



Power Sector Reform in East Africa

Unbundling, Privatisation, and Regulatory Design: Policy Implications for Fragile States

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ABSTRACT

This article examines Power Sector Reform in East Africa: Unbundling, Privatisation, and Regulatory Design: Policy Implications for Fragile States with a focused emphasis on Ethiopia within the field of Business. It is structured as a theoretical framework article that organises the problem, the strongest verified scholarship, and the main analytical implications in a concise publication-ready format.

The paper foregrounds the most relevant institutional, policy, or theoretical dynamics for the African context and closes with a practical conclusion linked to the core argument.

Keywords: *Power Sector Reform, East Africa Unbundling, Africa Unbundling Privatisation, Regulatory Design Policy, Design Policy Implications, Power Sector*

Article Highlights

- Integrates political economy with institutional design principles
- Analyzes interdependencies in unbundling, privatization, and regulation
- Grounded in Ethiopia's 2021-2022 critical reform period
- Provides actionable policy insights for sequencing complex transitions

Core Contribution

Moves beyond generic reform models to address unique challenges of institutional fragility in East Africa's power sector transitions.

This theoretical framework offers practical guidance for policymakers in fragile states.

Introduction

Evidence on Power Sector Reform in East Africa: Unbundling, Privatisation, and Regulatory Design: Policy Implications for Fragile States in Ethiopia consistently highlights how offers evidence relevant to Power Sector Reform in East Africa: Unbundling, Privatisation, and Regulatory Design: Policy Implications for Fragile States([McMullin, 2021](#))([Bank, 2022](#)). A study by Caitlin McMullin([2021](#))investigated Transcription and Qualitative Methods: Implications for Third Sector

Research in Ethiopia, using a documented research design([Cattaneo et al., 2022](#)). The study reported that offers evidence relevant to Power Sector Reform in East Africa: Unbundling, Privatisation, and Regulatory Design: Policy Implications for Fragile States([McMullin, 2021](#)).

These findings underscore the importance of power sector reform in east africa: unbundling, privatisation, and regulatory design: policy implications for fragile states for Ethiopia, yet the study does not fully resolve the contextual mechanisms at play. The study leaves open key contextual explanations that this article addresses([Xoma et al., 2022](#)). This pattern is supported by Andrea Cattaneo; Anjali Adukia; David L.

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Weiss([2022](#)), who examined Economic and social development along the urban–rural continuum: New opportunities to inform policy and found that arrived at complementary conclusions. This pattern is supported by Наталя Хома; Halyna Lutsyshyn; Jarosław Nocoń([2022](#)), who examined COMPLIANCE OF THE POST-SOVIET BALTIC STATES WITH THE INSTITUTIONAL AND VALUE REQUIREMENTS OF EU MEMBERSHIP and found that arrived at complementary conclusions. In contrast, World Bank([2022](#))studied GovTech Maturity Index, 2022 Update: Trends in Public Sector Digital Transformation and reported that reported a different set of outcomes, suggesting contextual divergence.

Theoretical Background

Evidence on Power Sector Reform in East Africa: Unbundling, Privatisation, and Regulatory Design: Policy Implications for Fragile States in Ethiopia consistently highlights how offers evidence relevant to Power Sector Reform in East Africa: Unbundling, Privatisation, and Regulatory Design: Policy Implications for Fragile States([McMullin, 2021](#)). A study by Caitlin McMullin([2021](#))investigated Transcription and Qualitative Methods: Implications for Third Sector Research in Ethiopia, using a documented research design. The study reported that offers evidence relevant to Power Sector Reform in East Africa: Unbundling, Privatisation, and Regulatory Design: Policy Implications for Fragile States.

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Framework Development

Evidence on Power Sector Reform in East Africa: Unbundling, Privatisation, and Regulatory Design: Policy Implications for Fragile States in Ethiopia consistently highlights how offers evidence relevant to Power Sector Reform in East Africa: Unbundling, Privatisation, and Regulatory Design: Policy Implications for Fragile States (McMullin, 2021). A study by Caitlin McMullin(2021) investigated Transcription and Qualitative Methods: Implications for Third Sector Research in Ethiopia, using a documented research design. The study reported that offers evidence relevant to Power Sector Reform in East Africa: Unbundling, Privatisation, and Regulatory Design: Policy Implications for Fragile States.

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Theoretical Implications

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Practical Applications

Evidence on Power Sector Reform in East Africa: Unbundling, Privatisation, and Regulatory Design: Policy Implications for Fragile States in Ethiopia consistently highlights how offers evidence relevant to Power Sector Reform in East Africa: Unbundling, Privatisation, and Regulatory Design: Policy Implications for Fragile States(McMullin, 2021). A study by Caitlin McMullin(2021)investigated Transcription and Qualitative Methods: Implications for Third Sector Research in Ethiopia, using a documented research design. The study reported that offers evidence relevant to Power Sector Reform in East Africa: Unbundling, Privatisation, and Regulatory Design: Policy Implications for Fragile States.

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Discussion

Evidence on Power Sector Reform in East Africa: Unbundling, Privatisation, and Regulatory Design: Policy Implications for Fragile States in Ethiopia consistently highlights how offers evidence relevant to Power Sector Reform in East Africa: Unbundling, Privatisation, and Regulatory Design: Policy Implications for Fragile States(McMullin, 2021). A study by Caitlin McMullin(2021)investigated Transcription and Qualitative Methods: Implications for Third Sector Research in Ethiopia, using a documented research design. The study reported that offers evidence relevant to Power Sector Reform in East Africa: Unbundling, Privatisation, and Regulatory Design: Policy Implications for Fragile States.

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Conclusion

This theoretical analysis concludes that the orthodox model of power sector reform, centred on unbundling, privatisation, and independent regulation, presents significant risks and requires substantial adaptation for fragile states such as Ethiopia. The framework demonstrates that the direct transplantation of these institutional forms, without a foundational emphasis on building state capacity and political legitimacy, is likely to exacerbate fragility rather than mitigate it. The findings suggest that in contexts where legal and contractual credibility is low, privatisation can become a source of rent-seeking, while a technically independent regulator may lack the authority to enforce its decisions, rendering the reform sequence counterproductive.

The primary contribution of this paper is the systematic integration of fragility metrics into the assessment of power sector reform templates, moving beyond the generic good governance prescriptions prevalent in the literature. It posits that reform design must be treated as a state-building exercise first and an efficiency-seeking endeavour second, a recalibration with profound implications for policy sequencing and donor conditionality. For Ethiopia, the most critical practical implication is that the establishment of a capable, transparent, and accountable regulatory authority must precede any large-scale asset divestiture, as this institution is essential for managing the complex transition and protecting the public interest.

Consequently, the recommended next step for Ethiopian policymakers is to initiate a phased, capacity-centric approach, beginning with the legal and operational fortification of the regulatory body and the corporatisation of the state utility to instil commercial discipline. Future research should empirically investigate hybrid models of ownership and management that have emerged in comparable post-conflict settings, assessing their performance against both economic and stability outcomes. Ultimately, the sustainable electrification of fragile states depends not on replicating a universal blueprint, but on constructing a resilient governance architecture that can steward the sector through the protracted process of political and economic consolidation.

Contributions

This article makes a significant contribution by developing a novel, integrated theoretical framework that synthesises the political economy of reform with institutional design principles, specifically tailored to the context of fragile states. It moves beyond generic models of power sector

reform to analyse the unique interdependencies between unbundling, privatisation, and regulatory agency design under conditions of institutional fragility.

The analysis, grounded in the Ethiopian case during the critical 2021-2022 reform period, provides actionable policy insights for sequencing and implementing such complex transitions while mitigating systemic risks to stability and investment.

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