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## Article

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# A study on high performance organization framework and organization performance: lens of dynamic capability theory

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## ABSTRACT

Drawing upon dynamic capability theory, this article tested high performance organization (HPO) framework with relation to organizations' performance and explore causes of tested results in public sector of Pakistan. An explanatory sequential mix method was applied whereby the partial least square structural equation modeling method was used to test the direct effect of the HPO framework on organizations' performance while qualitative method was used to explore causes of poor factors resulted from HPO framework. The results show that the HPO Framework is valid for PSOs. However, this study found weak predictive relevance and small effect size of HPO framework in public organizations. The overwhelming and compelling causes identified are mechanistic structure, lack of commitment and resources, and lack of ethical and visionary leadership in qualitative strand of the study. This study has several contributions; firstly, it explains whether HPO framework is valid to be applied in public organizations, secondly, this study answer question: how five factors criteria of HPO framework influence public organization performance? Thirdly, this study explains HPO framework application to improve organization status from low performance to high performance through ethical and visionary leadership under the lens of dynamic capability theory. This study provides a clue for public managers of developing countries to produce models of high performance and to generate new ideas and information to realize the power of high performance. High performance factors and models will promote sustainable performance of organizations which will benefit employees, organizations and society overall.

## IMPACT STATEMENT

This study examines HPO framework application to improve public organization status from low performance to high performance through ethical and visionary leadership under the lens of dynamic capability theory. This study provides a clue for public managers of developing countries to produce models of high performance and to generate new ideas and information to realize the power of high performance. High performance factors and models will promote sustainable performance of organizations which will benefit employees, organizations and society overall.

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## 1. Introduction

Pakistan has stated its 'Vision Pakistan 2025', the government commitment to make Pakistan as a middle income country by 2025. One of the main pillars of 'Vision Pakistan 2025' to transform public organizations into high performing public organizations (HPPOs). By envisioning 2025, with the aim to realize the utmost value, Pakistan's PSO encountered noteworthy and interesting question, how to transform public organizations into high performing public organizations (HPPOs)? In persuasion of HPPOs, the National Economic Council (NEC) approved the 2014–2015 National Development Plan (PSDP) at its 2014 meeting, in which

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Pakistani Rupee (PKRs) 117.5 billion, including foreign aid of Rs. 192 billion were approved. After the event, NEC also approved PKRs of 151.37 billion, including foreign aid of 231.7 billion rupees for high-performance public organizations in 2015 (Planning Commission, 2014–2015). However, since 2013, a large amount of funds have been allocated for public sector reform, but the public sector in Pakistan still has inefficiencies and mismanagement, lack of governance, lack of performance management systems, automation, technical adaptability, process delays, corruption and politics. Impact, lack of resources, all of which are mainstream reasons. Public Sector Organizations (PSOs) in Pakistan face significant challenges in delivering satisfactory services to the citizens. The public is highly dissatisfied with the poor service quality and performance of these PSOs (Bashir et al., 2011). The alarming state of PSOs' performance becomes evident when considering the privatization of various entities such as Pakistan Telecommunication Limited, government transport services, and banks due to stakeholders' dissatisfaction with their consistently poor service delivery. The sustainability of PSOs in Pakistan is at risk, as evidenced by the substantial losses incurred by Pakistan International Airlines, Pakistan Post Office (PPO), Pakistan Steel Mills, Pakistan Electric Power Company, Pakistan Railways, National Highway Authority, Pakistan Agriculture Storage and Services Corporation, and the Utility Stores Corporation, totalling 1500 billion rupees (Federal Footprint State Owned Entities Performance Review Fiscal year, 2014–2015). The adverse effects of PSOs' inadequate service delivery are outlined in the annual report of the Office of the Ombudsman, which categorizes citizen complaints as follows: 53% of complaints pertain to negligence, delays, inefficiency, and incompetence. 30% of complaints involve administrative abuses, discriminatory practices, biased decisions, and unfairness. 17% of complaints are related to unethical conduct. While the dissatisfaction with PSOs' performance in Pakistan has prompted discussions on the role of privatization in enhancing public sector effectiveness, it is not deemed as the most viable option (Hanif et al., 2016; Kalim & Arshad, 2018). Moreover, Ministry of planning and development of Pakistan emphasize on long term strategy, hard work, honesty and changing employees' attitude, work culture, innovation and reforms in public sector organizations to transform public organizations' performance to High Performance Public Organization (HPPOs) but the question remains as how these objectives, formulated in the national development plan can be measured and can be reached. As overall there is no holistic and scientifically validated framework of what constitutes a high performing Pakistani organization—profit nor non-profit nor governmental—has thus far been developed and described in the literature. Thus, current study turns to generic high performance frameworks. One Such a framework is offered by De Waal. High performance organization (HPO) Framework by De Waal has thus far been applied in some of the developing countries like African countries—Tanzania, Rwanda, South Africa Zambia—it was considered that it might be also applicable in the Pakistani context. However, the question remains whether this HPO Framework is valid in the Pakistani context. Therefore, one of the research questions of this study is: Can the HPO Framework be applied in the Pakistan's context? This research question is particular interesting for the public sector because prior literature found that the poor quality of governmental institutions in Pakistan played an important role in Pakistan's economic decline. Therefore, this study suggests the application of Dynamic Capability Theory and HPO framework. Dynamic capability theory specifically focuses on organizations' need to match their resources with market requirements through (1) sensing, (2) seizing, and (3) reconfiguring the activities while HPO framework identifies the factors that organizations need to focus on to become HPOs (De Waal et al., 2017). The application of HPO framework would indeed be helpful as a performance improvement technique to focus on specific factors to become high-performing public organizations in Pakistan. Public organizations need to be able to sense changes in the external environment and proactively respond to emerging challenges and opportunities. Decision makers of public organizations need to consider dynamism of the changing demand of the public by emphasizing the competitive advantage by developing and identifying high performance factors. Thus, if institutions would be able to improve and this eventually become high performance organizations, the economy would benefit considerably. Providing an answer to the research question thus will not only fill a gap in the literature but will also have a practical contribution in that the HPO Framework could potentially be used to raise the quality of the public sector. Therefore, this article examines De Waal et al. HPO framework focused on Public organizations. To achieve this, following research questions guide this study.

**RQ1:** Are the five factors criteria of HPO framework valid to be applied in the public sector organizations?

**RQ2:** What are the possible causes of tested results of HPO framework?

## 2. Theory and hypotheses

This study is drawn upon the dynamic capability theory to examine HPO framework with relation to public organizations' performance in Pakistan. Dynamic capability theory emphasizes the importance of organizations' dynamic resources and capabilities to adopt and adjust with the dynamics of its environment. Dynamic capability theory specifically focuses on organizations' need to match their resources with market requirements through (1) sensing, (2) seizing, and (3) reconfiguring the activities. Linking dynamic capability theory, we suggest that the decision makers of public organizations need to consider dynamism of the changing demand of the public by emphasizing the competitive advantage by developing and identifying high performance factors. PSOs' decision makers need to adjust and cope up with new dynamics and changing environments and they need to see beyond their routines and may be adapting the HPO framework. Along the similar lines, the emphasis on high performance have fashioned a range of performance management systems and processes. However, De Waal et al. (2017) shaped the HPO framework based on a five-year meta-analysis of high performance and extensive research in global organizations. The five dimension and thirty-five characteristics of De Waal HPO framework are theoretical and scientifically validated structures for the improvement of organizational sustainable performance. The five dimensions of HPO framework are: (1) 'management quality (MQL); (2) workforce quality (QWF); (3) long-term orientation (LNT); (4) continuous improvement process and renewal (CR); and (5) openness and action orientation (OO)'. The MQL and QWF are associated to quality of management and quality of employees while LNT, CR and OO are their attitude about tasks and jobs, and emphasis of their goals. In regard to hypotheses of five factors of the HPO framework, following section discuss hypotheses in detail.

### 2.1. Management quality (MQL)

According to De Waal HPO framework, for any organization to be HPO on MQL mean that whether there is a healthy, conducive environment provided by public managers where trust, fairness, live with integrity, managers' commitment, enthusiasm, and action oriented participative decision-making style is encouraged, where clear communication of values and strategies and accountability of actions are exercised. Management, therefore, make a conducive environment for very effective and resilient management style to communicate the standards and make sure that everyone not only knows the organization strategy but also it is realized by all employees of the organizations (De Waal, 2010; Kintu & de Waal, 2021; Muldrow, 2011; Oeij et al., 2022). This attribute is consistent with Gary's (2009) leadership concept because he attributes leadership behavior to organizational HPOs rather than positions (Gary, 2009). This notion is also in line with the philosophy of human resources (Becker & Gerhart, 1996; Delaney & Huselid, 1996) because it stresses on the strategies managers use to achieve organizational goals. Therefore, organizations should set clear goals and understand employees' capabilities to guide performance on the path to achieving the status of HPO. Therefore, organizations should set clear goals and understand employees' capabilities to guide performance on the path to achieving the status of HPO. To measure this dimension of HPO framework, 11 items determined by De Waal are used in this study. According to De Waal, 'Management belief and trust in others and fair treatment are encouraged in the HPO. Managers are trustworthy, live with integrity, show commitment, enthusiasm, and respect, and have a decisive, action-focused decision-making style. Management holds people accountable for their results by maintaining clear accountability for performance. Values and strategy are communicated throughout the organization', so all employees become aware and accept these features. Therefore, present study leads to first hypothesis as following:

**H1:** Management quality positively influences public organizations' performance.

### 2.2. Quality work force (QWF)

Linking management quality characteristics, the following is the subject of workforce quality. Workforce quality requires employment of a varied and ingenious staff that must be developed and nurtured continuously to achieve targets. HPOs will ensure that employees establish extraordinary results and should be responsible for their actions to make sure their efforts and creative skills leads to achieving the anticipated results. Recent

research has consistently established a significant positive relationship between workforce quality and organizational performance. For instance, a study by Oeij et al. (2022) found that organizations with highly skilled and knowledgeable employees achieved higher levels of productivity and efficiency. Furthermore, Oeij et al. (2022) emphasized the impact of workforce quality on innovation and creativity within organizations, highlighting that organizations with a diverse and skilled workforce were more likely to generate innovative ideas and adapt to changing market demands. Additionally, a study by Atmaja et al. (2023) showed a strong association between workforce quality and customer satisfaction, with organizations that invested in employee development and training reporting higher levels of customer loyalty. These recent findings underscore the critical role of workforce quality in driving organizational performance across various domains, validating the importance of strategic investment in attracting, developing, and retaining a high-quality workforce. De Waal identified four items to measure workforce quality in organizations thereby same four items (Appendix) are adopted in this study. In line to this, the current study predicts that quality workforce explains positive variance in PSOs performance and hence the second hypothesis of the current study is:

**H2:** Quality workforce positively influence organizations' performance

### **2.3. Long term orientation (LNT)**

The literature suggests that a long-term orientation in the public sector contributes to better policy outcomes, organizational performance, and public service delivery (Manoharan et al., 2023). Public sector organizations that prioritize long-term thinking and planning are better positioned to address complex societal challenges and deliver sustainable benefits to citizens. However, achieving and sustaining a long-term orientation in the public sector requires supportive governance structures, leadership commitment, and the ability to overcome short-term pressures and constraints (Manoharan et al., 2023). Furthermore, long term orientation characteristic of HPO framework highlights the establishment of long standing affiliations with all interested parties, comprising workers, contractors, clients, and society as a whole. Therefore, extensive contacts are needed to create mutually beneficial opportunities for all stakeholders with complete emphasis on the win-win and generous relationship with society. HPOs not only continuously develop long term relationship with their employees and choose managers and leaders within organizations and provide a safe and sound work environment (Blackman et al., 2012). Furthermore, along the similar lines, HPOs involve, collaborate and develop network with clients for their satisfaction (Blackman et al., 2012). Based on aforementioned literature, present research comes with third hypothesis as following:

**H3:** Long-term orientation positively influences organizations' performance.

### **2.4. Openness and action orientation(OO)**

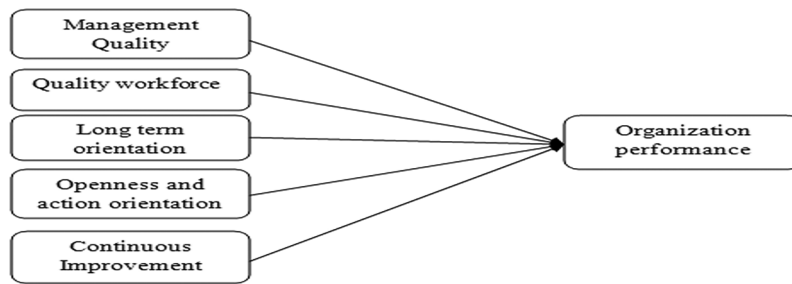
This feature requires the establishment of result oriented culture. Accordingly, leaders and supervisors emphasize more on knowledge exchange, communication, allowing risks, experiments, respecting employees' ideas, and consider mistakes as opportunities for learning. As a result, management continues to update, develop dynamic management capabilities to increase flexibility, and participate in change activities in person (Kintu & de Waal, 2021; Sinakou et al., 2022) welcoming and inspiring change. It is expected that these management activities would lead to explain positive variance on organizational performance, so the fourth hypothesis indicates that:

**H4:** Openness and action orientation positively influences organizations' performance.

### **2.5. Continuous improvement and renewal (CR)**

According to De Waal, CR feature of HPO framework require to opt for inimitable policies and procedures through the development of many new options and alternatives. The organization continues to innovate products, processes, and facilities to act in response to changes in the market through fast development of value added services and products to gain and maintain high performance status in the market. De Waal emphasized that the organization's core competitiveness seems to be consistent with what Gary





**Figure 1.** Five factors of HPO framework with relation to organization performance.

(2009) proposed. Gary (2009) seems to agree with de Waal that companies must focus on their strong points and not worry about their weaknesses, which will make them become HPO. The eight items proposed by De Waal, are 'The organization has adopted a strategy that sets it clearly apart from other organizations, In the organization processes are continuously improved, In the organization processes are continuously simplified, In the organization processes are continuously aligned, In the organization everything that matters to performance is explicitly reported, In the organization relevant financial and non-financial information is reported to all organizational members, The organization continuously innovates its core competencies, The organization continuously innovates its products, processes, and services'. Therefore, hypothesis number five of present study states:

**H5:** Continuous improvement and renewal positively influence organizations performance.

## 2.6. Organization performance

Relating HPO framework, the measuring instrument to measure the performance of the public organizations in Pakistan was adopted from previous studies encompasses 06 items (Choi & Rainey, 2010; Pitts, 2009). The items are, 'I am satisfied with the overall performance of the organization, organization has been able to provide the services to the public as per their expectation, the quality of services provided by the organization is close to the ideal quality, managers set high-performance expectations for employees, individual performance appraisal holds people accountable for their performance, and we use performance measurement in our program management'. Linking factors of HPO framework to organizations performance, Figure 1 shows research model of the study.

## 3. Research methodology

By following suggestions of Creswell et al. (2003), we applied explanatory sequential of mix method. The details of each method are discussed following.

### 3.1. Data collection method: quantitative strand

The reliable and valid questionnaire of HPO framework is employed as an instrument for data collection. Online method of data collection was employed through Google form consisting of 35 items with values ranging from 1 to 10; 1 indicated strongly disagree, and 10 indicated strongly agree. In total, 1093 employees were contacted in three service-based public organizations: Pakistan Post Office, Water & Power Development Authority, and the Central Directorate of National Savings. The 1093 respondents were targeted based on the rule of thumb approach of sample-item ratio. As per Hair et al. (2017), the ratio should not be less than 5-to-1. For instance, in current study, total 42 items require minimum 210 (42×5) sample size. However, we have used 15-to-1 ratio (15×42) which gives us 630 sample size. Total 1093 respondents were targeted with the intention that not all respondents would reply but at least up to 630 respondents would respond. However, we received total 513 responses. Therefore, based on G-power calculator and rule of thumb approach, the minimum sample size requirements are fulfilled in current study. Surveys were distributed online, and it took forty days from 05 December 2018 to 20

January 2019. The survey was in the English language and the response rate was 46.93%. Response rates approximating 60% for most research should be the goal of researchers. However, literature suggests that a typical survey response rate goes from 5 to 30%, while a response rate of 50% or higher is considered excellent. As per literature, minimum response rate should be 30%. Current study response rate is not an ideal response rate, however, this study fulfill the minimum criteria of response rate. Moreover, the number of complaints against sample organisations led to their selection.

## 4. Data analysis: quantitative strand

### 4.1. Respondents profile

Table 1 shows the respondents' profiles in detail which shows the sample with higher number of males (382 or 74.5%). The academic qualification levels of most of the respondents were bachelor's degree which makes 55.9%. Similarly, 44.5% of the respondents have 11 years or more than 11 years of experience. Pertaining to age of the respondents, about 42.7% of the respondents' ages were between 41 and 50 years. Moreover, we also applied Levene's test for the homogeneity of variance between early and late responses and we found that the obtained Levene's statistics were non-significant (Table 2). Therefore, the dataset of this study was free from non-response biases and we can generalize the results of this study to the larger population.

### 4.2. Descriptive statistics, non-response bias and data normality

Before proceeding for data analysis to examine hypotheses, we performed descriptive statistics in IBM-SPSS 23. The average values of MQL (5.011), QWF (5.621), LNT (5.451), CR (4.801), OO (3.321) and OP (4.317) (Table 2). Moreover, for testing measurement and structure model, this study has used SmartPLS3.3.9 software of partial least squares (PLS) structure equation modeling. It is worth mentioning that it does not need normal data and as per Chin et al. (2003), survey research is normally non-normally distributed in practice. Therefore, based on suggestion of Chin et al. (2003), this study has employed SmartPLS3.3.9 due to non-normal data. Data normality was assessed by following suggestions of Hair

**Table 1.** Respondents profile.

Section	Number of employees	Percentage
<i>Gender</i>		
Male	382	74.5
Female	141	25.5
<i>Education</i>		
Master	172	33.5
Bachelor	287	45.9
12th grade	54	10.5
<i>Experience</i>		
1–5 years	97	18.9
6–10 years	190	37
11 years & Above	226	44.1
<i>Age</i>		
21–30	67	31.2
31–40	85	16.6
41–50	219	42.7
Above 51	142	27.7
<i>Grade level</i>		
11th–14th grade	179	34.9
15th–18th grade	334	65.1
Total		

**Table 2.** Mean and Leven statistic.

Construct	Mean	Std. deviation	Levene's	Sig
OO	3.321	0.828	3.059	0.081
CR	4.801	0.911	0.758	0.384
LNT	5.451	1.788	0.18	0.672
OP	4.317	1.391	0.337	0.562
QWF	5.621	1.574	0.972	0.325
MQL	5.011	0.659	3.629	0.057



et al. (2017). We applied Mardia's multivariate skewness and kurtosis by using web power. We found that data was multivariate non-normal. Mardia's multivariate Skewness ( $\beta=2.770$ ,  $p<0.01$ ) and Mardia's multivariate kurtosis ( $\beta=28.135804$ ,  $p<0.01$ ).

#### 4.3. Common method variance

As the data is collected from a single source, therefore, the study proceeds to address the issue of common method bias. This study considers guidelines for applying full collinearity. Common method variance issue is addressed by regressing all the variables against a common random variable. Therefore, in the current study the issue of common method bias is addressed and full collinearity values were found well below 3 as shown in Table 3.

Further, we proceed to test hypotheses by applying Smart PLS 3.2.6 software. Firstly, we assess measurement model and then structure model by using bootstrapping method as suggested by Hair et al. (2017).

#### 4.4. Measurement model

Based on suggestions of Hair et al. (2014, 2017), current study confirm the required values of composite reliability ( $CR>0.7$ ), average variance extracted ( $AVE \geq 0.5$ ) and factor loadings (loadings  $>0.5$ ) as presented in below Table 4. An AVE value of at least 0.5 and higher indicates that a latent variable is able to explain more than half of the variance of its indicators on average, therefore it is considered as sufficient (Hair et al., 2014).

Moreover, discriminant validity was established by using HTMT criteria. Henseler et al. (2015) proposed two unlike thresholds of 0.85 and 0.9, if the HTMT value is greater than 0.85 or greater than 0.9 then there is a problem of discriminant validity. Table 5 indicate discriminant validity of the items as all values are well below 0.85 and 0.9.

However, it is worth mentioning that a set of items produced from the measurement model was 21 in the context of Pakistan which is different than the original 35 items of HPO framework (see Appendix). Thirteen items were dropped due to low loadings. Thirteen items dropped from MQL 'MQL2, MQL3, MQL4, MQL5, MQL6, and MQL11, MQL12', six measures dropped from CR 'CR1, CR2, CR3, CR4, CR5, CR6'. Discarded items are referring to the fact that the thirty five characteristics of HPO is based on global data collection. Therefore, this study makes use of those measures of HPO framework that are shown in Table 4.

#### 4.5. Structure model

By following guidelines of Hair et al. (2017), collinearity was assessed through Variance Inflation Factor (VIF). It was found that VIF values were less than the threshold value of 3. All the values are presented in Table 5, showing no issue of collinearity. In addition, Figure 2 depicts structure model results.

The R Square value is 0.157, meaning that 15.7% effect is predicted in organization performance by five factors of HPO framework. A closer look of Table 6 shows that hypothesis 1 MQL ( $b=0.157$ ,  $t\text{-value}=3.882$ ), hypothesis 2 QWF ( $b=.116$ ,  $t\text{-value}=2.732$ ), hypothesis 3 LNT ( $b=0.141$ ,  $t\text{-value}=2.522$ ), and hypothesis 5 CR ( $b=0.111$ ,  $t\text{-value}=2.371$ ) has positive relationship to organization performance and therefore supported in this study. However, hypothesis 4, OO ( $b=.129$ ,  $t\text{-value}=2.065$ ) is not substantiated because of BCI LL ( $-0.115$ ) and BCI UL ( $0.174$ ) showing insignificant relationship. Moreover, by following suggestions of Hair et al. (2017), we also assessed effect size of respective predictors on endogenous variables. Cohen's guideline were used to assess magnitude of effect size which is 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35, representing small, medium, and large effects respectively. Results revealed that MQL ( $f^2=0.024$ ), QWF ( $f^2=0.023$ ), LNT ( $f^2=0.016$ ), OO ( $f^2=0.019$ ) and CR ( $f^2=0.013$ ) has weak effect on organization performance (Table 6). A result of effect size of exogenous variables of the current study shows

**Table 3.** Full collinearity testing.

OO	CR	LNT	OP	QWF	MQL
1.015	1.032	1.435	1.118	1.409	1.097

**Table 4.** Measurement model result (convergent validity).

Constructs	Items	Loadings	CR	AVE
Long term orientation	LNT1	0.937	0.914	0.805
	LNT2	0.886		
	LNT3	0.916		
	LNT4	0.846		
	LNT5	0.898		
Management quality	MQL1	0.545	0.87	0.577
	MQL10	0.786		
	MQL7	0.822		
	MQL8	0.804		
	MQL9	0.806		
Openness and action orientation	OO1	0.841	0.934	0.703
	OO2	0.798		
	OO3	0.828		
	OO4	0.868		
	OO5	0.907		
	OO6	0.782		
Quality work force	QWF1	0.676	0.847	0.586
	QWF2	0.871		
	QWF3	0.852		
	QWF4	0.635		
Continuous improvement and renewal	CR7	0.791	0.713	0.555
	CR8	0.696		
Organization performance	OP1	0.438	0.936	0.718
	OP2	0.922		
	OP3	0.908		
	OP4	0.894		
	OP5	0.905		
	OP6	0.908		

**Table 5.** Discriminant validity.

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Continuous improvement and renewal						
2. Long term orientation	0.577					
3. Management Quality	0.385	0.312				
4. Openness and action orientation	0.201	0.126	0.144			
5. Organization performance	0.453	0.303	0.261	0.075		
6. Quality Workforce	0.613	0.602	0.329	0.092	0.334	

small or very small effect. Finally, the blindfolding procedure with a distance of 7 was used to assess the model's predictive relevance. The model possesses predictive relevance for specific endogenous constructs if the  $Q^2$  value is greater than 0 (Hair et al., 2017).  $Q^2$  statistic was 0.107 for organization performance, which was greater than 0, indicating that the predictive relevance was acceptable. Linking quantitative results, the next section presents qualitative results of the study.

#### 4.6. Qualitative phase: reasons and data collection method

Hair et al. (2017) stated that explanatory sequential method is appropriate when researcher purpose is to test existing model, framework or theory by applying quantitative method followed by qualitative methodology. By following, Hair et al. (2017) guidelines, explanatory sequential approach is applied to test HPO framework in first phase while and its results are reaffirmed and discussed in qualitative phase. Following reasons led this study to design qualitative phase of the study.

- Based on quantitative results, in the next phase, qualitative methodology was applied to explore the reasons of quantitative results with top management (Grade 19–22) of PPO, WAPDA and CDNS to
- To discuss low mean scores factors of HPO framework with top management of public organizations.
- Out of 12 items of management quality, only 5 items were retained while 7 items were dropped due to low loadings. Similarly, out of 8 items of continuous improvement and renewal, only two items were retained and 6 items were dropped due to low loadings. In total, 13 items of HPO framework were dropped which has led this study to qualitative phase

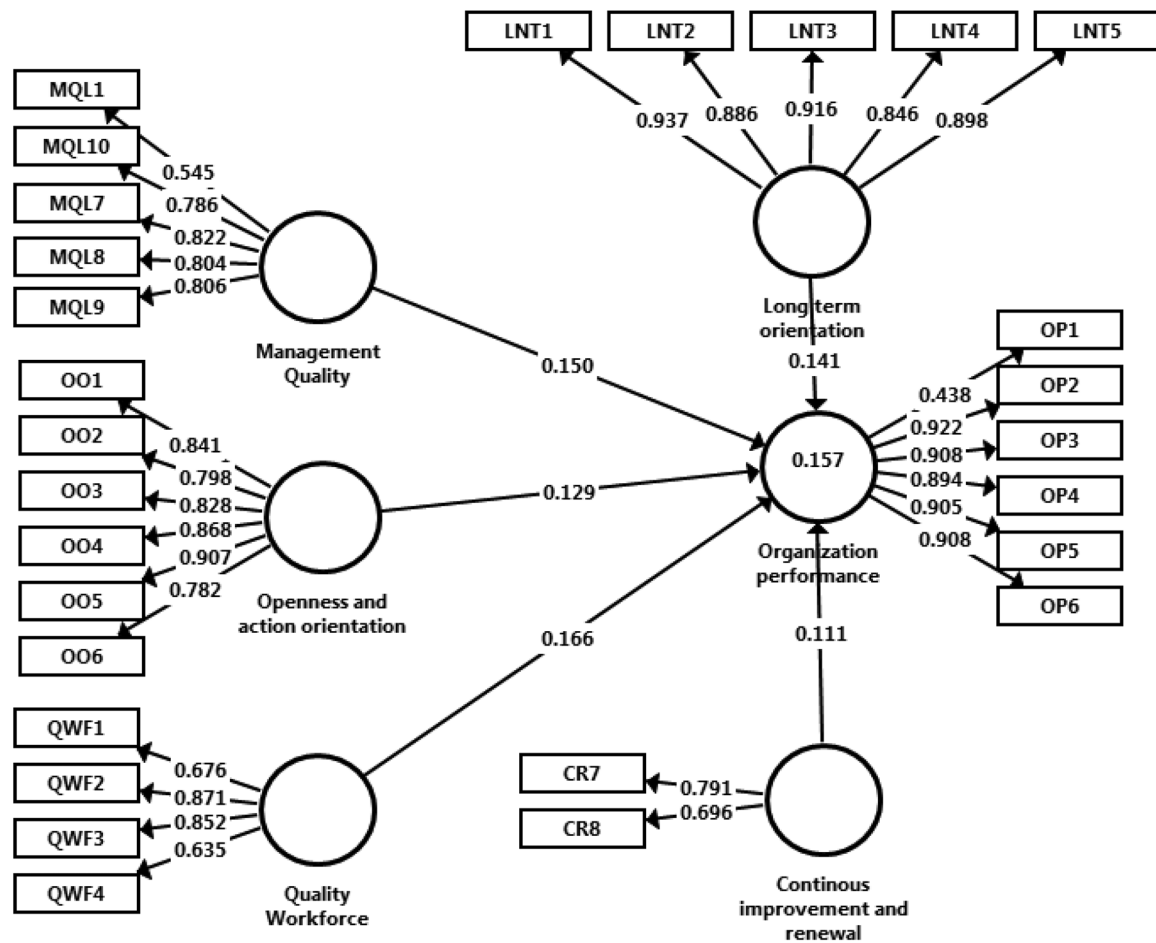


Figure 2. Structure model results.

Table 6. Path coefficients and hypothesis testing.

		Std. beta	Std. error	t-value	p values	BCI LL	BCI UL	$f^2$	VIF	Hypothesis supported
H1	MQ -> OP	0.157	0.039	3.882	0.000	0.081	0.21	0.024	1.115	Yes
H2	QWF -> OP	0.166	0.061	2.732	0.003	0.072	0.276	0.023	1.414	Yes
H3	LNT-> OP	0.141	0.056	2.522	0.006	0.043	0.227	0.016	1.465	Yes
H4	OO -> OP	0.129	0.062	2.065	0.02	-0.115	0.174	0.019	1.014	No
H5	CR -> OP	0.111	0.047	2.371	0.009	0.025	0.178	0.013	1.084	Yes

- The dropped items indicated the importance of other factors as reasons of tested results.
- Magnitude of the effect size of three constructs of HPO framework were found very weak as per Cohen criteria.
- And finally, the hypothesis no 4 is rejected which has also led this study to qualitative phase to discuss its score and possible reasons.

In qualitative phase, interview protocols consisting two sections were designed (i) Biographical questions and (ii) Questions related to reasons of quantitative results. A total of 12 in-depth interviews were conducted. The main objective was to explore the reasons of low mean scores factors of HPO framework. Three factors namely, OO, CR and MQL were found with low mean score and therefore, during interviews, following issues were discussed.

- a. Reasons of low mean score of OO?
- b. Reasons of low mean score of CR?
- c. Reasons of low mean score of MQ?

Moreover, to ensure accuracy of information, responses of the respondents were recorded and were transcribed and organize manually based on each issue discussed during interview for the use of themes extraction.

## 5. Data analysis: qualitative strand

In regard to qualitative data analysis, the first step was to identify codes as a basic theme. In this step, the data analysis identified 14 basic themes. The themes were named, defined and then classified as shown in below Table 7.

It can be seen in Table 7, column two shows three organizing themes. The first organizing theme 'Mechanistic structure' is extracted from the first five basic themes in column 1. Second organizing theme 'lack of commitment and resources' is extracted from six basic themes, third organizing theme 'lack of ethical and visionary leadership' is extracted from basic themes number eleven to fourteen. From the organizing theme, then overall theme is constructed which is 'organization structure and culture'.

Furthermore, in relation to number of respondents' responses on reasons of low mean scores, it was found that seven respondents shared similar thoughts and explain by one of the respondents in his words as:

Low average scores of mentioned factors seem plausible in the context of our organizations. I think there can be many reasons but the one which I perceive is nature of Public organizations. Our organization cannot be that much open and flexible as private organizations. We have parameters, rules; formalities in all echelon and everyone just follow that. No one is allowed to cross its limits. Open communication, dialogue and experiment kind of things is just a waste of time within the same organizational structure". Actions are taken when approval is come from the whole chain of command and it also takes time. Therefore, what I think that it may not work within the same organization structure.

Similarly, another five respondents emphasize on same issues as explained by one of the respondents:

OO need specific culture in organization. Our organizations culture is not dynamic because its government organization. A weak accountability system cannot differentiate good and bad. Therefore, no one take interest in dialogue, open communication, knowledge sharing concepts. Policy makers and implementers must be on same page for bringing this kind of culture in our organizations. Overall, organization culture needs to be changed.

In the same vein, respondents echoed their voice on lack of CR, it was found that all the respondents shared the similar thoughts and explain by one respondent as:

This is needed when things are continuously improved and it needs not only very good level of commitment in all level, but also resource. In our case, no one care because decision makers are just completing their tenure, people are not made accountable for this. We also cannot take decisions without resources. Management commitment and resources are very important. Actually, we need to follow lengthy procedures for doing even small things because each action needs too many formalities. What actually I want to say that the low score of continuous improvement need commitment, measurement, resources and ministry support.

**Table 7.** Basic and organizing theme.

Basic themes	Organizing themes	Overall theme
1- Centralised decision making 2- Weak accountability system 3- High level of bureaucracy 4- No culture of open discussion 5- Big size of organization	Mechanistic structure	
6- Continuous improvement needs resources. 7- Lack of ministry support 8- Everyone just complete tenure 9- Lack of measuring continuous improvement 10- Continuous improvement need commitment	Lack of commitment and resources	
11- Management must be proactive people 12- Personal interests over institutional interests 13- Lack of fairness and transparency 14- Honest actions should come from top leaders	Lack of ethical and visionary leadership	Organization structure and culture

Furthermore, why MQL has been scored low in their organization was also asked. In response, six respondents were on same page and shared by one respondent as:

Let me tell you realistically that every manager or head just focus to complete his tenure. Everyone just take care of his personal benefits and use other employees and lower staff for their personal benefits. No one own organization. Overall, there is a need of honest, committed and energetic management. Management, auditors, policy makers, and policy implementers must behave ethically. Management must be fair and must not accept which is against standard procedures. This is not available in our case and I think, these are the reasons that Management quality is scored low

Similarly, *another* six respondents echoed their voice for the similar reasons of low score of management quality and explain by one informant as:

Well, to me management quality is all about taking right decisions about the future of organizations. Management must be proactive. Our decisions making process is slow and reactive. Fair and transparent approach is not followed. Management also didn't perceive the rapid changes coming in the market because of technology and now we are in hot water. Management must be futuristic in decision making and should not expect too much from lower echelon

The consensus views seem to be suggesting mechanistic structure as a main reason of low score factor of openness and action orientation. Likewise, lack of commitment in all levels, dearth of resources and its inefficient utilizations are the main causes of low score factors of CR. And lack of ethical and visionary leadership is found as a main cause of MQL. The results yielded by this study provide strong and convincing evidence of the reasons of low mean scores of OO, CR, and MQL. Figure 3 also depict the same results of low mean scores factors of HPO framework.

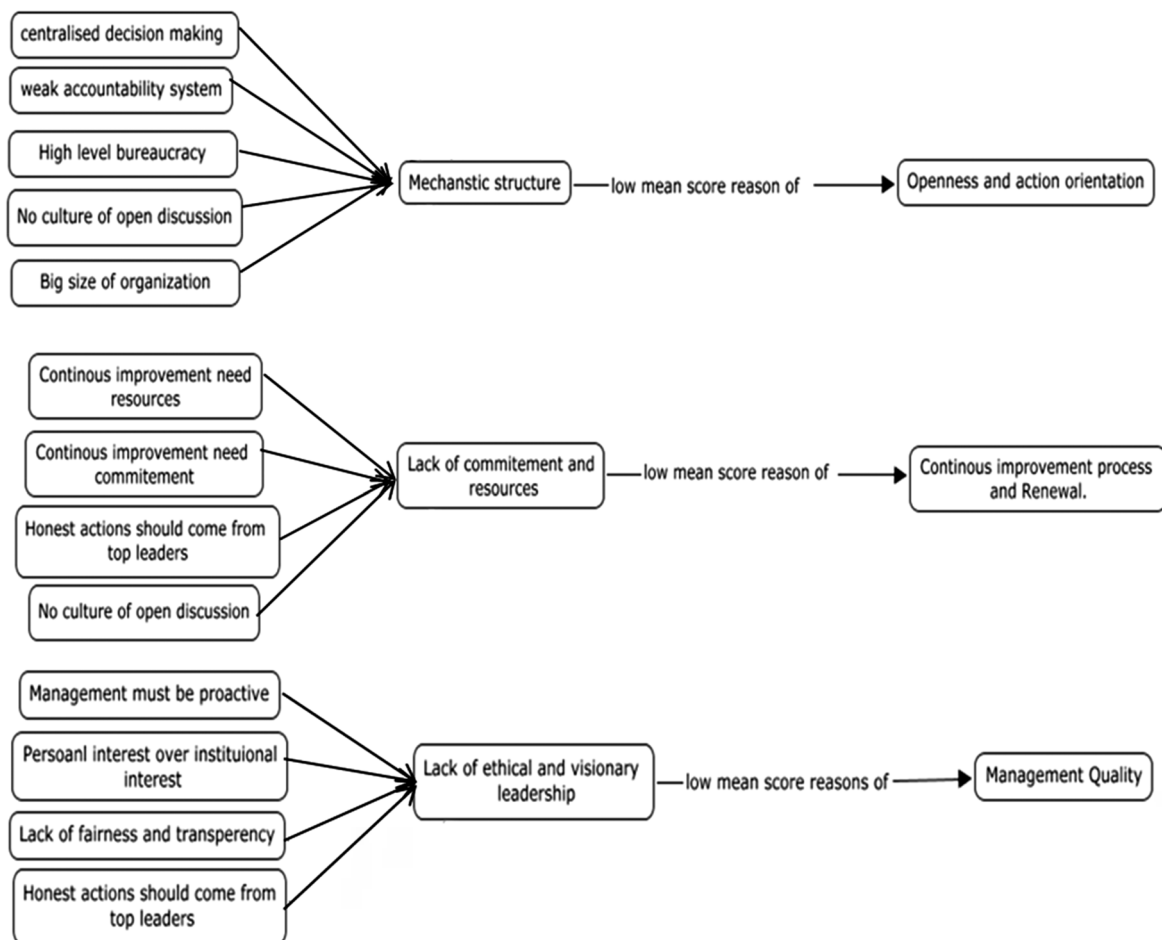


Figure 3. Causes of low mean score factors of HPO framework.

## 6. Discussion

This research aimed to test HPO framework validity and its direct effect on public organizations' performance. The results of measurement model show that the HPO Framework is valid for PSOs in Pakistan. However, the measurement model resulted only 22 characteristics as compared to the original 35 characteristics. The removed 13 items found did not relevant to this study. The underlying argument in the favor of HPO framework validity in the context of Pakistan is the universal items of HPO framework and  $Q^2$  (0.107) statistic greater than 0 showing predictive relevance of the model (Hair et al., 2017). However, this study also concluded weak predictive relevance and small effect size of HPO framework in public organizations based on values proposed by Hair et al. (2017). Therefore, this study also concluded that the HPO framework is not a 'quick fix' for public organizations' performance. Furthermore, the direct effect of HPO on organizations performance was found 15% which fall under moderate category as per criteria suggested by Hair et al. (2017). Moreover, this study found empirical support of four hypotheses and the results are found consistent with prior studies (Yadav & de Waal, 2020). However, we didn't find the same support for one hypothesis related to openness and action orientation which is found insignificant. In context of Pakistan, the results of this hypothesis also reflect the issues of power distance. The inflexible and rigid way of managing public institutions, commonly observed in developing nations as a whole and specifically in the context of Pakistan, result in the development of an organizational culture where the prioritization of high-quality public service delivery becomes less significant (Atmaja et al., 2023; Manoharan et al., 2023). Furthermore, quantitative results raised questions such as: What then are the reasons for the failure of the OAO to support the current study hypothesis? Do the systems in public organizations lack the flexibility to cope up with fast pace environmental changes? What are the reasons of low mean score factors of HPO framework? These were the issues discusses in in qualitative phase of the study. In this regard, overwhelming and compelling reasons identified are mechanistic structure, lack of commitment and resources, and lack of ethical and visionary leadership are explored as main reasons of low mean score during the qualitative analysis. It indicates that what PO need to consider is the overall structure of the organization, commitment and resources, and this is possible though ethical and visionary leadership. These findings are consistent with literature of developing countries which shows the culture and structue of PO are not in line with the culture and sturcture needed to become HPPO (Manoharan et al., 2023). In context of Pakistan, the results of this study also reflect the issues of power distance. The rigid and inflexible approach of managing public organizations in developing countries in general and Pakistan in particular turn into organization culture where quality service delivery to public becomes less critical. This contrasts with the open culture proposed by de Waal's HPO framework. However, for public organizations in Pakistan, the HPO framework and Dynamic Capability Theory can be instrumental in driving organizational excellence and enhancing adaptability by focusing on ethical leadership, visionary leadership and resource utilization and by focusing on to drive change and foster a culture of excellence. Developing dynamic capabilities within public organizations in Pakistan also requires a culture of learning and innovation. Encouraging employees to think critically, experiment with new ideas, and share knowledge can foster a more agile and adaptable organization. In addition, creating mechanisms for collaboration and knowledge-sharing across different departments and levels of government can enhance the organization's capacity to respond to complex issues. This is very well supported by Li et al. (2021), who stated that organizational performance is directly linked to the capability of the organization to learn and adapt to its surrounding market environment. Therefore, achieving and sustaining a long-term orientation in the public sector requires supportive governance structures, leadership commitment, and the ability to overcome short-term pressures and constraints (Manoharan et al., 2023, Chau et al., 2022). Furthermore, public organizations in Pakistan can benefit from leveraging technology to enhance their dynamic capabilities. Embracing digitalization and data-driven decision-making can enable public organizations to gather and analyze information more effectively, anticipate changes, and respond swiftly to emerging trends (Manoharan et al., 2023). However, it's important to acknowledge that implementing the HPO framework and Dynamic Capability Theory in public organizations in Pakistan may face challenges. These may include bureaucratic structures,



resistance to change, limited resources, and political influences. Overcoming these challenges requires strong leadership commitment, resources and stakeholder engagement, and a phased approach to implementation.

### **6.1. Theoretical contribution**

Our study has several contributions; firstly, it explains employees' responses to high performance factors, and particularly how five factors criteria of HPO influence public organization performance. Secondly, our study also explains the factors that can lead to improve performance status of public organizations. Our study added support for the application of the dynamic capability theory in that it explains HPO framework application to improve organization status from low performance to high performance through ethical and visionary leadership. Ethical and visionary leadership needed to transform mechanistic structures into flexible, dynamic structures, and to instill commitment and to empower employees of all levels to produce high performance models and to cope up with environmental changes. The underlying argument for this is the fact that mechanistic structure, lack of commitment and resources, and lack of ethical and visionary leadership are explored as main reasons of high performance during qualitative analysis. The integration of Dynamic Capability Theory in the public sector of Pakistan can facilitate adaptability and responsiveness to the country's evolving socio-economic landscape. Public organizations need to be able to sense changes in the external environment and proactively respond to emerging challenges and opportunities. This can involve actively monitoring social, political, and economic trends and leveraging resources to seize opportunities or address potential risks. The results of the current study also indicate that what public organizations need to consider is the overall structural issues of the organization, commitment and resources. The findings indicate that this is possible though strong ethical and visionary leadership.

## **4. Implications of study**

Our study provides a clue for public managers of developing countries to produce models of high performance and to generate new ideas and information to realize the power of high performance to provide quality services. This study strongly recommends development of high performance models in the context of developing countries. This study has explored that mechanistic structure, lack of commitment and resources, and lack of ethical and visionary leadership are the explanatory variables of high performance in PO. Therefore, public managers should consider the significance of the transformation of mechanistic structure into organizational structures which support high performance practices. Moreover, public managers need to work on commitment of employees of all levels and to enrich resources, and finally ethical and visionary leadership should be considered for improved and sustainable performance. Prior research (Ruiz-Palomino et al., 2023) also suggest that having ethical leadership in CEO roles proves highly beneficial for several aspects, including internal social capital, personal social capital among staff, service distinctiveness, organizational performance and innovation, among other factors. The application of HPO framework within public organizations in Pakistan, coupled with a commitment to ethical leadership, carries profound implications. This approach promises to enhance overall organizational performance by establishing clear objectives, monitoring progress, and refining processes, thereby optimizing the efficiency and effectiveness of public service delivery. Furthermore, our study champions ethical leadership as a cornerstone of this transformation, fostering a culture of transparency and principled decision-making. By prioritizing ethical leadership and ethical climate, the HPO framework empowers the workforce to align with ethical principles and organizational objectives, fostering a committed and motivated staff. Embracing innovation and data-driven decision-making, it encourages public organizations to adapt and evolve in response to contemporary challenges. In addition to financial efficiencies and cost savings, the framework promotes accountability at all levels, rebuilding public trust and emphasizing long-term sustainability. These implications collectively signify a promising path towards improved governance and service delivery in Pakistan's public sector.

#### 4.5. Limitations and future research direction

Our study has some limitations; however, we have presented them along with directions for future research. A significant limitation of this research is that we have followed explanatory sequential design of mix method instead of exploratory sequential design in the context of study. We believe, first high performance factors should be explored and then it should be tested for its confirmation. Another limitation of the study is the less sample size of qualitative phase of the study. Secondly, this study is conducted in public organizations and therefore, findings are not generalizable to private sector. Future researchers should use a larger sample size with an exploratory sequential mixed method approach to explore high performance factors by employing large sample size. Moreover, future research may be carried out to explore and propose holistic HPO framework to become HPO from external and internal perspective of organizations for sustainable performance. Moreover, previous studies (Ruiz et al., 2011; Ruiz-Palomino et al., 2021) suggest that more mechanism of cascading effect of ethical leadership and ethical culture should be explored. Therefore, we suggest that our study framework should be extended by testing the effect of ethical leadership on organization performance with the moderating role of HPO framework. Testing HPO framework as a moderating factor between ethical leadership and organization performance would be the kind of first study to consider in future research. Furthermore, future research should also consider ethical culture, transparency and accountability as a moderating factor of HPO framework and organization performance. In the same vein, future studies can investigate HPO framework as a moderating factor of servant leadership and organization performance. Moreover, future research may consider individual level factors as moderating variables between HPO framework and organization performance such as employee passion of performance (Zoghbi-Manrique-de-Lara et al., 2023) employees' personality and employees' commitment.

#### 5. Conclusion

Based on dynamic capability theory, this study examined the direct impact of five factors of the HPO framework on public organization' performance. The results from the measurement model indicate that the HPO Framework is applicable to public service organizations (PSOs) in Pakistan. However, this research also found limited predictive relevance and a small effect size of the HPO framework in public organizations. Four hypotheses were empirically supported, but no evidence was found for the relationship between openness and action orientation with organizational performance. Additionally, this study investigated the causes of the weak factors identified in De Waal HPO framework. Hence, the main objective of this study was to contribute to the existing literature on the HPO framework in public organizations, specifically in developing countries like Pakistan. Previous studies on the HPO framework have typically utilized the average scores of the five factors to assess the HPO status, focusing primarily on its applicability. In contrast, this study adopted a mixed design explanatory research approach to explore the reasons behind the lower average scores of the tested frameworks. Consequently, this research makes several contributions. Firstly, it addresses whether the HPO framework is suitable for implementation in public organizations. Secondly, it examines whether the HPO framework directly influences the performance of public organizations. Lastly, this study identifies and contributes factors that hinder the achievement of high performance in public organizations. By providing answers to these questions, the current study enriches the empirical literature on the HPO framework as an improvement technique in developing countries, drawing upon the lens of dynamic capability theory. Furthermore, as suggested by prior studies (Ruiz-Palomino et al., 2023, Ruiz-Palomino et al., 2013), our study also recommends future research on ethical leadership and ethical climate as predictor variables of HPO framework and organization performance.

#### Authors' contributions

Dr. Kalimullah has taken the overall responsibilities of the manuscript and he gave the idea of the issue to be investigated and therefore he has drafted the introduction part of manuscript and contributed methodology part and also run the statistical analysis. Dr. Qaiser khan edited and refines the language of the overall manuscript. Dr. Khan

also contributed in qualitative data collection and analysis. Syed Hassan Jamil has not only compiled the discussion and implication of the manuscript but also contributed to respond to the reviewers' comments for improvement of manuscript. Dr. Sher Akbar worked on literature Review section of the manuscript and took the responsibility of quantitative data collection.

## Conflict of interest

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

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## Appendix

### HPO framework Assessment Questionnaire

<b>HPO factor 1</b>	<b>Management quality</b>
MQ1	Management of our organization is trusted by organizational members
MQ2	Management of our organizations has integrity
MQ3	Management of our organization is a role model for organizational members
MQ4	Management of our organization applies fast decision making
MQ5	Management of our organization applies fast action taking
MQ6	Management of our organization coaches organizational members to achieve better results
MQ7	Management of our organization focuses on achieving results
MQ8	Management of our organization is very effective
MQ9	Management of our organization applies strong leadership
MQ10	Management of our organization is confident
MQ11	Management of our organization is decisive with regard to non-performers
<b>HPO factor 2</b>	<b>Openness and Action Orientation</b>
OA1	The management of our organization frequently engages in a dialogue with employees
OA2	Organizational members spend much time on dialogue, knowledge exchange and learning
OA3	Organizational members of our organization are always involved in important processes
OA4	Management of our organization allows making mistakes
OA5	Management of our organization welcomes change
OA6	Our organization is performance driven
<b>HPO factor 3</b>	<b>Long-Term Orientation</b>
LTO1	Our organization maintains good and long-term relationship with all stakeholders
LTO2	Our organization is aimed at servicing the customers as best as possible
LTO3	The Management of our organization has been with the company for long time
LTO4	New management is promoted from within the organization
LTO5	Our organization is a secure workplace for organizational members
LTO6	Our organization grows through partnerships with suppliers and/or customers
<b>HPO factor 4</b>	<b>Continuous Improvement and Renewal</b>
CI1	Our organization has adopted a strategy that sets it clearly apart from other organization
CI2	In our organization processes are continuously improved
CI3	In our organization processes are continuously simplified
CI4	In our organization processes are continuously aligned
CI5	In our organization everything that matters to performance is explicitly reported
CI6	In our organization relevant financial and non-financial information is reported to all members
CI7	Our organization continuously innovates its core competencies
CI8	Our organization continuously innovates its products, processes and services
<b>HPO factor 5</b>	<b>Work force Quality</b>
WQ1	The management of our organization inspires organizational members to accomplish extraordinary results
WQ2	The resilience and flexibility of our organizational members is continuously strengthened
WQ3	Our organization has a diverse and complementary workforce
WQ4	Employees of our organization have adequate information and knowledge to do their job
<b>High performance organization</b>	
OP1	I am satisfied with the overall performance of our organization
OP2	Our Organization has been able to provide the services to the public as per their expectation
OP3	The quality of services provided by our organization is close to the ideal quality
OP4	The Managers of our organization set high performance expectations for employees
OP5	In our organization Individual performance appraisal holds people accountable for their performance
OP6	Our organisation use performance measurement in our program management