

## **Abstract**

### **Local Government Capacity Constraints in Punjab, Pakistan**

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This study seeks to address some of the key constraints in the local government organizational capacities. This is achieved by developing a ranking among the important factors of political influence, human resources and IT skills, managerial incentives, managerial autonomy, adoption of technological tools, budget consultation and planning and monitoring. The rankings of organizational capacities are further explored to find the underlying areas which need correction for better performance. Further, a regression model is developed to explain the relationship between organizational capacity variables and performance at local government level. This is achieved by distributing a survey questionnaire to local government in province of Punjab, Pakistan. The survey questionnaires are filled by officers of BS-16 to BS-19 at Tehsil Councils, Municipal Committees, Municipal Corporations and Metropolitan Corporations. The findings conclude that key organizational capacity deficits are exposure to political pressure, incentives and human resource and IT skills. Other constraints do not reflect as much of a magnitude as the key constraints do. The underlying reasons are the influence of MNAs/MPAs and to a less extent district administration on development; majority of the local government officers are unsatisfied that enough reward and honoraria are not being given to high performers; staff overburdening due to shortage of skilled staff; inability to recruit new staff at local government; insufficient training and inability to use computer to write memo; and transport facility being insufficiently provided for official work. The recommendations include: to develop a robust system of local government accountability where the local government bureaucratic structure and officers are accountable to the politicians, keeping local government bureaucrats safeguarded against interference from provincial/federal politicians and district administration; local governments should be allowed to exercise powers for decision-making within their jurisdiction; engage Punjab Local Government Academy for assessing the training needs of the local government in Punjab (especially regarding memo writing capabilities). Training curriculum should be up to the mark with present day realities; transport facility should be provided for staff in designated offices, especially, where female staff is present.

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