On the Development of Public Private Partnerships in Transitional Economies: An Explanatory Framework

This article develops a generic framework to explain the environment for public–private partnership (PPP) development in transitional economies. The framework stands on a tripod that includes the market, the operating environment, and the government, each containing several factors that support aspects of PPPs. The authors apply the framework to analyze the results of a multi-country survey in an effort to identify key factors that facilitate PPP development in transition countries. The identified factors are market potential, institutional guarantee, government credibility, financial accessibility, government capacity, consolidated management, and corruption control. The framework and identified factors may serve as effective tools to diagnose and monitor PPP development in a broader array of countries. The framework is applied in analyzing data from four transitional economies and several advanced economies. The efficacy of the framework is further justified by its explanatory power of PPPs' practicality and is largely confirmed by results from a sensitivity test.

Public private partnerships (PPPs) are long-term cooperative relationships that are established between the public and private sectors for the purposes of planning, designing, financing, constructing, and managing projects that are traditionally within the realm of the public sector (Ho 2006). PPPs are situated along a complex continuum of hybrid forms (Perry and Raine 1988; Koppell 2003) between complete public ownership on one side and complete privatization on the other side. Under contractual agreements, public and private entities jointly provide public services and share both risks and benefits (Forrer et al. 2010). Such partnerships afford synergetic advantages: private enterprises benefit from government-supported strategies to harvest stable and reasonable returns on their investments (Scharle 2002), while public agencies benefit from the professional and cost-efficient operation of private enterprises in service

delivery (Savas 2000). Since their creation, the use of PPPs has spread from traditional hard infrastructure (transit, railways, bridges, and highways) to soft infrastructure (education, health care, and emergency service) (Hodge and Greve 2007). Today, PPPs are an important means by which governments deliver public services.

Public private partnerships have been widely and successfully adopted in many advanced market economies, such as Australia, Hong Kong, and the United States, because of their mature legal systems, transparent policy making and regulations, stable economies, strong financing capabilities, and adherence to risk-sharing principles. In the United States, municipalities have observed a dramatic rise in the mixed public private delivery (joint contracting) of city services (Warner and Hefetz 2008). In recent years, transitional economies that previously relied on government expenditures have also begun to adopt PPPs as a supplemental strategy, particularly at the local level to finance hard infrastructure (Grimsey and Lewis 2004). Major barriers to the development of PPPs in transitional economies, such as underdevelopment, unstable macroeconomic environments, and the absence of necessary institutions, are the inverses of the conditions that are favorable to the development of PPPs in advanced economies. However, given their strong demand for facilities and services (Jamali 2004), transitional economies have great potential in terms of creating PPPs for public service delivery.

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to identify key factors that facilitate PPP development in transition countries. The framework and identified critical factors may serve as effective tools to diagnose and monitor PPP development in a broader array of countries.

This article is organized as follows: First, we review the literature on critical factors, theoretical frameworks, methodology, and sampling. The next section presents our framework and hypotheses. Then we discuss research design and follow with a discussion of the empirical results. The article concludes with a summary and directions for future research.

Literature Review

The scholarly literature on PPP development has grown rapidly since the 1990s. Most studies, however, are about advanced economies; research on PPPs in transitional economies is increasing, but at a much slower pace.

Critical Factors

Many studies have discussed key factors that influence the adoption of PPPs (Chan et al. 2010; Field and Peck 2004; Jamali 2004; Roseneau 1999; Van Slyke 2003; Zhang 2005). Some studies offer insight into the overall environment in which PPPs operate. One major stream of research discusses key factors that motivate the formation of PPPs. Alter and Hage (1993) study public–private collaboration in health service delivery in the United States and argue that a collaborative partnership can start when players in the two sectors both perceive the need and are willing to collaborate. Miller (2000) attributes the proliferation of PPPs to the desire for performance improvement, cost reduction, environmental protection, and increasing competition. Samii, Van Wassenhove, and Bhattacharya (2002) highlight key requirements for the formation of effective PPPs, which include resource dependency, commitment symmetry, common goal symmetry, intensive communication, alignment of cooperation learning capability, and converging working cultures.

Prominent in this literature are studies that dissect impediments to or facilitators of PPP implementation. Boaird (2004) and Hofmeister and Borchert (2004) argue that PPPs cannot function in the absence of good governance, which is interpreted as and decomposed into accountability, responsiveness, transparency, equity, and participation. A PPP project with good governance should establish an institutional framework and incentive structure to reconcile private sector participation with public value and long-term sustainability (Koppenjan and Enserink 2009). Jamali (2004) emphasizes the importance of a sound legal and regulatory system to provide a fair and transparent operating environment and a strong administrative structure to steer and guide policy implementation. Using a factor analysis with 18 factors that are critical for the success of PPPs, Li, Edwards, and Hardcastle (2005) identify five factor groupings for PPP projects: effective procurement, project implementability, government guarantees, favorable economic conditions, and financial market availability.

Bloomfield (2006) echoes the emphasis on governance from the government side. To successfully complete long-term PPP contracts, partnering governments must invest

in specialized expertise and effective contract management. Kettl (1993) and Field and Peck (2004) interpret this capability as selecting contractual partners, forecasting the future operating environment, negotiating the form and content of contracts, and managing, monitoring, and enforcing contracts. Without investment in adequate expertise as a proxy for capabilities, localities are unable to regulate, monitor, and control long-term contractual relations; thus, the introduction of PPPs would be likely to fail and undermine public interests (Aworti 2004). Hodge and Greve (2007) find that many PPP relationships become strained after the contracts are signed. There have been reports of such frustrations in Latin American countries, where approximately half of the concession contracts signed since the mid-1980s eventually were renegotiated (Guasch 2004). One of the adverse consequences of such cases is the decrease of private investment in public infrastructure in transition countries (Noel and Brzeski 2004).

In transition countries, despite the apparently enormous potential for private involvement in the financing and operation of hard infrastructure, the actual application of PPPs has been slow and limited. Queiro (2007) attributes this phenomenon to the lack of an appropriate legal framework, economic and political instability, and, consequently, high perceived risk. Some scholars have concluded that PPP development in transition countries requires rapid development in procedures, market awareness, institutional acceptance, and risk taking (Snelson 2007). The performance of PPP projects in transition countries is also affected by the political will of senior leadership, incentive mechanisms, contract enforceability, and regulatory capabilities (Ménard and Shirley 2002). Despite wide discussions about factors influencing PPP adoption, these factors have not been integrated into a coherent conceptual framework that allows for systematic examination of PPP development. Thus, simply listing key factors without a coherent theoretical framework will not provide explanatory power.

Theoretical Frameworks

Previous studies have attempted to formulate frameworks to explain the adoption of PPPs. In the conceptual framework of Bagnoli et al. (1997), three components are crucial: operating environment, partnership structure, and nature of the activities. More recently, Field and Peck (2004) distinguish internal drivers from external enablers for successful public–private collaboration. Internal drivers reside with relevant parties that perceive the need and have the intention to collaborate. External enablers refer to the operating environment and the ability of parties to collaborate. Brown, Potoski, and Van Slyke (2006) note that public service contracting should align public values, institutions, and service market conditions across three phases in contracting: deciding to make or buy, selecting vendors, and deploying tools to oversee contract implementation.

Because PPPs are relatively new in transition countries, few frameworks have been proposed. Zhang's (2005) study of PPP adoption examines the successful factors, but these factors do not compose a consistent framework. Similarly, Chan et al. (2010) assemble a net of six potential PPP obstacles that also fall short of a coherent framework. In summary, despite an apparent flourishing of research on

> Despite an apparent flourishing of research on individual elements, there has been a general lack of frameworks for holistic studies [of PPPs].

Opening an identi ed market to PPPs demands a fa orable en iron-
ment to ensure that pri ate partners can operate ith a (lo) le el
of production costs and a reduction in public sector restraints.   e
operating en ironment is composed of at least t o essential ele-
ments. First and foremost is the presence (or e pectation) of la s

For a transitional economy, the three pillars may not develop equally, particularly in the early stages of transition; however, the overall trend is moving toward balance and coordination. During the transition process, the development of the *government* and the *operating environment* often lags behind that of the *market.* The transition process enhances the capacity and credibility of the government and creates a fairer and more transparent and efficient operating environment as the last two stages defined by the IMF (2000), restructuring and privatization, as well as legal and institutional reforms. Placing the framework in the context of the transition process more adequately explains the case of transitional economies' mutual amelioration and coordinated evolution among the three pillars.

Working Hypotheses

In this subsection, we develop working hypotheses on the contributors to PPP development in transitional economies based on the foregoing framework. From the three pillars, we develop three major hypotheses, each associated with two or three supplemental hypotheses. Then we develop three more hypotheses about the transition process.

Ma

The profitability of a specific PPP market is an essential consideration for private enterprises (Scharle 2002), for which the natural monopoly of public goods and stable returns on investment are the

increases the possibility of public agency rent seeking (Bloomfield 2006; Romzek and Johnston 2002). A lack of mature institutions and corruption are common in PPP operations in transition countries. Although it can be argued that corruption sometimes eases the approval and enforcement of PPP contracts, it also damages fair competition and investor confidence in the long term. Therefore, the ability of governments to prevent, control, and eliminate corruption is crucial in safeguarding a fair market. This point leads to our second hypothesis:

Hypothesis 2: The existence (or expectation) of a favorable, supporting environment with political endorsement is positively related to PPP adoption.

Hypothesis 2a: The presence of mature or improving legal institutions contributes to PPP adoption.

Hypothesis 2b: Mechanisms of consolidated government participation are positive with regard to PPP adoption.

Hypothesis 2c: Anticorruption measures benefit PPP adoption.

G

PPP-related government capacity refers to the expertise, knowledge, and information that government agencies possess with regard to negotiating, operating, and supervising PPP projects. Such capacity is a prerequisite for public agencies to successfully initiate, contract, and manage PPP projects (Brown and Potoski 2003a, 2003b), which, in turn, guarantees that the provision of public services by the private sector will not sacrifice or compromise public interests (Inkpen and Beamish 1997; Yan and Gray 1994).

Government credibility is related to and equally important as technical capacity. Government credibility is crucial for the protection of private investment in public facilities and services in transition countries, given that their market is not mature and their regulatory and legal systems are far from firmly established. Studies have shown that undermining government credibility increases uncertainty and risk in PPP operations (Levy and Spiller 1994). It is important to enhance government credibility in PPP projects by strengthening rule-based administration in an effort to secure the interests of private partners (Stasavage 2002). Thus, we present our third hypothesis:

Hypothesis 3: Government capacity and credibility are positively related to PPP adoption.

Hypothesis 3a: Stronger technical capacity better positions the government in contracting and operating PPPs.

Hypothesis 3b: Higher credibility boosts the confidence of private partners, protects their interest, and thus leads to more widespread adoption of PPPs.

D a cTa P c

A transitional economy is one that is changing from a centrally planned economy to a market economy. An incrementally liberalizing economy provides private investors with lucrative market space that was originally controlled by the government.

Hypothesis 4: Transitional economies exhibit greater market potential than advanced economies for PPP adoption.

The transition process is typically characterized by the alteration and creation of institutions. In essence, the transition process is the functional restructuring of state institutions from growth providers to enablers. A transitional economy must create fundamentally different government institutions and promote privately owned enterprises, markets, and independent financial institutions. The major objective of the transition process is the establishment of institutional and legal systems for a more equitable, transparent, and efficient operation environment. For PPP development, we thus propose,

Hypothesis 5: The operating environment for PPPs improves as transition deepens.

Hypothesis 5a: The institutions and the legal system incrementally improve.

Hypothesis 5b: The participation of relevant government agencies becomes increasingly consolidated.

The speed of economic reforms is not the only important determinant of the success of the transition to a market economy; the transition of a government from a centralized state to an institution supporting a market economy is equally critical. Governments that have recently abandoned central planning struggle to grasp the change of their role in the market from providers to enablers of growth. For these governments, the transition process entails developing their capacity to manage a market economy.

Hypothesis 6: Government capacity and credibility continually improve as the transition process deepens.

Hypothesis 6a: Government capacity in managing PPP projects improves.

Hypothesis 6b: The government builds its credibility over the transition process to inspire the confidence of private partners in PPP project implementation.

Next, we test these hypotheses with data that we collected first-hand through cross-country surveys. We will use weighted logistic regression to test hypotheses 1, 2, and 3 and use cross-group comparisons between transitional and advanced economies to test hypotheses 4, 5, and 6.

Research Design
Sa M d
To investigate PPP development in transitional economies, a cross-country research team designed and implemented small-sample interviews and a survey in 2007.[1] The survey was conducted in four transition countries (China, Poland, Russia, and Ukraine) used as the treatment group and eight advanced economies (see note to table 2) used as the reference group. The latter group was included to highlight the peculiar features of transition countries in PPP development.

The team used the snowball sampling technique to identify the respondents who had experience with and knowledge of PPPs from different perspectives. In each economy, the team first interviewed several renowned figures in PPPs, who then recommended candidates for the team to survey and interview in the second round. This process

continued for se eral rounds until the team had obtained its target number of inter ie ees. e respondents in each transition countr ere selected as representati es of the public sector, the pri ate sector, and ci il societ . e public sector respondents ere primaril o cials in central or local go ernments ith e perience in PPP management, and the pri ate sector respondents ere mainl senior e ecuti es ho had participated in PPP management. ose from ci il societ ere e perts or academicians ho speciali ed in PPP research.

Q a I

e research began ith open-ended, face-to-face qualitati e inter- ie s in the selected transition countries. e inter ie ers encour- aged the inter ie ees to freel share their opinions on topics related to PPP de elopment in their respecti e countries from a general perspecti e. ese topics ere predetermined b the research team and included the follo ing: (1) roles in and current de elopment of PPPs, (2) institutional and legal en ironment of PPPs, (3) obstacles

respondent selection method as identical to that used for the inter- ie s. e same questionnaires ere used for both the transition countries and the ad anced economies. e inter ie ees in the rst stage of the project ere also in ited to complete the questionnaire.

tor. is data set ($N = 129$) ill be used for the empirical anal ses.

Empirical Analyses and Results

Our sur e anal ses began ith descripti e statistics (the mean score) for the 15 obstacles and an independent sample t-test to identif di erences bet een the t o groups of sample countries.

en, e performed an e explorator factor anal sis to e tract the underl ing ke factors of the 15 obstacles in an e ort to generali e and pro ide e idence for our theoretical frame ork. Ne t, e conducted an independent sample t-test of the identi ed ke ari- ables to test their alidit and consistenc ith the results for all 15 ariables. Finall , e conducted a eighted logistic regression to test our orking h potheses.

D c S a c a d C a T a a d Ad a c d Ec

Descripti e statistics for the 15 obstacles are presented in panel 1 of table 3 in descending order b mean scores (on a scale of 1 4) that indicate the eight that our sur e respondents assigned to each obstacle. According to the mean scores, the most prominent obsta- cles to PPP de elopment are those related to institutions and go ern- ment capacit . e former includes la s, regulation, legal structure, and procedures; the latter are ariables connected to the go ernment, including its kno ledge and e perience, decision-making mecha- nisms, administrati e s stems, and credibilit . Financial accessibilit and market attraction pose the least obstacles to PPP de elopment.

e results from the independent sample t-tests (panel 2 of table 3) demonstrate that transitional economies and ad anced economies di er signi cantl in their mean ratings for 6 of the 15 obstacles. A negati e t- alue indicates that an obstacle is a less important factor in the ad anced economies than in the transitional economies or that this obstacle constitutes a greater impediment to the de elop- ment of PPPs in transition countries. e results identif four obstacles as substantiall eakening transition countries in PPP de elopment. ese obstacles are legal structure and procedures_ ($t = 3.25, p < .01$), la s and standards_ ($t = 3.02, p < .01$), go - ernment regulation_ ($t = 1.96, p < .1$), and go ernment guarantee_ ($t = 1.77, p < .05$). us, the data con rm that transitioning to a market econom is an incremental process of building institutions and go ernment capacit . e incremental nature of the process

Table 3 Obstacles to PPP Development: Descriptive Statistics and Cross-Country Type Comparison

	Panel 1			Panel 2
	All (*N* = 129)	Advanced Economies (*N* = 22)	Transitional Economies (*N* = 107)	

entails increasingly liberalizing domestic markets in transitional economies, which boast significant business potential for PPP development (lucrative market, t = 2.04, $p < .05$), although these countries encounter greater institutional and legal risks. Moreover, their centralized management systems, which have been partially inherited from their former planned economies, serve to simplify procedures and facilitate coordination in PPP project management (centralized system, t = 1.72, $p < .01$). The positive sign indicates that transitional economies tend to perform better than advanced economies on the last two measures.

Identi C ca Fac E l a Fac A a
Next, we conducted an exploratory factor analysis with principal component estimation and varimax rotation. The purpose is to identify a smaller number of factors from among the 15 obstacles that promise strong explanatory power about the observed correlations. The varimax rotation method makes each original variable load highly on one and only one factor to enhance the interpretability of the factor pattern. The factors thereby identified can be conceptualized as linear combinations of related variables.

First, we used the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure to examine the homogeneity of the variables and obtained a value of 0.62, which (being greater than 0.5) suggests that the data are appropriate for factoring. We extracted seven meaningful factors that accounted for 73.5 percent of the total variation in the observed variables. The item loadings for each factor after varimax rotation are presented in table 4. Factors with large coefficients (in absolute value) for a

variable are closely related to the variable. Each of the seven factors reflects one unique aspect that impedes PPP development. The meaning of each factor is induced from those items heavily loading on it. The factors are thus named *market potential, institutional guarantee, government credibility, financial accessibility, government capacity, consolidated management,* and *corruption control.* These seven underlying factors (constructs) are consistent with a prior content analysis and cover most of the constructs in the proposed conceptual framework. The 15 obstacles are generally well explained by the seven-factor solution that is depicted in table 4. Communality values range from 0.484 to 0.852.

We examined the internal consistency of each factor using the Cronbach's alpha coefficient. As shown in table 4, among the six factors with more than two indicators, four factors had acceptable internal consistency, with Cronbach's alpha coefficients ranging from .65 to .78. Two factors, *financial accessibility* and *government capacity,* were in the marginal range, with alpha coefficients of .56 and .55, respectively. The coefficient was not calculated for *corruption control,* which has only one indicator.

Computing Task Variable and Advanced Economy Categorical Factor

Next, we estimated the factor scores using the Thomson regression method and used the estimates as variables in subsequent analyses. The factor scores have a mean of 0 and a standard deviation of 1. The questions in the questionnaire were negatively worded to reflect a lack or absence of particular aspects; the factor scores are positive linear combinations of the original standardized variables, which reflect the meaning in the same direction as these original variables. To enhance understanding and facilitate interpretation, we reversed the sign of the factor scores to ensure that higher scores indicate a more positive evaluation.

Then, we reran an independent sample *t*-test with the seven scored factors (with signs reversed) to compare the PPP development in transitional and advanced economies. The results are shown in table 5. A positive *t*-value reflects a favorable position for advanced economies in comparison with transitional economies and vice versa. Advanced economies are perceived significantly more favorably than transitional economies with regard to *institutional guarantee* ($t = 2.26$, $p < .05$) and *government credibility* ($t = 2.47$, $p < .05$) but significantly less favorably with regard to *market potential* ($t = -1.81$, $p < .10$) and *consolidated management* ($t = -2.51$, $p < .05$). We found no statistically significant difference between the two groups with regard to *financial accessibility, government capacity,* and *corruption control.* These results are consistent with those in table 3 but are

more succinct and explicit. This finding confirms that the factor pattern is valid and satisfactorily accounts for the original information. In addition, some of the findings provide satisfactory support for hypotheses 4, 5a, and 6a, with two exceptions: *government capacity* is negative but not significant, and *consolidated management* is negative and highly significant. The latter demonstrates that a transitional economy is perceived significantly more favorably than an advanced economy in terms of integrated management.

Weighted Logistic Regressions As a Robustness Check Considering Factors

Finally, we used these seven identified factors as regressors in a sensitivity test of the validity of our framework. The dependent variable is a question in the survey: "Do you think there will be more private participation in the public sector in the next 10 years in your country?" The answers are coded as a binary (yes = 1, no = 0), which warrants the use of logistic regression. Because more than half of the answers were yes (1), we normalized the number of the two answers to give each equal weight, and this process led us to use a weighted logistic regression. The results are provided in the first column (B_1) of table 6.

In general, the test confirms our previous results: market potential, government credibility, consolidated management, and financial accessibility all have the expected positive signs and are statistically significant at the 1 percent level. Hypotheses 1a, 1b, 2b, and 3b are well supported. Government capacity has a positive sign, though it is not statistically significant. There is only partial support for hypothesis 3a. The results do reveal two caveats: *corruption control* is negative but not significant, and *institutional guarantee* is negative and highly significant. Our interpretation is that the results of these two factors are linked to the transitional nature of origin for the

Table 5 Independent Sample *t*-test with Scored Factors (advanced versus transitional economies)

	t	df	P	Mean Difference
Market potential	**−1.811***	47	.077	−.312
Institutional guarantee	**2.258****	127	.026	.520
Government credibility	**2.468****	127	.015	.567
Financial accessibility	0.995	127	.322	.233
Government capacity	−0.808	49	.423	−.138
Consolidated management	**−2.507****	127	.013	−.575
Corruption control	−0.014	127	.989	−.003

* $p < .1$; ** $p < .05$; *** $p < .01$.

Table 6 Sensitivity Test of Logistic Regressions with Different Weights
DV = "Do you think that there will be more private participation in the public sector in the next 10 years in your country?" (yes = 1, no = 0)

	More Private Participation in the Public Sector in the Next 10 Years (yes = 1, no = 0)			
	Weighted[†]			Unweighted
Variable	B_1[††] (yes:no = 1:1)	B_2 (yes:no = 3:1)	B_3 (yes:no = 6:1)	B_0 (yes:no = 12:1)
Market potential	**0.607***	**0.581***	**0.574**	**0.572***
Institutional guarantee	**−0.579***	**−0.506****	**−0.476***	−0.457
Government credibility	**1.058***	**0.989***	**0.950**	**0.920***
Financial accessibility	**0.392****	**0.430***	0.438	0.447
Government capacity	0.026	0.009	0.018	0.030
Consolidated management	**0.537***	0.364	0.291	0.246
Corruption control	−0.076	−0.113	−0.173	−0.241
Constant	**0.721***	**1.757***	**2.422***	**3.102***
−2 log likelihood	254.947	143.016	93.704	58.977
Goodness of fit	39.502	17.644	6.824	8.809
Cox and Snell R^2	0.274	0.204	0.139	0.084
Nagelkerke R^2	0.365	0.302	0.248	0.201

[†]Method is weighted logistic regression.
[††]Equally weighted DV: We normalized the number of the two possible answers (yes = 1, no = 0) so that each carries equal importance.
*$p < .1$; **$p < .05$; ***$p < .01$.

e use of a small sample and the snowballing technique subjects this study to two types of bias. First, interviewees and survey respondents were not selected from probability sampling, which may have caused a sample bias. Second, we were unable to control for differences among the survey respondents in terms of their policy coalition, fields of expertise, experiences with PPP operations, cultural backgrounds, and value orientations. These elements may have affected their perceptions of PPP development. Therefore, this study provides directions for future research in examining the reliability and validity of the extracted factors. Researchers may employ confirmatory factor analyses and linear structural relational models to establish construct validity of the scales to obtain more insight into those factors that are most instrumental to the success of PPPs. Researchers can also construct a structural model with these factors to analyze their influence on the performance of PPPs in terms of service quality, service cost, and equity. Furthermore, researchers may apply this framework to examine PPP development in other country contexts. We believe work in these directions will generate rich results.

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