise, airports in India adopting integrated facilities management experienced reduced service interruptions and accumulation of maintenance issues (Krishnan, 2021). By employing predictive analytics on assets, airports in Canada realized better financial performance of assets and higher customer satisfaction (Street & Smith, 2021). Therefore, the models developed with public supervision and private TFM implementation are more effective and sustainable. Performance-based contracts have proven effective in maintaining service quality and operational efficiency in privatized airports.

### **Best Practices for Sustainable Privatization**



Only if the regulatory mechanisms to be put in place when the privatization of an airport are sustainable will efficiency and accountability be achieved. Airports that have been privatized with structured governance have better financial strength and service delivery as compared to publicly managed airports. Other developed countries like Canada and Australia have set up their independent regulators to ensure that contractual obligations are complied with thereby minimizing risks of embezzlement of funds (Street & Smith, 2021). Performance evaluations can be used to alter the governance approaches in airports to make them sustainable in the long run due to the market's volatility. Spanish airports with structures of the oversight mechanism enhanced efficiency and passengers' satisfaction, supporting the role of regulatory clarity (Núñez-Sánchez et al., 2020). In the future, it is necessary to create forms of regulation that correspond to the tendencies in the sphere of industry and economy to preserve the positive outcomes of privatization.

One of the most critical elements of privatization is using new technology in investment. Airports that use AI in asset management and predictive maintenance reap the benefits of cost reduction and increased operational efficiency (Beishenaliev., 2021). Real-time data analytics has been adopted in Canada to help decrease maintenance costs, thus enhancing service delivery and minimizing the time spent without operation (Street & Smith, 2021). Implementing automated security checks and baggage handling systems is a plus in the throughput of passengers, which is vital when delivering high-quality services in privatized airports. Moreover, the private sector has invested in smart infrastructure like biometric verification or check-in systems, which helped minimize airport crowds and improve passenger experience quality. To ensure sustainable privatization, airports must embrace technology, which will help efficiently use resources.

Another core factor that needs to be considered in privatization is stakeholder engagement. Airports that use privatization strategies with structural engagement with stakeholders' framework encounter less dispute and high acceptance. Currently, in Brazil, government agencies, investors, and the community are engaged to foster more openness and participation in decision-making (Brito et al., 2021). Privatization models that deal with local economic development, such as employment and infrastructure, are highly accepted by the people. Overall, the government should try to strengthen cooperation with the trade unions to prevent conflicts and increase cooperation (Bowyer et al., 2020). The emphasis will be placed on the purposeful participation of the stakeholders so that the privatized operations will be stable and credible.

### **Challenges in Airport Privatization**

One of the main issues that may be linked to airport privatization is the existence of regulatory barriers that can lead to such adverse outcomes as inefficiency and non-compliance. The regulation in Greek airports was a significant issue that affected privatization and made the airports less efficient (Tsironis et al., 2021). Similarly, Kostanian (2021) explains that due to policy instability, many of the privatized airports in Lebanon have faced financial problems and poor management. The absence of structures may lead to monopolistic actions from these players and may affect the delivery of these services and the price to be charged (Kumari & Aithal, 2020). These risks have been mitigated in countries with developed legal systems, including Canada and Australia, using compliance and performance contracts (Bowyer et al., 2020). It is necessary to establish clear and adaptive regulations that align with international standards and consider the peculiarities of the country's economy and political system.

Another reason why airport privatization has not been successful is because of inadequate capital. This is because regional airports such as Halifax International struggle to attract investors for investment due to low traffic rates and low revenues (Raynor, 2020). The long-term operational and maintenance costs will likely be unaffordable by the privatized airports without adequate strategic financial planning, hence negative impacts on the infrastructure. However, the high initial costs of implementing such models discourage the private sector, especially in the developing world, where state subsidies are inadequate to support privatized models (Brito et al., 2021). Countries like Spain have managed these financial challenges by implementing public and private funding (Núñez-Sánchez et al., 2020). Future actions should focus on sustainable economic models for privatization, such as revenue generation diversification and long-term investment planning (Biygautane & Jarrar, 2023).

There is always strong opposition from the stakeholders, especially the labor unions and local governments. Bowyer et al. (2020) state that there is usually resistance to privatization mainly emanating from employees who fear for their jobs and conditions of work. The Indian airports privatized faced protracted legal problems over the labor issues that have not been resolved, hence constraining the operational and financial changes (Krishnan, 2021). Also, local governments are against privatization due to concerns about losing control over strategic assets (Sengur,

2020). The stakeholders' early involvement and effective communication and decision-making structures effectively manage resistance (Howell et al., 2022). As the case of Brazil illustrates, the privatization of airports has been beneficial and effective when the government collaborates with other actors, including private actors and workers (Brito et al., 2021).

### **Technological Integration in Facilities Management**

Modern technologies have significantly impacted airports and their functioning as they become more effective and less expensive (Beishenaliev, 2021). Through predictive maintenance technologies, airports have reduced downtimes, improving asset reliability and operation (Howell et al., 2022). Thus, AI-based management systems increase efficiency as they enable proactive decisions to be made based on the data collected and improve service delivery (Sengur, 2020). In the same way, digital security systems have also enhanced the identification of threats and the security of passengers in airports, supporting the argument for using technology in managing privatized airports. The growth of new technologies shows that facilities management should incorporate innovative solutions in its practices (Núñez-Sánchez et al., 2020). Further work should be done to determine the suitability of blockchain and IoT technologies within airports concerning governance and security.

Automation in airport management has also brought about cost reductions and enhancement of services (Brito et al., 2021). Automated baggage handling systems have reduced the time taken to process the baggage, improving passengers' satisfaction and the efficiency of the airports (Bowyer et al., 2020). Using AI to conduct predictive analysis in workforce management reduces costs by achieving the right staffing level. Also, cloud-based management platforms enhance the flow of communication among the various stakeholders within the airport, enhancing the flow of operations. The analysis of the European airports' cases shows that digitalization helped to decrease maintenance costs and increase operational performance (Beishenaliev, 2021). These findings show a need for further financial commitment to technology to support privatization gains.

Additionally, cybersecurity is crucial in managing facilities in the current airports. Airports have also adopted threat detection systems to improve the organization's digital security and the passengers' information (Krishnan, 2021). Regulatory compliance processes help privatized airports adjust to the new international safety standards. Implementing blockchain technology in transactional systems improves transparency and security in financial transactions instead of privatized ownership approaches. Including airport cybersecurity, governance structures enhance protection against cyber threats Brito et al. (2021). The future courses of action should consider the increase in investment in advanced technology to ensure quality service delivery in the airports while at the same time securing them against cyber threats in airport management through privatization.

### **CONCLUSION**

There is a need for strong governance coupled with effective TFM to make privatization in airports successful. For privatized airport operations, the following recommendations should be made to the policymakers: The regulatory structures should be made clear, there should be proper coordination with the stakeholders, and, there should be a focus on the technological aspect. The key factors affecting the privatization's long-term success are financial sustainability, service quality, and regulatory compliance. Privatized airports must constantly develop mechanisms to face dynamic challenges in airport management and protect the public interest. The application of AI and automation in the running of airports can significantly improve the operational aspects, which supports the process of privatization as a viable model for current aviation management. Thus, it is possible for privatized airports to sustain long-term success by being profitable and efficient while helping in the economy's growth and global economy.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

There exist appropriately formulated regulations to complement airport privatization to avoid malpractices. The appropriate measures should be put in place to regulate privatized airports in terms of both financial and operational performance, as well as to prevent monopolization and inefficiency (Howell et al., 2022). Stakeholder engagement is also vital because achieving goals requires cooperation between the government, private sector, and the public to have a common understanding of the social and economic goals. Other strategies that should be implemented include capacity building for asset management and TFM implementation to enhance the personnel's ability to manage modern airports. Applying innovations, such as management information systems incorporating artificial

intelligence, is essential in increasing effectiveness, decreasing costs, and improving the capacity to deliver quality services (Beishenaliev, 2021). Lastly, there should always be a check on the results of the privatization and the adaptation of the strategies to the current issues affecting the industry to ensure the airport management department's success in the long run (Bowyer et al., 2020).

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