A Study of Reasons behind Unproductivity and Indecisiveness in public Institutions of Urban Planning in Pakistan

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U rban Planning plays a crucial role in managing the systematic growth of the cities. Over time, it has been observed that institutions dealing with the planning, development & regulations are suffering from unproductivity because of numerous reasons. The objective of the study is to find the social, psychological, administrative, structural & academic factors affecting the most in the non-performance and unproductivity of the institutions dealing with the Urban Planning & Development and their respective severity so that the causes of those factors could be evaluated & so as remedial measures & reforms could be suggested. The performance evaluation is needed for the organizations working in the Urban Planning field. Otherwise, the Master plan/strategic plan/ development plan will remain merely an academic concept. It's about giving a chance to look deep inside your organization to enhance its efficiency and effectiveness.

Keywords: Urban Planning, Unproductivity, Factors, Efficiency, Effectiveness.

INTRODUCTION

The public institutions responsible for urban planning & regulations in Pakistan lack the required productivity/performance [1][2]. Their performance over the period leads cities to this stage. Organizational behavior & culture can be changed with simple reforms. The institutions are the one of the main pillars of any political system within a state, and the main constituent of these institutions are executives who run these institutions. [3] The executives comprising the bureaucrats (in the first tier) and technocrats (in the second tier) accumulatively run the institutions in accordance with the policies and legislations. But due to so many reasons, they fail to meet the strategic goals of their institutions. [4] Particularly, in case of urban planning, the institutions terribly failed to give required productivity, which resulted in unmanageable cities. We can see its effects in shape of climate change, worst air quality, carbon emission and in so many other forms of problem everywhere. Prior to find the solution, still, first performance & productivity of the Organizations should be evaluated using a worldwide view and the focus should be on finding the root causes of the problem rather than treating the effects.

It is observed that despite the availability of all the policies and legislations, the executives of the state and professionals remain unproductive, and their continuous state of indecisiveness takes their organizations to the state of inertia. [5] We can see its effects, but what are the social, psychological, structural, administrative, and academic reasons behind this unproductivity.

This dis-functionality of the organizations primarily involves the indecisiveness of the executives. Indecisiveness is an individual difference measure of chronic difficulty and delay in decision making. Indecisiveness is associated with low decisional confidence and distinct pre-choice information search behavior patterns. [6] Many practicing executives and researchers believe that in organizational settings, people prefer a great amount of clarity in what is expected of them. This need for security in knowing what behavior is expected results in a great deal more respect for the manager/executive who acts decisively. The word of a decision-maker may be a lonely one, but executives and managers must accept the responsibility that the "buck stops" with them. Nothing is more dysfunctional than the "participation ritual" which many executives engage in. here, managers go through the process of participation for the purpose of selling decisions which have already been made by making them look like group decisions [7]. If managers fail to take charge of group activities, they abdicate their role as manager, and performance will be negatively affected. [8], [9] The decision-making is entirely related to the behavior of people in institutions. In fact, the quality of the decisions executives reach is the yardstick of their effectiveness. Within an organizational structure, people behave as individuals and as members of groups, communicate for many reasons, the important one of which is to make decisions. In the last three decades, the systematic analysis of decision-making has become known as "decision theory." Decision theory is firmly rooted in the fields of statistics and the behavioral sciences and has as its goal to make decision-making less of an art and more of a science [10].

Herbert Simon [11] distinguished between two main types of decisions made in organizations: Programmed Decisions and Non-Programmed Decisions. Programmed

decisions refer if they are repetitive and systematic. An actual procedure has been developed for taking them. In contrast, non-programmed decisions refer to those decisions when the decisions are novel and unstructured. As such, no already built procedural establishment for handling the problems; either it's not arisen before, or it is because of its complexity, importance, and risks involved. More comprehensive knowledge, courage, understanding, and additional resources are required to cope with this. Unfortunately, this type of human decision process that we know the least about.

Decisions are the organizational mechanisms made by the executives through which an attempt is made to achieve the desired state. They are, in effect, organizational response to a problem. Ideally, the primary concern of the top management should be non-programmed decisions, against all odds, in meeting the strategic mission and philosophy of the organization. [12] It involves the unconventional approaches to making non-programmed choices to put the organizational function forward. The non-programmed decisions have traditionally been handled general problem-solving processes, judgment, intuition, and creativity. Unfortunately, modern management techniques have not made nearly the advances improving non-programmed decision making as they have with programmed decision making. [13] However, the executives find it difficult to take action and make any non-programmed decision.

Obviously, the decision-making is connected with the problem. The problem arises in those organizations where top management extends much time and effort on programmed decisions. One unfortunate result of this practice is neglect of long-range planning. In such cases, long-range thinking is subordinated to other activities, whether the organization is successful or is having problems [14]. [15] If the organization is successful, this justifies continuing the policies and practices that achieved it. If the organization experiences difficulty, these current problems enjoy first priority and occupy the time of top management. [16] Finally, the neglect long-range planning usually results in an overemphasis on short-run control. This results in a lack of delegation of authority to lower levels of management which often has adverse effects on motivation and satisfaction.

A necessary condition for a decision is a problem [17]. That is, if problems did not exist, then there would be no need for decisions. [18] This underscores the importance of establishing goals and measurable objectives. How critical a problem is for the organization is measured by the difference between levels of performance specified in the organizational goals and objectives and the levels of performance attained. Of course, if the performance does not meet a predetermined objective, the problem may be with the objectives. In order for objectives to be useful, they must permit the establishment of meaningful standards for effective control. The decision making is a dynamic process, as the decision making is more than an act of choosing. [19] It has been observed that unfortunately for most executives/managers, situations rarely exist in which one alternative singularly achieves the objective without having some impact either positively or negatively on some other objective. Often situations exist where two objectives cannot be optimized simultaneously. [20] If one is optimized, the other is sub-optimized, for example, running after short-term goals at the expense of long-run objective, etc, and vice versa. Thus, the multiplicity of institutional objectives complicates the real world of the decision-maker. A situation could also occur where attainment of an institutional goal through decision making would be at the expense of a societal objective [21].

An organizational system comprises the 4P model describing policy, people, platform & processes. People, i.e., Human Resources and Platform [22], i.e., Organizational culture, behavior,, and structure, have a lot more influence on institutional productivity. Significant policies exist. Institutional setup lacks the proper HR management facilities according to the global perspective. Two major categories of HR exist in the organizations, i.e., bureaucrats and technocrats. Bureaucrats being of general cadre, hold the majority of the decision-making seats with no professional qualification and only administrative and managerial degrees/certifications. They are entirely dependent upon the technocrats/skillful persons in all technical matters. Bureaucrats have a better service structure and have more powers in terms of service grades, therefore, had more influence over technocrats. The people working on technical posts always remain influenced by the people working on bureaucratic posts. As precisely described by Putt's Law i.e., "Technology is dominated by two types of people, those who understand what they do not manage and those who manage what they do not understand." [23]. There are specific other administrative reasons and factors that influence the people's decision-making on Executive positions. The other reasons/factors remain with the other two pillars of the system, i.e., platforms (organizations) and processes.
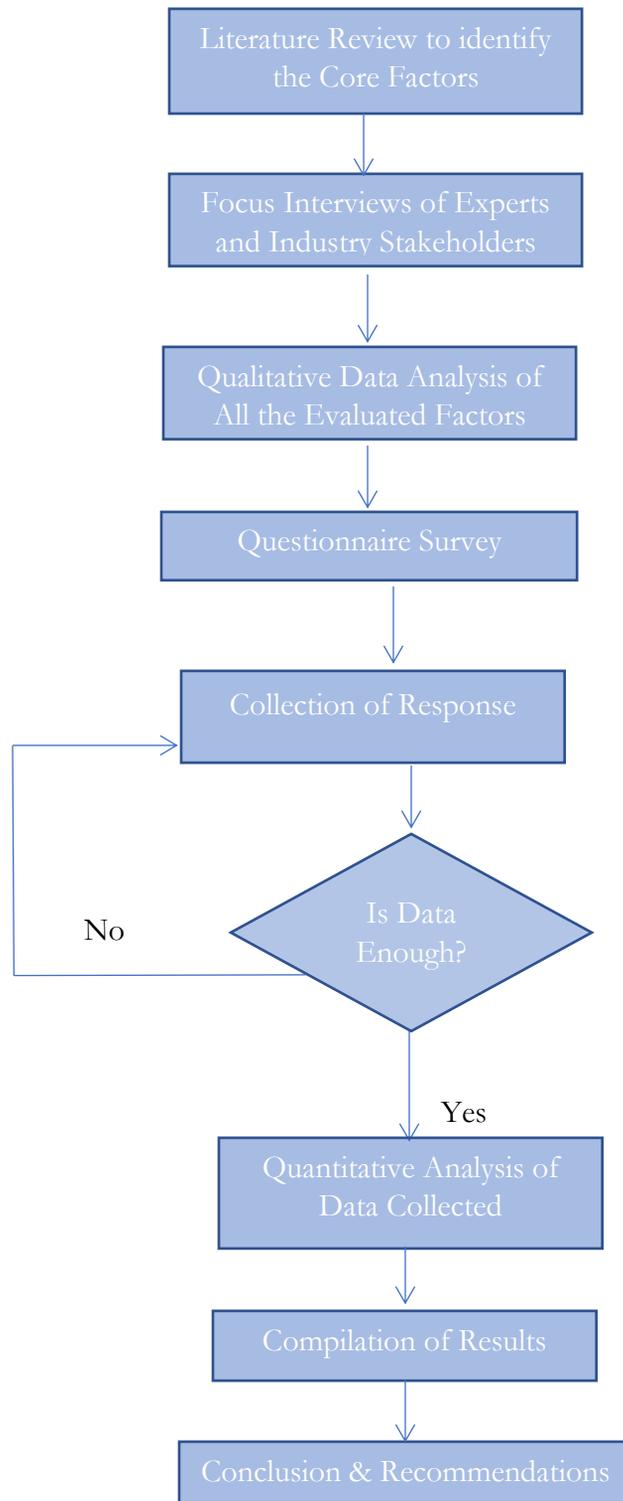
As per the process, the planning systems work under the direct sway of Political Ideologies and systems established within a State. These ideologies affect the Institutional processes, and accordingly, policies and programs are derived at the practical level [24].

Apart from behavioral/psychological and administrative reasons, there are also social, academic, and environmental reasons/factors that have been assessed qualitatively during the literature review and expert interviews data. The study's objective is to evaluate the core reasons for the unproductivity of the institutions relating to urban planning & development so that, accordingly, a recommendation plan could be developed as per the severity of the causes behind the effects.

Material and Methods:

To perform research, a proper methodology was taken up; after reviewing the literature, the reasons/factors were identified that were affecting the productivity and indecisiveness within the public institutions, keeping the mind the Pakistani scenarios. Initially, the literature was thoroughly studied, and interviews with professionals and experts were briefly taken into account. Overall, 23 factors were extracted by the experienced professionals, planners, architects, engineers, and managers (part of the Urban Planning Industry of Pakistan).

Secondly, a questionnaire was developed, having two parts, Part-A and Part-B; part-a includes the introductory portion, which comprises the name of the officer, his / her designation, and concerned department, and the nature of department is to be mentioned. Part-B includes all the 23 factors having severity columns in front of each factor.

Flowchart 1: The Methodology of Research work.

The severity range was distributed into three zones: Low Severity Zone ranging from 1 to 3 severity, Medium Severity Zone ranging from 4 to 6 severity, and High Severity Zone ranging from 7 to 10 severities. The factors finalized are mentioned below:

Reasons/Factors affecting the productivity and indecisiveness within the public institutions, keeping the mind the Pakistani scenarios:
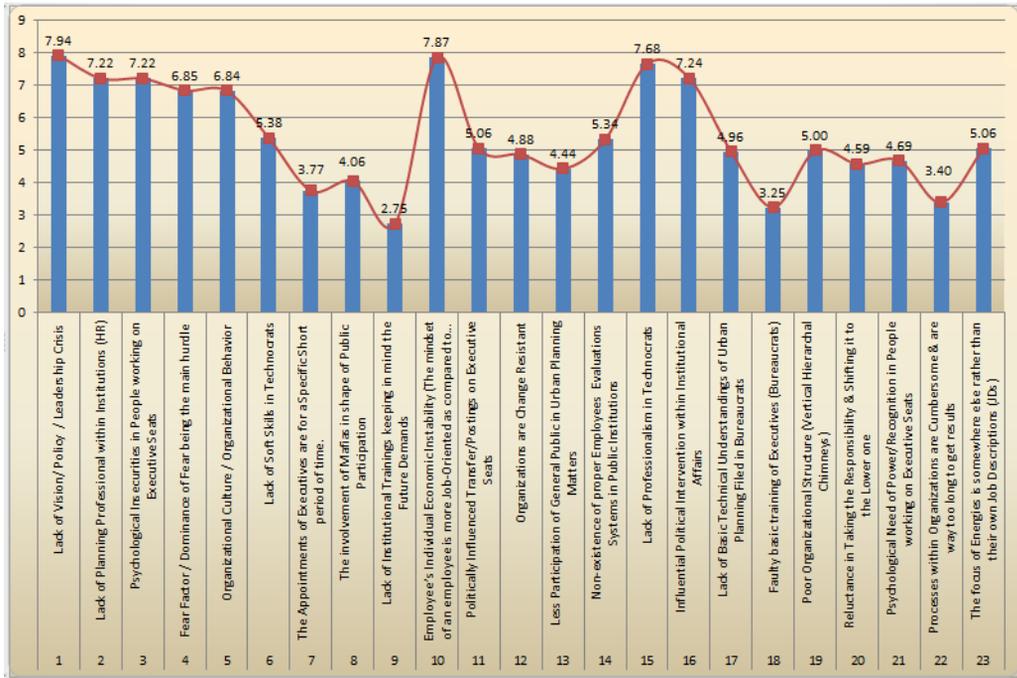
1. Lack of Vision/ Policy/ Leadership Crisis.
2. Lack of Planning Professional within Institutions (HR).
3. Psychological Insecurities in People working on Executive Seats.
4. Fear Factor / Dominance of Fear are the main hurdle.
5. Organizational Culture / Organizational Behavior.
6. Lack of Soft Skills in Technocrats.
7. The Appointments of Executives are for a Specific Short period.
8. The involvement of Mafias in the shape of Public Participation.
9. Lack of Institutional Trainings keeping in mind the Future Demands.
10. Employee's Individual Economic Instability (The mindset of an employee is more Job-Oriented as compared to Service-Oriented).
11. Politically Influenced Transfer/Postings on Executive Seats.
12. Organizations are Change Resistant.
13. Less Participation of General Public in Urban Planning Matters.
14. Non-existence of proper Employees Evaluations Systems in Public Institutions.
15. Lack of Professionalism in Technocrats.
16. Influential Political Intervention within Institutional Affairs.
17. Lack of Basic Technical Understandings of Urban Planning Filed in Bureaucrats.
18. Faulty basic training of Executives (Bureaucrats).
19. Poor Organizational Structure (Vertical Hierarchal Chimneys).
20. Reluctance in Taking the Responsibility & Shifting it to the Lower one.
21. Psychological Need of Power/Recognition in People working on Executive Seats.
22. Processes within Organizations are Cumbersome & are way too long to get results.
23. The focus of Energies is somewhere else rather than their Job Descriptions (JDs).

After the finalization of the questionnaire, a survey was conducted through emails & face to face interviews. A questionnaire was asked to rank and score these factors according to their experience with the experts and experienced professionals. The results presented here are based on the basis of based on a survey conducted by 91 professionals having more than five years of experience.

Result and discussion.

The data collected was analyzed in SPSS-17 (Statistical Package for Social Sciences). The severity and the standard deviation for each factor were analyzed. The Mean difference is shown in the graph and table below. As per the values, the elements of the factor have been further segregated into three zones, i.e., High Severity Zone, Medium Severity Zone, and Low Severity Zone. Any element in a particular zone describes the intensity of the factor that how

aggressively it is affecting the Institutions, People, and Processes and consequently affecting the Urban Planning Systems. The following severity chart, given below, is based on t-test values depicting the Severity Ranking:

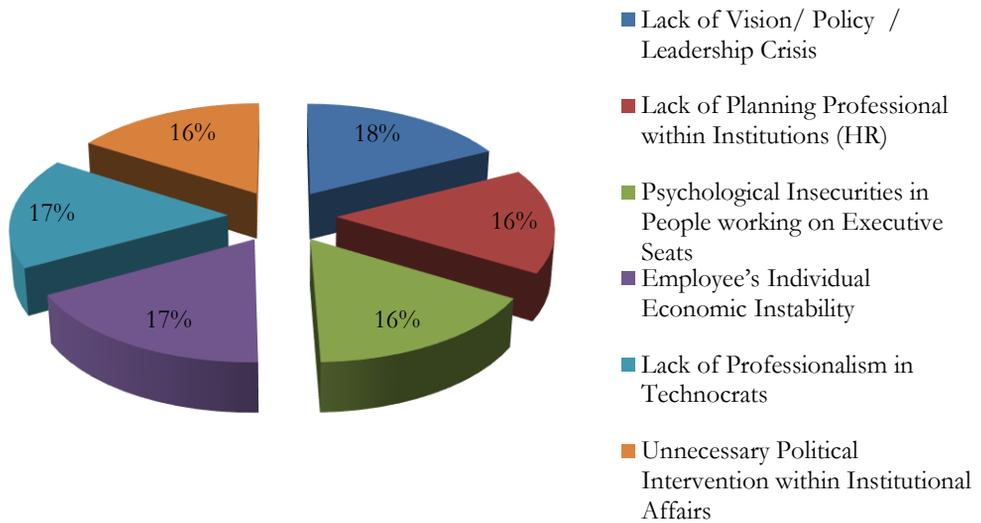**Graph 1:** The factors initial influence the severity line

Graph 2: The factors are arranged in the zones according to their severities.

Factor arranged according to their severity

1	Lack of Vision/ Policy / Leadership Crisis	7.9356
2	Lack of Planning Professional within Institutions (HR)	7.221
3	Psychological Insecurities in People working on Executive Seats	7.221
4	Employee's Individual Economic Instability	7.868
5	Lack of Professionalism in Technocrats	7.676
6	Unnecessary Political Intervention within Institutional Affairs	7.235
7	Fear Factor / Dominance of Fear being the main hurdle	6.853
8	Organizational Culture / Organizational Behavior	6.838
9	Lack of Soft Skills in Technocrats	5.382
10	The involvement of Mafias in the shape of Public Participation	4.059
11	Politically Influenced Transfer/Postings on Executive Seats	5.059
12	Organizations are Change Resistant	4.882
13	Less Participation of General Public in Urban Planning Matters	4.441
14	Non-existence of proper Employees Evaluations Systems in Public Institutions	5.338
15	Lack of Basic Technical Understandings of Urban Planning Filed in Bureaucrats	4.962
16	Poor Organizational Structure (Vertical Hierarchal Chimneys)	5
17	Reluctance in Taking the Responsibility & Shifting it to the Lower one	5.059
18	Psychological Need for Power/Recognition in People working on Executive Seats	4.588
19	The focus of Energies is somewhere else rather than their own Job Descriptions (JDs)	4.691
20	The Appointments of Executives are for a Specific Short period.	3.765
21	Lack of Institutional Training keeping in mind the Future Demands	2.75
22	Faulty basic training of Executives (Bureaucrats)	3.25
23	Processes within Organizations are Cumbersome & are way too long to get results	3.397

Table 1: Factors arranged according to their severity

Factors in High Severity Zone

Legend:
- Lack of Vision/ Policy / Leadership Crisis
- Lack of Planning Professional within Institutions (HR)
- Psychological Insecurities in People working on Executive Seats
- Employee's Individual Economic Instability
- Lack of Professionalism in Technocrats
- Unnecessary Political Intervention within Institutional Affairs

Graph 3: Factors in High Severity Zone – A Pie chart presentation

Factors in Low Severity Zone

Legend:
- The Appointments of Executives are for a Specific Short period of time.
- Lack of Institutional Trainings keeping in mind the Future Demands
- Faulty basic training of Executives (Bureaucrats)
- Processes within Organizations are Cumbersome & are way too long to get results

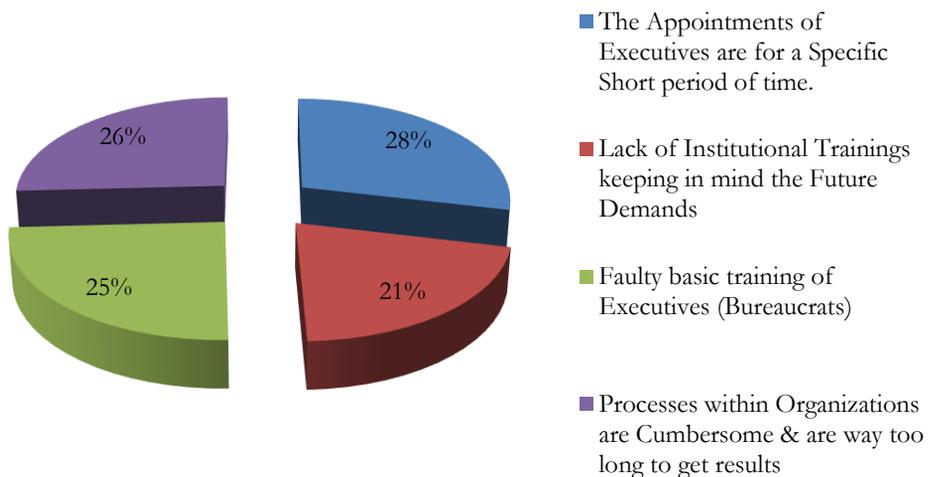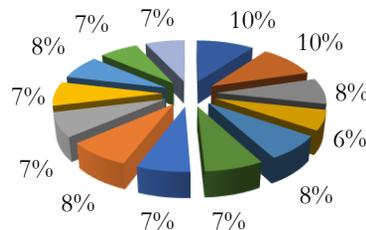**Graph 4:** Factors in Low Severity Zone – A Pie Chart presentation

Factors in Medium Severity Zone

- ■ Fear Factor / Dominance of Fear being the main hurdle
- ■ Organizational Culture / Organizational Behavior
- ■ Lack of Soft Skills in Technocrats
- ■ The involvement of Mafias in shape of Public Participation
- ■ Politically Influenced Transfer/Postings on Executive Seats
- ■ Organizations are Change Resistant
- ■ Less Participation of General Public in Urban Planning Matters
- ■ Non-existence of proper Employees Evaluations Systems in Public Institutions

Graph 5: Factors in Medium Severity Zone – A Pie Chart presentation

Conclusion

The Institutions are one of the main pillars of any state. The institutes dealing with the urban planning and development provide calculated parameters in the shapes of Master/Development plans and the regulations to control the city growth and channelize it rationally. The prevailing urban sprawl and spreading unplanned development is creating disastrous impacts over the city inhabitants.

An organization is said to be triumphant only if it controls or at least minimizes all the factors which are affecting its performance and making it unproductive.

Following conclusions/recommendations are made on the basis of the study:

- The establishment of proper Human Resource Departments which not only look into the administrative affairs of the institution but also give a prime focus over the psychological parameters of the employees working on different posts and make periodic analysis of their psychological wellbeing.

- Our institutes lack relevant professionals. There should be strict observance of "Right job for the right person" philosophy within the organizations.

- The policies are made, and the organizations should be so coped that no political intervention should be tolerated at the operational level or within the internal affairs of the institution.

- The HR departments should be responsible for the time-to-time preparation of the psychological & leadership trainings need assessment of both sorts of employees i.e. technocrats as well as bureaucrats.

- A well-prepared and rational 360-degree Employees Evaluation process should be adopted, and a proper service structure and pay-package along with performance-based perks should be taken into account by the institutions for incubating better professionalism within the employees, resulting in making them more service-oriented.

- Elimination of unnecessary fear factor & obedience culture as it restrains the progress factor and affects the productivity of the individual badly.

Diagram 1: A diagram highlighting the cause and their appropriate recommended solutions for Unproductivity and In-decisiveness in public Institutions of Urban Planning in Pakistan.

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