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NAVIGATING CHALLENGES IN IMPLEMENTING ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE AND DEVELOPMENT IN PAKISTAN'S PUBLIC SECTOR

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Abstract. Pakistan is at a crucial stage, undergoing a process of political, social, and economic transformation. The performance of the public sector impacts significantly on the population. The public sector is undergoing constant reform and development due to current events. This study aims to locate and understand the elements that inhabit organisational transformation and development in Pakistan's public sector.

We adopted qualitative techniques and thematic analysis to find insights and answers to the research questions. The case study approach was utilised, and semi-structured interviews were conducted with 21 public servants who have been part of the change process at public entities.

The most significant factors of the research study relate to socioeconomics, the progression of technology, willingness for change, cultural effect, political will, the impact of elite decision-makers, and the improvement of administrative systems. These main themes have a significant impact on the progression of the process.

As an outcome of the study, we have developed a holistic model to understand public management reforms in Pakistan. This study will serve as a road map for policymakers to facilitate their decision-making process. Moreover, this is also beneficial for researchers in the public management field, legislatures, and various public entities. The research enhanced an understanding of institutional theory regarding organisational, change, transformation and development, within Pakistani public sector organisations.

Keywords: organisational change, organisational development, public sector, public administration.

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Introduction

Pakistan is at the crossroads of political, social, and economic transformation (Jamil and Azhar, 2024) The nation as a whole suffers due to the deficient functioning of public sector entities. The institutional functioning is not measuring up to the mark, and the quality of public service is deteriorating (Khawaja and Khalid, 2022). There is a profound lack of willingness among public entities to implement or undergo a prospective change due to the vested interests of various stakeholders, which suits their prevailing culture of deep-rooted corruption (Ullah et al., 2022). Politicians as well as higher bureaucracy at the helm of state affairs control and negatively interfere with in-state activities that make the conditions of public institutes worse and complicate their functioning. Pakistan has been ranked 140th out of 180 countries with a score of 28 on the corruption perception index (Transparency International, 2021). The increasing and pervasive corruption has collapsed many public sector organisations in Pakistan, such as Pakistan International Airlines and Pakistan Railways (Uroos et al., 2022). In addition, numerous corruption cases are under scrutiny and investigation against industrialists, politicians, and government servants (Kırşanlı, 2024) The growth rate of corruption has impeded the reform process badly and has made it an uphill task to implement any change strategies (Mouneer et al., 2022)

Organisational change is the partial or complete adoption of new ideas, concepts, or sets of human behaviours by the organisational members (Errida and Lotfi, 2021). Change implementation is a broad statement that refers to continuous transformation in various domains such as technology, structure, and the development of human resources (Sofat et al., 2015). Organisational development is "the organisational-wide application of behavioural science knowledge to the planned improvement and reinforcement of the strategies, structures, and processes that lead to organisational effectiveness (Cummings and Worley, 2009). Kurt Lewin has given a change model, and he is credited as the father of change management for his unfreeze-change-refreeze, three-step approach to change (Sarayreh et al., 2013). Moreover, the model given by Kotter is also important for organisational change and development (Kotter, 2011). According to Carol Rusaw (2007), organisational change is a detailed and interrelated process. In public sector organisations, top management can play a significant role, especially in facilitating the environment for the adoption as well as the implementation of change strategies (Sminia and van Nistelrooij, 2006) by play-

ing a crucial role as a change sponsor. Moreover, according to Fattore, Iacovone, and Steccolini (2018), a clear vision, planning, commitment to change, and willingness of the top management are the elements that play a significant role in the change process as compared to the resource availability and comprehensive approach that appear to play a less contributory role. The concept of New Public Management (NPM) that emerged for public sector reforms and management (Pollitt, 2007) was much criticised when it was implemented in developing countries due to its Western roots, but it has delivered positive outcomes in many cases in developing countries.

There have been three waves of reforms in Pakistan. The first period focused on generating reports, and only a few changes materialised in 1973 when major reform practices were undertaken. The second period was more developmental management in its approach. Some structural adjustment programmes came into force, and the privatisation of government entities began to reduce the size of the government. In the third phase, the development governance model was made effective by focusing on decentralisation, devolution of power, and making the service industry effective (Meghna et al. 2013). Since its beginning, Pakistan has endured widespread corruption that hampers its overall growth. Various forms of corruption have impacted Pakistan's governmental system (Kırşanlı, 2024). Furthermore, poor governance, inefficiency, and corruption are the primary factors that impede the development of public sector enterprises (Kamal and Batool, 2020). Due to a lack of political will, most of the reforms in the past were not fully implemented, and those strategies have also become redundant. This is attributable to many reasons, such as successive changes in the government, frequent variations in policies, and resistance from politicians, bureaucrats, and vested public and private stakeholders. All these factors conclusively affected these reforms and prevented them from succeeding (Khan and Hussain, 2020). Over the last two decades, Pakistan's public management reforms have implemented several governance and public management practices to address structural deficiencies, procedural ambiguities, managerial inefficiencies, and ineffective accountability mechanisms. The major objective of all these reforms was to alleviate poverty and achieve social and economic development goals, whereas the general focus of all these efforts has been on decentralisation, accountability of opposing political entities in the name of combating corruption, privatisation of public-owned entities, strengthening regulatory bodies, public-private partnerships, and social assistance programmes to eradicate poverty and cope up with natural disruptions like COVID-19 (Salman, 2021).

The objectives of the research are as follows:

- To conduct a detailed analysis of Pakistan's public sector organisations to gain insight into the factors that hamper organisational change and development.
- To assess the multiple effects of the identified impediments on the functioning of public sector organisations in Pakistan.
- To suggest a model for public sector reforms in Pakistan.

Broad research question:

What are the key elements that influence organisational transformation and development in Pakistan's public sector?

Specific research questions:

- How does the pressure of increased population affect the implementation of management reforms in Pakistan?
- What is the role of the media in supporting organisation reforms?
- To what extent do global economic policies and domestic societal pressures influence the reforms in public sector?
- What is the role of the merit system in fostering organisational reforms in Pakistan's public sector?
- What is the role of digital technology in influencing implementation, efficiency, and transparency of reforms?
- What are the key factors (culture, politics, and religion) determining the organisational readiness for change in Pakistan's public sector organisations?

The model given by Pollitt and Bouckaert (2011) regarding public management reform was considered appropriate as a framework to understand this phenomenon and the hindrance to organisational change in Pakistan, as the primary goal of this research is to identify the elements that impede or slow the process of organisational change and development. The findings of this research would contribute to the development of a cohesive knowledge of the elements or factors affecting organisational change. This study has not only contributed to a better understanding of organisational reforms but also highlighted significant elements that hinder the change process, particularly in the context of Pakistan. Moreover, it is expected to affect how public policy is conceived and implemented and will contribute to the literature in this domain in the context of a developing nation. This study seeks to close the gaps identified in previous research.

Literature Review

The dynamics of organisational change and development have changed (Mizrak, 2024). The capacity for organisations to adapt to change is a competence that is essential for continued existence in a changing environment (Supriharyanti, 2022). Organisational development is the top priority of every government, it is the planned process that addresses the organisational culture utilising systematic efforts, processes, and practices. According to Ahmady et al. (2016) the core characteristic of an organisation is the “coordination of people and resources to jointly accomplish desired goals.” Therefore, managers are generally critical whilst directing and coordinating resources efficiently and effectively to achieve the desired goals (Clegg et al., 2019). Pollitt believes that if system perspectives are applied to the public sector, the systems perspective will serve as a foundation for comprehending the operations of the public sector organisations under consideration (Hill, 2014).

The term PETS refers to the political, economic, technological, and socio-cultural elements. It is a widely used technique for determining the impact of the environment on an organisation's operations. It affects the organisation's subsystems and components and can function as a change catalyst. The change strategy cannot be applied to every circumstance that arises inside an organisa-

tion. Before commencing a change process, it is necessary to understand the context. The change model for every country is distinct. Transferring a model from one country to another may not be sufficient, the local variables and environment must be considered (Hood, 1991). According to McLaughlin and Osborne, (2005) different countries and sectors have a distinct perspective on change management, as every country has its priorities. Each country has unique contextual factors that must be considered before implementing any reform. Different studies have described an organisational transformation and the scope of change in a variety of ways. It might be on a small scale, such as upgrading computer equipment, or on a large scale, such as restructuring the organisation. According to Phillips (1983), transformational change is a process of utilising fundamental structures and tools to manage the organisation where change is attempted. There is no specific criteria or theory to understand or derive the way to implement change in any organisation.

Technology has advanced at a rapid speed, and the world has become a global village. The challenges ahead are enormous. As a result of the daily dynamics, change is unavoidable (Drucker, 2007). Therefore, Bouckaert argued that the planned approach for the change is more appropriate for public sector entities. According to Cumming and Worley (2013) there is a consistent need to accommodate the expectations of the citizens, frame government policies, and provide appropriate and high-quality public services. There are significant distinctions between the private and public sectors, and they defined five forces that influence transformation in public sector organisations. These are political and administrative systems, socio-economic pressure, random events, and the decision-making of the elite.

R. C. Mascarenhas (1993) believes that the increasing trend of globalisation and tight economic conditions are the main drivers for global transformation. Furthermore, A. Farazmand (1999) stated that global financial institutions like the IMF, the World Bank, and the WTO affect administrative systems and, consequently, public sector reform processes. Global interdependence and membership in systems such as the WTO put nations under pressure to effect change. In addition Coram and Burnes (2001) state that public pressure is a significant motivator of change in the public sector. The dissatisfied public creates an impact on the government to improve services because that government takes influence and makes necessary changes to the public sector and enhances the delivery of services. Additionally, Kamensky (1996) argues that emerging innovations also contribute to the process of change by acting as a catalyst. Organisations must make the necessary changes to facilitate the adoption of new technology, which is critical to their existence. Moreover, Trottier, Van Wart, and Wang (2008) identified leadership as a critical element for organisational change. In the public sector, leadership can be classified as political, administrative, or bureaucratic. R. Laking (1999) highlighted that the reform practices of developed countries are not suitable for developing countries in any case. Moreover, R. Heeks (2002) thinks that understanding the background of a country is important to the achievement of any reform endeavour. A. Hanif et al. (2016) highlighted the weak performance management system in the public sector of Pakistan that weakens the change pro-

cess. According to M. Kamal (2020), good governance is a significant challenge for Pakistan to strengthen institutions. S. Naveed et al. (2018) discussed the ineffective governance mechanism of state-owned enterprises. Moreover, S. Naveed (2021) emphasises the elements of the new public management model and (NPM) that can be used as a tool for organisational change and development. G. N. Jones and J. Firth (2019) suggest Kotter's model as the paradigm for successful organisational change and development process. L. Sheikh and A. Rizwan (2021) argue that change activities should not be path dependent.

Therefore, it may be confidently asserted that the literature contains several gaps. Only a few studies have been conducted on organisational transformation and development in the public sector of Pakistan, leaving a huge gap that must be addressed. Further, there is an acute shortage of change leaders and professionals to address the reform issue efficiently and effectively. Academics have mostly ignored Pakistan in this field of change management. There are few publications, predominantly due to a scarcity of expertise in the field and a dearth of research conducted by foreign experts. The major reason for the lack of study on the subject in Pakistan is that many public sector organisations engaged in organisational reform fail to provide an academic perspective for the benefit of others. It is necessary to gain a better grasp of organisational expansion and transformation in the context of Pakistan's public sector organisations. Moreover, Riggs (2001) believes that it is necessary to build public administrative models that are contextually appropriate and responsive to local needs. As a result, research on Pakistan's public sector organisations is necessary to potentially solve the gaps highlighted above. Therefore, it is necessary to establish a holistic paradigm for comprehending public management in Pakistan. Additionally, variables affecting its operation and impeding change must be recognised.

Hypothesis is a statement of prediction about the possible outcome of the study (Barroga and Matanguihan, 2022). Although some scholars have criticised using the term hypothesis for qualitative studies (Lareau, 2012), others have strongly rebutted this claim and suggested the proposition of hypotheses in qualitative research (Haven and Van Grootel, 2019). Therefore, based on the extensive literature review, this study offers the following statement of prediction about the study's outcome.

- Due to resource constraints, increased population pressure is a negative factor in the successful implementation of reforms in Pakistan's public sector organisations.
- Media is a significant determinant of shaping public opinion for organisational reforms in Pakistan's public sector.
- Organisational reforms in the public sector are either positively or negatively affected by global economic policies.
- The merit system and reforms in the public sector organisations are strongly interrelated.
- Implementing digital technology is an effective tool to implement reforms and ensure transparency.
- Multiple socio – politico – cultural factors are strongly associated with the readiness to form.

Theoretical underpinning

Institutional theory investigates the factors involved in the formation and maintenance of social institutions. This method is crucial to organisational studies as it examines the influence of cultural roots, social norms, and collective expectations on organisational behaviours, structures, and outcomes (Koczkás, 2024). Institutions primarily comprise roles, regulations, values, and symbolic components that may affect organisational frameworks. Institutional theory has consistently garnered acknowledgment as a significant and influential framework for elucidating organisational and individual behavior (Amenta and Ramsey, 2010). This Special Research subject on Institutional Theory and Institutional Change encompasses several studies that elucidate the reasons for institutional change, notably concerning the deinstitutionalisation of entrenched norms and practices (Peters, 2022). Applying institutional theory to facilitate organisational development and transition might be beneficial for the public sector. Institutional theory may provide a framework for understanding the behavior of public institutions and their personnel within the organisational culture of Pakistani public sector entities (Sherani, 2017).

Methodology

This is exploratory research aimed at gaining a better understanding of the critical issues, discovering further insights, and assessing the phenomenon being investigated (Creswell, 2013). The researcher obtained a broader perspective of the topic through the experiences of the people while conducting the interview and observing interviewees (S. Van Thiel, 2014).

Researchers after considering the point of view of the interviewee try to develop an understanding of the phenomenon after getting details of the experience and interpretation of the interviewee without any bias (Saunders et al., 2007). In this study qualitative data was collected, using a variety of analyses and techniques. Semi-structured interviews were conducted. In addition participant observations were also used to collect data. Thematic analysis was employed to analyse the data (Braun and Clarke, 2006). To obtain a better knowledge of the topic being studied in the public sector it is essential to consult a variety of data sources, including organisational reports, newsletters, websites, and other relevant materials, therefore primary and secondary data were used to build coherent knowledge regarding organisational change and development in the public sector (Saunders et al., 2007). This paved the way for developing an understanding of multiple aspects of the public sector organisations of Pakistan including their culture, values, norms, history, work practices, structures, and processes.

The research has attempted to examine people's behaviours, opinions, and experiences – therefore, a qualitative method was adopted. Thus, an in-depth understanding of how organisations operate was attainable. Qualitative methods are valid for examining social phenomena (Lincoln, 2018). Qualitative research methods are holistic, explorative, intrusive, contextual, and rational (Ghauri et al., 2020). A case study analysis was conducted in this research that is frequently used in public administration (Gummesson, 1991). The primary data was gathered

by conducting semi-structured interviews with officers who participated in the change process. To ensure rigour and triangulation, multiple data collection methods were undertaken to strengthen the case study. These included semi-structured interviews, participant observation, and the analysis of the relevant documents (Yin, 2013)

The interviewees were chosen using a non-probability selection technique that includes purposive and snowball sampling. Purposive sampling was selected to identify the person who is capable of giving in-depth information regarding the topic of the research. Additionally, snowball sampling was employed to find prospective and potentially having great knowledge and have worked in the change process (Easterby-Smith et al., 2021) Thematic analysis was used in the study because it was beneficial to uncover the element of driving organisational change and development in the public sector (Braun and Clarke, 2022). Moreover, appropriate codes and themes were developed and patterns both within and between themes were reviewed and analysed (Brooks et al., 2015). Then the initial template of codes was classified and grouped. This also helped in developing themes and sub-themes (Johnson, 2014). According to Marshall et. al (2013) in qualitative research, a sample size of twelve respondents may be sufficient to achieve data saturation. According to this research, personal interviews with 21 Government personnel were undertaken. Face-to-face interviews were conducted and then transcribed. The interview questions were derived from the thesis (Wasim, 2016) which is completely consistent with the factors established in an earlier study in the literature review section.

Results

Interviews with 21 personnel of different federal government entities who have been part of the change process at their respective organisation are shown in Table 1:

Table 1

Sampling framework

Participants in structured interviews	Number of participants
Pakistan Post Office Department	02
Federal Investigation Agency	01
Pakistan Audit Department	03
Wafaqi Mohtasib	01
AGPR Karachi	01
Urdu Dictionary Board	01
Quaid-e-Azam Academy	01
NADRA	02
Quaid-e-Azam Mazar Management Board	01

Participants in structured interviews	Number of participants
Pakistan Audit Department	02
Deputy Secretary of Federal Ministry	01
Federal Secretary	01
Pakistan Railways	02
Pakistan Customs	02
TOTAL	21

Source: Completed by the author.

The participants were asked to share their experiences while applying change. After analysing their interview, many codes and themes were generated around the organisation and development in Pakistan. All twenty-one participants were Pakistanis and belonged to the change process. The results are discussed below in detail. Based on the results an organisational change model has been developed in Figure 1.

Socio-economic factors

Rising population Burden

Interviewees expressed the rising population as a massive challenge that is managed. One of the senior civil servants expressed his view: *“The population is rising day by day i.e., increasing urbanisation, and due to the high standard of living there is an increase in the number of vehicles which are on road. The traffic congestion has also increased; therefore, management is becoming quite difficult”*. Another senior civil servant was also of the view about population: *“It is difficult to bring about change due to the increasing population. The census is also not accurate therefore it is difficult to plan things”*.

Some other interviewees expressed that *“without population control, Pakistan cannot bring change in the affairs of state as it is the 5th largest nation of the world with a low per capita income and standard of living. If this nation wishes to progress, the policymakers should look into this matter and make proper strategies to address the issue”*.

One officer of the Pakistan Post Office Department expressed that *“due to increased population at a massive rate of 2 percent yearly, the economic pie to share is becoming increasingly small to feed more mouths and expand on their education, wellbeing, and social development. It further leads to increased unemployment. Therefore, if proper planning is not done to control the population, it may lead to dire consequences”*.

Influence of media

Approximately half of the interviewees expressed their views: *“Media plays a negative role and influences public entities in their decision-making. However, some of them make positive images of public departments among the general masses and they project a positive picture of public entities and their efforts”*.

Another civil employee who had served in FIA expressed that *“the media blackmails individuals and public entities. Also they are in a position to impact the policies and structure. They can easily influence things in their favour”*. Two interviewees highlighted that *“the media acts as a pressure group. The rules and regulations framed by PEMRA should be imposed in true spirit. The media should be given the freedom to express but the culture of blackmailing should be curbed”*.

Impact of global economic forces

Almost all the interviewees highlighted that *“the policies of the World Bank and the IMF greatly affect the decision-making, planning, execution of policies, law-making and controlling of the State-owned entities. Sometimes deviations are made as per their choices. The sovereignty of the State remains at stake. However, the dire economic conditions of the country force the state to seek help from these global financial institutions at times even against its desire”*.

One of the interviewees stated that *“many times Pakistan has been bailed out and rescued from economic defaults by these institutions, the role of these international financial institutions has therefore, become of key importance for Pakistan in the times of interrelated and interdependent global economies”*.

Impact of domestic economic policies

One employee of National Bank informed that *“there is a massive impact of monetary and fiscal policy on public entities and their decision-making process if the government can make substantive policies and can execute them with vigour and dedication, the public entities would be able to play their role towards public duty and welfare in a much better way”*.

Two interviewees further explained that *“the non-consistency of institutional policies is one of the major flaws, as their development and execution are personalities centric instead of being system-centric. Therefore, with each change of government or the change of institutional head, the policies in vogue and their pursuit lose esteem hindering the change process and progress of public entities. There should be a mechanism that ensures the intrinsic continuity of policies irrespective of the management or leadership change”*.

Impact of Societal Pressure

Half of the interviewees expressed that *“the overall behaviour of citizens is not uniform as they come from various socio-economic, ethnic, and religious backgrounds. It varies from time to time and region to region. Therefore, segments of the society with converging interests work as a pressure group, and their behaviour impacts the public entities”*.

One senior civil servant expressed: *“The government policies should be public-centric as they are the main stakeholder of the country and beneficiaries of public reforms”*.

Impact of unexpected natural events

All of the interviewees were of the view that *“unexpected events have an enormous effect on the progress of the public entities. The recent COVID-19 and Floods*

badly affected all the organisational development initiatives and almost all the entities could not achieve their desired goals and objectives. Many of these government bodies have become rather more fragile and weakened in their capacity to live up to the grinding demands of the time”.

Violation of the merit system

Three interviewees shared their experiences when they were part of the recruitment process:

“We experienced a great influence of bureaucrats, political leaders, media, and even from some esteemed organisations to recruit their recommended persons”.

Two interviewees further shared that *“the meritocracy is generally on the decline due to nepotism and bureaucratic and political influences”.*

Impact of technology

Impact of e-commerce, internet, e-filing, and digitalization

All of the interviewees expressed the view that e-commerce has opened the doors of opportunities for Pakistani masses to do online trade and due to e-commerce, this world has become a global village in true sense. Moreover, the Internet has been a blessing for public entities as it serves as a great catalyst and supporting tool for organisational change and development. It has given impetus to the work processes. The public entities of Pakistan have shifted to an e-filing mechanism which is a substantive change and leaves from traditional ways of working. Online technology has made government processes efficient, effective, and transparent. NADRA and Passport offices are two such entities, which have lived up to the call of the digital times and the public is fully benefiting from their efficient digital processes, which are even better than countries like Turkey.

Impact of social media

Four interviewees highlighted that *“social media has affected public entities a lot. Due to critical and scathing social media analysis and news, every big Ministry has recruited a public relations officer to endorse or counter social media criticism. However, there are some nuisances of social media such as invasion of privacy of the public entities or blowing the matters out of proportion, as social media in Pakistan has attained a lot of freedom but it seriously lacks a desired sense of responsibility”.*

Organisational readiness for change

Two senior civil servants expressed that *“Before undertaking a change process a public entity must be made ready for a change in terms of their human resource, processes, mechanism, and systems. It is usually seen that the technical aspect of the change such as systems and technologies are upgraded but the human aspect of the change generally remains ignored as they are not made capable through relevant training or motivation to cope with the rigours of new change likely to emerge at the time of practical implementation of the desired change. It is, therefore, of utmost importance that transition to change from existing state A to desired state B is managed flawlessly before rolling out a change implementation plan”.*

Culture

Religious influence

All the interviewees were of the view that *“in Pakistan, religion immensely affects the change process, especially where any change is found contravening to the religious beliefs or sensitivities of the employees. Such influences are exerted from within and outside of the organisation on the decision making as well as the process of implementing the policies”*.

Impact of macro-, meso-, micro-, and nano- culture

Five interviewees expressed that *“the overall culture of Pakistan is a mix of religious beliefs, an amalgamation of different races, casts, cultural norms, values, traditions and languages, that affects much required integrated and homogeneous working of public entities enormously”*.

Existence of cross purpose among political, military and bureaucratic elites

Impact of military rule

One senior bureaucrat expressed the following views: *“The military exerts huge influence on politicians and bureaucrats alike mostly in the name of national security and at times to secure a bigger piece of the pie from the national budget. The military also plays an immense role in the making of internal and foreign policies. There is undue meddling of the military in the government and bureaucratic matters. Historically, prolonged martial laws have severely affected the capacity and confidence building of these institutions in terms of decision making or their ability to spearhead any prospective change management for national cause”*.

Political interference

A senior civil servant had the following views about politicians: *“The mandate of political stakeholders is to serve the people. However, once in power they do exactly the opposite, as they usually come from upper and elite class of the society having extremely low or no exposure to the plight and problems of a common person. They generally support the status quo as their prosperity, especially of the feudal elite, is linked to the ignorance of their people because education and literacy would nurture progressiveness among the masses and they would migrate to cities or abroad for better livelihood or life opportunities instead of tilling the lands of these feudal people. Therefore, they are least interested in bringing about any change in the existing politico-social setup”*. Another interview expressed that *“politicians immensely interfere in public departments and influence the decisions as per their wish or whim to accrue benefits and favours for their progeny or those who act as proxies to support their self-interest agendas”*. An interviewee further stated that *“there is a dire need for an efficient and effective political leadership having the capacity to rise above their self-interests to bring about positive organisational change and development”*.

Bureaucratic interference

Three senior bureaucrats stated that *“we the bureaucrats have a crucial role to play; we serve till the age of 60 for the nation and we do whatever is in the best interest of the nation and the government departments that we represent, which*

have a strict hierarchical structure. Furthermore, our work is overseen by senior officers. However, there is a need for change in the bureaucratic system as well, because a lot of ad-hocism exists in public institutes and no worthwhile progress has been made to uplift the plight of the nation since its inception 75 years ago”.

In contrast, three non-bureaucrat officers revealed that “there are many flaws in the existing system of public entities. There should be advanced working systems/processes coupled with the latest technology measuring up to the needs of this modern era as the current system is quite rigid and inefficient. The senior management makes work quite difficult due to their slow and laid-back attitude. Things get piled up down the line rendering the entire system inefficient, which creates tensions amongst the lower working staff, and the environment of public entities generally remains toxic”.

Impact of the Judiciary

Half of the interviewees stated that the “judicial system is highly sluggish and inefficient taking excessively prolonged time to decide the cases even of the petty nature. Such delayed decisions at times have huge economic costs for the development projects of public good, which due to unnecessary litigations cause contractual breaches – exponentially inflating the capital costs that render the entire project unfeasible. Moreover, when we take some disciplinary action against the employees, they approach the Court of Law, and most of the time after getting favourable decisions re-join the organisation, even further emboldened in their habitual laxities; immensely undermining the prestige and authority of the superiors; thus, affecting the overall environment and working of the public entities”.

New management ideas

One senior civil servant had the following views: “Within public entities much depends upon the head of the organisation. If he has a participatory leadership style, then new ideas would be appreciated and implemented”. Another senior civil servant stated that “employees do have new and innovative ideas, but they do not come forward for the fear of negative peer pressure or retribution by the superiors who prefer status quo as that suits them according to their existing experience and skill set”.

Role of structures, policies, systems, and processes

Half of the interviewees stated that “the structures, systems, and policies are not followed in letter and spirit, but rather in an ad hoc fashion. Temporary administrative instructions are pursued suited to the vested interest of the leadership of the time – mainly to facilitate their corrupt practices. Most of the personnel in charge at public entities are habitually living beyond their means, which is the main cause of corruption becoming institutionalised among these entities. Corruption, lack of professionalism, non-political will, complexities in the system, etc. are all causes of non-performance of public institutions”. Another civil servant stated that “there is nothing wrong with the system or policies as it is the same structure which existed at the time of the British and was quite useful and efficient, rather it’s only the lack of will to implement it in true letter and spirit”.

Capacity of the Civil Service

Approximately half of the interviewees stated that *“the civil servants are capable of running public entities effectively and efficiently and they are stringently trained for that purpose. Further, it’s not a small feat to pass the civil service entrance exam and to bear the rigours of the civil services academy. However, there is a huge requirement for culture change at public institutes whose part they become to root out the inefficiencies from the system. The realisation for this cultural change has to take place at the highest echelon of civil services such as bringing in proper Human Resources practices, avoiding overlapping of tasks, clarity in the vision, mission, and objectives of the concerned entity, proper job descriptions, and understanding of roles and responsibilities”*. Moreover, another civil servant pointed out that *“the work environment of the organisation should be made conducive for each employee to give his/her best and most importantly their jobs should be supported with the modern digital technologies to bring them at par with rest of private, corporate and international institutes of repute”*.

Content of the reform package

Almost all interviewees shared that *“all reform packages were well planned and were mostly the replications of tested and proven global management practices, it was only their non-implementation in true sense, which could not yield the desired results”*.

Implementation process

All interviewees were of the view that *“It is the implementation of any change process where the biggest of the snags lie. The person or team tasked to implement change (the change agents) does not get the necessary support from the head of the institute or the Board of Governors, as they fail to realise their responsibilities as (change sponsors). As a result, the personnel responsible for spearheading the change become frustrated and demotivated by the resistance they face from the employees and stakeholders of the expected change while getting no backing from the change sponsors. Such change agents quit halfway, and the entire change process grinds down to zero, wasting all the efforts and public resources”*.

Research contributions

Riggs is recognized for his significant contribution to the field of comparative public administration literature. He introduced several variables in his prismatic model, some of which were also incorporated in Pollitt and Bouckaert’s (2011) model and empirical data. However, Riggs’ model has limitations in terms of its applicability, logical consistency, and comprehensiveness when compared to Pollitt and Bouckaert’s approach. Therefore, Riggs’ prismatic model cannot be practically utilised for research purposes, especially in the context of a developing nation like Pakistan. To gain a deeper understanding of Pakistan’s public sector functioning, the investigation relied on Pollitt and Bouckaert’s (2011) model for public management reform as a foundational framework. This model was used to explore, identify, and analyse the factors influencing the reform process in Pakistan.

However, following the completion of interviews, additional variables and themes were discovered that have an impact on the functioning of the public sec-

tor and consequently influence the reform process. As a result, the researchers have proposed an updated model, depicted in Figure 1. This revised model is more suitable for the specific circumstances found in developing countries, particularly in Pakistan. It serves as a valuable addition to the existing body of research on public sector reform in developing nations. The research not only contributes by providing a standard but also by offering a framework for the development of an organisational transformation and development model that can be emulated by other public sector organisations in developing countries, leading to potential benefits. Furthermore, the study's findings are expected to influence the formulation and implementation of public policies, thereby contributing to the existing research in this field within the context of developing countries. This enhanced model, illustrated in Figure 1, represents a significant expansion upon the model previously developed by Pollitt and Bouckaert (2011).

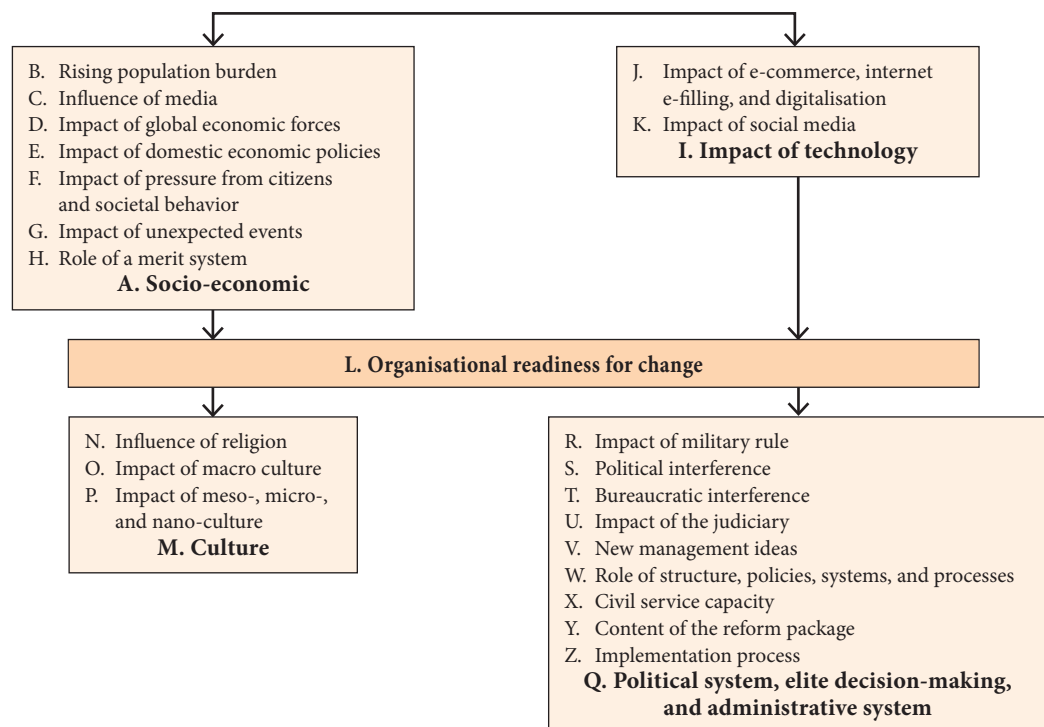


Figure 1. Model of Public Management Reforms for Pakistan

Source: Created by the author.

Discussion

Socioeconomic factors such as the rise of population, the role of the media, the influence of the IMF and the World Bank, monetary and fiscal policies of the government, public pressure, and contingencies such as flood and demerit are the factors that negatively affect the public sector entities and hinder the progress of those entities. These factors were also endorsed by literature (Ali, 2022; Foua and Diriwari, 2022; Nawaz and Usama Anwar, 2021; Zahid and Din, 2019). During the in-

terview it was revealed that technological advancement, digitalisation, and social media have great effects on organisational change and development and technology can be used as an effective tool for change stimulation corresponding to the literature (Batool et al., 2021; Umair et al., 2021). In addition, research revealed the influence of religious practices, macro-, micro-, and meso-culture – corresponding to the organisational change and development literature (Abbas and Bidin, 2022; Afzal et al., 2021). Moreover, the impact of military rule, political interference, judicial practices, policies, the capacity of personnel, the content of reform elements, and the process of implementation are significant elements in the change process. These factors were also found validated in the literature.

Conclusion

This research improved the comprehension of institutional theory about the problems and implementation of organisational transformation and growth within public sector organisations in Pakistan.

The purpose of the study was to fill in some of the gaps that had been identified in the existing body of literature in Pakistan on the topic of organisational change and growth in public sector companies. Certain organisations have appropriately implemented changes and have attained the results that were expected. In this study, an effort was made to highlight the potential of various organisations from the point of view of serving government servants. The research provided several important contributions and expanded the knowledge regarding the potential for organisational change and development in organisations that are part of Pakistan's public sector. A model of change is also something that has been suggested as a result of this research. As a consequence, the objectives of this research have been accomplished, and the research questions have been answered. This study is an effort to pave the way for a better and more holistic overview of public entities from the perspective of reforms, as well as to contribute to the scant literature that exists on the issue. In addition, it is hoped that the findings of this study will lead to the development of a better, stronger, and more stable Pakistan in the future.

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