

OPEN PEER REVIEW

Legal and Economic Analysis of Municipal Contracts Regarding Urban Services

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1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

The introduction states that the research question is whether providing urban services is an exclusive duty of municipalities. However, the discussion also addresses legal ambiguities and economic constraints. Clarify whether the research is primarily normative (exploring exclusivity) or evaluative (assessing economic efficiency).

The article provides a broad definition of urban services, including waste collection, infrastructure, and cultural services. A clearer categorization (essential vs. non-essential services) would help frame the discussion on which services should be privatized.

While the article references constitutional and statutory laws, some sections discuss legal issues without citing specific provisions. For example, in the discussion on municipal responsibilities, direct references to relevant articles of the Constitution or municipal laws would strengthen the argument.

The article mentions "weak legal frameworks" as a challenge but does not specify which legal gaps hinder effective private sector participation. Identifying and analyzing specific legal barriers would improve the discussion.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the document.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

The introduction outlines general objectives but lacks a clear hypothesis. Given the legal and economic dimensions of the study, a hypothesis about the efficiency of private sector involvement in municipal contracts could strengthen the research.

The article briefly mentions international experiences with urban service privatization but lacks specific comparative examples. Adding case studies from countries with successful models could provide a stronger foundation for policy recommendations.

While the literature review mentions key studies, it states that there is a lack of comprehensive research on the legal and economic dimensions of municipal contracts. However, the article does not sufficiently justify how the present study fills this gap. Explicitly comparing this study's contributions to prior work would strengthen its originality.

The study references various legal principles and economic considerations, but there is no explicitly stated theoretical framework. Clearly outlining legal and economic theories (e.g., contract theory, public-private partnership models) would improve the study's conceptual clarity.

The article claims that private sector involvement can mitigate financial challenges but does not provide data on cost reductions or efficiency gains. Including empirical evidence or references to studies on cost savings through privatization would support this claim.

The article relies heavily on theoretical and legal discussions but lacks empirical data. If possible, including financial data from municipal budgets or examples of successful/failed private sector collaborations in Iran would enhance the argument.

The section on contract models (BOT, BLOT, BOO) lacks examples from Iranian municipalities or comparative jurisdictions. Providing concrete case studies would clarify how these models function in practice.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the document.

2. Revised

Editor's decision: Accepted.

Editor in Chief's decision: Accepted.