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Perception Survey of Civil Servants: A Preliminary Report

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1. INTRODUCTION

Despite various attempts at reforming the civil services the common perception seems to be that the system essentially remains similar to that inherited from the colonial past. Worse still, little is known about the perceptions of civil servants on various issues in civil service reforms. Against this backdrop, the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics conducted a perception survey of civil servants seeking their views on recruitment, training, performance evaluation, job satisfaction, and relationship with the private sector. This preliminary report highlights the key findings of the survey.

Section 2 sets out the survey methodology. Sections 3 to 7 respectively highlight the survey findings with respect to recruitment, postings and training, performance evaluation, job satisfaction, bureaucracy, private sector, and institutions and reforms.

2. METHODOLOGY

Questionnaire, Sample Design, and Data Collection

The survey focuses on nine 'Civil Services of Pakistan (CSP)' groups, viz. Audit and Accounts Services; Secretariat; Police Services of Pakistan; Office Management (OMG); District Management (DMG); Information; Commerce and Trade; Customs and Excise; and Foreign Services.[1]

As a first step, lists of all the CSP officers were collected from the relevant departments / organisations and compiled. Before initiating the sampling procedure, all the lists were thoroughly examined and updated. It was a challenging task for the team to update the list and to trace all the civil servants through telephone calls and fax, however, it was done in quite a professional and organised manner.

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[1]Due to some complications and time limitation, the study could not incorporate the Pakistan Railways and Pakistan Postal Service groups.

Questionnaire Design and Pre-testing

The questionnaire was designed, at the *Development Strategies and Governance* section of Pakistan Institute of Development Economics (PIDE), Islamabad. To formulate the questionnaire, the survey team met numerous times to identify the issues related to civil services of Pakistan. Main areas of research, included in the questionnaire pertained to recruitment; training; performance evaluation; job satisfaction; bureaucracy, private sector and Political Institutions and finally about the Reform Process itself.

At the final draft stage, a panel of distinguished civil servants and researchers was called to offer their comments regarding the survey questionnaire and the research methodology. The participants at the panel meeting offered several suggestions and comments on the questionnaire as well as on the research methodology which were incorporated in the research plan. Thus, the questionnaire was refined and finalised through a consultation process.

Before initiating the survey, pre-testing of the questionnaire was carried out for healthier feedback. Four teams, each of one male and one female, were formulated and trained for the pre-testing task. Each team, in their own competence, made contact with the civil servants and conducted interviews.

Sample Design

When sub-populations vary considerably, it is advantageous to sample each subpopulation (stratum) independently. Stratification is the process of grouping members of the population into relatively homogeneous subgroups before sampling. In general the size of the sample in each stratum is taken in proportion to the size of the stratum (i.e. proportional allocation). Therefore, stratified random sampling technique has been adopted in the study.

A sample of 382 civil servants, as ten percent of the universe, from the above mentioned civil services groups were proportionally allocated, amongst the three starat viz. strata 1 (i.e. grade 17-18), stratum 2 (i.e. grade 19-20), and stratum 3 (i.e. grade 21-22). Each of these groups constituted a separate stratum. After determining the size of the sample for each service group, at second stage, each stratum was divided into sub-strata according to grades[2] and estimated sample was proportionally allocated to these sub-strata. And finally, the random sampling tecnique was applied within each sub-stratum. Sample selected as per foregoing methodology includes 156 civil servants in sub-stratum 1, 193 in sub-stratum 2, and 33 in sub-stratum 3; contributes to a total sample size of 382 civil servants.

Data Collection

For the collection of primary data from civil servants all over Pakistan, as a first round, the survey questionnaires were sent to all the civil servants through courier service. In the second round, all the civil servants were bothered again though telephone and fax to get an early response. The survey team tried it level best to ensure maximum response.

[2]The word ‘grades’ refers to the government/public sector ‘Basic Pay Scale (BPS)’. Three divisions (stratum) on the basis of grades, i.e. (1) BPS 17-18; (2) BPS 19-20; and (3) BPS 21-22, were identified to evaluate diversified results the perception survey.

It was the outcome of these efforts that the responses were mainly received through postal service, however, visits were also arranged to capture realistic reflection from the civil servants in one-to-one (personal) interviews.[3] It is noteworthy that of the total response, more than 70 percent was received through postal service.

A total of 206 responses (54 percent) were collected. Of the total recorded response, 93.2 percent was from males and 6.8 percent was from females. Age-wise response shows that officers in the age bracket of 51-60 gave maximum feedback, i.e. 46.1 percent, followed by those who fall in age bracket of 41-50, i.e. 36.4 percent, age bracket of 31-40, i.e. 12.7 percent, and age bracket of 25-30, i.e. 4.4 percent.

According to the regional feedback, 46.6 percent of the total response was from Islamabad, 21.4 percent was from Sindh, 20.9 percent was from Punjab, 5.8 percent was from NWFP, and 5.3 percent from Balochistan. As mentioned above, three sub-stratums were identified to analyse the perception of CSP officers. Maximum response was from sub-stratum 2 (grade 19-20), i.e. 62.1 percent, followed by 33.5 and 4.4 percent from sub-stratum 1 (grade 17-18) and sub-stratum 3 (grade 21-22), respectively. CSP group wise feedback shows (see Table 2.1) that maximum response came in from the Secretariat group, i.e. 21.4 percent, followed by the Audit and Accounts Services, i.e. 16.5 percent, and the Police Services of Pakistan, i.e. 14.6 percent. The least response was recorded for the Foreign Services of Pakistan, i.e. 2.4 percent.

Table 2.1

Survey Response: Service Group-wise

CSP Group	Response	Percentage Response
Audit and Account Services	34	16.5
Secretariat Group	44	21.4
Police Services of Pakistan	30	14.6
OMG	22	10.7
DMG	23	11.2
Information Group	9	4.4
Commerce and Trade	13	6.3
Customs and Excise	12	5.8
Foreign Services of Pakistan	5	2.4
Other	14	6.8
Total	206	100.0

3. RECRUITMENT

Design of Recruitment Process: General vs. Task-specific

Civil servants are generally inducted in Grade-17 through a test/interview process that is very general in nature. At the time of test/interview it is not known whether the interviewee is to join say, police service or finance division. There are two views on the issue of the design of recruitment process. One view is that the test/interview should be

[3]Visits to NIPA Karachi, NIPA Lahore, NIPA Peshawar, and NIPA Quetta were also arranged to have focus group discussions.

general in nature while the other view favours a task oriented recruitment process. The former is based on the argument that the administrators/managers should know a bit of everything, therefore the general nature of the recruitment process is preferable. The other extreme is that some tasks currently being performed by civil servants, are too technical to be entrusted to a *generalist* who does not possess the relevant professional background.

An overwhelming majority of respondents (81 percent) feel that recruitment process should be task-specific. Civil servant in higher grades (BPS 21 and 22) show greater preference for task oriented recruitment process. The reason could be that experienced officers may have a better comprehension of the demerits of a general recruitment test/interview. With in groups Foreign Service and OMG report above-trend response in favour of task specific test.

Table 3.1

Should the Recruitment Process be Task-specific?

	Responses (%)	
	Yes	No
Overall	81	19
Services Groups		
OMG	95	5
Foreign Service	100	0
Ex-cadre	62	38
Strata		
Grade 21-22	100	0

Despite the respondents' preference for task oriented performance, one cannot ignore outright, the generalist because the tasks assigned to officers from DMG or Police may perhaps be performed equally well by persons with degrees in say linguistics or chemistry.

Table 3.2

Professionals for Specialised Cadre

	Respondents (%)	
	Yes	No/Not Sure
Overall	70	30
Male	71	29
Female	42	58
Strata		
Grade 17-18	65	35
Grade 19-20	70	30
Grade 21-22	77	23
CSP Group		
DMG	47	53
OMG	86	14
Commerce and Trade	34	66
Foreign Service	40	60

What then is the middle ground? One solution could be to set different eligibility criteria for entry into different groups. It is in this context that we asked the civil servants whether only those possessed with specialised technical education be allowed to opt for specialised cadres like Finance division, Audit and Account and Commerce and Trade etc. More than two third of the respondents answered *yes*.

Table 3.3

Who Should Undertake the Examination? [Respondents (%)]

CD*	FPSC	SRAPS**	Others
9	73	11	7

***** Concerned Departments.
****** Specialised Recruiting Agencies from Private Sector.

Given, that majority favours task oriented recruitment process specialised groups, the issue arises who should conduct the process; FPSC, concerned department, or some recruitment agency from private sector. Majority of the respondents favour FPSC for the job. Probably, respondents knowing well how their department operates, apprehend that it would indulge in favouritism.

Direct Recruitment in Grade 18 and above

As mentioned earlier, civil servants are generally inducted in Grade-17. However at times for some higher post that fall vacant or the ones that are newly created, a suitable person, in terms of qualification and experience etc. may not be available in lower ranks. Given the context, we asked the civil servants should direct recruitment in Grade-18 and above be allowed. Majority (61 percent) of the respondents, as expected, answered, *no*. On aggregate only about one third of the respondents favour direct recruitment in higher grades however 67 percent respondents from upper stratum have voted for direct recruitment in higher grades. The inference is that those most likely to be adversely affected do not favour direct recruitment.

Table 3.4

Direct Recruitment in Grade 18 and Above

	Respondents (%)	
	Yes	No/ Not Sure
Overall	39	61
Strata		
Grade 17-18	33	67
Grade 21-22	67	33
CSP Group		
Secretariat Group	60	40
Police	20	80
Foreign Service	20	80
Regions		
NWFP	1	99

Induction of Doctors / Engineers in Civil Service

In recent past the trend of Medical doctors and Engineers joining the civil service has been on the rise. The reason for the trend is but obvious. The two professions have not been generating good returns for some time now. Given the trend, two opposing views have developed. One holds that significant amount of money is spent by the society in producing a Doctor/Engineer; therefore they should serve in their respective fields. It is noteworthy here that these two sectors get a healthy share of the education budget of the country. The other view is that generally, the two professions, despite low returns, are able attract relative better students. So why deprive the civil service of better performers. Besides from an individual's perspective there should be freedom of choice. Given the context we put this issue to civil servants. Only one third of the total respondents, carry the opinion that doctors and engineers be allowed to opt for civil service. Given the answer what's the solution. Should the entry of Doctors/Engineers in civil service be banned? Is it a market based solution? If the ban is imposed would not the problem manifest itself in some other way? Given the health indicators we cannot say that we don't need more doctors similar argument could be constructed for engineers. Then what's the remedy? This lies in, somehow, increasing returns in the two professions.

Table 3.5

Doctors'/Engineers' Entry into Civil Service

	Respondents (%)	
	Yes	No/ Not Sure
Overall	35	65
CSP Group		
Audit and Account	52	48
Secretariat Group	18	82
OMG	13	87
DMG	52	48
Foreign Service	0	100
Ex-cadre	64	36
Regions		
Islamabad	21	79

4. POSTINGS AND TRAINING

Postings: Academic Knowledge / Professional Background

Ideally one would expect that academic knowledge/professional background would have been given due consideration in case of postings. Majority of the respondents (57 percent) felt that their academic/professional background was not taken into account while being posted to various positions. One can argue that for some of the assignments/groups, for example DMG, a generalist is preferred over specialist, but perhaps, it would be difficult to win this argument for postings to specialised groups, where the nature of assignment calls for a person possessed with specific academic background. Our findings show that academic background does not carry much weightage even for posting to specialised groups.

Table 4.1

Postings: Academic / Professional Background Considered

Yes	37 percent
No	57 percent

A significant majority of 85 percent respondents from Commerce and Trade and 62 percent from Audit and Accounts reported that their academic knowledge/professional background was not taken into account while being posted to various positions. Besides an above-trend percentage of respondents from upper stratum also offered the same response.

Table 4.2

Academic / Professional Background Considered

	Respondents (%)		
Groups	Yes	No	Not Sure
Commerce/Trade	8	85	7
Police	36	64	–
Information	38	62	–
Audit/Accounts	27	62	11
DMG	39	61	
Others	45	45	10
Strata			
17 and 18	39	54	7
19 and 20	36	57	7
21 and 22	22	78	0

Postings: Skill Test

When asked the question were your given a skill assessment task while being posted to various positions? Majority (55 percent) of the civil servants flatly said, *no*. However a reasonable percentage of respondents from some groups answered in affirmative. This includes customs (63 percent), Office management (54) and Commerce and Trade (46 percent). Amongst the respondents who answered *yes* to the question, majority (60 percent) felt that the assessment task only *moderately* tested their true skills/ knowledge but another 28 percent gave the test better ranking of *completely* testing their skills. The responses of groups that diverge from the overall trend are given in Table 3.4.

Table 4.3

Testing Suitability Prior to Posting

	Yes	No	Not Sure
Overall	34	55	11
Group-wise			
Customs/Tax	63	27	9
Office Management	54	32	14
Commerce and Trade	46	54	–

Table 4.4

Testing Suitability Prior to Posting

	Completely	Moderately	Slightly
Overall	29	61	10
Group-wise			
Customs/Tax	14	86	–
Office Management	22	77	
Commerce and Trade	64	36	–

Postings: Job Description

Regarding the job description being provided in black and white, majority of the civil servants responded that the practice is not vogue (60 percent, including those who were not sure on this count). Amongst those who said that yes a written description is provided, 53 percent of them think that job description *completely* reflects what they have to do in practice while another 39 percent considered the relationship between job description and actual assignments a *moderate* one. Given the complexities involved in designing an accurate job description, this, may not be a bad score. However for fixing responsibility, as well as for performance evaluation, a better nexus between the two is called for.

Training Relevance / Opportunity: Domestic

The need of imparting training to personnel is undisputable. To the question that did you receive any formal on the job training? As much as 78 percent civil servants have answered *yes*. It is our hunch that lower stratum may have included the initial training at civil at services academy to answer this question, hence the relatively higher response the lower stratum (BPS 17 and 18). However the finding that a sizable percentage of middle and senior level respondents were not imparted formal on the job training, should raise some eyebrows.

Table 4.5

Formal Training

	Respondents (%)	
	Yes	Not Sure
Overall	78	22
Strata		
17 and 18	88	12
19 and 20	73	30
21 and 22	67	33

Table 4.6

Training: Relevance to Assignment

Relevance (%)	Respondents (%)
75 and Above	51
50	34
25	10
Below 25	6

One would agree that going through ritual of training is not enough. Relevance of training to assignments is important; otherwise it is a burden on exchequer and waste of time. Around 50 percent of the respondents who have been through training, of one sort or the other, replied that 75 percent or more of the training content is relevant. However at lest 16 percent of the respondents feel that only 25 percent or less of the training content is relevant.

The reason for non-relevance finding could be that either the training programme/contents are not carefully designed or that care is not exercised while nominating personnel to the training. To probe deeper into the issue of nominations for training we asked the civil servants, to rank from 1 to 5 the factors like seniority, relevance to assignment, and political/social connections etc. that determined nominations for training. Only 27 percent of the respondents considered relevance to assignment to be the number one consideration in making nominations for training. However the large percentage (30 percent) of respondents consider that connections play the highest role in training nominations. This provides some food for thought.

Table 4.7

Training Nominations: Major Determinants

	Respondents (%)
Relevance	27
Seniority	21
Connections	30

Foreign Training: Relevance / Opportunity

Forty percent of the respondents have received foreign training. A look at the current posting-station of those who have been through foreign training provides some insights. Majority of the trainees (56 percent) are posted in Islamabad and surprisingly.

Table 4.8

Foreign Training Acquired: Area-wise

	Yes
Islamabad	56
Sindh	23
Punjab	10
Balochistan	9
NWFP	2

Table 4.9

Foreign Training Acquired: Group-wise

	% Within Groups
Foreign Service	80
Secretariat	59
DMG	54
Police	48

Only 10 percent in Punjab. If we assume that that respondents have spent most of their service at the station where they are currently posted, which is not an unrealistic assumption, then the inference is that those who are close the to the power hub (i.e. Islamabad) managed to go on foreign training. This doubt also gets substance from the analysis of group-wise responses. Groups considered, *above others* receive relatively more foreign training. For example, a greater percentage of respondents who have been through foreign training are from groups like Foreign Service, Secretariat, DMG and Police etc. While groups like OMG and information lag behind on this count.

Those who have been through the foreign training majority of them (68 percent) feel that at least three quarter or more of the contents of the training bore relevance to their assignment. This relevance finding is much better than that reported earlier for domestic training. When asked the question that how does foreign training compare with domestic training eighty percent of the respondents offered the expected response, *foreign is better*. The next obvious question was about the reasons for holding one type of training superior over the other. Among those who consider that foreign training is better 44 percent of them feel that it is due to better methodology. Other features that make foreign training superior, according to the respondents are, richer content and better instructors.

Table 4.10

Why Foreign Training is Better?

	Respondents (%)
Better Methodology	44
Richer Content	25
Better Instructors	20

Opportunity to Apply Training

Seventy one percent of the respondents said they were given complete or moderate opportunity to apply the knowledge gained during training. However the remaining 29 percent who feel that they were provided only a slight or no opportunity at all to apply the training is worrisome figure. Service groups that report divergent trend from the others include Police and OMG. Though a large percentage of respondents reporting that opportunities were not provided to apply the training is a cause of concern, However this may imply that the training acquired was not relevant to ones assignment, in the first place. The finding, reported above, that connections/closeness to the power hub play a role in training nominations supports the non-relevance assertion.

Impact upon Efficiency

At least 25 percent of the respondents thought that the training programmes improved their work efficiency/quality of decision making *significantly*, while a percentage as large as 65 percent felt that the programmes cast a only a *moderate* impact upon efficiency.

5. PERFORMANCE EVALUATION, PROMOTIONS, AND TRANSFERS

Written standards of expected performance make the performance evaluation task more objective. When asked about prevalence of written standards of expected performance, 43 percent of the respondents answered in affirmative. The service group wise response is indicated in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1

Written Standards of Performance

	Respondents-Yes (%)
Over All	43
Service Groups	
Audit and Account	30
OMG	64
DMG	22
Information	63
Commerce and Trade	31
Customs and Income Tax	67

Table 5.2

*Factors Affecting Promotions Decisions**

Performance	48
Social Connections	16
Political Influence	7

*These are factors other than seniority.

Promotions in civil service are typically based on seniority. We asked the civil servants what factors other than seniority play a role in promotions. They were required to rank the factors affecting like performance, social connections, political influence, etc. that may affect promotions decisions. From the responses it appears that a seniority-cum-performance system of promotions is in vogue. A sizable percentage of 48 (Table 5.2) percent ranked performance to be the number one factor affecting promotions however the result that political affiliation and social connections do not a play a significant role in promotions is against the popular perception. The percentage of respondents replying that performance is the main factor varies directly with grade and age (Table 5.3). This implies that most of those who have been through promotions feel that these were performance-based. Within groups a significant majority from Foreign Service responded that promotions are performance-based but this percentage is very low for commerce and trade. Group-wise responses are indicated in Table 5.4.

Table 5.3

Factors Affecting Promotion Decisions

Age Group	Respondents (%) Performance
25-30	22
31-40	35
41-50	43
51-60	57
Strata	
Grades 17-18	41
Grades 19-20	50
Grades 21-22	67

Table 5.4

Performance-based Promotions

	Respondents (%)
Foreign Service	80
OMG	59
Commerce and Trade	15

Table 5.5

Fairness of the Seniority-based Promotions?

	Fair	No
Over All	56	34
Strata		
Grades 17-18	58	42
Grades 19-20	53	47
Grades 21-22	78	22
CSP Groups		
OMG	81	19
Customs and Income Tax	33	67
Foreign Service	20	80

Given the conflicting views on seniority-based promotion system, we asked the civil servants, do you consider the promotion system based on seniority, fair enough. Majority (56 percent) considers the system to be fair with the percentage for upper stratum (Grade 21 and 22) being as high as 78 percent (Table 5.5). Perhaps, they are in the favour of this because they were promoted on this criterion.

Table 5.6

Why Is Seniority-based System of Promotion Fair?

Options	1	2	3
Over All	49	13	21
CSP Group			
Police	33	0	27
DMG	60	0	10
Commerce and Trade	66	0	17
Customs and Income Tax	33	33	33
Foreign Service	100	0	0

1. No substitute to experience.
2. One should move up the career path with age.
3. Other miscellaneous reasons.

The respondents who considered the seniority-based system of promotion to be a fair one were asked to choose among some popular arguments forwarded in support of the system. Majority (49 percent) of the respondents feel that there is no substitute to experience while 21 percent of the respondents think that one should move the career path with age.

Table 5.7

Why Is Seniority-based System of Promotion Not Fair?

	1st	2nd
Over All	51	38
Strata		
Grades 17-18	67	22
Grades 21-22	0	100
CSP Groups		
Audit and Account	36	55
OMG	100	0
DMG	67	22
Information	67	0
Customs and Income Tax	33	67

1st Ignores performance.
2nd Disincentive to work.

Amongst those who are against seniority based promotion system, 51 percent of them responded that seniority based promotion ignores performance while a sizable percentage also said that the system is a disincentive for the worker to give his best. Some important results are shown in Table 5.7.

To strike a compromise between the two opposing views regarding the promotion system, the respondents were asked, should a seniority-cum-performance based system of promotions be put in place, with relatively greater weight to performance. Majority (85 percent) of the respondents are in the favour seniority-cum-performance based system, with the response increasing as one moves to higher age brackets. This perhaps implies as we move up the age bracket, the percentage of officers who have suffered at the hands of seniority-based system increases. Hence, their vote for seniority-cum-performance, with greater weight to seniority. Overall and age-wise results are indicated in Table 5.8.

Table 5.8

Should Seniority-cum-Performance-based System of Promotion Be Adopted?

	Yes	No/Not Sure
Over All	85	15
Age Group		
25-30	67	33
31-40	71	29
41-50	87	13
51-60	88	12

Table 5.9

Punishment in Civil Service

	Yes	No/Not Sure
Over All	69	31
CSP Groups		
Secretariat Group	54	46
Police	90	10
OMG	45	55
Customs and Income Tax	100	0
Foreign Service	100	0

To get an idea about extent of accountability, we asked the civil servants, were the officers in your department ever penalised. Around 69 percent answered in affirmative, with response from Foreign Service and Customs being hundred percent and 90 percent for Police (Table 5.9). Probably these are the departments about which people complain the most.

Table 5.10

Overall Rating of the Reasons of Penalisation

	Always/Often	Seldom/Never
Poor Performance	48	49
Misappropriation of Funds	59	41
Insubordination	58	42

The most common reason for penalisation, according to respondents, is misappropriation of funds followed by the subordination (Table 5.10).

Table 5.11

Deterioration of Civil Servants' Performance

Extreme	38
Moderate	39
Slight	16
Same as Before	7

To test the popular perception that the performance of civil service has deteriorated overtime, we asked the officers, has the performance of civil service deteriorated overtime. Around 93 percent of the respondents answered in affirmative.

Table 5.12

Distribution of Votes in Favour of Extreme and Moderate Deterioration

	Extreme	Moderate
Age Groups		
25-30	0	67
31-40	20	44
41-50	43	37
51-60	44	36
CSP Groups		
Information	67	22
Police	63	27
OMG	14	57
Customs and Income Tax	8	67
Foreign Service	20	80
Regions		
Punjab	28	51
Balochistan	64	18

Most of them are of the opinion that the performance has deteriorated either *extremely* or *moderately*. Only 7 percent of the respondents think that performance is unchanged (Table 5.11). The largest percentage of respondents saying *extreme* deterioration in performance is in the upper age bracket. The younger officers, not being witness to the change in performance level, have responded that performance has not deteriorated. Overtime (Table 5.12)

Larger percentage of respondents from Police (63 percent) and Information group (67 percent) think that the *extreme* deterioration in performance has occurred. For police this could be due to more political interference. Performance of Customs and Income Tax group having improved over the last few years, especially *vis-à-vis* public, only 8 percent respondents from this group think that the performance has deteriorated (Table 5.12).

Table 5.13

Civil Servants in Favour of Transfers

	Yes	No/Not Sure
Over All	77	23
CSP Groups		
Police	67	33
Foreign Service	100	0
Strata		
Grades 21-22	50	50

Theoretically transfers create diversity in experience, knowledge and skills and thus prepare better managers for the future. However it is possible to argue, perhaps not convincingly, that transfers are against the spirit of specialisation. Majority of the respondents in our sample have favoured transfers. However the ratio in grades 21 and 22 is relatively low (Table 5.13).

Table 5.14

Efficiency of the Bureaucracy in Service Delivery

Efficient	25
Average	41
Inefficient	25

Given that the general public does not carry a good opinion about efficiency of the public sector in terms of services delivery, we asked the civil servants' as to how they view their performance on this count.

Table 5.15

Efficiency of the Bureaucracy in Service Delivery

	Efficient	Inefficient
Age Groups		
25-30	11	11
CSP Groups		
Audit and Account	9	3
Police	10	7
OMG	50	5
Customs and Income Tax	0	0
Foreign Service	40	0
Regions		
NWFP	8	0
Balochistan	46	0

By and large the civil servants appear to confirm the popular perception, as many as 41 percent of respondents have rated it as average (Table 5.14) and 25 percent each as inefficient or very inefficient. Group-wise response is indicated in (Table 5.15) also shows a dismal picture.

6. JOB SATISFACTION

For a worker to give his best, it is essential that he remains satisfied with his work environment so that he is motivated enough to perform. 73 percent of the respondents are satisfied with their assignment while remaining 27 percent are not satisfied (Table 6.1). It is here that the scope for reform lies. Police group reports the highest percentage of highly satisfied/satisfied people (83 percent) while commerce and trade reports the lowest (45 percent). The inference from group wise response is that, given that remuneration in terms of salaries is rather low, groups that enjoy perks/privileges in one for or the other are relatively more satisfied.

Table 6.1

Satisfaction with Work

	Satisfied	Not Satisfied Sure
Overall	73	27
Service Groups		
Police	83	17
Foreign Service Service MG	58	42
Commerce and Trade	45	55

To further probe their satisfaction, especially with reference to being a civil servant, a question was put to them as to where they would like to work in the next two years. The options included continuing their present service, joining another public sector organisation or moving to private sector etc. The respondents were required to rank the options in order of their preference. First preference of 55 percent of the respondents is to *remain in civil service*, while only 5 percent would like to *move to private sector* (Table 6.2). Given the officers clear preference to remain in civil service, it is worthwhile to find out the causes of this preference. In this context we asked them, what influenced your decision to pursue civil service? They were required to rate characteristics like job security, social status and perks etc. *Job security* is the foremost reason indicated by as much as 55 percent of the respondents. *Money* which is considered to be the strongest motivator in Psychological literature has been indicated by only 7 percent as the main reason for joining the civil service.

Table 6.2

Civil Servants' Preferred Work Place in Next Two Years First Preference

	Respondents (%)
Remain in Civil Service	55
Move to a Foreign country	17
Another Public Sector Organisation	10
Private Sector	5

This response when considered together with the earlier one makes the picture clearer. Those who joined civil service and want to continue, their primary concern is either job security or social status (Table 6.3). The fact that officers prefer job security over money and are not inclined to move to private sector, which is a relatively better paymaster, is difficult to understand. One reason for the preference to stay in civil service could be the non-portability of pension—an issue that we take up later.

Table 6.3

Reasons for Joining Civil Service

	Rated: Highly*
Job Security	59
Social Status	44
Professional Interest	30
Authority to Make Decision	28
Guaranteed Pension	27
Good Salary	7

Quality of Life

Civil Servants were asked to assess the quality of their life, on a scale of 1 to 7, 1 indicating outstanding life style 7 reflecting unacceptable living standard. Majority of the respondents [(66 percent), Table 6.4] have rated their life style either comfortable good enough. Only a very small percentage, responded that civil service does not allow them to maintain a certain desired standard of living.

Table 6.4

Civil Servants' Quality of Life

	Rated: Highly*
Comfortable/Good	66
Acceptable	31
Unacceptable	3

Prestige of Civil Service

Civil servants were asked to assess the prestige of their profession. Amongst the respondents, 76 percent (Table 6.5) consider their profession to be a prestigious one.

Table 6.5

Prestige of Civil Service

	Respondents (%)
Prestigious	76
Not Prestigious	24

In similar vein they were asked to express their opinion regarding the change in prestige overtime and 84 percent unambiguously responded that the prestige of civil service has declined overtime.

Again in similar vein the civil servants were asked to assess the attitude of general public towards civil servants. At least half of the respondents feel that the attitude of the public carries a *disapproving* attitude towards civil service.

Table 6.6

Attitude of Civil Service towards Public: Civil Servants Perception

	Respondents (%)
Foreign Service	100
Customs and Tax	78
Police	72
Commerce and Trade	46
Information	25

The analysis across civil groups makes interesting reading but perhaps tells the obvious. Greater the interaction of a civil service group with the general public, the more the respondents from these groups feel that the public carries a *disapproving* attitude of towards them. The high percentage of respondents from customs and police group that carry this feeling [(78 and 72 percent respectively), Table 6.6] supports the statement. However the public perception of Foreign Service may not be as bad as the respondents from the group themselves feel.

To probe the *disapproving attitude* further, we asked the civil servants, is the said attitude of the public because of *civil servants apathy* towards public or is it the case that public *misperceives* the civil servants?. Amongst respondents, at least 49 percent rated civil servants apathy towards public to be the most important cause of the disapproving attitude however a sizable percentage of respondents also feel that public misperceives the civil servants. The response appears to be somewhat mixed with the tilt being towards *civil servants apathy*.

Table 6.7

Attitude of Public towards Civil Service: Civil Servants Perception

	Respondents (%)
CS apathy towards Public	49
Public's Misperception about CS	31

Remunerating Performance

The civil servants were asked should the salary package of Civil Servants bear relevance to the nature of the job, that is, more demanding jobs should be better rewarded, amongst the respondents 72 percent answered in affirmative. This is in a way employees vote for performance-based remuneration. To the question, should the salaries of government employees bear, at least, some relationship with the pay package in the private sector, for equivalent qualification and experience, an overwhelming majority of 78 percent answered in affirmative.

7. BUREAUCRACY, PRIVATE SECTOR, AND POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS

We asked the civil servants, how much discretion *(high, little or no)* they enjoy in performing their duties. Only about 20 percent of the respondents replied that they enjoy high discretion while majority indicated that they have *little* discretion. Analysis of

group-wise response shows that for police group *high-discretion* respondents are above trend [(50 percent, as against overall trend of 20 percent), Table 7.2] while the respondents replying that they enjoy *no* discretion are above trend for secretariat group and OMG. All respondents from Foreign Service group said they enjoy *little* discretion. This difference can be explained in terms of the nature of job. Field work obviously calls for more discretion. As expected, percentage the civil servants enjoying *high* discretion is more for higher grades.

Table 7.1

Discretion of the Civil Servants

High Discretion	21
Little Discretion	65
No Discretion	14

Table 7.2

Discretion of the Civil Servants

Stratum	High Discretion	No Discretion
Grade 21-22	50	25
Regions		
NWFP	33	17
Balochistan	10	10
Service Groups		
Audit and Account	15	2.9
Secretariat Group	16	30
Police	47	3
OMG	18	27
DMG	26	4
Foreign Service	0	0

Table 7.3

Political Influence in Public Sector

	Always/Often	Seldom/Never
Overall	77	23
	Always	Never
Age Group		
25-30	33	0
Province		
Punjab	9	2
NWFP	33	8
CSP Group		
Audit and Account	12	0
Commerce and Trade	39	0
Customs and Income Tax	0	8

This needs no emphasis that employment/promotions should be merit based. In this context we asked the civil servants is the employment/promotion in Civil Service influenced by politicians. 77 percent of the respondents said that process is almost *always/Often.* Younger respondents feel more interference from political side as none of the respondents from the age group 25-30 feel that there is *no* political interference.

To judge the attitude of the bureaucracy towards private sector, civil servants were asked to rate the attitude from *cooperative to authoritative* and the change in attitude over last ten years.

Table 7.4

Attitude of Bureaucracy Towards Public

	Now	10 Years Earlier
Cooperative	33	13
Average	48	22
Authoritative	20	65

The respondents have characterised the attitude as average, between the two extremes of *cooperative and authoritative*. However all most all of them are of the opinion that bureaucracy has shed, at least some, of its authoritative posture. Least the respondents from the group themselves think that the attitude has improved considerably. Currently Customs and Income Tax group seems to going through a paradigm shift, as more than half of the respondents from this group answered that attitude of bureaucracy towards private sector is cooperative *now*. However for ten years ago only 9 percent, from customs and income tax, characterised the attitude as cooperative.

Table 7.5

Consultation with Private Sector

	Always/Often	Seldom/Never
Overall	53	47
Age Group		
25-30	33	0
Regions		
NWFP	25	8
Strata		
21-22	11	22

While devising policies the need to seek the views of the stakeholders need not be emphasised. We put the question to the civil servants that are the views of the private sector accounted for while devising policies that affect private firms? Amongst the respondents 53 percent (Table 7.5) said this is the case always/often. However the cause of concern is that remaining 47 percent think otherwise.

Table 7.6

Corruption in Civil service

	Always/Often	Seldom/Never	Not Sure
Overall	65	22	13

On the issue of corruption, we asked the civil servants, how often the private sector has to indulge in *palm-greasing* to get things done. Amongst the respondents, 65 percent of the respondents answered that they have to do it *always/often.* This being the popular perception, there is nothing new in this response accept that this comes from the *horse's-mouth*. The result across groups and strata are in conformity with the trend, implying that corruption is all pervasive.

An efficient mechanism to redress the grievances of the private sector against the civil servants is important for growth of business activity in private sector. We asked the Civil Servants does the private sector enjoy easy access to superiors of officers who acts against the rules. Amongst the respondents 62 percent (Table 7.7) replied that this access is *Always/Often* available while another 25 percent felt this to be the case seldom only.

Table 7.7

Private Sector: Lodgment of Complaints

	Always/Often	Seldom/Never	Not Sure
Overall	62	28	10

To get an idea about the extent of accountability, we asked the civil servants; how often cases of corruption, involving Civil Servants, are reported to higher authorities? By and large, the response is shared equally between, *Always/Often* and *Seldom/Never* The fact that at least 46 percent of the respondents feel that cases involving Civil Servants are not reported to authorities speaks volumes about the state of accountability.

Table 7.8

Accountability of Civil Servant: Corruption

	Always/Often	Seldom/Never	Not Sure
Overall	51	46	3

8. REFORMS

To begin with civil servants were asked are they aware of any of the previous civil service reforms. 65 percent of the respondents answered *yes* to the question. The respondents who were aware of the previous reforms were then asked to rate the impact of previous reforms upon work efficiency, level of corruption, attitude of civil servants towards business firms and attitude towards general public. The broader conclusion from the responses (Table 8.1) is that the reforms, in general, failed to make a significant impact. It is evident from the table that majority of the respondents are of the opinion that reforms had an insignificant impact in all the areas, with the level of corruption getting the poorest score (Impact: Significant 27 percent, insignificant 73 percent).

Table 8.1

Impact of Previous Reforms

	Respondents (%)	
	Significant	Insignificant
Efficiency	35	65
Attitude towards Business Firms	42	58
Attitude towards General Public	36	64
Level of Corruption	27	73

One important condition for carrying out the reforms is that those who have to carry out the reforms or would be influenced by reforms should be optimistic about the possibility of instituting effective reforms in future. In this context, we asked the civil servants to what extent improvement is possible in the areas referred above.

Table 8.2

Impact of Reforms in Future: Optimism Level

	Respondents (%)	
	Significant	Insignificant
Efficiency	83	17
Attitude Towards Business Firms	71	29
Attitude Towards General Public	74	29
Level of Corruption	53	47

An overwhelming percentage of 83 percent respondents feel that significant improvement is possible in work efficiency however for reduction in level of corruption this optimism is shred by only 53 percent respondents. This again points towards the pervasiveness of the corruption and given its deep roots as many 47 percent respondents feel that it will be difficult, for any reform process, to make a dent in the level of corruption.

Perks

The civil servants were asked about the importance of perks in the remuneration package. They were required to choose among categories like; perks motivate employees to perform better and reflect status etc. Amongst the respondents 66 percent consider that perks serve to motivate employees while another 58 percent feel that these allow officers to maintain a better standard of living. Relatively smaller percentage have answered that perks are status symbol or that these serve to retain employees in Civil Service.

Table 8.3

Monetisation of Perks

Perks	Respondents (%)
Motivate Employees to Perform Better	66
Allow Maintenance of Better Living Standard	58
Govt. Housing / Official Car Reflect Better Status	34
Retain Employees in Govt. Service	33

It is worthwhile to note here that money can serve all the purposes that the perks do serve, except perhaps being a status symbol (which relatively smaller percentage has chosen). It is in this context that we asked the civil servants should the perks be monetised? As many as 75 percent, of the respondents have favoured monetisation. It is generally believed that the perks enjoyed by the upper stratum are so high that the monetisation may not be able to capture it, therefore this stratum will perhaps be against monetisation of perks. However the responses indicate that perception is incorrect, as 77 percent of the respondents from the upper stratum (BPS 21 and 22) have favoured monetisation of perks.

Amongst those who have favoured monetisation, 58 percent (Table 8.4) are of the opinion that monetisation would allow the employees to choose facilities of their own choice. Besides 51 percent also think that monetisation would increase nominal pay, in money terms which would exercise a better psychological impact upon the employee and thereby improve his efficiency.

Table 8.4

Monetisation of Perks

	Respondents (%)
Higher Nominal Pay-Better Efficiency	51
Acquiring Facilities of Own Choice	58

MP Grades

A question was put to the civil servants as to how do they view the recently introduced MP Grades. A significant percentage of 34 percent respondents replied that these were unfair, while another 36 percent answered *not sure* (perhaps they are not aware of the MP Grades). As the civil servants are adversely influenced by the MP Grades and the question was put to civil servants only, therefore the response is not surprising.

Reform Areas

To institute reforms one must know what, if done, would improve performance. In this context civil servants were asked, what would improve the performance of your department/organisation. They were required to answer, *yes*, *no* or *not sure* to features like increase/reduction in staff strength, higher salary and more autonomy etc. Three features *viz.* increase in salary, increase in professional level of employees and computerisation have been chosen by 90 percent or more of the respondents (Table 8.5). Neither increase in staff strength nor downsizing, according to respondents, is likely to influence performance.

Table 8.5

What Would Improve Performance?

	Yes	No/Not Sure
Increase in:		
Professionalism	96	4
Salary	93	7
Computerisation	94	6
Increase in Staff Strength	30	70
Downsizing	29	69
Greater Autonomy for Officers	58	42

Choosing Team Members

One would perhaps agree with the argument that the person who is to be held responsible for a task should be allowed to choose his team members. In this context we asked the civil servants, do you enjoy a '*say*' while subordinates are being posted under you. Amongst the respondents Sixty percent (Table 8.7) responded '*some say*' while 20 percent each have answered '*complete say*' and '*no say*'. We believe that a necessary condition for fixing responsibility onto a senior officer is to allow him to choose his own team or at least let him have *more say*, in the choice of subordinates then is currently available.

Table 8.6

'Say' in Posting of Subordinates

	Respondents (%)
Complete say	20
Some say	60
No say	20

Job Mobility / Pension Portability

Job mobility improves efficiency by way of skill diversification and reducing monotony at work. In this context, we asked the Civil Servants will the job mobility between public and private sector, improve overall efficiency. Amongst the respondents, 77 percent of the civil servants have answered *yes*. Given the response job mobility needs to be encouraged.

A major hurdle in the way of job mobility from public to private sector, and at times, even within public sector, is the non-portability of pension. Pension portability implies that an employee that not need serve his entire length of service or at least 20 years in an organisation, to be eligible for pension. Rather if he moves to another organisation, be it in the private sector, he can carry his pension along. Non-portability increases the cost of job change, because a worker who wants to move to the private sector after putting in say, ten years of civil service, will have to forego his pension . If the person is not to move the economy, stands to loose, because the private sector, which

is part of the economy, fails to get the right man and the public sector ends up with a frustrated person, who is busy looking at countdown to the pension eligibility. Obviously such a person cannot perform.

In the context of job mobility, we asked the Civil Servants, do they favour pension portability, and a sizable majority of 68 percent (Table (8.8) answered *yes*. A significant percentage of respondents (23 percent) answered *not sure*. As pension portability is not much heard off in Pakistan, perhaps the respondents had difficulty in comprehending the mechanics of the scheme. In similar vein we asked; should the minimum length o service for pension eligibility be reduced to, for example, ten years and a majority comprising 58 percent answered *yes*. For the upper stratum, comprising Grade 21 and 22, this percentage is as high as 78 percent. The two answers combined leads us to infer that perhaps there are people who want to part ways with the government but are held captive by the *pension-chain*. No doubt that the pension portability may involve some extra monetary cost, but the cost needs to be weighed against benefits that will accrue if we bade farewell to an unwilling worker.

Table 8.7

Job Mobility / Pension Portability

	Respondents (%)	
	Yes	No/Not Sure
Pension Portability (Overall)	68	32
Job Mobility Increases Efficiency Improved Efficiency	77	33
Favour Pension Portability	68	32
10 Years Service for Pension Eligibility	58	42
——— Grade 21 and 22	78	22

Public Service Delivery

One view is that quite often the public sector is burdened with the task that can be more efficiently, and at lower cost be performed by the private sector. Hence, the trend of outsourcing. A reasonable number of 44 percent respondents favour outsourcing, 39 percent are against and the remaining 17 percent were not sure which way to vote. Amongst those who favour outsourcing, 95 percent (Table 8.9) think that outsourcing that this will improve work efficiency. Those who do not favour (Table 8.10) outsourcing their main argument is that outsourcing would increase cost for consumers, private sector does not have the capacity to perform and it is difficult to have a transparent system in place for the purpose.

Table 8.8

Yes to Outsourcing

	Respondents (%)
Will Improve Work Efficiency	95
Will Reduce Size of Government	40
Will Reduce Cost	35

Table 8.9

No to Outsourcing

	Respondents (%)
Increase in Cost for Consumers	95
Private Sector does not have the Capacity to Perform	40
Difficult to Devise a Transparent System for Outsourcing	35

Hierarchy/Flat Organisation

Amongst the respondents 65 percent (Table 8.11) said *yes* to flatter organisation, that is lesser hierarchy. It is evident from the table that desire for less hierarchy varies directly with grade—almost all of those who favour flatter organisation feel that this would increase the speed of decision making, besides 65 percent also feel that this would reduce government expenditure. Those who do not favour flat organisation apprehend that reducing hierarchy will compromise quality of decision-making and the check and balance system, as the matter would pass through lesser layers.

Table 8.10

Flat Organisation

	Respondents (%)
	Yes
Overall	65
Grade	
17 and 18	71
19 and 20	63
21 and 22	55

Innovative

Civil servants were asked are you innovative in your job. Amongst the respondents 72 percent responded *yes*, 28 percent said *no/not sure*. Those who said *no*, their (80 percent) main argument is that innovation is not encouraged by superiors while 37 percent also apprehend that innovation is risky.

Table 8.11

Why Not Innovative

	Respondents (%)
Innovation is not Encouraged by Superiors	80
Innovation is Risky	37

Civil Services Academy

Amongst the respondents, 50 (Table 8.6) percent carry the opinion that training at the civil services academy produces an *elitist mindset*. However a sizable Percentage also feels that training at the academy produces officers ready to serve the masses. Given that only16 percent respondents feel that the public carries an *approving* attitude towards Civil Service we believe that public would find it difficult to buy the information that Civil Services Academy produces officers ready to serve the masses. Besides the fact majority of the officers feel that training at the academy does not bear relevance to the tasks ahead. So for any Civil Service reform process to bear fruit, the training philosophy at the Civil Services Academy would have to be reformed.

Table 8.12

Training at Civil Services Academy

	Yes	No/Not Sure
Creates an Elitist Mindset	50	50
Produces Officers Ready to Serve	43	57
Bears Relevance to Tasks Ahead	46	54