Int. j. adv. multidisc. res. stud. 2023; 3(1):1309-1319

Received: 03-01-2023
Accepted: 13-02-2023

International Journal of Advanced Multidisciplinary Research and Studies

ISSN: 2583-049X

Proposed Evolutionary Model for Global Facility Management Practices

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Abstract
The increasing globalization of organizations and the growing complexity of operational environments demand a transformative approach to facility management (FM). Traditional models, which emphasize cost control and reactive maintenance, are no longer sufficient to address evolving challenges such as sustainability imperatives, digital transformation, workforce diversity, and geopolitical volatility. This proposes an evolutionary model for global facility management practices that conceptualizes FM as a dynamic discipline progressing through identifiable stages of development. The proposed model comprises five stages. The first stage emphasizes operational efficiency, where FM focuses primarily on cost minimization and service delivery through reactive approaches. The second stage advances toward integration and standardization, embedding compliance frameworks, quality systems, and centralized oversight. The third stage marks the shift to technology-enabled transformation, characterized by the adoption of IoT, predictive analytics, and Building Information Modeling (BIM) to drive data-informed decisions. The fourth stage aligns FM strategically with organizational objectives, linking facility outcomes with workforce productivity, safety, sustainability, and financial performance. Finally, the fifth stage positions FM as a leader in global sustainability and innovation, embracing circular economy principles, renewable energy integration, climate adaptation, and contributions to environmental, social, and governance (ESG) goals. This evolutionary model is supported by enabling factors such as leadership commitment, skilled multidisciplinary teams, investment in digital infrastructure, and international collaboration. Value creation emerges through operational gains, enhanced employee well-being, resilience, and strengthened reputation in competitive markets. By applying a staged, adaptive roadmap, organizations can assess current maturity levels and strategically progress toward more advanced global FM practices. The model ultimately reframes facility management as a strategic discipline that not only sustains operational efficiency but also drives innovation, sustainability, and organizational excellence in a rapidly changing global landscape.

Keywords: Global Facility Management, Evolutionary Model, Best Practices, Operational Efficiency, Sustainability, Digital Transformation, Smart Buildings, Predictive Maintenance, IoT Integration, Data-Driven Decision Making, Performance Benchmarking, Workforce Development, Cross-Border Standards, Innovation Adoption

1. Introduction

Facility management (FM) has undergone profound transformations over the past three decades, evolving from a narrowly defined function focused on maintenance and cost control into a multidisciplinary field that integrates operations, technology, sustainability, and organizational strategy (Nwokediegwu *et al*., 2022 [35]; Okiye *et al*., 2022). In today's interconnected world, the globalization of FM introduces new levels of complexity and opportunity. Multinational organizations manage portfolios of diverse facilities spanning regions with different regulatory environments, cultural expectations, technological infrastructures, and environmental challenges (Okiye *et al*., 2022; Ejairu, 2022 [18]). This globalization has not only expanded the scope of FM responsibilities but has also heightened the demand for strategies that are adaptive, scalable, and sensitive to diverse contexts (Akhamere, 2022; Akinboboye *et al*., 2022 [9]). Facility managers must now balance global consistency with local flexibility while responding to external pressures such as climate change, energy transition, workforce mobility, and heightened stakeholder scrutiny (Frempong *et al*., 2022 [23]; Akhamere, 2022).

The increasing complexity of FM necessitates a departure from static, one-size-fits-all approaches. Traditional models that emphasize reactive maintenance and incremental cost reductions are insufficient in an era where facilities play central roles in sustainability, employee well-being, and corporate competitiveness (Appoh *et al*., 2022; Umana *et al*., 2022) [12, 61]. Organizations face growing challenges such as integrating smart technologies, meeting aggressive sustainability targets, and ensuring resilience in the face of disruptions ranging from supply chain breakdowns to pandemics (Okoli *et al*., 2022; Afrihyia *et al*., 2022) [52, 4]. These realities highlight the need for a dynamic, adaptive framework that can guide organizations through different stages of development, enabling them to evolve in response to emerging demands. Such a model must not only ensure operational efficiency but also anticipate broader transformations in technology, society, and governance that shape the environments in which facilities operate (Ayumu and Ohakawa, 2022; Ogunmokun *et al*., 2022) [13, 45].

The rationale for developing an evolutionary model of global FM practices is grounded in the recognition that facility management is not static but progressive, with organizations exhibiting varying levels of maturity (Olajide *et al*., 2022; Ojika *et al*., 2022). Just as maturity models in fields such as project management and organizational development provide a roadmap for capability building, an evolutionary FM model can offer structured pathways for growth (Balogun *et al*., 2022 [14]; Ogunsola *et al*., 2022). By identifying distinct stages—from basic operational efficiency to global leadership in innovation and sustainability—organizations can evaluate their current position, benchmark progress, and strategically plan transitions. This staged progression allows FM to adapt to global diversity while maintaining coherence, ensuring that facility strategies remain aligned with organizational objectives and external demands (Ogunsola *et al*., 2022; Charles *et al*., 2022 [16]).

The objective of this, is therefore to propose a comprehensive evolutionary model that reflects the growth, integration, and innovation pathways in global facility management practices. The model conceptualizes FM as a discipline that evolves through multiple stages: beginning with a focus on reactive service delivery, advancing toward standardized and technology-driven practices, aligning strategically with broader business goals, and ultimately positioning FM as a leader in sustainability and innovation (Ubamadu *et al*., 2022 [60]; Olajide *et al*., 2022). Each stage is characterized by specific enablers, capabilities, and outcomes, offering organizations a clear trajectory for development. By articulating this progression, the model provides a framework not only for assessing current practices but also for guiding investment, capability-building, and international collaboration in FM.

The globalization of FM and the growing complexity of organizational environments underscore the urgency of adopting an evolutionary perspective. By framing FM as an adaptive, staged process, the proposed model responds to both current operational realities and future strategic imperatives. It positions facility management not as a peripheral support service but as a core driver of organizational resilience, sustainability, and competitive advantage in an increasingly interconnected and dynamic world.

2. Methodology

The Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) methodology was employed to develop the proposed evolutionary model for global facility management practices. The process began with a comprehensive search of scholarly and industry databases including Scopus, Web of Science, PubMed, ProQuest, and Google Scholar, covering the period from 2000 to 2025. Search terms were structured using Boolean operators and truncation symbols, focusing on combinations such as "facility management," "global practices," "evolutionary models," "integrated operations," "sustainability," and "digital transformation." Reference lists of key articles were also manually screened to capture additional sources not identified in the initial query.

The search produced 1,462 records, which were imported into a reference management system for screening and duplicate removal. After eliminating 427 duplicates, 1,035 records remained. Titles and abstracts were assessed against eligibility criteria focusing on studies that addressed facility management frameworks, global practice trends, integration of technology, sustainability, and operational models. Exclusion criteria included articles narrowly addressing technical aspects without broader organizational or evolutionary insights, opinion pieces without empirical grounding, and studies limited to single-country case reports with no transferable lessons. This stage excluded 673 records, leaving 362 articles for full-text assessment.

Full-text screening further excluded 219 studies due to lack of methodological rigor, insufficient focus on evolutionary or global perspectives, or inadequate relevance to facility management as a strategic function. Ultimately, 143 studies were retained for synthesis. Data extraction followed a standardized template that recorded study objectives, methodologies, geographical scope, thematic focus, and reported outcomes. Both qualitative and quantitative studies were included, allowing integration of theoretical advancements with empirical case evidence.

Quality appraisal was conducted using established tools such as the CASP checklists for qualitative research and the Joanna Briggs Institute tools for quantitative studies, ensuring that only studies with moderate to high methodological quality were retained. Discrepancies in quality ratings were resolved by consensus among reviewers.

The synthesis employed a thematic and narrative approach to identify recurring patterns and emerging trajectories in facility management practices globally. Four major evolutionary dimensions were consistently observed across the literature: the integration of digital technologies such as predictive analytics and Internet of Things (IoT); the growing emphasis on sustainability and climate adaptation in facility operations; the professionalization and globalization of facility management as a discipline; and the development of more adaptive, client-centered service delivery models. Studies highlighted how facility management has shifted from being largely operational and maintenance-focused to becoming a strategic enabler of organizational performance, resilience, and competitiveness in diverse contexts.

This systematic synthesis provided the empirical foundation for constructing the proposed evolutionary model, demonstrating how global facility management practices

have transitioned from reactive, cost-driven functions to proactive, value-creating systems aligned with broader organizational and societal objectives. The model reflects the cumulative evidence that facility management must continuously adapt to technological advances, regulatory shifts, and sustainability imperatives in order to remain relevant and effective in a globalized economy.

2.1 Conceptual Foundation

The foundation of an evolutionary model for global facility management (FM) lies in understanding the discipline as a dynamic and continuously adapting field. Facility management has progressed far beyond its early conception as a support service concerned primarily with building maintenance and operational efficiency. Today, it encompasses strategic responsibilities in sustainability, workplace experience, technological integration, and risk management (Akpe *et al*., 2022; Kisina *et al*., 2022) [11, 28]. Recognizing FM as an evolving discipline allows organizations to frame its practices not as static tasks but as progressive stages of development shaped by theory and contextual drivers. This conceptual orientation ensures that FM can adapt to global complexities and remain a core contributor to organizational resilience and competitiveness.

FM can no longer be defined narrowly as the maintenance of physical infrastructure. Instead, it represents a multidisciplinary practice that integrates real estate, engineering, operations, human resources, and sustainability into a unified strategy for supporting organizational objectives. As the environments in which facilities operate become more complex, FM is required to evolve from reactive problem-solving to proactive, value-generating functions. This evolution mirrors broader organizational trends, where support functions are increasingly integrated into core strategies to enable innovation, efficiency, and differentiation (Ojika *et al*., 2022; Fagbore *et al*., 2022). Defining FM as an evolving discipline underscores its capacity to expand in scope and sophistication, progressing from basic operational control toward global leadership in sustainability and innovation.

The conceptual framing of an evolutionary model for FM draws upon several interrelated theoretical perspectives that explain progression, adaptation, and integration.

Evolutionary Models provide the foundation for understanding how organizations move through identifiable stages of development. In facility management, this means beginning with a focus on operational efficiency, progressing to standardization and integration, adopting technology-driven solutions, aligning with organizational strategy, and eventually achieving global leadership in innovation and sustainability. Evolutionary models emphasize that progress is not linear but iterative, with feedback loops that encourage learning and adaptation.

Systems Theory offers a lens for examining FM as part of a broader organizational ecosystem. Facilities are not isolated units but interconnected systems that influence and are influenced by technological infrastructure, human behavior, and external environments. Systems theory emphasizes interdependencies, feedback mechanisms, and emergent properties, all of which are central to understanding the complexity of modern FM (Ilori *et al*., 2022; Fagbore *et al*., 2022). By applying systems thinking, organizations can identify how facility decisions impact productivity, safety, environmental outcomes, and long-term resilience.

Organizational Maturity Frameworks provide structured pathways for assessing capability and planning growth. Widely used in fields such as project management and IT, maturity models categorize organizations into stages of development, from ad hoc and reactive to optimized and strategically aligned. Applying a maturity framework to FM allows organizations to benchmark their current practices, identify gaps, and design targeted interventions. It also highlights the progression of FM from operational management to a strategic discipline integrated into organizational governance.

Together, these theoretical foundations justify the proposal of an evolutionary FM model by framing facility management as a discipline that progresses through stages, adapts through systems integration, and matures through structured capability building.

The evolution of FM is not theoretical alone but driven by powerful contextual forces that reshape organizational expectations and operational realities. Four key drivers—technology, sustainability, workforce diversity, and globalization—are central to understanding why FM must adopt an evolutionary model.

Technology has revolutionized FM by introducing digital tools such as the Internet of Things (IoT), Building Information Modeling (BIM), predictive analytics, and artificial intelligence. These tools enable data-driven decision-making, real-time monitoring, and predictive maintenance, transforming FM from reactive service delivery to proactive, intelligent management (Fagbore *et al*., 2022; Ilori *et al*., 2022). The pace of technological innovation requires FM systems to continuously evolve in order to remain relevant and effective.

Sustainability is another major driver, with organizations under increasing pressure to reduce environmental impacts, adopt circular economy practices, and meet ambitious net-zero commitments. Facilities play a central role in energy use, waste management, and carbon emissions, positioning FM as a critical actor in sustainability transitions. This demands an evolution from compliance with environmental regulations to active leadership in sustainable innovation and climate resilience.

Workforce Diversity reshapes facility needs by introducing varied expectations for workplace design, inclusivity, health, and well-being. Modern facilities must accommodate diverse cultural norms, generational preferences, and accessibility requirements, while also supporting hybrid and flexible work models. FM must therefore evolve to manage not only infrastructure but also the human experience within workplaces, integrating diversity and well-being into core strategies.

Globalization further amplifies the need for adaptive FM models. Multinational organizations manage facilities across jurisdictions with diverse regulations, cultural contexts, and resource constraints. Globalization requires FM to balance global consistency with local sensitivity, ensuring alignment with international standards while addressing local operational realities (Eyinade *et al*., 2022; Adesemoye *et al*., 2022) [19, 2]. The increasing interconnectedness of supply chains, regulatory environments, and stakeholder expectations highlights the importance of FM as a global discipline capable of harmonizing strategies across borders.

The conceptual foundation for an evolutionary model of global facility management practices establishes FM as a discipline that is inherently dynamic, shaped by theoretical

principles of progression, systems integration, and maturity, and driven by powerful contextual forces such as technology, sustainability, workforce diversity, and globalization. By defining FM as an evolving field, organizations can better anticipate and manage the transitions required to move from operational efficiency to global innovation leadership. This foundation provides the intellectual and practical justification for developing a staged evolutionary model that reflects the realities of global practice while offering a roadmap for strategic growth and resilience.

2.2 Evolutionary Stages of Facility Management Practices

Facility management (FM) has undergone profound transformation over the past decades, evolving from narrowly focused maintenance functions into a globally recognized discipline that shapes organizational resilience, sustainability, and competitiveness as shown in figure 1. This progression can be conceptualized in five evolutionary stages, each representing a shift in priorities, capabilities, and strategic relevance. From a basic operational focus to a leadership role in global sustainability, FM reflects the dynamic interplay between organizational needs, technological innovations, and broader societal expectations (Friday *et al*., 2022; Adanigbo *et al*., 2022) [24, 1].

In its earliest stage, facility management was predominantly concerned with operational efficiency, defined in terms of maintenance, cost control, and basic service delivery. FM functions were highly transactional, ensuring that buildings remained functional and services such as cleaning, utilities, and repairs were delivered at minimal cost. The primary objective was to reduce downtime, extend the life of assets, and avoid disruptions that could affect organizational activities.

This stage was characterized by fragmented systems and reactive approaches to management. Facilities often operated in silos, with limited coordination between functions such as maintenance, procurement, and energy management. Most interventions occurred only after failures, leading to inefficiencies, higher repair costs, and inconsistent service quality. Despite these limitations, this stage established the foundation of FM as a necessary support function, ensuring basic continuity of operations.

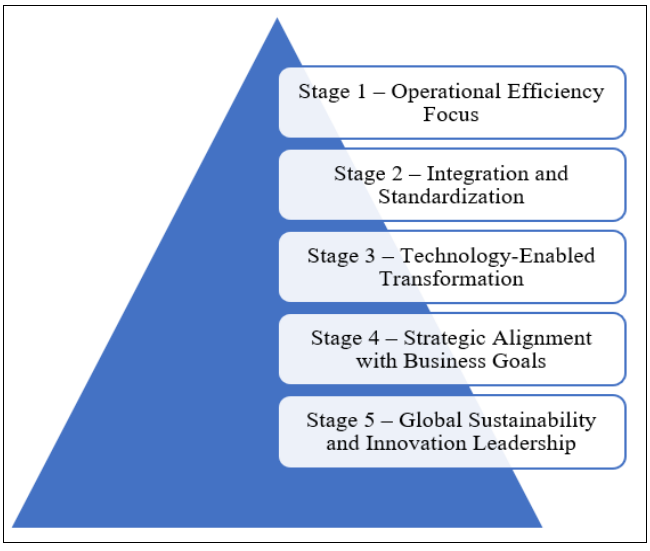

Fig 1: Evolutionary Stages of Facility Management Practices

The second stage marked the gradual transition from fragmented practices to integrated and standardized systems. Growing organizational complexity and globalization highlighted the need for consistency, transparency, and accountability in facility operations. During this stage, organizations began adopting standardized processes, benchmarks, and compliance frameworks, often driven by international standards such as ISO 9001 for quality management or ISO 14001 for environmental management.

Centralized oversight structures were introduced to harmonize practices across multiple sites or business units. This shift enabled organizations to reduce redundancies, enhance comparability, and improve efficiency. Quality management systems (QMS) gained prominence, promoting preventive rather than purely reactive approaches to facility care. Benchmarking against industry norms also became common, allowing organizations to measure performance and identify areas for improvement (Oladuji *et al*., 2022; Onifade *et al*., 2022) [53, 57].

By embedding FM within standardized frameworks, organizations achieved greater predictability in service delivery, reduced risk exposure, and improved alignment with regulatory requirements. However, FM at this stage remained largely operational, with limited influence on broader strategic decision-making.

The third stage represents a turning point in the evolution of FM, defined by the integration of advanced technologies into facility operations. The advent of the Internet of Things (IoT), predictive analytics, and Building Information Modeling (BIM) revolutionized how facilities were monitored, maintained, and optimized. Sensors enabled real-time tracking of energy consumption, occupancy, and equipment performance, generating data streams that informed predictive maintenance and reduced downtime.

Data-driven decision-making became central to FM, enabling managers to anticipate risks, optimize resource allocation, and support sustainability initiatives. Predictive analytics shifted the emphasis from reactive and preventive approaches to proactive and anticipatory strategies. BIM, in particular, allowed for more comprehensive visualization and management of building assets throughout their lifecycle, enhancing collaboration between design, construction, and FM teams.

This stage elevated FM from a support function to a knowledge-driven discipline. By leveraging technology, organizations reduced costs, improved energy efficiency, enhanced safety, and created better user experiences. At the same time, the growing reliance on digital tools highlighted the need for workforce upskilling, cybersecurity measures, and integration of IT and FM functions.

The fourth stage reflects the recognition of FM as a strategic partner in organizational success. Facility managers began to engage with executives and contribute directly to business planning, aligning FM objectives with broader corporate strategies. Rather than being confined to cost efficiency, FM was increasingly valued for its role in enhancing productivity, supporting employee well-being, and contributing to organizational resilience (Adewuyi *et al*., 2022; Ajuwon *et al*., 2022) [3, 6].

Integration with human resources, finance, and sustainability strategies became more pronounced. Facilities were viewed not only as physical assets but as environments that influence employee satisfaction, health, and collaboration. FM professionals contributed to workplace

design strategies that enhanced flexibility, inclusivity, and innovation. At the same time, facility decisions were evaluated through financial metrics, linking operational outcomes to organizational performance indicators.

Metrics evolved to capture the impact of FM on productivity, safety, and workforce well-being, reinforcing its role in driving business success. In this stage, FM began transitioning from an operational function to a strategic enabler of value creation.

The fifth and most advanced stage positions FM as a leader in global sustainability and innovation. Driven by climate change, corporate social responsibility, and stakeholder expectations, facilities are increasingly recognized as hubs for environmental stewardship and innovation. Circular economy practices, including waste minimization, resource recycling, and modular design, became embedded in FM strategies. Facilities integrated renewable energy systems such as solar, wind, and geothermal, reducing carbon footprints and contributing to net-zero goals.

FM also assumed a central role in climate adaptation, ensuring buildings and infrastructure could withstand extreme weather events and resource challenges. Beyond environmental imperatives, FM became a driver of corporate competitiveness, helping organizations demonstrate compliance with environmental, social, and governance (ESG) standards demanded by investors, regulators, and global markets.

Innovation in this stage extended beyond environmental concerns, encompassing smart campuses, adaptive work environments, and partnerships with technology firms to pilot emerging solutions (Nwangele *et al*., 2022; Onifade *et al*., 2022) [34, 57]. By connecting sustainability with innovation, FM at this stage not only ensured operational continuity but also contributed to brand reputation, talent attraction, and global leadership in sustainable business practices.

The evolution of facility management from operational efficiency to global sustainability leadership highlights its transformation into a multidimensional and strategic discipline. Each stage reflects adaptation to shifting organizational, technological, and societal demands, with FM gradually expanding from reactive maintenance to proactive value creation. As global challenges intensify, the future of FM will be defined by its ability to balance efficiency with sustainability, integrate technological advances, and align closely with organizational and societal goals. Ultimately, the evolutionary trajectory demonstrates that facility management is not merely a support function but a central driver of resilience, innovation, and long-term competitiveness.

2.3 Enabling Factors for Evolution

The evolution of facility management (FM) into a globally integrated, innovation-driven discipline is contingent upon a set of enabling factors that provide the structural, human, technological, and relational foundations for change. While external drivers such as globalization, sustainability imperatives, and technological advancement create the conditions for transformation, it is the presence of strong enablers that determines whether organizations can effectively adapt and progress along the evolutionary pathway (Kufile *et al*., 2022; Otokiti *et al*., 2022). Four enabling factors stand out as critical: leadership commitment and governance structures, a skilled and multidisciplinary workforce, investment in digital infrastructure and knowledge systems, and cross-border collaboration and knowledge exchange as shown in figure 2. Together, these elements form the backbone of sustainable and adaptive FM practices.

Leadership commitment is perhaps the most decisive factor in shaping the trajectory of FM evolution. Without executive endorsement, safety, sustainability, and innovation initiatives often remain fragmented or underfunded. Senior leadership must champion FM as a strategic priority, embedding its objectives into organizational vision, mission, and performance indicators. Governance structures play a complementary role, ensuring accountability, transparency, and alignment across diverse facilities and geographies. Effective governance frameworks establish clear roles, reporting mechanisms, and decision-making pathways that allow FM practices to scale consistently across global operations. Moreover, leaders act as cultural anchors, setting the tone for safety, inclusivity, and sustainability, while ensuring that FM evolves from an operational support function into a driver of strategic value.

The workforce is the operational engine of FM, and its evolution depends on cultivating skills that extend beyond traditional technical expertise. Modern FM demands a multidisciplinary team that combines engineering, sustainability, data analytics, human resources, finance, and organizational behavior. This convergence of disciplines enables holistic decision-making, where technical performance is integrated with human well-being, environmental stewardship, and financial efficiency. Continuous professional development is essential, as facility managers must adapt to rapidly changing technological tools, regulatory frameworks, and workplace expectations. A culture of lifelong learning, coupled with opportunities for cross-disciplinary collaboration, ensures that FM teams remain agile and capable of navigating complex global challenges. Moreover, embedding diversity and inclusivity within FM workforces enriches problem-solving capacities and reflects the varied cultural and operational contexts of global practice.

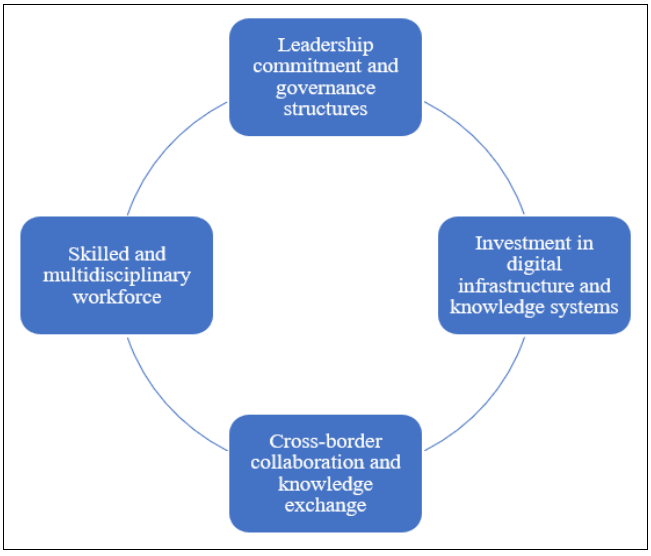

Fig 2: Enabling Factors for Evolution

Digitalization is a defining enabler of FM evolution, providing the tools necessary for predictive, data-driven, and integrated management. Investment in digital infrastructure-

such as Internet of Things (IoT) platforms, Building Information Modeling (BIM), artificial intelligence, and advanced analytics—allows organizations to monitor real-time performance, anticipate risks, and optimize resource use. Beyond tools, effective knowledge systems are vital for capturing, storing, and disseminating insights across global operations. Knowledge management platforms enable organizations to learn from successes and failures, transfer expertise across facilities, and avoid duplication of effort (Otokiti *et al*., 2022; Ibidunni *et al*., 2022) [25]. Importantly, digital infrastructure must be accompanied by robust cybersecurity measures and data governance policies, ensuring that the growing reliance on digital tools enhances resilience rather than introducing new vulnerabilities. Organizations that prioritize digital integration position FM not merely as a reactive function but as a predictive, strategic enabler of innovation and sustainability.

Global FM practices require mechanisms for collaboration and learning across national, cultural, and organizational boundaries. Cross-border collaboration enables organizations to harmonize standards, benchmark performance, and adapt innovations to local contexts. Knowledge exchange is particularly critical, as lessons learned in one region can inform strategies in another, reducing redundancies and accelerating the adoption of best practices. Partnerships with international professional associations, research institutions, and industry consortia further enrich this process, providing access to cutting-edge insights and fostering shared standards of excellence. In an era where challenges such as climate adaptation, supply chain resilience, and energy transition transcend borders, collaborative approaches allow FM to respond collectively and effectively. By embedding networks of knowledge sharing, organizations ensure that FM evolves in step with global demands while maintaining sensitivity to local realities.

The successful evolution of global facility management practices is neither automatic nor uniform. It requires deliberate investment in enabling factors that create the conditions for sustained transformation. Leadership commitment and governance structures ensure strategic alignment and accountability, while a skilled and multidisciplinary workforce provides the expertise and adaptability necessary for holistic management. Digital infrastructure and knowledge systems empower organizations with predictive and data-driven capabilities, and cross-border collaboration facilitates continuous learning and global alignment. Collectively, these enablers form a resilient foundation that allows FM to transition from operational efficiency to global innovation leadership, ensuring its role as a central driver of organizational performance and sustainability in an interconnected world.

2.4 Mechanisms of Value Creation

The evolution of facility management (FM) from a narrowly operational discipline into a strategic function has been accompanied by the recognition that it creates value through multiple, interconnected mechanisms. These mechanisms can be broadly categorized into operational, social, and strategic dimensions. Each mechanism not only contributes to immediate organizational performance but also reinforces long-term resilience and competitiveness (Agboola *et al*., 2022 [5]; Ogeawuchi *et al*., 2022). Together, they explain why FM is increasingly regarded as a value-creation partner rather than merely a cost center.

At its foundation, FM delivers value through operational mechanisms that directly reduce costs, improve efficiency, and optimize resource utilization. Traditional maintenance, energy management, and space optimization functions have evolved with the integration of advanced technologies such as the Internet of Things (IoT), predictive analytics, and Building Information Modeling (BIM). These tools enable organizations to monitor asset performance in real time, anticipate failures, and schedule preventive interventions, thereby minimizing downtime and extending asset lifespans.

Cost reductions are achieved not only through preventive strategies but also through enhanced resource allocation. Energy-efficient lighting, HVAC optimization, and water conservation systems lower utility expenses while contributing to environmental goals. Similarly, flexible workspace designs supported by occupancy sensors enable organizations to adapt space usage in line with demand, reducing real estate costs. By linking these operational efficiencies with financial metrics, FM demonstrates tangible returns on investment.

Moreover, operational mechanisms contribute to risk management by ensuring regulatory compliance and reducing the likelihood of accidents or disruptions. This proactive approach safeguards continuity of operations, preventing costly delays or reputational damage associated with safety failures. Thus, operational value creation is rooted in the dual objectives of efficiency and reliability.

Beyond cost and efficiency, FM increasingly generates value through social mechanisms, particularly by enhancing workforce well-being and supporting diversity management. The physical environment directly influences employee health, satisfaction, and productivity. Well-designed, ergonomically optimized workplaces with good air quality, lighting, and acoustics reduce absenteeism, improve concentration, and foster collaboration (Umoren *et al*., 2022 [62]; Ogeawuchi *et al*., 2022). Facility strategies that emphasize safety and inclusivity also build trust between employees and employers, reinforcing organizational culture.

FM also plays a critical role in diversity and inclusion initiatives. By creating accessible environments for individuals with disabilities, ensuring gender-sensitive facilities, and accommodating multicultural workforces, FM contributes to equitable participation and workforce diversity. This, in turn, strengthens employee engagement and retention, reducing turnover costs and fostering innovation through diverse perspectives.

Workforce well-being initiatives, including wellness rooms, green spaces, and flexible work environments, demonstrate how FM intersects with human resources to create a supportive organizational ecosystem. By aligning facility strategies with broader human capital objectives, FM enhances not only the lived experience of employees but also organizational attractiveness in competitive labor markets. In this sense, social mechanisms of value creation bridge the operational and strategic roles of FM, linking the physical workplace to broader outcomes in workforce morale and productivity.

At the highest level, FM creates value through strategic mechanisms that enhance organizational resilience, strengthen reputation, and differentiate competitiveness. Resilience is achieved by embedding risk management and adaptive capacity within facility operations. For example,

climate-adaptive building designs and business continuity planning enable organizations to withstand environmental disruptions and market volatility. By ensuring operational stability in uncertain contexts, FM becomes an essential enabler of organizational agility.

Reputation is another strategic outcome of effective FM. Organizations that prioritize safe, sustainable, and innovative facilities are viewed favorably by regulators, investors, customers, and employees. This reputational capital not only strengthens stakeholder trust but also translates into financial advantages such as easier access to investment and enhanced brand equity. Corporate commitments to environmental, social, and governance (ESG) standards often rely heavily on FM practices—ranging from energy-efficient buildings to transparent safety reporting—positioning FM as a visible contributor to corporate responsibility.

Competitive differentiation is the culmination of strategic value creation. Facilities that embody sustainability, innovation, and employee well-being become distinguishing features in markets where products and services may be otherwise comparable (Ofoedu *et al*., 2022; Benson *et al*., 2022 [15]). For example, multinational firms that operate smart, carbon-neutral campuses differentiate themselves in terms of innovation leadership, attracting global talent and forging stronger client relationships. FM's role in embedding these features into organizational identity highlights its transition from a support role to a strategic partner.

The mechanisms of value creation in facility management span operational, social, and strategic dimensions, each reinforcing the others in a dynamic system. Operational mechanisms deliver cost reductions, efficiency gains, and optimized resource use, while social mechanisms enhance workforce well-being and inclusion. Strategic mechanisms elevate FM to a leadership role, strengthening resilience, reputation, and competitive positioning. Collectively, these mechanisms demonstrate that FM is integral not only to sustaining operations but also to advancing organizational growth, sustainability, and global competitiveness.

2.5 Implementation Roadmap

The translation of an evolutionary model for global facility management (FM) from theoretical construct to operational reality requires a structured and deliberate roadmap. Implementation must account for the diversity of organizational contexts, the complexity of global operations, and the need for iterative adaptation. A robust roadmap therefore includes assessing the current maturity stage, adopting evolutionary practices in phased steps, piloting and refining interventions, and scaling solutions across global operations while making context-sensitive adjustments as shown in figure 3 (Kufile *et al*., 2022; Ofoedu *et al*., 2022). Together, these stages form a pragmatic pathway that organizations can follow to achieve sustained growth and innovation in FM.

The first step in implementation is to establish a clear understanding of an organization's current position along the evolutionary continuum. Maturity assessment frameworks provide structured tools for diagnosing existing FM practices, capabilities, and outcomes. Assessments typically evaluate dimensions such as governance, technological integration, workforce competencies, sustainability practices, and strategic alignment. By benchmarking against established maturity levels, organizations can identify gaps between current practices and desired future states. Importantly, this diagnostic stage helps to avoid one-size-fits-all approaches, ensuring that interventions are grounded in the realities of each organization. For multinational firms, maturity assessments may reveal variation across facilities in different regions, underscoring the importance of tailoring strategies to local conditions while maintaining overarching global objectives.

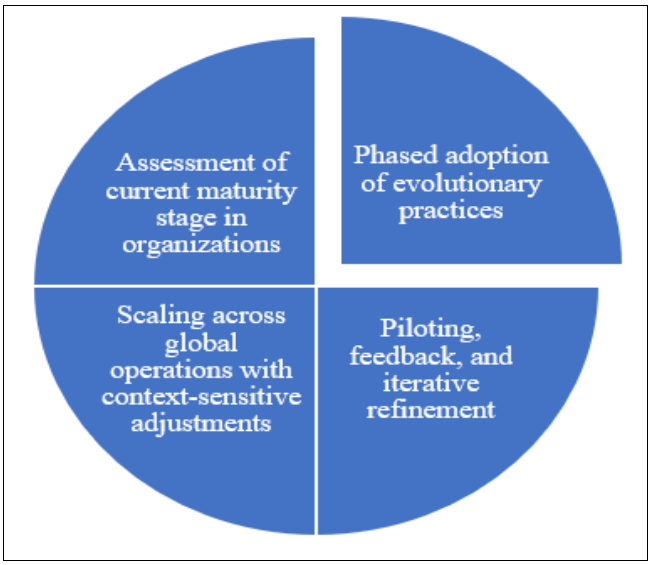

Fig 3: Implementation Roadmap

Following maturity assessment, organizations should pursue phased adoption of evolutionary practices that align with their readiness levels. Rather than attempting radical transformation, phased adoption allows organizations to prioritize initiatives that build momentum and create measurable impact. For instance, organizations at early stages of maturity might begin with standardization of processes and baseline digital integration, while more advanced organizations could focus on predictive analytics, sustainability innovations, or cross-border harmonization. Phased adoption also helps to manage risk, ensuring that changes are introduced at a pace that minimizes disruption to ongoing operations. By sequencing initiatives strategically, organizations create a coherent trajectory of growth rather than fragmented or reactive interventions.

Pilot projects are essential for testing the feasibility, impact, and scalability of new FM practices before organization-wide adoption. Piloting allows organizations to experiment with emerging technologies, governance frameworks, or workforce strategies on a smaller scale, reducing exposure to risk while generating valuable insights. For example, a company might pilot digital twin technology in a flagship facility, evaluate its impact on energy efficiency and predictive maintenance, and then refine the implementation plan before broader rollout (Ofoedu *et al*., 2022; Kufile *et al*., 2022). Feedback loops are critical during piloting, ensuring that lessons learned are systematically captured and integrated into revised strategies. Iterative refinement reflects the evolutionary nature of FM itself, where adaptation to feedback and changing conditions strengthens resilience and ensures long-term success.

Once practices have been tested and refined, the next step is scaling them across the organization's global operations.

Scaling requires balancing the pursuit of consistency with the flexibility to adapt to local contexts. Global alignment is important for establishing shared standards, performance metrics, and governance frameworks, but rigid uniformity risks undermining effectiveness in diverse regulatory, cultural, and resource environments. Context-sensitive adjustments allow organizations to respect local practices and requirements while embedding overarching principles of efficiency, sustainability, and innovation. For example, energy management strategies might be standardized globally but adapted to reflect local grid reliability, renewable resource availability, and regulatory expectations. Effective scaling is also facilitated by knowledge management systems that ensure lessons learned in one region are accessible to others, enabling cross-pollination of innovations and continuous global improvement.

The implementation of an evolutionary model for global facility management requires a roadmap that balances structure with adaptability. Beginning with a rigorous maturity assessment, organizations can identify their current stage and target appropriate interventions. Phased adoption allows change to be sequenced strategically, building momentum while minimizing disruption. Piloting and iterative refinement ensure that practices are tested, adapted, and optimized before broader rollout, while scaling across global operations with context-sensitive adjustments embeds resilience and flexibility into global strategies. Collectively, these steps ensure that FM organizations can operationalize the evolutionary model in a manner that is pragmatic, sustainable, and responsive to the complexities of globalization. By following this roadmap, organizations position FM as a dynamic discipline capable of driving efficiency, sustainability, and innovation at both local and global scales (Kufile *et al*., 2022; Ofoedu *et al*., 2022).

2.6 Expected Outcomes

The proposed evolutionary model of facility management (FM) is designed to generate outcomes that extend across operational, cultural, and strategic domains. These outcomes are both tangible and intangible, shaping not only immediate organizational performance but also long-term competitiveness and resilience (ODETUNDE *et al*., 2021; DARAOJIMBA *et al*., 2021 [17]). The implementation of advanced FM practices produces measurable benefits such as improved efficiency and reduced costs, while simultaneously cultivating organizational cultures of innovation, trust, and adaptability. Ultimately, the model positions FM as a strategic driver of sustainability and organizational success on a global scale.

At the most immediate level, the expected outcomes of modernized FM practices are tangible and quantifiable. Organizations adopting integrated, technology-enabled approaches achieve improved efficiency in asset management, space utilization, and service delivery. Predictive analytics, Internet of Things (IoT) systems, and Building Information Modeling (BIM) enable real-time monitoring and forecasting, reducing equipment failures, minimizing downtime, and extending asset lifespans. Such efficiencies translate directly into lower operational costs, as preventive strategies reduce the need for costly reactive maintenance and emergency interventions.

Resource optimization further reinforces tangible outcomes. Energy-efficient lighting, renewable energy integration, smart HVAC systems, and water recycling not only reduce utility expenses but also align with sustainability targets. By adopting circular economy principles, FM reduces waste streams and enhances the reuse of materials, contributing to long-term cost savings and environmental responsibility. The cumulative effect is a demonstrable reduction in operating expenditures and an increase in return on investment, strengthening FM's financial value proposition.

Beyond measurable cost savings and efficiencies, the model fosters intangible outcomes that are equally critical to organizational success. Chief among these is the development of a stronger culture of innovation. By embedding digital tools, adaptive practices, and continuous improvement loops, FM encourages experimentation and cross-disciplinary collaboration. Employees exposed to innovative workplaces are more likely to adopt creative problem-solving approaches, which extend beyond FM into broader organizational functions.

Trust is another intangible but powerful outcome. Transparent governance structures, consistent safety practices, and inclusive facility designs create environments where employees feel valued and secure. Trust is reinforced when organizations demonstrate their commitment to health, safety, and sustainability through facility operations, signaling alignment between corporate rhetoric and practice (Akpe *et al*., 2021 [10]; ODETUNDE *et al*., 2021). This trust translates into greater workforce engagement, loyalty, and productivity, reducing turnover and fostering positive organizational identity.

Adaptability also emerges as a defining outcome of advanced FM. In an era characterized by uncertainty, from climate change to pandemics, organizations with agile facility systems are better positioned to respond rapidly. Flexible workspaces, resilient infrastructure, and digital monitoring systems enable organizations to adapt to shifting workforce needs, regulatory requirements, and environmental conditions. This adaptability strengthens overall resilience and enhances the organization's ability to navigate disruptions while maintaining continuity.

At the highest level, the evolutionary model positions facility management as a strategic driver of organizational and global sustainability. By linking facility operations with corporate strategies in human resources, finance, and environmental performance, FM transcends its historical role as a support function. Instead, it becomes a partner in shaping organizational growth trajectories and competitive differentiation.

Sustainability outcomes represent a particularly significant strategic dimension. Facilities designed to minimize carbon emissions, integrate renewable energy, and adapt to climate risks position organizations as leaders in environmental stewardship. In doing so, FM contributes directly to achieving corporate environmental, social, and governance (ESG) goals, enhancing reputation with investors, regulators, and global stakeholders. Organizations that succeed in embedding sustainability through their facilities gain competitive advantages in increasingly sustainability-conscious markets.

Strategic outcomes also include enhanced organizational reputation and global competitiveness. Facilities that reflect innovation, inclusivity, and sustainability become symbols of corporate excellence, attracting talent, strengthening customer loyalty, and securing investor confidence. In multinational contexts, FM serves as a harmonizing force that aligns operations across geographies, ensuring

consistent quality and resilience while enabling cultural adaptability. As a result, FM becomes a benchmark for operational excellence and an essential pillar of global competitiveness.

The expected outcomes of the evolutionary model for facility management practices encompass a spectrum of tangible, intangible, and strategic benefits. Tangible outcomes such as efficiency improvements, cost reductions, and sustainable resource use provide immediate financial and environmental gains. Intangible outcomes, including innovation, trust, and adaptability, strengthen organizational culture and resilience. Strategic outcomes elevate FM to a leadership role in sustainability and competitiveness, positioning it as a global driver of organizational success. Collectively, these outcomes illustrate how FM has evolved from a narrowly operational focus to a comprehensive, strategic discipline that shapes the future of organizations and their role in global sustainability (Ogeawuchi *et al*., 2021; Lawrence *et al*., 2021) [44, 33].

3. Conclusion

The growing complexity of globalization, sustainability imperatives, and technological advancements highlights the urgent need for an evolutionary model in facility management (FM). Traditional frameworks, often linear and compliance-driven, are insufficient for addressing the dynamic challenges faced by organizations operating across diverse geographies and regulatory environments. An evolutionary model provides a structured yet adaptive pathway, enabling FM to progress through stages of growth, integration, and innovation. This shift underscores the necessity of reconceptualizing FM as more than an operational support function, positioning it instead as a strategic driver of organizational resilience, competitiveness, and long-term value creation.

Facility management today is uniquely positioned to shape sustainable, resilient, and innovative organizations. By embedding principles of adaptability, systems thinking, and cross-disciplinary collaboration, FM evolves into a discipline that not only ensures efficient operations but also contributes to broader organizational goals, including environmental stewardship, workforce well-being, and digital transformation. In this way, FM becomes a central mechanism for aligning operational excellence with global sustainability and resilience agendas.

Looking forward, future research should deepen understanding of how evolutionary pathways unfold across different sectors, cultures, and scales of operation. Comparative studies on FM maturity across regions would illuminate best practices and reveal context-specific challenges. Strengthening global collaboration among industry bodies, academic institutions, and policy makers will be equally essential, creating platforms for knowledge exchange and harmonized standards. Moreover, alignment with international policies on climate adaptation, workplace health, and digital governance will ensure FM remains responsive to external pressures while advancing global sustainability objectives.

Ultimately, the adoption of an evolutionary model positions facility management at the forefront of shaping the future of organizations—driving not only efficiency and innovation but also sustainable value in an interconnected world.

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