Reforming a Broken System: A New Performance Evaluation System for Pakistan Civil Servants

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Extant literature informs that the modern state requires a civil service whose performance is accurately measured, evaluated and subsequently rewarded (or punished). In this paper we use Pakistan as a case study of a country in which the performance evaluation system is obsolete and resistant to change. After analysing literature on the importance of performance management systems in bureaucracies, we evaluate the present structure of the Pakistani performance evaluation system of civil servants and identify its major weaknesses. We then present the results of a unique survey of senior civil servants which informs on how they viewed potential reforms of the current system. Based on this, we present a revised instrument to more accurately measure the performance of Pakistani civil servants, which both adapts the existing instrument while being cognizant of the international best practices. Finally we look at some of the significant political economy factors that could hinder the introduction of a new performance management system.

Keywords: Performance Evaluation, Political Manipulation, SMART, Political Alignment Performance Management, Civil Service

I. INTRODUCTION

Although there is exists debate about the role and importance of the nation-state there is no question that at an efficient and meritocratic civil service is a key arm of the state [Micklethwait and Wooldridge (2014)] "The importance of the bureaus and the critical position of their heads in the line of command need no demonstration" [Macmahon and Millet (1939: 307)].

Also, there has been a strong move recently to move from a civil service that is blindly trusted to maximise societal welfare to a civil service whose performance is accurately measured, evaluated and rewarded (or punished). Though this approach is intuitively appealing, there are significant problems in adopting such a system for many reasons: first, there is always a fluid definition of performance and this definition is highly subject to interpretation. Second, there is a tendency to delay change in developing countries especially since the civil service is viewed as a relatively stable force in turbulent times (even in the case where the civil service is viewed as flawed). And third, there is always significant resistance to

changing the system of rewards and punishments for the civil service and those that tend to resist these changes most are the civil servants themselves as well as the politicians and other stakeholders. But in a rapidly changing world, a civil service in which performance is not measured, evaluated and rewarded accurately will become obsolete.

This research is focused on the Pakistani performance evaluation system and the reason for this is multi-fold: First, the Pakistani case is a perfect example of a bureaucratic performance management system that is in need of significant reform, not only because of the significant increase in the scale of responsibilities of the bureaucrats but also because the present system has effectively broken down which makes it a enlightening case study in the developing country context. Second, the system has now come to the point where the various powerful stakeholders (such as the political elite and the business community) have effectively dismantled the bureaucratic system to suit their own needs which has led to bureaucratic decisions being made for the benefit of a few as opposed to benefit of all the stakeholders in society. Finally, the bureaucrats themselves recognise that the system is broken which means that if reforms are not begun the system could effectively collapse. The objective of the research therefore is to understand the many different ways the performance evaluation system in Pakistan has broken down and the best way forward, within the current political economy constraints to fix it.

The structure of the paper is as follows: In Section II we look at the literature on the importance of performance management systems in bureaucracies and then focus on the experiences of developing countries in reforming the performance management systems of their bureaucracies. In Section III we discuss the present structure of the present performance evaluation system of bureaucrats and identify its major weaknesses. In Section IV we present a revised instrument to measure the performance of Pakistani civil servants which adapts the existing instrument keeping in mind international best practices. In Section V we present some of the results of a unique survey of senior bureaucrats (from the Pakistan civil service) which looked at how they viewed potential reforms of the current system. In Section VI we discuss some of the significant political economy issues that could occur while trying to introduce a new performance management system for bureaucrats.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Though one cannot deny the importance of markets, literature confirms that the state still has an important role to play in the ensuring development of countries, especially in developing countries. The state and the way it governs has significant implications in the developing country context. The modern state is issued with the responsibility of providing governance and directing development. "As world economic integration proceeds, state capabilities will matter more rather than less in fostering social well-being and wealth creation" [Weiss (1998)]. State and Effective government performance and management are quintessential for state development [Hilderbrand and Grindle (1997)]. States which are unable to deliver efficient governance and public service provision will fade as the new globalised era belongs to the competent states [Micklethwait and Wooldridge (2014)] Subsequently the importance an effective public administration, which is the primary vehicle through which the state ensures public service delivery and economic development, cannot be over emphasised.

The major causes of economic growth in the third world, investigated by Reynolds (1983) based on the historical experience of 41 countries since mid-nineteenth century; show that administrative competence is of paramount importance for economic growth of a country:

> "My hypothesis is that the single most important explanatory variable is political organisation and the administrative competence of government" [Reynolds (1983:976)].

Literature informs that "The vitality of a country's development depends on the rejuvenation of public administration even in the darkness of insufficient knowledge and experience [Rizos (1965: 47)]. And a modern competent state requires efficient and committed bureaucracies [Weiss (1998)]. Recent development literature emphasises the importance of a competent and professional bureaucrat, and informs that efficient performance of the civil servant has a direct correlation with development [Kohli (2006)]. Evans (1995) confirms that the primary instrument of the developmental states remains a competent and a professional bureaucracy. The miracle of the East Asian developmental state has largely been attributed to the role of the professional and autonomous bureaucracy, which closely approximate the Weberian model [Chang (2006)]. There are now both case studies and cross-country empirical analyses that affirm that bureaucratic performance is essential for development performance [Kaufmann, *et al.* (2000); Evans and Rauch (1999, 2000); World Bank (1997)].

After establishing the importance of the bureaucracy, the following section inspects the reasons why performance management systems are essential for the development of an effective bureaucracy. It is because the ability of the bureaucrat to transform the tenets of policy into the reality of development is dependent on the capability and capacity of the bureaucracy as an organisation to ensure successful delivery of programmes and projects. The quality of the bureaucracy, the competence of civil servants, the independence of the civil service from political pressures, the incentives offered to the bureaucracy, and the credibility of the bureaucrat's commitment to policies all impact on the quality of governance.

Underlining the significance of the efficiently performing bureaucrat and the close correlation to positive development outcomes, governments and practitioners have turned their attention towards augmenting the capacity of the bureaucrat [Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (1996); Pollitt and Bouckaert (2000); Ayee (2008)]. This is more important than ever before, as with the 21st century, the forces of globalisation, and increasing volatility and irregularity within the social and economic environment, has called for the civil service, particularly the senior civil service to realign and reinvent itself to cope with the evolving strategic challenges. In this process of reinvention and modernisation of the senior bureaucracy, modernising the evaluation and performance management of the civil servants is vital.

A sound performance management system is essential to the civil service remains efficient and motivated. Bana and McCourt (2006) examine Tanzania's civil service and report excessive political appointments and promotions. They inform that depolarisation of the bureaucracy and its reform, especially of its performance appraisal will translate it good governance. This has been corroborated by Rugumyamheto (2004) who inspects

public service reform in Tanzania and informs that the importance of political leadership and commitment for successful reform cannot be overemphasised to ensure governance and development.

The performance must be assessed accurately, as Garvin (1993) informs that "if you cannot measure it, you cannot manage it". And it is important to measure accurately and objectively, as Daniels (1987) apprises "anything can be measured and if it can be measured it can be improved". Accurate performance measurement tools would indicate whether the work rendered is satisfactory or provide warnings if the work is inadequate. Accurate and objective performance measurement would also lend clarity when examining the cause of the success or failure of development programmes performance management can also provide indications to what may be the problem, whether it is the performance of the bureaucrats or other extraneous factors which need consideration. Accurate measurement can also isolate the officers which need to improve performance and would also help strengthen accountability, transparency, improve quality of service, and culminate more successful outcomes [Cook, *et al.* (1995)]. Performance management system which has incentives that motivate and influence public sector performance are vital for poverty reduction and economic growth [UNDP (2006a)].[1]

III. THE DEVELOPING COUNTRY EXPERIENCE OF REFORM

Literature informs that developing countries are now overhauling their public administration and performance management systems to keep up with the challenges of the modern global economy.

The following section examines the CSR initiates in Africa. The Economic Commission for Africa report apprises on the reform initiatives undertaken in Africa regarding the civil service. It examines four Case studies: Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa. The report informs that in these countries the civil service reform efforts started in the late 1980s, and the reforms were ushered by the onset of the Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs), and the New Public Management (NPM).[2] The emphasis of the reform was to augment the efficiency and performance of the civil servant. Some of the principle strategies deployed by the civil service reform were restructuring of the organisation, improving human resource management, reinventing the relationships between ministers and civil servants, and augmenting capacity of the civil service through training of staff and retaining them. There was a focus on incentivising performance of the officers. The report informs that some progress was noted the four countries in terms of innovations and best practices in civil service reforms (CSRs). And some of these were "performance management agreements with senior civil servants; and annual civil service monitoring and evaluation".

Court, Kristen, and Weder (1999) examine the results of a survey on incentives and bureaucratic structures in Africa. Their research suggests that incentive structures

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[1]An incentive implies a positive motivation to perform efficiently, and give the best performance possible. Mathauer and Imhoff (2006:3) understand the term motivation as "the willingness to exert and maintain an effort towards organisational goals".

[2]For detailed information on the case studies please see Economic Commission for Africa (ECA): Innovations and Best Practices in Public Sector Reforms: The Case of Civil Service in Ghana, Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa, December 2010.

play comparable roles in African countries and improved performance of the officers remains linked to organisational autonomy and good career opportunities. Their research endorses that incentives play a significant role in augmenting civil service performance.

Mugerwa (2003) examines five case studies (French-speaking West Africa, Malawi, Kenya, Nigeria and Mozambique) regarding the civil service reform efforts, the contents and the impact. They find that both the incentives and the structures prevalent were inadequate. In their research they inform that an efficient, productive and accountable civil service remains premised on competitive compensation and performance-based promotion.

Mengesha and Common (2007) assess the outcomes of the Public Sector Capacity reform, based on a small-scale survey conducted in two ministries. The results of the survey informs that there was notable transformation in the quality of service delivery in the ministries. A significant improvement in performance was observed. The reform was gradual but eventually translated into significant improvements in Ethiopia's system of public administration. The research suggests that to ensure the positive sustainable impact of the reform, there should be permanent incentive schemes and a proper monitoring system. It informs that even though many public sector reforms fail in African countries, there are cases where reforms have translated into positive outcomes.

There have been similar initiatives in other countries: There have been efforts to reform the civil service in China since the 1980s. Burns (2007) informs that since 1993 the Chinese government has prioritised on the reform of the country's civil service system, where "performance appraisals focus mostly on merit-related criteria which seek to evaluate behaviour on the job. China's performance management policy seeks to link performance with rewards and stipulates the payment of bonuses to those who have performed well. It also mandates that bonuses should be linked to those officers who receive outstanding appraisals [Burns (2007: 15)]" The reforms improve the monitoring and supervision systems. The incentives were instrumental in ensuring augmented performance. The research confirms that the reforms augmented the performance of the civil servants; however the full impact of the reforms was weakened by a failure to redress impediments present in the organisation culture in china.

Civil service reforms do translate into efficient performance. However developing countries lack the mechanisms required to implement and sustain the civil service reforms. Literature informs that even though incentives play a determining role in boosting performance of the public officials, however developing countries lack the mechanisms that ensure that the incentives successfully motivate the public service officials. [Lopes and Theisohn (2004:99)]. However in their research Lopes and Theisohn (2004) examine various countries case studies to examine if incentives have indeed translated into capacity development, and they find that in the case of India the use of better management evaluation and assessments translated into enhanced performance of the civil servants. They report similar success full results of CSR in Philippines.

IV. AN ANALYSIS OF THE PAKISTAN'S PRESENT PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Before presenting a revised version of the PER, the following section offers some insights in to the current PER prevalent in Pakistan. At present, Pakistan does not have a

performance management system. It only has one performance evaluation report (PER). The PER (previously termed as the annual confidential report (ACR)) is filled out annually by the senior/boss of the officer being assessed and is one of the most important criteria for assessing whether the officer is worthy of being promoted to a higher grade or not.

This performance assessment document according to Weber (1968) should be based on merit and performance. According to Weberian Tradition the PER should be an objective and fair assessment of the officer concerned, and it should recommend a promotion to a higher grade if the performance warrants it. If promotion is lacking, or further capacity building of the officer is required then it should report these facts accurately also. However it is reported that the Pakistani ACR reports "rarely contain adverse remarks since there are doubts about their confidentiality"; the report does not have tangible, performance-oriented criteria and is premised heavily on subjective evaluations of officers' characters [Tanwir (2010)]. Moreover, the comments are very general and simplistic and completely devoid of performance-related targets [Tanwir (2010)]. The National Commission for governance reforms in Pakistan informs that the performance evaluation reports in Pakistan are subjective and are frequently used as punishment by superiors to ensure submissiveness.

Recent research focusing on the civil service of Pakistan, offers an in depth analyses of the structure and functioning (or the lack of) of Pakistan's bureaucracy and one of the critical issues brought to light is the lack of objective performance assessing standards for the officers. Its key recommendation to the government of Pakistan is to reinvent the current PER reports by using objective performance-oriented criteria, and doing away with the current subjective evaluation. The report informs that the current system remains non-meritocratic and the transfers and the promotions are based on political alignment and not on merit and performance.

This is a demotivating factor for the officers. Research on the general performance appraisal systems in Pakistan by Usman, *et al.* (2014) finds that fairness perception and grievance mechanism are the most important predictors of performance appraisal satisfaction. And fulfilment of training and development needs and feedback were important predictors of work motivation. The research highlights the importance of an effective performance management system. Similar research in the telecom industry by Malik and Aslam (2013) in Pakistan confirms that perceived fairness is found as critically important dimension of performance appraisal for employee motivation. These ingredients remain missing in the performance evaluation report of the bureaucrats in the Pakistani context.

The World Bank civil services reform document (1998) also reflects the disconnection between performance and promotion in the Pakistani bureaucracy. The system appears to have been degenerated into one of promotion purely on the basis of seniority, which is a source of significant staff de-motivation there does not exist a connection between performance and career advancement.

The inadequacy of the ACR in gauging performance is confirmed by Cheema and Sayeed (2006) who report that the ACR emphasises the personal qualities of the officer rather than to setting objective and measurable targets against which performance can be assessed. It appears that performance and ACR have little correlation. India and Pakistan

both inherited the same British Weberian model, and have the same ACR system to gauge promotion and performance. Kashikar (2012) on evaluating the performance appraisal system in the Indian bureaucracy, informs that the system of performance appraisal in India, the PER, remains a tool of control, a legacy of the British rule. It does not have a developmental orientation, and suffers from similar ailments as the Pakistani PER, and has no quantifiable targets and objective standards, and remains susceptible to political manipulation. To add further strength to the argument, the quantitative study by Pakistan Institute of Development Economics [Haque (2007)], elaborates on the perceptions of the bureaucrats, that their postings and transfers are not done on the basis of who is the most pertinent and able for the position but on other grounds. It seems that transfers are certainly not being made for efficiency reasons. In keeping with the observations of several authors, it seems that rationale for these decisions is a combination of political pressure and rent sharing. [Haque (2007)].

Additionally the concept of promotion on merit and performance is difficult to quantify in the Pakistani bureaucracy as the bureaucrats are not usually given any goals or deadlines to meet. As elaborated in the Haque (2007) report, that the need for a clear job description is mandatory for effective management and performance. And without a job description, the performance cannot be effectively assessed and hence merit and reward system cannot be established. Haque (2007) reports that only 60 percent of the civil servants have their job descriptions clearly articulated to them. The remaining 40 percent reiterate they do not have a written job description. Without a proper job description accurate performance assessment cannot be ascertained.

The Pakistani PER in Detail

Unlike the best practices observed in International performance management systems the PER in Pakistan does not contain any explicit quantifiable targets. There is only an annual review, no review of agreement of targets beforehand, and no review of the attainment of targets/deliverables. The Pakistani PER in its present form contains three particular sections: First, there is a section that asks the evaluator the basic information regarding the civil servant. Second there is a section that asks the evaluator about the basic job description of the civil servant as well as an account of his or her performance on the job. Third there is a section that asks for an evaluation of the civil servant's performance in their job as well as an evaluation of their strengths and weaknesses. It is useful to look at a detailed breakdown of each section in order to determine how the document can be improved upon. The Pakistani performance evaluation report is given in the Appendix.

In Section 1, the Pakistani performance evaluation system asks for the basic information of the civil servant like the name and date of birth of the civil servant, the ministry, division and department in which the civil servant is presently employed, the period under review, the date of entry into the civil service, the various jobs held during the period, the academic qualifications of the civil servant, the languages the civil servant knows, the training received by the civil servant and the period the civil servant served in their present job. As a whole, most of this information is made up of basic facts which do not tend to be subject to manipulation or political interference. But a few things should be noted: First, knowledge of languages may be more important for some services than

others. So while noting it can be of some use in determining future jobs, it should not be used to limit the job opportunities of civil servants. Also it is important to realise relevant technical skills can be just as important as the knowledge of certain languages in some jobs (such as computer skills, programming skills, finance skills, etc.) and should also be included in the evaluation.

In Section 2, a very brief job description is asked for as well as a brief account of the performance of the civil servant, which can be supported by giving targets and performance measures. This is the first place where significant changes need to be made to the performance review. First, the simple job description has to be replaced by a set of clear, concise and concrete job objectives and the estimated timelines associated with each objective. This first step is the critical step needed to change the nature of the Pakistani performance review. The performance appraisal that follows in this section is the most important aspect of the performance evaluation. It should list next to each of the objectives and timelines mentioned above how much progress has been made in meeting these clear objectives in the planned timelines. It is critical that this be clearly done on an objective scale (either numerical on otherwise).

At this stage it is important to note that a true performance evaluation review can only come after a discussion has been had between a civil servant and their superior before the review period begins on what are the clear and measureable objectives during the review period. So, Section 1 and Section 2 should be combined also completed at the beginning of the review period and should list a clear set of concrete and measureable objectives and the timelines associated which each objective.

In Section 3, the evaluator comments on the performance of the civil servant in this particular position as well as their level of integrity as well as a picture of their strengths and weaknesses. Though the heart of the present performance evaluation system, this is also the weakest part for a number of reasons: First, in the present evaluation report there is no link between evaluating performance and how well the civil servant has met the objectives decided up earlier. Second, measuring the integrity, emotional stability, and interpersonal skills of a civil servant are extremely subjective and highly susceptible to personal interpretation as well as manipulation. In this case it would be far better to measure how specific related skills (such as management skills, communication skills, financial skills, etc.) have impacted the success or failure of a civil servant in meeting the objectives defined above. Also, the questions on civil servant expertise and the training and development needs of the civil servant should be directly related to the ratings given above. So if a civil servant lacks certain language or technical skills then the training and development needs should be focused on developing these skills. Also, any discussion of technical expertise and suggestions for future postings should be based on the strengths of the civil servants as clearly illuminated in the sections above.

V. WHAT BUREAUCRATS PERCEIVE AS THE ROAD AHEAD

To determine the true efficacy of the Pakistan performance evaluation system, and evaluate the extent to which it accurately captures the performance of the bureaucrats we also conducted a survey in which senior civil servants were asked about their perceptions regarding the present system.

The performance of the bureaucrats has often been examined and berated by not only academics but by politicians, civilians and the international development agencies. There has been little research done which asks the bureaucrats about what the primary impediment is to their effective performance. Their own perceptions are valuable, because they are the true judges of what motivates their performance and what demoralises them and proves to be an impediment to their performance. And a research and a system based on their own personal feedback would have a much greater chance of success, than any other system imposed on them externally.

In order to determine the perceptions of senior Civil Servants in Punjab regarding the present performance evaluation system we developed and administered a detailed questionnaire for senior civil servants. The questionnaire was informed by the comparison and contrasts of the British and Pakistani performance evaluation system. More than 100 senior civil servants were surveyed to determine their perceptions regarding the efficacy of the present system as well as their recommendations for restructuring the present system. The survey was carried out in at the National Institute of Public Administration (NIPA), Lahore with a group of senior civil servants who were attending training courses at the institute. The survey was unique as it was conducted for civil servants from a variety of services.

The survey inquired about the strength and weakness of the system. It also asked about international best practices that could be included in the future performance evaluation system. The survey also gathered the perceptions of the bureaucrats about what they though the PER should contain for it to be a motivator and incentive for their bureaucratic performance. It asked about the nature of the targets set in the system, the possibility of a link between efficiency and postings, and the link between performance, training and pay structures.

The first set of results from the survey found an extremely negative perception of the current performance evaluation system. In particular a extremely high percentage of civil servants found the current PER to be extremely inaccurate in measuring performance, extremely susceptible to political manipulation and completely delinked from key motivational issues such as training opportunities, better positions, better salaries and overall motivation. Finally the results showed that the civil servants found that the structure of the present PER lacked any objective criteria or targets. Some of the key results of the survey were:

(1) 78 percent of the civil servants agreed that there was no link between efficient performance and the present performance evaluation system.
(2) 70 percent of the civil servants confirmed that there was no link between efficient performance and training opportunities.
(3) 84 percent of the civil servants confirmed that there was no link between efficient performance and better/plum postings.
(4) 70 percent of the civil servants said there was no link between efficient performance and pay.
(5) 70 percent of the civil servants thought the PER was subjective and lacked tangible objective criteria.
(6) 99 percent of the civil servants confirmed that no targets were agreed between the officer and the senior manager for public service delivery.

(7) 70 percent of civil servants confirmed that the current PER was highly susceptible to political manipulation.

(8) 85 percent of the civil servants perceived the current performance evaluation report (PER) to be inaccurate in assessing their performance.

(9) 81 percent of the civil servants perceived that the PER was not a motivator for their performance.

The second set of results of the survey showed that the civil servants were strongly in favour of a new performance management system that has quantifiable targets, that cannot be politically manipulated, that has SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, timed) objectives, that looks at what targets were achieved and how they were achieved, that is performed at least biannually and should be based on the evaluations of both people directly above and below the civil servant. Some of the key results from this section of the survey were:

(1) 71 percent of officers concurred that Pakistan should have an umbrella PMS that links the PER (which is now in isolation) to the overall management of the bureaucrats and the organisation.

(2) 90 percent of the civil servants said that there should be quantifiable targets in the PER.

(3) 95 percent of the civil servants confirmed that there can be objective criteria in the PER which cannot be politically manipulated.

(4) 75 percent of the CS want to have an objective PER (which is not susceptible to political manipulation)

(5) 90 percent of the officers confirmed that the objectives in the PER should be SMART? (Specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, timed)

(6) 75 percent concurred that there should be an assessment of the performance of job holders which takes into account of both what they have achieved and how they have achieved it.

(7) 70 percent of the officers concurred that the assessment should be biannually ateast.

(8) 80 percent of the officers said that only the direct superior should determine the work targets.

(9) 65 percent of the officers confirmed that there should there be an evaluation from the lower management level also.

The third set of results looked at how civil servants perceive the road forward in terms of civil service reforms. The fascinating aspect of these survey results is that the civil servants were strongly in favour of a new performance evaluation system that links better performance to better jobs, but were very strongly convinced that politicians would oppose such a system. Some of the key results from this section of the survey were:

(1) 61 percent of the officers confirmed that there must be a link between performance and better postings.

(2) 71 percent of the civil servants wanted such a system.

(3) 80 percent of the officers said that the politicians would not want such a system.

On the whole the result of the survey suggests some important conclusions: First, civil servants are extremely well aware of the failures of the present performance management system. In particular they are cognizant of what are the specific problems in the system, what failures these problems have led to and what are the solutions that are required to reform the system. The second important conclusion is that the civil servants are overwhelmingly in favour of changing the system to make it a fairer and more accurate method of evaluating and rewarding performance. But the third key conclusion tempers these results in that they show that even though the civil servants are keen on reform, they recognise that pushing through reform in the present, highly politicised environment will be extremely difficult. So the greatest obstacles may not come from the civil servants themselves but rather the politicians who benefit from the highly political system that exists presently that is both highly subjective and highly subject to manipulation.

VI. THE STRUCTURE OF A REVISED PERFORMANCE EVALUATION

This section examines the current PER and for the purpose of the new revised PER, attempts to identify the areas in the current PER, (based on the analysis of the survey and international best practices discussed earlier) which tend to dilute its efficacy and make it susceptible to political manipulation. Part 1 of the current PER asks wide-ranging questions, and focus on the background of the officer. And hence this section does not require any alterations. Part 2 of the PER contains questions which require alteration. The question in Section 11:

(1) "**Brief account of performance on the job during the period supported by statistical data where possible. Targets given and actual performance against such targets should be highlighted. Reasons for shortfall, if any, may also be stated.**"

This question needs to be reinvented as firstly: The part 2 in the form initiates the assessment of performance which has not been earlier agreed on by the reporting and reported party. Hence before this section, in the revised PER we add a section which includes a detailed timetable of events where the officer and the senior agree on targets, deadlines, budgets, time and cost overruns. This would be referred to in the proceeding section which will evaluate the agreed targets. Secondly the revised PER does not ask the above stated question, where the account of performance is descriptive, and use of statistical targets are optional and not mandatory. The question has been replaced by tangible, analytical and statistical analysis. Since the targets mentioned are not agreed beforehand, in objective analytical terms, it renders the above question inappropriate for accurate assessment of performance. Hence the revised PER (presented in the Appendix) has replaced this question which is subjective and susceptible to political manipulation. The revised PER will ask questioned which will require analytical and statistical analysis.

Part 111 of the current PER contains questions which require alteration, these are:

Part 111, Q1*:* **"Please comment on the officer's performance on the job as given in Part II (2) with special reference to his knowledge of work, ability to plan, organise and supervise, analytical skills, competence to take decisions**

and quality and quantity of output. How far was the officer able to achieve the targets? Comment on the officer's contribution, with the help of statistical data, if any, in the overall performance of the organisation, do you agree with what has been stated in Part II (2)?"

This question again is not based on any pre-agreed commitment on targets, and the answers are not based on any numerical numbering, but on general comments. If the targets are not agreed at the start, how can the achievement be analysed. The queries regarding knowledge, and planning and organisational skills and competence need to be structured and objective manner. The revised PER has altered this question and replaced it with a more objective and analytical query.

(2) **"Integrity (Morality, uprightness and honesty)**
(3) **Pen picture including the officer's strengths and weakness with focus on emotional stability, ability to work under pressure, communication skills and interpersonal effectiveness (weakness will not be considered as adverse entry unless intended to be treated as adverse)"**

These two questions are subjective and non-analytical and have been has been deleted, and been replaced by more objective and quantifiable questions in the new PER.

Part 111,
Q 6. **Overall grading.**

Fitness for promotion
Q7. **Comment on the officer's potential for holding a higher position and additional responsibilities.**

All three questions are currently ambiguous, and susceptible to manipulation. They need to be addressed from a more objective lens, where the answers need to be based on the achievement of targets and deadlines, and the quality of performance rendered. The analysis should also address areas where performance was unsatisfactory, and punitive measures in case of missed targets and time and cost overruns can be called for.

The last section of the current PER calls for an assessment by any countersigning officer, who may or may not have adequate knowledge of the officer's work rendered. This is again open to manipulation. The new PER now asks the immediate junior to comment on the seniors work and performance. This would ensure that the senior involve the juniors in the organisation strategic goals and targets, it would ensure team work. It would also ensure that the senior remains accountable and does not excessively abuse the power given to him (although this might also allow for collusion of corruption).

Hence the revised PER now asks assessments on the basis of objective, tangible, verifiable targets and timelines. It contains two separate parts. The first calls for an agreement between the superior and the officer on the targets, and deliverables, the budget involved and possible time and cost overruns. All the questions require answers in statistical detail. The performance evaluation in Part II of the PER is based on the agreement made in Part I between the officer and his senior. The targets are also shared with the junior below. The second part to be viewed after 6 months of the agreement in

the first part) is the review of the target agreed in the first part. The use of objective, analytical terminology limits the susceptibility of the document to political manipulation. This makes the whole process of assessment more methodical, transparent, and communicative. The targets discussed and finalised are also shared with the junior below. This further adds to the communication and accountability chapter. The revised PER also contains a section where the junior officers comments on the senior performance, this will go a long way in streamlining the performance of the seniors. The revised PER is devoid of subjective assessments which can be easily manipulative. It also contains most of the best international practices that the Pakistani civil service officers perceived to be instrumental in their revised PER. Some questions in the new PER:

9.1 Targets to achieve: (Description of the target in objective, analytical and quantifiable terms).

9.2 Value of the target: (The total costs and benefits of the target).

9.3 Budget: (the budget and resources under the authority of the officer).

9.4 Headcount responsibilities (Number of staff and their grade that reports to the officer).

9.3 Timeline to achieve target:

9.4 Objective: what is the primary objective of the target?

9.5 Deliverable? What will the verifiable deliverable at the time of completion?

The expected outcome that can be measured/assessed objectively?

9.6 how and by whom will the deliverable be measured? How will the performance of achieving the target be measured?

9.7 how and who will ensure that cost and time overruns don't alter the efficiency of the target.

9.8 will the target and deliverables decided be shared with the staff reporting to the officer?

VII. THE POLITICAL ECONOMY ASPECTS

In the previous sections we have looked at the shortcomings of the present civil servant performance evaluation system in Pakistan and have recommended ways of reforming the system. But one glaring issue that has been ignored is the political economy aspects of implementing potential reform. Based on the analysis above we have found that the present system has significant gaps and that these gaps are recognised by a majority of civil servants. But these civil servants also realise that one of the main reasons for the perpetuation of the present, highly subjective system is that it can be easily manipulated to serve the needs of politicians or other powerful stakeholders. The reasoning is simply: if there exists a purely objective system of evaluating civil service performance then powerful stakeholders will have less discretion in appointing people based on preferences (or through the complicated system of relationships that exist in Pakistan such as biradari or kinship) and will be forced to appoint civil servants based on merit and skill. Also, an objective system of evaluating performance makes it difficult for stakeholders to use the threat of dismissal or transfers to force civil servants to follow their will, which has become commonplace now.

Other than these obvious obstacles to reforming the system, there are a number of more subtle (though no less powerful) reasons that reforming the system will be an uphill task:

First, after the passage of the 18th amendment, many of the administrative and financial responsibilities have been shifted to the provinces (and there is a strong push towards devolution of power to local governments) which means much of the major decisions which were once taken at the federal level (and potentially less susceptible to corruption not because of greater honesty but because of significantly less access) are now taken at the provincial level and subject to greater pressure from affected stakeholders. This means that civil service reform will be resisted by a larger constituency of stakeholders that benefit from the present system.

Second, politicians have slowly mastered the skill of choosing 'loyal' bureaucrats and punishing 'disloyal' or independent bureaucrats because of the significant expansion in the number of bureaucrats (which used to mean that the pool was smaller and thus exerted more power and unity) as well as because of the ability of politicians to go above the head of bureaucrats to higher level politicians or bureaucrats which has effectively reduced their power. This manipulation of the system becomes much more difficult in a system of evaluation based on objective criteria.

Third, due to the nature of politics in Pakistan, most politicians, business elites and other powerful stakeholders have significantly reduced timelines to accomplish their specific objectives. This means that even if one made that argument that a fair performance management system for bureaucrats which effectively rewards bureaucrats (in terms of jobs, financial renumeration and training) is better for long run growth, most decision makers would ignore this argument since they believe that short run gains are far more important than long run results. So even if stakeholders are rational enough to realise that reforming the system will result in greater long run gains for everyone, they will avoid changing the system because the present system maximises their short run benefits.

Fourth, there is a strong belief in society that bureaucrats are flawed: Either they are corrupt, or they are too powerful, or they are getting significantly more benefits than the rest of society, or they are not fulfilling their responsibilities. In this environment, there is either an explicit or implicit process of deliberately weakening bureaucrats, who are viewed as deserving of weakening or punishment. In such an atmosphere there is little appetite for significant reforms in the civil service performance management systems since people feel that it will only strengthen bureaucratic power. Also, there is no movement in civil society towards reward bureaucrats for good performance because members of civil society either have a significantly opinion of bureaucrats or feel that they must adjust their objectives to suit those of the powerful elites as opposed to society as a whole. In this environment, the present system is viewed as a way of weakening, controlling and punishing civil servants is viewed as optimal.

Finally, the biggest issue is a lack of clarity amongst the bureaucrats and the elites about what should be the targets for bureaucrats and what constitutes good performance. This in turn makes it effectively impossible to quantify targets: So some bureaucrats may believe that good performance is defined by their own beliefs of what is best for society. Others may believe that good performance is simply obeying the instructions of elected

officials. There may be a section that believes that good performance is simply actions that lead to better and more influential positions. Similarly, politicians may believe that good performing bureaucrats are those that simply obey instructions without any objections while business elites may believe that the best bureaucrats are those that simply do not interfere with the day to day running of the system. In a situation where there is no agreement on what is good performance, there can be little progress in determining how to measure good performance. So the first step must be a clear definition of the role and objectives of bureaucrats and then after this is decided how to measure if they have fulfilled these objectives.

All of these factors reinforce the idea that civil service reform is critical yet challenging. The lack of a good performance management appraisal lowers bureaucratic capacity. The low bureaucratic capacity tends to create a vicious circle.[3] The relationship between the bureaucracy and politicians remains complex. However the relationship between the political and bureaucratic sphere remains critical for successful reform [Schneider (2003)] therefore all initiatives that works towards promoting the civil service reform need to be cognizant that ensuring meritocratic appointments and providing incentives for performance for bureaucrats will essential for their improved performance, yet difficult for the politicians to abide by as it would require the political elite to relinquish their power.

VIII. CONCLUSION

The paper shows that the current performance evaluation system used to measure the performance of Pakistani bureaucrats is inadequate and obsolete. The system not only fails in establishing an objective criteria for assessment and promotion but also gives incentives for political alignment.

The implications of this research is that there needs to be an immediate re-evaluation of the present performance management systems of Pakistani bureaucrats which makes it an objective measure of bureaucratic performance which is not susceptible to political interference.

We conducted a novel survey of senior civil servants which informs of a significant disconnect between the present performance evaluation system and the actual performance of civil servants. This in turn has led to significantly negative perceptions of the present performance evaluation system, a lack of incentive for efficient performance and an increase in incentives for political alignment for the civil servants. But perhaps most importantly the survey shows that the majority of civil servants would like significant changes in the present performance management system to make it a more accurate representation of actual civil service performance outcomes. This paper offers an alternative, an objective document which is can be a motivator for performance and is also less susceptible to political manipulation.

But these recommendations must be tempered with the realisation that the present system has been established not to optimise bureaucratic performance (or for that matter for furthering development outcomes) but rather to sustain the present system of

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[3]It weakens incentives for bureaucrats to comply with legislation, and furthermore makes it more difficult for politicians to persuade bureaucrats to take actions that politician's desire [Huber and McCarty (2004)].

patronage and power. So these performance evaluation system reforms have to be accompanied by an effort to convince the political elites that an independent and motivated bureaucracy will lead to more winners than losers.

APPENDIX 1

Pakistani PER (The Original)

FOR OFFICERS IN BPS 19 & 20   S-121-G(i)

۱۹اور۲۰ اسکیل کےافسران کیلئے

CONFIDENTIAL

GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN

حکومت پاکستان

Ministry / Division /   Service / Group

Department / Office   گروپ/سروس

وزارت/ڈویژن/محکمہ/دفتر

PERFORMANCE EVALUATION REPORT

کارکردگی رپورٹ

FOR THE PERIOD

Department / Office

برائےعرصہ   ء۲۰ تا ء۲۰

PART – I

اول حصہ

(TO BE FILLED IN BY THE OFFICER REPORTED UPON)

(متعلقہ افسر خود پر کریں)

1. Name (in block Letters)

نام(واضح حروف میں)

2. Personal Number

انفرادی نمبر

3. Date of Birth

تاریخ پیدائش

4. Date of Entry in Service

ملازمت اختیار کرنے کی تاریخ

5. Post held during the period (with BPS)

پیش نظر عرصہ میں عہدہ (مع اسکیل)

6. Academic Qualifications

تعلیم

7. Knowledge of Languages

زبانوں کاعلم (Please indicate proficiency in speaking (S), reading (R) and writing (W)) بولنے(ب)، پڑھنے(پ)اورلکھنے(ل) کی صلاحیت

8. Training received during the evaluation period

متعلقہ عرصہ کے دوران حاصل کی گئی تربیت

Name of Course attended

کورس کا نام

Duration with dates

تاریخوں کے ساتھ دورانیہ

Name of Institution and Country

ادارے اور ملک کا نام

9. Period served

عرصہ ملازمت

(i) In present post   (ii) Under the reporting officer

موجودہ عہدہ پر   رپورٹنگ افسر کے ماتحت

PART – II
دوم حصہ
(TO BE FILLED IN BY THE OFFICER REPORTED UPON)
(متعلقہ افسر خود پر کریں)

1. Job description

ذمہ داریوں کی تفصیل

2. Brief account of performance on the job during the period supported by statistical data where possible. Targets given and actual performance against such targets should be highlighted. Reasons for shortfall, if any, may also be stated.

پیش نظر عرصہ میں کارکردگی کو اعداد و شمار کے ساتھ مختصر بیان کریں۔ دیئے گئے اہداف اور کارکردگی کو نمایاں طور پر لکھیں۔

اہداف ناکمل رہ جانے کی وجہ بھی بیان کریں۔

PART – III
سوم حصہ
(EVALUATION BY THE REPORTING OFFICER)
(رپورٹنگ افسر کا جائزہ)

1. Please comment on the officer's performance on the job as given in Part II (2) with special reference to his knowledge of work, ability to plan, organise and supervise, analytical skills, competence to take decisions and quality and quantity of output. How far was the officer able to achieve the targets? Comment on the officer's contribution, with the help of statistical data, if any, in the overall performance of the organisation, Do you agree with what has been stated in Part II (2)?

حصہ دوم (۲) میں بیان کی گئی کارکردگی کا جائزہ لیں۔ افسر کے علم تنظیمی، اور نگرانی کرنے کی صلاحیت، تجزیات مہارت اور فیصلہ کرنے کی صلاحیت کے متعلق رائے دیں۔ کارکردگی کے معیار و مقدار کے حوالے سے بھی رائے دیں۔ اہداف کو پورا کرنے میں افسر کس حد تک کامیاب رہا/رہی۔ ادارے کی مجموعی کارکردگی میں افسر کے کردار کی اعداد و شمار کے حوالے سے نشاندہی کریں۔ کیا آپ حصہ دوم (۲) میں دی گئی معلومات سے متفق ہیں؟

2. Integrity (Morality, uprightness and honesty)

دیانت (راست بازی، ایمانداری)

3. Pen picture including the officer's strengths and weakness with focus on emotional stability, ability to work under pressure, communication skills and interpersonal effectiveness (weakness will not be considered as adverse entry unless intended to be treated as adverse)

قلمی خاکہ : افسر کی خوبیوں اور کمزوریوں کا جائزہ لیں، خصوصاً جذباتی ٹھہراؤ، دباؤ کی حالت میں کام کرنے کی صلاحیت، رابطہ اور باہمی افہام و تفہیم پیدا کرنے کی صلاحیت بیان

کریں (کوتاہی کو اس وقت تک منفی تصور نہ کیا جائے جب تک رپورٹنگ افسر ضروری نہ سمجھے)

4. Area and level of Professional expressional expertise with suggestions for future posting

پیشہ ورانہ مہارت اور آئندہ تعیناتی کی نشاندہی

5. Training and development needs

مزید تربیت کے لئے تجاویز

6. Overall grading

مجموعی درجہ

Fitness for promotion

ترقی کے لئے مناسب

7. Comment on the officer's potential for holding a higher position and additional responsibilities

(افسر کی اعلیٰ عہدہ پر کام کرنے اور اضافی ذمہ داریاں سنبھالنے کی صلاحیت کے بارے میں رائے دیں)۔

Name of the reporting officer
(Capital Letters)

رپورٹنگ افسر کا نام (واضح حروف میں)

Designation _____

عہدہ

Signature   _____

دستخط

Date   _____

تاریخ

PART – IV

حصہ چہارم

(REMARKS OF THE COUNTERSIGNING OFFICER)

(کاؤنٹر سائننگ افسر کی رائے)

1. How often have you seen the work of the officer reported upon?

افسر کا کام کس حد تک آپ کی نظر سے گزرتا رہا ہے؟

2. How well do you know the officer? If you disagree with the assessment of the reposting officer, please give reasons

آپ افسر کو کس حد تک جانتے ہیں؟ اگر آپ رپورٹنگ افسر کی رائے سے متفق نہیں تو اس کی وجہ بیان کریں۔

3. Overall grading

مجموعی درجہ

Recommendation for promotion

ترقی کے لئے سفارش

4. (Comment on the officer's potential for holding a higher position and additional responsibilities)

(افسر کی اعلیٰ عہدہ پر کام کرنے اور اضافی ذمہ داریاں سنبھالنے کی صلاحیت کے بارے میں رائے دیں)۔

5. Evaluation of the quality of assessment made by the reporting officer

رپورٹنگ افسر کے جائزہ کے معیار کے بارے میں کاؤنٹر سائننگ افسر کی رائے

Name of the reporting officer
(Capital Letters)
رپورٹنگ افسر کا نام (واضح حروف میں)
Designation _____
عہدہ
Signature
دستخط
Date   _____
تاریخ

PART – V
حصہ پنجم

(REMARKS OF THE SECOND COUNTERSIGNING OFFICER (IF ANY)
دوسرے کاؤنٹر سائننگ افسر (بشرطِ موجودگی) کی رائے

Name of the reporting officer
(Capital Letters)
رپورٹنگ افسر کا نام (واضح حروف میں)

Designation _____
عہدہ
Signature
دستخط
Date   _____
تاریخ

Pakistani Performance Agreement and Evaluation Form. (The revised PER)

FOR OFFICERS IN BPS 19 & 20
CONFIDENTIAL
GOVERNMENT OF PAKISTAN

Ministry / Division /   Service / Group
Department / Office

Performance Agreement and Evaluation Report.
FOR THE PERIOD
Department / Office
1. Name (in block Letters)
2. Personal Number
3. Date of Birth
4. Date of Entry in Service
5. Post held during the period (with BPS)
6. Academic Qualifications

7. Knowledge of Languages
8. Training received during the evaluation period

Name of Course attended
Duration with dates
Name of Institution and Country

PART – 1
Performance Agreement on Targets/Deliverables
(to be filled at the start of a new post)

9. Present post:
 (i) In present post   (ii) Under the reporting officer

9.1 Targets to achieve: (Description of the target in objective, analytical and quantifiable terms)
9.2 Value of the target: (the total costs and benefits of the target)
9.3 Budget: (the budget and resources under the authority of the officer)
9.4 Headcount responsibilities (Number of staff and their grade that reports to the officer)
9.3 Timeline to achieve target:
9.4 Objective: what is the primary objective of the target?
9.5 Deliverable? What will the verifiable deliverable at the time of completion? The expected outcome that can be measured/assessed objectively?
9.6 how and by whom will the deliverable be measured? How will the performance of achieving the target be measured?
9.7 how and who will ensure that cost and time overruns don't alter the efficiency of the target.
9.8 will the target and deliverables decided be shared with the staff reporting to the officer?

PART – II
Performance Evaluation Form:
(TO BE FILLED IN BY THE OFFICER REPORTED UPON)

9.1 Targets achieved: (Description of the target achieved in objective, quantifiable and analytical terms).
9.2) Value of the target: (the total costs and benefits generated from the target/deliverable).
9.3 was the budget fully utilised? : (an examination of the budget and resources under the authority of the officer).
9.3 Timeline: Target achieved in envisioned time?
9.4 Objective: Was the objective achieved?
9.5 Deliverable? What are the testable deliverables at the time of completion?
9.6 How are the deliverable be measured?
9.7 How is the performance of achieving the target be assessed? What yardstick?
9.7 were they any cost and time overruns?

PART – III
(EVALUATION BY THE REPORTING OFFICER)

1. Please comment on the officer's performance on the job as given in Part II (2) with special reference to his competence to take effective decisions regarding the targets achieved?
2. Did the officers meet all his expected targets?
3. Comment on the officer's contribution, only with the help of statistical data, in the overall performance of the organisation?
4. Could the officer have performed more efficiently? How?
5. What training would me most appropriate to the officer's skill sets?
6. The officer is best suited for posting in which department?
7. Is the officer ready for the next grade?
8. If yes, why?
9. If no, why?

Name of the reporting officer
(Capital Letters)

Designation _____

Signature _____

Date _____

PART – IV
(To be filled by immediate junior, who reports to the officer)

1. How often have you seen the work of the officer reported upon?
2. Did you work with your senior in completing the target/deliverables assigned to him?
3. What have you learnt during the time you worked with your officer?
4. How well do you know the officer? If you agree/disagree with the assessment of the reposting officer, please give reasons.
5. Recommendation for promotion, (Comment on the officer's potential for holding a higher position and additional responsibilities).
6. Evaluation of the quality of assessment made by the reporting officer.

Name of the reporting officer
(Capital Letters)

Designation _____

Signature_____

Date _____

PART – V
(REMARKS OF THE SECOND COUNTERSIGNING OFFICER (IF ANY)
(the remarks should be used as much as statistical and analytical language as possible,
please refer to Part 1, and comment on the target and deliverables only)

Name of the reporting officer
(Capital Letters)

Designation _____

Signature_____

Date   _____

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