Institutional Complexity of Civil Service Reforms in Pakistan: Challenges and Impediments

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Abstract

Over the last two decades, there is an increasing trend of structural reforms in the administrative system of South Asian countries. In this region, the traditional bureaucratic model of public administration prevails in retrospection of colonial and postcolonial periods (Haque, 2003). The new agenda is to transform the traditional public sector model with business-like practices in line with the current global movement for such a transition. The central theme of this paper revolves around the institutional complexity faced by public sector organizations in line with institutional pressures. It also explicates how organizations respond to the complexity created by multiple and conflicting logics. This paper explores institutional complexity of federal training institutions of Pakistan by investigating the way these organization adopted the new proposed logic of civil service reforms. It describes how new management practices are introduced in training institutions and how well they are interpreted and adopted by these organizations. This study is based on 18 semi structured interviews from the senior and middle line management of federal training institutions. Participants are purposively selected as unit of observation and data is analyzed by using thematic analysis. In this regard, this study presents a scientific insight to federal training institutions and their adoption of market logic. Cultural institutional perspective has appeared to have high explanatory power to explain this phenomenon. This paper argues that organizational characteristics like size, its position in the field, its legal entity, and its linkages with the ministry are important determinants while studying relationships between complexity and organizational responses. The paper recommends further empirical research on the current topic by linking organizational responses to institutional complexity to organizational outcomes and to contextualize these findings in other settings.

Keywords: Complexity, agency, logics, organizational filters, performance

Introduction

Civil services of Pakistan are considered as one of the elite services of the country. Due to its significant role in bureaucratic framework it has been the center of concern for political arm of the state. Civil services have generally played a crucial role in developing a sense of belonging to state and nation. Anderson (1983) conceptualizes

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nations as "socially constructed communities, imagined by the people who perceive themselves as part of a cohesive group"(Avis, 2015). Anderson (1983) discuss about imagined communities where the process of nation-building involves the establishment of a legitimate 'us' versus an illegitimate 'other'. Considering the importance of civil services it is important to develop the capacity of this sector so that the overall service provision can be improved. Literature establishes the significance of public sector training. Evidences from Somaliland illustrate the importance of training civil servants. Ethiopian educational institutions also supported in the absence of tertiary education sector. Tanzania, also presents a similar example, where international donor support has been leveraged to develop training institutions that can equip civil servants to fulfil their responsibilities and contribute to a more effective civil service.

Today, it is inevitable for organizations to avoid institutional pressures that create complexity. Institutional complexity is created when organizations face different and even conflicting demands from multiple institutional logics (Goodstein, 1994; Greenwood, Raynard, Kodeih, Micelotta, & Lounsbury, 2011; Lu & Wang, 2014; C. Oliver, 1991). Institutional logics are basically demands posed by external environment. Traditionally, public sector carries state logic in which the overarching principles are quite different from managerial logics operated in the private sector. Keeping in view the distinction of the state and managerial logic (Hammerschmid & Meyer, 2004; R. Meyer, 2014), most of the principles like rationality, legitimacy, core values, mission and vision, mode of governance, evaluation criteria and employment status are applicable to the public sector in Pakistan as well.

Hence it is imperative to address the level of complexity created by these new logics and the corresponding organizational responses. Therefore, the problem statement identified for the recent research is:

How have federal training institutions reacted to civil service reforms in Pakistan?

Based on the above question, this study addresses the following sub-questions:

1. What is the proposed market logic in Civil Service Reforms of Pakistan?

2. How market logic is interpreted by federal training institutions in Pakistan?

3. How have the federal training institutions managed the pressure to adopt market logic prevalent in Civil Service Reforms?

Significance of the study

This study presents significant contribution towards knowledge building in context of South Asian countries as it explores the adoption of western notion of improved public service through New Public Management (NPM) based reforms and highlights the ignorance of administrative legacy of this region by the policy makers. These

countries are adopting managerial principles to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of public sector institutions by capacity building of the civil servants. This study is the recontexualization of the phenomenon which explains that why certain reforms fail to achieve their objectives.

This study also highlights the rise of institutional complexity is related to the external dependence of a region on international agencies which may affect the economic conditions of the country. Moreover, this study holds a significant purpose of identifying the organizational responses to institutional complexity. Institutional complexity is a nascent concept in organizational theory and hence demands scholarly attention. Not only in Pakistan but also foreign scholars and researchers have identified unexplored avenues to this concept by identifying its various facets. Greenwood, Raynard, Kodeih, Micelotta, and Lounsbury (2011) present a meta-analysis of the research conducted on institutional complexity but regarded it as the broad general framework that can help to explain the overall phenomenon of the complexity. But they are also eager to explore it in a way that how individual organizations respond to the particular complexity faced by them. Moreover the concept has also drawn attention in strategic organizations that actually bridging up the gap between the strategic management and organizational theory. According to this debate there are certain potential gaps in the literature that can be filled through the empirical and theoretical analysis of complexity at the field level to determine how multiple logics interact and how these logics are shaped by collective agencies (Besharov & Smith, 2012; Purdy, 2009). The concept of institutional complexity is still an unexplored area of research in the context of Pakistan due to the dearth of qualitative institutional studies. Hence the study takes into account an emerging topic of the study which will be significantly contributing to the institutional literature.

The central theme of this paper thus revolves around the idea of organizational responses to the complexity created by multiple and conflicting logics. It also takes it basis from how different management instruments are being introduced under the managerial logic and how they are employed by different agencies. In turn, this study also highlights ways in which these logics are interpreted and their possible effects on the performance of the agency. In this regard, this study gives a scientific insight to highlight the ways in which the construct of organizational complexity is being gauged in the existing literature, and how this can be operationalized for the present research. It also argues about the theoretical and empirical connection between different logics faced by the agencies and their performance.

Literature Review

Close analysis of literature in managerial studies highlights those governments all around the globe stress heavily on performance. Particularly, in transition countries, crisis of legitimacy of government and the need to emphasize the performance management in public sector call upon structural and the institutional changes in the

government machinery (Adejuwon & David, 2014). The rise in the demands of transparency and accountability of the public sector give momentum to the infusion of managerial logics into the centralized bureaucracy. The rise in fame of managerialism has led to rhetoric of institutional changes in the public sector. Managerialism, in context of administrative reforms, advocates efficiency, goal orientation, customer focus and value for money. Not completely being rhetoric, these managerial reforms have actually happened in the practice of public administration throughout the world (OECD, 2002b; Christensen and Laegreid, 2003; Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2004).

Organizational complexity in this study is defined in terms of multiple logics including state and managerial logic. State or bureaucratic logic includes existing government practices characterized by traditional performance management by state, lack of accountability and tight political control (Asangansi, 2013; Fossestøl, Breit, Andreassen, & Klemsdal, 2015; Greenwood, Díaz, Li, & Lorente, 2010a). Managerial logic is referred to attributes of private sector: autonomy, transparency and performance management system to be adopted in the public organizations to improve efficiency and effectiveness (Thornton & Ocasio, 2005)

In particular, institutional logics provide social actors with formal and informal rules of action and interaction, cultural norms and beliefs for interpretation, and implicit principles about what constitute legitimate goals and how they may be achieved (Friedland & Alford, 1991; Thornton & Ocasio, 1999). Although institutional logics can be understood as "the way a particular social world works", they may constitute a useful tool for understanding how a particular field is structured and organized. There is a growing recognition in the neo-institutional literature that organizational and societal settings are more and more exposed to multiple institutional prescriptions contemporaneously (Dunn & Jones, 2010; A.-C. Pache & Santos, 2010; A. Pache & Santos, 2013).

New Public Management (NPM) - The Prescribed Logic:

New Public Management emerged out to be the latest reforms of the public sector around the globe. Before 1980s, NPM was taken as the administrative reforms but in 1991, Hood formally used the label NPM for these administrative reforms. These reforms were based on the economic values, norms and advocate efficiency. Since these reforms were one-dimensional, hence they conflicted with the normative administrative values of different systems in different countries (Christensen, 2007, 2012, Christensen & Lægreid, 2008, 2011). Since NPM is said to be theoretical, it implies the dominance of neo institutional theories. The transaction cost theory, principal agent theory and path dependence are the underlying features of NPM doctrines. These theories consider the complexity and conflicting goals and values as problems of the public sector, rather than considering them their political administrative culture. These reforms demand change in the structure, procedures and culture of political-administrative systems. Hence the mean question as raised by

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Christensen & Lægreid (2001) is that "how these reform elements affect the political-democratic control of systems and what the implications are". Although the concept of NPM is old, but due to the globalization, marvel of modern science internationalization of the human affairs, these reforms are belatedly recognized as the solution to cure the sluggish public sector service.

Even if NPM advocates economic values and objectives, the concept is slack and multidimensional and proposes a kind of "*shopping basket*" of different elements for public administrators and reformers (Hood, 1991; Pollitt, 1995). The key components of NPM are discretionary control by managers, explicit performance standards, output orientation, contracts and devolution. In lieu of the above stated problem, Christensen and Lægreid (2001) are of the view that "*NPM is a double-edged sword which prescribes both centralization and devolution*". The concept of NPM includes the internal re-arrangement of administrative structures, changes in financial management (output- instead of input-orientation in budgeting), controlling mechanisms (for example performance measurement, new accounting systems), human resource management, parting politics and administration apart.

The most daunting challenge for the public organizations in the reform agenda is performance measurement. During last century, widely adopted reforms have frequently focused on the concepts of performance and effectiveness   These reforms have underlined pay-for-performance, total quality management, performance measurement, contracting out, managerial flexibility, and decentralization as the managerial instruments that have steadily claimed better performance of the public sector as their eventual aim. These reform movements (e.g., NPM or reinvention) assumed that changes in internal management of the public sector can results in enhanced performance. These reforms challenged the core logics of the public sector, and prescribe values such as accountability, transparency, and managerial flexibility. Performance contracting as a part of agencification is the mechanism, through which the parent ministry steer the agency performance by using autonomy and control mechanisms. It includes the extent to which internal performance-based steering of the organizational subunits are done, the multiyear planning for the agency, and to what extent the resources allocation is done on the basis of the internal performance based results (Adejuwon & David, 2014; Albescu, 2013; Ć, 2011; Egeberg & Trondal, 2016; Ekelund, 2010; Randma-liiv, NakroŠis, & György, 2011).

The demand of identifying performance indicators has been widely attended in the research studies. These demands are a major drift in the normative logics of the public sector. Despite the introduction of result-oriented management instruments, studies report that effectiveness of these steering mechanisms is still not evident. It may be due to inadequate capacity of parent ministries to control their agencies through the application of these instruments. Another reason can be the relative identity of the agency to eliminate the effect of the prescribed logic. In order to understand how

institutional complexity arises and the ways in which organizations respond to these complexities, it is significant to address those factors that determine the level of complexity an organization faces.

Organizational responses to different logics also vary from case to case based on the level of complexity they face. Literature has identified two categories of organizational responses: structures and strategies (Greenwood et al., 2010a, 2011). Moreover, responses are based on the type of pressures: internal or external. This study only focuses on strategic responses to internal complexity present in new hybrids. Literature identifies multiple strategies to deal with internal logics prevailing in hybrid organizations. Organizational strategies may include prioritization of logics, resistance to logics, balancing of logics and decoupling. Oliver (1999) has devised one of the comprehensive frameworks for determining strategic responses to external institutional pressures. He identified 5 strategies: acquiescence, compromise, avoidance, defiance, and manipulation. Acquiescence is a passive and others are active strategies. These organizational responses are explained through institutional perspective and resource dependence perspective. (Oliver, 1999). Organizational responses to conformity and isomorphic changes are the result of institutional pressures and the habit of the organization to follow international trends. The institutional theory also explains cultural, societal and environmental effects while responding to external pressures on organizations.

Researchers argue that contingency theory of management also suggest responses for institutional complexity in the external environment (Battilana & Dorado, 2010; Greenwood et al., 2011; Jay, 2013; Lean, 2010; Plowman, Duchon, & Mcdaniel, 2000; Thompson, 2011). Ashmos, Donde, Duschon, Dennis McDaniel (2000) argue that when organizations face turbulent and uncertain environment they tend to reduce complexity whereas for the mechanistic structure and stable environment organizations tend to absorb complexity. But complexity reduction and absorption responses depend heavily on the organizational characteristics.

Kraatz & Block (2008) have given four alternate ways by which organizations may respond to pluralistic presures. Organizations can (1) eliminate the sources presenting conflicting demands, (2) compartmentalize the conflicting demands and deal with them independently, (3) reign over the tension created by conflicting demands (e.g., attempting to balance conflicting demands, playoff constituents against one another or searching for cooperative solutions), (4) or become an 'institution in their own right' and bring in new institutional orders. The antecedents of the above mentioned strategies have not been discussed in the model.

Pache & Santos (2010) have extended the theoretical model of organizational responses to conflicting institutional demands. This model of organizational response has an internal perspective. It means that these responses are appropriate for the demands posed by interdependent units of organization within the organization.

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Conflicting institutional demands may differ with respect to the goals of the organizations that they deem legitimate or the means or courses of action they prescribe. The authors have suggested that goal conflicts or disagreements present a particular challenge for organizations since the resolution requires "organizational members to overtly recognize the incompatibility of the demands on goals, which may, in turn, jeopardize institutional support" (Pache & Santos, 2010: 466). Similarly, organizations face challenging situations if the conflict between institutional demands exists internally and different groups inside the organizations clash with each other in order to uphold their views (Pache & Santos, 2010: 461).

Organizational Characteristics: Researchers have emphasized the study of micro-foundations to explain the heterogeneity of organizational responses, while at the same time identifying the need to study the decision makers perceptions and his/her interpretation of institutional pressures (Greenwood et al., 2010a; Greenwood, Díaz, Li, & Lorente, 2010b; Scherer, Palazzo, & Seidl, 2013). Particularly in understanding how organizations experience and respond to institutional complexity, scholars study individual-level factors that are a valuable addition to the field-level (i.e., fragmentation, formal structuring/rationalization, centralization) and the organization-level (i.e., field position, structure, ownership/governance, identity) factors. Likewise, this research takes the individual perspective and the key role played by decision makers responsible for interpreting and assessing the various demands in their environment (Fossestøl et al., 2015; Lean, 2010; Plowman et al., 2000; Pratt & Foreman, 2000). After all, decision makers are focal actors who need to take into account the institutional complexity in their decisions about when and how to respond. They need to navigate their organization through the complex institutional environment by deciding what demands to prioritize, satisfy, alter or neglect to secure support and ensure survival (Berente, 2009; Greenwood et al., 2011; Laurel, Arjaliès, & Giorgino, 2013; Maxwell, 2005; A. Pache & Santos, 2013; A. G. M. Raaijmakers & Vermeulen, 2015; Skelcher & Smith, 2015a; William J. Wales, Vinit Parida, & Patel, 2013). The interpretation and enactment of institutional pressures mediate between the complex sets of pressures in their environment and organizational action. By focusing on underlying individual-level factors that shape organizational responses, a greater understanding of the relationship between institutional complexity and the heterogeneity in organizational responses can be achieved (Bührman, 2011; A. G. M. Raaijmakers & Vermeulen, 2015; Skelcher & Smith, 2013). This study focuses on the structural and institutional factors of complexity and uses Pache & Santos's (2010) conceptualization to analyze responses to institutional complexity of state organizations.

Theoretical Framework

This section elaborates the main variables of the study and the theoretical premise on which this research is based on. For the present research at hand two major

institutional logics are taken to determine the organizational complexity: state logic and managerial logic. Managerial logic here means the reform agenda prescribing private sector practices to be adopted in the public organizations specifically agencies, in order to improve efficiency and effectiveness. Government or state logics include the governmental pressures in the form of control and autonomy, and the level of share in the ownership of the agencies (Hammerschmid & Meyer, 2004).

This study measures the extent to which agency faces prescriptions to use policy instruments and how they respond to such demands. This study describes multiple prescriptions: the use of performance contracting (internal performance-based steering, planning and internal performance-based allocation of resources to organizational units on the basis of results), managerial autonomy and control. It also reflects agency response in the form of the strategy used by them to cope up with the complexity. The relationship is explained through the organizational factors mentioned above. As far as organizational responses are concerned, literature has identifies different responses to institutional complexity (Oliver, 1988, 1991). These responses include linking multiple logics, avoiding, mirroring different demands, buffering multiple logics and boundary spanning (Greening & Gray, 1994; Greenwood et al., 2011; J. Meyer & Rowan, 1977; Villani & Philips, 2013)

Organizational filters in the form of agency size, its position in the field, its legal entity, and its linkages with the ministry are used as the moderators to explain the relationship between complexity and organizational responses (Bjerregaard & Jonasson, 2014; Greenwood et al., 2011; Raffaelli & Glynn, 2014). These factors shape the relation between the logic prescribed and the strategy used by the organizations and are explained through the institutional theory.

Different institutional and structural features related to the NPM doctrine explains that why and how performance management instruments are used by the agencies. Conceptualizing on these theoretical basis are the three broad strands of institutional theories; (1) a structural-instrumental perspective, (2) a cultural-institutional perspective, and (3) a task-environmental perspective (emphasizing the characteristics of organizational tasks and the technical environment) (Binder, 2007; Christensen & Lægreid, 2008)

Cultural-Institutional Perspective:

Cultural-institutional perspective accentuates more on organizational culture and path dependence models. Logic of appropriateness has gained more importance than logic of consequentiality in this perspective. Cultural-institutional perspective curtails formal rules rather than relying upon the informal ones to take decisions to occur. Organizational members socialize where the informal norms and values are so institutionalized in organizational culture that they become formal norms. Hence such agencies are immune to the pressures from the superior bodies and fate of reform

initiatives rest on their compatibility of conventional norms and values in the agencies (Yesilkagit, 2004).These enshrined norms and values will make organizations less willing to adopt management systems. If they adopt these systems, in order to gain legitimacy towards stakeholders, they will structurally decouple them from the actual decision-making. This means that they will not actually use these management systems to inform the decision making process and achieve the set goals (J. Meyer & Rowan, 1977; R. Meyer, 2014)

In some studies, agency type is also a determining factor in reporting performance and in assigning sanctions and rewards. Laegreid et al. (2006) reported that the regional and integrated agencies make more use of the sanctions and rewards and reporting of performance management as compared to the national agencies. Apparently, agencies which are further away from government, and are more shielded off from political interference, and possess strong institutional culture, have a greater motivation to practice performance management techniques than those closer to government (Yesilkagit and van Thiel 2011). Their larger need for legitimacy with stakeholders or the larger potential to develop organizational cultures is conducive to performance management.

Laegreid et al. (2006) concluded that there is a tendency for agencies with executive boards to be more adapted to issuing rewards and imposing sanctions than agencies which do not have executive boards. The existence of a board actually increases the use of performance-measurement systems to steer the agency-ministry relationship. This phenomenon reflects that boards make it more necessary for the ministry to use performance information, in order to issue reward and sanctions on the agency (Laegreid et al. 2006).

Hence it can be inferred that cultural perspective explains the organizational responses while considering the important organizational factors which have a contingent effect on the relationship being studied.

Figure 1

Conceptual Model
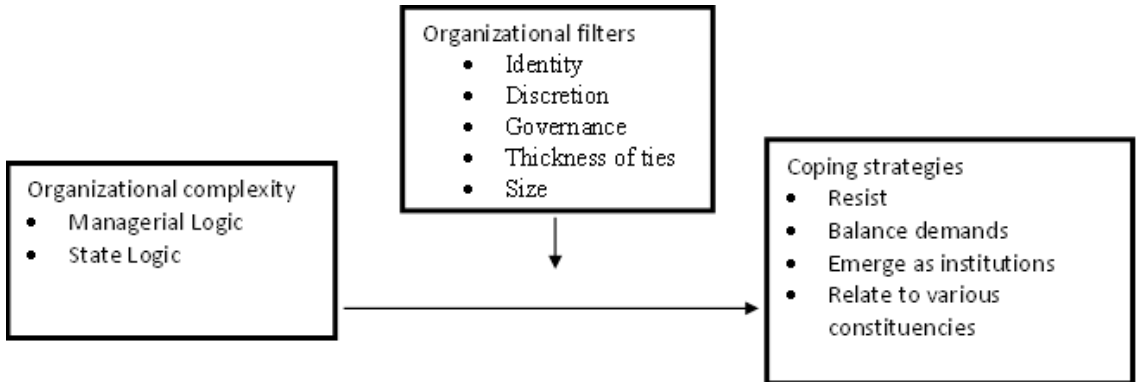
Methodology

This study is the qualitative investigation of institutional complexity and organizational responses based on case study methodology. The policy domain selected for the study is training institutions in Pakistan. The case selected for the study is National School of Public Policy which is established through the integration of three independent training institutions (Civil Service Academy, Pakistan Administrative Staff College and NIPAs). It depicts the most important restructuring in federal training institutions in the country. According to National Commission for Government Reforms (NCGR), there are 30 federal training institutions operating under various ministries (Prime Minister's Secretariat, n.d.). These institutions serve as the total population of the study. Table 1 in appendix provides a complete profile of autonomous training institutions, their year of establishment, parent department, legal instrument under which these institutions are established, policy field and their role in policy cycle.. Different types of training institutions are categorized in Table 1. Attached departments are under the direct control of the ministries and hence face relatively less complexity as compared to the autonomous bodies. This is because attached departments follow rules and regulations, control and hierarchy from the ministry and there is less conflict of interest as compared to autonomous bodies. Policy guidelines, financial and HR matters are generally determined and are standardized across federal bodies of the government. Autonomous bodies however are at distance from the ministry and are governed by the board headed by a chairperson.

Qualitative data is collected by using semi-structured interviews using case study protocol.12 interviews from the senior and middle management of three institutions are contacted for the data. Secondary data is also used to support the primary data including reports from Civil Service Reforms Unit, National Commission for

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Government Reforms, company website, Company Ordinance and other information available from credible sources. Data is analyzed by using systematic content analysis in which coding is done by reading and analyzing textual material.

Table 1

List of Training Institutions

Types of Public Organizations	Frequency
Autonomous bodies	12
Semi-autonomous bodies	1
Attached departments	12
Subordinate offices	3
Others	1
Total	29

Findings and Discussion

Empirical Context: During 2001, civil service reform agenda prescribed different changes in the structure of the federal and provincial governments (*Reforming pakistan's civil service*, 2010). Some of the reforms in this agenda were: devolution of powers from the Federal to the Provincial Governments, establishing inter-governmental structures with adequate authority and powers to formulate and monitor policy formulation. Moreover, policy making was separated and regulatory and operational responsibilities of the Ministries/ Provincial departments, and every Ministry/ Provincial department was fully empowered. They could adequately use resources to take decisions and streamline results. Another objective of reform was to rationalize and transform different organizations under government department into fully functional arms of the Ministries for performing operational and executive functions. This reform aims to reduce the number of layers in the hierarchy of Government departments. These prescriptions posed by reforms are based on the managerial logics operated in the private sector where increased transparency, authority and accountability is linked to the increased organizational efficiency.

In 2007, NCGR recommended different policy changes as well as established certain clusters that reorganized training system of federal government of Pakistan. Autonomous bodies are established and reorganized which are prescribed to use managerial logic for their internal management. These autonomous bodies are established by adopting corporate governance model carrying managerial logic that is quite different from the pre-established state logic. These clusters are National School of Public Policy (NSPP), Institute of Fiscal Policy and Financial Management (IFPPM), Energy Policy Institute (EPI), Infrastructure Policy Institute (IPI), Human Development Policy Institute (HDPI), Industrial and Trade Policy Institute (ITPI), Agriculture and Environment Policy Institute (AEPI) and National Police Academy.

In addition to these eight major training and policy research institutes, Foreign Services Academy, Pakistan Planning and Management Institute and Information Services Academy are proposed to be retained as attached departments of the Ministries concerned.

Majority of the respondents in the training institutions report values and practices that reflect strong bureaucratic logic. Some of the dominant themes generated from the data are presented in Table 3. Themes include control, stability, parent department involvement, and operational autonomy, presence of government members on board, traditional performance monitoring system, presence typical curriculum and methods of teaching, authority of board, less transparency in performance reporting, broken links of school's units. Some of the minor themes are training orientation towards public value and performance results.

Table 3

Selected Themes and Excerpts

Themes	Percent	Excerpts
Autonomy (The perceived autonomy in HR financial and strategic level)	75%	*These reforms are actually questioning the vested authority rather than giving autonomy…*
Stability/ Control (The amount of intervention establishment has over the intuitional matters)	88%	*I think things are as same as before by adding some hierarchal layers* *Trainees are nominated by establishment division*
Organizational history		*We have a long history…*
	80%	*I think we cannot just change the organizational values and norms so easily ..* *Culture is something permanent and we cannot alter it so easily.. our legacy do not allow to change so quickly*
Organizational identity	78%	*We are still called by our old institutional names… new names are not that easy to adopt… training and the process remained same*
Performance improvement	10%	*We are already performing as per standards… as far as new mechanisms are concerned … well … I think its same as before*
Curriculum improvement	9%	*We are already hiring professionals and senior civil servants, I think they are doing their best*

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Governance and Management

Institutional complexity is faced by these merged training institutions because their previous status has been changed and they have become the constituent and integral units of the new school. These changes have abridged their established authority relationships. Board of governors has been established and policy making decisions are transferred to the board from Director Generals of the previous institutions. The structural features included in the study are presence of governing board, the composition of that board, the chairperson, executive management and HR policy of agencies, and reporting relationships between the agency and the parent ministry. Autonomy is not enjoyed by boards and government intervention is still evident from the document analysis. Composition of board is one of the indicators of state control. Presence of state officials and political actors reflect less autonomy for organization to perform. Strategic in the board autonomy is not evident however institutions enjoy operational autonomy. Governing boards also creates a buffer between these prescriptions and the existing logics and hence any change is repelled at the top level. This increased complexity of public organizations is a result of different processes.

HRM Practices

NSPP is established as an umbrella organization that is perceived to erode the autonomy of the institutions by establishing another layer in the hierarchy. The changes that depict NPM logic are the change in the institutional names, redesigning and restructuring senior position. Although formal authorities and governance mechanism is established in Company Ordinance 2002 but the actual implementation of these changes are absent. Currently all the merged institutions are enjoying their previous status and autonomy rather they considered this reform adoption as unnecessary intervention of the international agencies. One of the senior officials reflected:

"Do you really think that just changing names and authorities will affect the long history of these institutions? I don't think so… the actual training process is same…content is same…trainers are same rather the attitude of the trainees are same…if anything needs to be changed it he training itself not the institutions… reason.. These trainees have to get back to their jobs and perform for the better service delivery... If training process will be improved the overall service delivery of the public sector will be improved …." (SM2, PASC)

Organizations that have been under the bureaucratic control for long cannot change their practices and management styles so quickly. Their core logic remains dominant even they adopted new prescriptions. Hence the level of complexity they face is actually at the minimal level as the underlying assumptions to run an organization has been preserved by the organizational actors as evident from the interview data:

"How can you expect to change an institution by just changing hierarchies and name…"Yeah there are some changes in the schools but the nature of processes remain there how can we say that we have changed…." (SM2 NIPA)

Accountability Mechanism

There is no significant changes in the overall management of the institutions. All institutions are working with the same authorities with perceived low authority. Accountability is in terms of training conducted and hiring at the lower levels are dealt with NSPP while hiring of senior officials, nominations of the trainings and the overall governance is still done from the establishment division. NSPP as a regulatory body has operational level autonomy and lack strategic autonomy that was expected to be granted at the time of establishment. Almost majority of the respondents from the institution retrospect these practices in their interviews:

"I think we are working as the same model as of before… yes there is some reporting requirement to the rector of NSPP but majority of our decisions are coming from establishment as it has the authority over these matters… I don't think so that such model can work effectively as annual reports are there but still we lack in the proper integrated system as was expect and I think there is no need to do that..."(SM1, CSA)

"It was expected that we should be given the authority to award degree but this process is not yet worked on… we are working on the same models yes the initiatives to improve training can actually make a mark on these institutional image, I think this is important …"(SM1, PASC)

Symbolic Compliance as Organizational Response:

Organizational actors interviewed consider this restructuring as purely based on some vague assumptions and consider training process as the main focus of attention to the policy makers. It can be argued by analyzing the data that NSPP is exposed to managerial principles of management inspired by NPM reforms but all the merged institutions have actually precluded the new logic while maintaining their previous bureaucratic logic. The reasons attributed to this response are: inappropriateness of the managerial principles in such institutional set up, the long history of bureaucratic rules in the organizations and the strong bureaucratic identity of the senior members who are unable to adopt new demands in the name of restructuring. Hence organizations have symbolically accepted the proposed logic while maintaining their older logic. This response of organization can be referred to symbolic compliance of the institutional pressures. The role of organizational filters in responding to the level of pressure these organizations faced become relevant here. It can be argued that identity, size and age of the agency are important filters to explain the relationship between institutional pressures and organizational responses (Raffaelli & Glynn, 2014; Villani, Greco, & Phillips, 2013) . Existing institutional norms of the organizations are so mature and strong that they cannot be modified. The new

prescriptions hence tend to merge in the existing ones leaving the institutions in the previous form. Organizations have a strong bureaucratic culture emerged from the instrumental organizational design, reflected in their structure and practices hence creating greater resistance to change. Since the inception of these institutions, a strong bureaucratic and elitist way of doing things prevailed it seems very difficult to shake the existing norms (Bhappu, 2000; Falk & Sandwall, 2015; March & Olsen, 2009; A. G. M. Raaijmakers & Vermeulen, 2015; Tracey, Phillips, & Jarvis, 2011). Organizations that are old have strong identity tend to reject pressures face by them and symbolically adopt prescribe practices as in the case of NSPP (Kodeih, 2013; A. Raaijmakers, 2013; Skelcher & Smith, 2015b, 2015a).

It can be argued that cultural-institutional perspective has got the highest appeal to explain this phenomenon (Bührman, 2011; Christensen & Lægreid, 2011). Those institutions that have a long history of bureaucratic rules and regulations cannot shift to newly prescribed logics so easily due to the established norms and values. These shared beliefs and established logics create a strong institution that cannot be changed easily (Bjerregaard & Jonasson, 2014). Because despite of being reorganized as training institutions, these institutions have not changed their management style and prevalent logic. Hence it can be established that there are some institutions that have rejected the prescription while others have done selective coupling which means to choose only those changes that are integrated with the government leaders interest and rejected other logics like performance contracting and grant of strategic autonomy (Maxwell, 2005; A. Pache & Santos, 2013; Raynard, 2016). Some prescriptions are just avoided by these institutions or these demands are buffered by the established institutions.

Adoption of NPM reforms can be explicated by the organizational learning perspective also (Perkmann & Tartari, 2011; Raffaelli & Glynn, 2014). This means that through NPM adoption, knowledge is being transferred from one organization to another, which in turn depends upon the absorptive capacity of the recipient organization. In a broader perspective, if knowledge is supposed to be a policy tool, and organizational units as countries, reform adoption and implementation can be certainly explained. Dolowitz and Marsh (1996) identify seven objects of policy transfer: "*policy goals, structure, and content; policy instruments or administrative techniques; ideology, attitudes, and concepts; and negative lessons*" (p. 349-350). It entails the level and degree of transfer. If we closely relate this model with the present findings where NPM failed to work, we find that the most of the transfers turned out to be inappropriate transfers, where conditionality like loans and grants are the reason to transfer. This model thus develops a theoretical understanding for identifying the whys and wherefores for this transfer failure.

Organizational learning perspective in organizational theory literature again helps us to comprehend the factors involved in the adoption of the particular policy or

organizational form. According to this perspective, organizational history matters a lot. The decisions become path dependent, and hence present policies and procedures take their roots from the already institutionalized values and norms. Subsequently, the organizational filters like organizational history, its identity and other characteristics play a major role when faced by complexity. Also, organizational responses are the interpretation of these filters.

The dilemma of transfer is that the recipient counties hardly addressed the questions like what should be transferred, how it should be transferred and why it should be transferred. These are the questions that can explain the appropriateness of the reforms agenda, and can increase their legitimacy among nation. Moreover, Dolowitz and Marsh (1996) assert that the dogma regarding lenders and borrowers should be considered redundant. The roles of lenders and borrowers may change. The adoption of five year plan of Pakistan by Korea (being the developed country) is one of pertinent examples. Pakistan being developing country proved to be the policy learning source for a developed country like Korea. Hence it is important to understand policy transfer framework, so that the questions related to policy transfer between countries can be understood.

This study is also an attempt to assess the implications of such isomorphic reforms in which agencies are bound by the performance contracts to perform better. For specificity, use of the performance management instruments prescribed by the reform agenda is taken as the new logic under the umbrella of NPM.

Conclusion

This study determines the level to which public organizations face institutional complexity and how they respond to such pressures arising from conflicting demands. Being in trend, civil services are prescribed to adopt managerial way of doing things. Private sector practices with more control and accountability has been considered to be inculcated in the bureaucratic culture of civil services which is influenced by colonial legacy and assumes its supremacy through less control ad more autonomy (Avis, 2015; Haque, 2003). It can be inferred that institutional complexity is an evitable reality of the public organizations. However the degree to which complexity vary depends upon field level characteristics and organizational filters that shape the way these institutional pressures are interpreted and responded at the ground level (Greenwood et al., 2011).

Organizational strategies to cope up with institutional demands are of significant nature; because these responses create the concept of functional hybrids (Skelcher & Smith, 2015a) and ambidexterity (Besharov & Smith, 2012; Raynard, 2016; Scherer et al., 2013) which is another area to get scholarly attention. It can be concluded that the training institutions received institutional prescriptions with strong resistance and difficulty. Most of the training institutions symbolically changed their structural

features keeping their day to day activities as same. These institutions decoupled their core environment from the peripheral one and their norms, values and beliefs are characterized by state logic rather than the prescribed one. As indicated by the respondent:

It's just changes in names and structures… the real change would be to change in the practices… how these trained officials act in their jobs after getting training… this can be the real change…(SM, NIPA)

The explanation of why organizations hose certain responses over others lies in the identification of relevant organizational filters. Organizational filers should be measured empirically as the moderating role of such filters cannot be examined completely through theoretical analysis (Bailey et al., 2005). However, it can be argued that strong identity of the institutions can create a buffer for the conflicting logic or neutralize the effect of change. There are evidences that when structural features are changed, but the logic of managing organization remain same, these institutions decouple their management style from the prescribed logic (Dunn & Jones, 2010; Greening & Gray, 1994; Lean, 2010). One of the senior officials indicated:

See... we have a long and strong history.. we have a culture… how just name and some other changes can change our values and beliefs… our identity I still the old one… we are still recognized by NIPA….

It can be concluded from the study that institutions with strong identity and history do not receive institutional changes as smoothly as the newly established institutions. (Glynn & Abzug, 2002; Tiplic, 2008). Institutional pressures are translated by the organizational actors who filter prescriptions and may sometimes just fabricate the practice and social structures to show conformity. In real their underlying beliefs and social actions are governed by the previously held norms and logics (Maxwell, 2005; A. Pache & Santos, 2013; Tiplic, 2008).

Limitations and Recommendations

This study is an exploratory study of federal training institutions of Pakistan based on primary and secondary sources of data. The model presented in the study can be applied to different settings by also adding organizational outcomes like performance and legitimacy which make this model more dynamic. Logics considered for the study are limited and must be expanded to community and political logic in order to gauge institutional complexity from diverse perspective. It is recommended to study the phenomenon through historical institutional perspective where path dependency and organizational history provide explanation for symbolic compliance of institutional pressure.

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Empirical surveys can investigate the actual governance structure and evolution of other similar agencies and thus can be compared with this study results to match the difference between the reality and rhetoric of these training institutions and the complexity faced by them. This study must also relates organizational responses with the organizational identity, organizational history and organizational culture in a detailed manner. Moreover, methodological rigor of research design will give the comparative view of the autonomous bodies established under different legal instruments to explain the variety of responses. The comparative analysis of the agencies during different time periods can be well elaborated to determine the variety of organizational responses to complexity with the help of the empirical data. From practical point of view this research suggests that in order to borrow ideas, policy makes especially in south Asian region need to understand the context under which policy instruments are borrowed because of the difference in the institutional history of the different cultures (Bhappu, 2000; Glynn & Abzug, 2002; Hall, P. Taylor, 1996; Thornton & Ocasio, 1999). An idea borrowed from the western culture must be implemented by keeping in view the colonial heritage and the dominance of bureaucratic rules in government (Avis, 2015; Christensen & Laegreid, 2011; Haque, 2003). This study must also connect the institutional complexity of adopting reforms to the resource dependence perspective where donor demands become strong and original purpose of establishing institutions remain undermined (Thornton & Ocasio, 1999).

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Appendix 1

Autonomous Training Institutions

Training institutions	Established in	Parent Ministry	Legal Instrument	Policy field	Primary task in policy cycle
1. Federal Judicial Academy	1988	Law Justice Division	Federal Judicial Academy Act, 1997	Social protection	Policy Implementation
2. National School of Public Policy (NSPP), Lahore	2002	Establishment division	NSPP Ordinance, 2002.	Education/Training	Policy Implementation
3. Pakistan School of Fashion Design (PSFD), Lahore	1994	Commerce	Companies Ordinance 1984	Education/Training	Policy Implementation
4. Foreign Service Academy (FSA)	1981	Foreign Affairs	Notification dated 12.5.1985	Education/Training	Policy Implementation
5. Institute of Regional Studies	1982	Information & Broadcasting Division	Societies Act 1860	Education/Training	Policy Evaluation
6. Pakistan Industrial Technical Assistance Centre (PITAC)	1967	Industries, Prod. & Special Initiatives	Societies Act 1860	Education/Training	Policy Implementation
7. Institute of Engineering and Technological Training, Multan	1985	Industries, Prod. & Special Initiatives	Companies Ordinance, 1984	Education/Training	Policy Implementation
8. Pakistan Institute of Management (PIM)	1954	Industries, Prod. & Special Initiatives	Societies Act 1860	Education/Training	Policy Implementation
9. Pakistan Railways Academy, Walton, Lahore	1925	Railways	Inherited from India	Education/Training	Policy Implementation
10. Social Welfare Training Institute	1971	Social Welfare & Special Education	Other instrument	Education/Training	Policy Implementation
11. Pakistan Institute of Tourism and Hotel Management (PITHM), Karachi	1967	Tourism Division	Societies Act 1860	Education/Training	Policy Implementation
12. Pakistan – Austrian Institute of Tourism and Hotel Management, Gulibagh, Swat (PAITHOM)	2006	Tourism Division	Societies Act 1860	Education/Training	Policy Implementation

*Civil service academy is not included separately as it's a part of NSPP now