

## (Part - II)

Q.2. Answer:

### Introduction

Pakistan is not a State without Plans; rather, it is a state with many Plans and limited perseverance. over the decades, an elaborate planning mechanism has evolved, supported by constitutional backing, specialised institutions, and long term vision documents. The planning Commission, Five Year and Medium Term Development Frameworks, Vision 2025, and Sectoral Strategies collectively reflect a strong formal commitment Frameworks, Vision 2025, and Sectoral Strategies collectively reflect a strong formal commitment to long term



development. Yet, governments in Pakistan are persistently criticized for neglecting long term development needs in favor of short term, Politically expedient measures. This criticism is largely justified. The fault lies not in the Planning architecture itself, but in the Political economy of governance, administrative behavior, and systemic implementation failures.

Strength of the Planning Framework  
and the Planning Performance  
Gap

From a public administration perspective, Pakistan's Planning machinery is theoretically sound.

The Planning Commission was



envisaged as a technocratic institution to ensure rational resource allocation, inter sectoral coordination, and continuity in development priorities. Early Planning exercises, particularly during the 1960s, demonstrated that when political stability and administrative discipline existed, long term planning could yield tangible outcomes in industrial growth and infrastructure expansion.

However, over time, a widening gap emerged between planning and execution. Development Plans increasingly became ceremonial documents, cited in policy speeches but rarely used as binding guides for budgeting



and implementation. Long term goals are articulated repeatedly, yet annual development programs reflect shifting priorities driven by short term political and fiscal pressures.

### Political Short Termism and Electoral Incentives

The most fundamental fault lies in the nature of Pakistan's political incentives. Democratic competition, in the absence of strong institutional checks, has encouraged a preference for projects that deliver immediate and visible results. Roads, flyovers, and short term relief schemes are favored over investments in education



quality, primarily healthcare, water management, and research, whose benefits accrue slowly and often beyond an electoral cycle.

Frequent changes in government further aggravate this problem. Successive regimes tend to abandon or rebrand long term plans initiated by their predecessors, undermining policy continuity. Development planning thus becomes personalized rather than institutionalized, reducing long term strategies to political slogans rather than binding national commitments.

Weak Implementation and Politicization  
of the Bureaucracy



Another major source of failure lies in administrative capacity and bureaucratic incentives.

While planning institutions may produce technically sound frameworks, implementation is entrusted to a civil service increasingly affected by politicization, frequent transfers, and limited tenure security. Administrators are rarely rewarded for long term outcomes; instead they are evaluated on short term compliance and rapid expenditure.

This environment discourages strategic thinking and encourages risk averse behavior. Long term projects requiring sustained coordination, such as education reform or urban planning,



suffer from fragmented execution and weak monitoring, leading to delays, cost overruns, or abandonment.

Fiscal Constraints and Annualized

Budgeting

Pakistan's fiscal Structure

Structurally biases governance toward short termism. A

large share of public expenditure is pre-empted by debt servicing, defense, and recurrent administrative costs, leaving limited space for development spending.

Even within development allocations, annualized budgeting undermines long term projects that require predictable, multi-year financing.



As a result, development priorities are frequently revised midstream to accommodate immediate fiscal or political pressures. Long term investments in water reservoirs, climate adaptation, or human capital are postponed, while stopgap measures dominate policy responses.

### Post Devolution Coordination Failures

The Eighteenth Constitutional Amendment altered the planning landscape by devolving key social sectors to the provinces.

While devolution aimed to improve responsiveness, it weakened national level long term planning due to inadequate



Coordination mechanisms. The Planning Commission's role diminished, yet no robust intergovernmental planning forum emerged to harmonize provincial and federal priorities.

This fragmentation has encouraged short term, localized decision making at the expense of coherent national strategies in education standards, health systems, population planning, and environmental sustainability.

Crisis Driven Governance and  
Internal Dependence.

Pakistan's governance has increasingly become reactive rather than strategic. Balance of payments crises, energy shortages, and



Security challenges dominate decision making, pushing long term development objectives into the background. Dependence on external financing reinforces this tendency, as stabilization programs emphasize immediate fiscal correction over structural reforms.

The energy sector exemplifies this pattern. Instead of sustained investment in governance reforms and renewable capacity, successive governments have relied on emergency solutions that address short term shortages while deepening long term inefficiencies.



## Conclusion

The criticism that Pakistan's governments short shift long term development despite processing an elaborate planning mechanism is well founded. The fault lies not in the absence of plans or institutions, but in political short termism, weak administrative incentives, fiscal myopia, poor intergovernmental coordination, and a crisis driven policy culture. From a public administration stand point, correcting this imbalance requires insulating planning institutions from political disruption, aligning budgeting with long term objectives, strengthening implementation



capacity, and institutionalizing continuity across political cycles. Without such reforms, Pakistan's development planning will remain ambitious in intent but deficient in impact.

Q.3. Answer:

Introduction

Public Policy is the primary instrument through which the state exercises authority and fulfills its responsibilities toward society. In Public Administration, public policies are understood not merely as formal decisions, but as purposive courses of



action adopted by government to address collective problems, allocate values, and guide national development. The purposes served by public policies are therefore multidimensional encompassing problem solving, regulation, redistribution, strategic direction, and legitimacy building. An examination of these purposes, followed by an assessment of policy performance in Pakistan, highlights the decisive role of political will, administrative capacity, and institutional continuity in shaping outcomes.

Problem Solving and Service Delivery  
Function of Public Policies



one of the central purposes of public policy is to provide structured solutions to public problems that cannot be efficiently resolved through private action or market forces. Policies in health, education, housing, and public safety are designed to ensure the provision of essential services and protection of citizens. For example, national health policies seek to reduce disease burdens and improve access to healthcare, while education policies aim to develop human capital and promote social mobility. In this sense, public policy translates needs



into actionable governmental responses.

Regulatory and Control Function

Public policies also serve a regulatory purpose by establishing rules, standards, and

constraints on individual and organizational behavior. Through

regulatory frameworks, the state seeks to correct market failures, protect consumers,

and safeguard public interest.

Environmental policies regulate industrial emissions, labor

policies govern working conditions,

and financial sector policies

aim to ensure stability and transparency.

Regulation, therefore, is not an end in itself



but a means to align  
private behavior with collective  
welfare.