

Annotated Listing

Editor's Note

Our policy is to review all books which are either sent to us or in our opinion are useful to our readers.

Sokbunthoeun So, Michael Woolcock, Leah April, Caroline Hughes and Nicola Smithers; *Alternative Paths to Public Financial Management and Public Sector Reform : Experiences from East Asia (International Development in Focus)*; The World Bank, Washington D.C., USA; pp. 162, Price US\$ 37.50

Reforming public-sector organizations – their structures, policies, processes, and practices – is notoriously difficult, in rich and poor countries alike. Even in the most favorable of circumstances, the scale and complexity of the tasks to be undertaken are enormous, requiring levels of coordination and collaboration that may be without precedent for those involved. Entirely new skills may need to be acquired by tens of thousands of people. Compounding these logistical challenges is the pervasive reality that circumstances are often not favorable to large-scale reform. Whether a country is rich or poor, the choice is not whether, but how, to reform the public sector – how optimal design characteristics, robust political support, and enhanced organizational capability to implement and adapt will be forged over time.

This edited volume, *Alternative Paths to Public Financial Management and Public Sector Reform: Experiences from East Asia*, helps address the “how” question. It brings together reform experiences in public financial management and the public sector more broadly from eight country cases in East Asia: Malaysia, Indonesia, Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam, Myanmar, the Lao People’s Democratic Republic, and Papua New Guinea. These countries are at different stages of reform; most of the reform efforts would qualify as successes, while some had mixed outcomes and others could be considered failures. The focus of each chapter is less on formally demonstrating success (or not) of specific reform, but on documenting how reformers maneuvered within different country contexts to achieve specific outcomes. Despite the great difficulty in reforming the public sector, decision-makers can draw renewed energy and inspiration learning from those countries, sectors, and subnational spaces where substantive (not merely cosmetic) change has been achieved, and what pitfalls to avoid.

The book begins with Introduction. Arraying “adaptive” approaches to public sector reform and East Asian experiences with public financial management and public sector reform are covered in addition to implications for reformers and development practitioners. Chapter two talks about Malaysia. After giving introduction, Performance based budgeting, Public service delivery and public service transformation are covered. Chapter three on Indonesia lays down Public financial management reforms and Civil service reform in Indonesia. Next chapter on Thailand elucidates Strategic performance based budgeting system, Government fiscal management information system and Decentralization in Thailand.

Chapter five deals with Cambodia. Revenue mobilization, budget execution through implementation of the financial management information system and program budgeting in Cambodia have been discussed well. Next chapter on Vietnam talks about Fiscal decentralization, integrated treasury and budget management information system and Public investment management in Vietnam. Various approaches to reforms have also been discussed in the chapter. Chapter seven covers Myanmar. Strengthening tax administration, Budget formulation process and Challenges, approaches to reform, and key lessons learned in Myanmar are the key contents of the chapter.

The Lao People’s Democratic Republic is covered in chapter eight. Reform intervention, results of first generation PFM reforms and the PFM reform process and approach are covered well in the chapter. Last chapter on Papua New Guinea details about Public financial management, Decentralization and sub-national governance reform and approaches to reform in Papua New Guinea. All chapters end with conclusion, notes and an extensive bibliography.

The book is worth reading by policy makers, government bodies, students, CEOs, innovators and business persons alike. It is a good collection for the public library and highly important for the University and Institution’s Libraries, the data charts and figures are very knowledgeable and described so easily that gives thinking and knowledge together.

**Dhingra, I.C.; *Indian Economy*; Sultan Chand and Sons, Delhi, India
pp. 469, Price ₹ 260**

India has emerged as a fast developing economy. Double digit growth and sustained development perceived with new issues, challenges and newer opportunities. India’s development period can be marked out in three different stages. 1951 to 1991 is market as first stage, as period of centralized planning. 1991 to 2014 can be marked as second stage, a period of liberalized planning. Third Stage, 2014 onwards has attempted to prepare a holistic strategy to bring out a structural and institutional transformation of the economy. *Indian Economy* by I.C. Dhingra presents different aspects of economic growth, achievements hurdles through these different stages of growth in a very simple and lucid manner. Distinguished features of this

books are (a) Elaboration of each topic is based on facts and figures. Use of long statistical tables have been avoided; (b) Language is easy to understand; (c) For students of economics, question as per the pattern of the University question paper have been given at the end of each chapter with suitable solution hints; (d) New Era i.e. 2014 onwards (Sustainable inclusive and rapid growth discussed.), New thoughts, directions, policies etc are emerging fast. Analytical analysis will help students to keep track of and make an appraisal of unfolding events.

This book is comprehensive textbook on Indian Economy. Book is divided into nine units. Unit I Growth and development provided necessary theoretical inputs to understand concepts of underdevelopment, determinants of economic development. How India became world's sixth biggest economy and pushed France to 7th place. The US is world's top economy followed by China, Japan, Germany and Britain. Unit II on National Income, the rate of growth of national income is indicative of the growth of economy. Only when national income grows faster than the rate of growth of population than the per capita income rises. Community is able to improve its living standards and add to its stock of capital, economy moves on rising level of productivity. A developing economy is characterized by such a trend.

Unit III, major problems of Indian Economy, contained four chapters namely poverty in India, Inequalities in income distribution, problems of unemployment and population in India. Nature and causes of poverty, along with poverty alleviation programmes launched and implemented by the government had been discussed in detail in chapter three. An Important cause of widespread poverty in India had been an unequal distribution of the fruits of growth. Growth with social justice had been the prime objective of economic planning in India. However personnel inequalities as well as regional inequalities have increased in past decades. Government initiated different measures to accomplish inclusive growth although with limited success. One of the most difficult problems which the country faces had been to provide employment opportunities to all those entered the labour force from year to year. Unemployment obtained both in rural and urban sector of the economy. Chapter six, the size of population is a crucial determinant of economic development. To check the growth rate of population, (1) it is important to push economic growth and thereby create new employment opportunities and (2) to pursue family welfare programme.

Unit IV, India's planned economy consisted of two chapters. Chapter 7 era of five years plans in India (1951-2012), identified broad objectives which our nation set out to achieve. Indian economic planning had been a mixed success. Chapter 8, emerging new era of the Indian Economy, by 2030, the country's median income per household is expected to reach USD 10,073. Further, by 2030, India would be ranked 2nd behind China in terms of middle class.

Unit V, Infrastructure fore developments has two chapters. Chapter 9, physical infrastructure in India covered those supporting services that helped growth of directly productive activities. These services have a wide range from the provision of health services and education facilities to the supply of such needs as power, irrigation, transport, telecommunication

etc. Chapter 10, social infrastructure in India, covered services as education, health, sanitation, provision of safe drinking water and so on. Social indicators continued to lag behind. Mere increase in social sector expenditure would not be enough, unless it is linked with outcomes directed to the socially excluded groups and effectively monitored.

Unit VI, Indian Agriculture, has four chapters. There is strong linkages between agriculture growth and industrial growth. Growth in agriculture output had been due to improvement in productivity. However productivity levels in India agriculture continue to be low as compared to what obtained in other countries. Institutional reforms took the form of land reforms. Although land reforms programme pursued vigorously in last decades, yet it has met with only limited success. Agriculture needs finance both to survive and prosper. Over the years, different financial institutions had made deep in roads in the farm credit system. Agriculture marketing system had been streamlined and regulated still both the credit system and marketing systems are subject to limitations.

With the onset of green revolution, India became self sufficient. Two major problems of food economy remained (1) deficient nutrient content and (2) high prices of foodgrains. An essential part of food policy is the public distribution system. The system is designed to impart stability in the food economy.

Unit VII, Industrial sector in India, contains three chapters. Industrial policy included (1) restructuring the consolidation of enterprise to maximise the productivity of resource use for the attainment of plan targets (2) Accelerating modernization based on futuristic technologies so as to position the industry to more rapid development. New approach must tackle the issue of surplus labour rights of labourers and provides suitable incentives. New Industrial policy had been guided by the principles of liberalisation, privatisation and globalisation.

Unit VIII, Foreign Trade had worked as an “engine of growth” for U.K., Japan, Singapore, Taiwan, Malaysia, South Korea, etc. This sector has enabled them to overcome the constraints of small resources. Structure of India’s foreign trade had been undergoing a transformation in terms of volume, composition and direction. There is an urgent need to formulate and implement a well knit export promoting strategy due to increasing trade deficit.

Unit IX, Public Finance, had three chapters. Fiscal policy, an important instrument of economic policy deals with government revenue and expenditure. Budgetary operations are conducted to achieve certain defined objectives of state policy. Changes in fiscal policy worked well to restore fiscal stability.

This book has been designed to meet the requirements of students preparing B.COM, BBA, BBM, BTech, BA and other degree courses of all Indian Universities. Students preparing for UPSC, PSC, RBI, NABARD, RRB and other competitive examinations will also find it highly useful. Must for an academic library. At the end I would like to thank publisher “Sultan Chand and Sons” for bringing out this book for students at large at a reasonable price.

Handa, K.L.; *Expenditure Control and Zero Base Budgeting*; IIF Publications, Delhi, India, pp. 168, Price ₹120

Zero Base Budgeting (ZBB) was introduced in all Ministries and Departments of the Government of India from the Budget year 1987-88. Since then, efforts are being made, through the use of ZBB, to reduce expenditure on some ongoing schemes, which had outlived their utility and allocating funds thus saved on high schemes, which had outlived their utility and allocating funds thus saved on high priority uses. To make the concept of ZBB familiar to the officials of Central, State Governments and Public Undertakings, Government has been organising a number of training programmes on ZBB in various training institutions all over the country from time to time. Some of the questions raised by the participants in those programmes were whether ZBB could be successfully applied in all organisations for control of expenditure and if so, what preliminary steps should be taken before introduction? Will ZBB involve a lot of paper work and an elaborate system of cost benefit analysis? Whether there are any books available on ZBB explaining the application of the concept in the context of Indian conditions?

Handa's book on Zero Based Budgeting tries to find answers to the various questions mentioned above. The book deals with different approaches implicit in the application of ZBB. It explains the methodology to be employed in institutionalizing ZBB as part of the administrative system. The book is divided into ten chapters. The first chapter discusses in detail the difficulties faced by the Union and State Government to raise additional resources for meeting the growing revenue expenditure and suggests the application of ZBB for a logical and rational system of expenditure control. Chapter two gives a historical perspective of line item budget and performance budget in Government. The third chapter gives the conceptual framework of ZBB and the four approaches implicit in its application, viz., Elimination of redundant expenditure, removal of duplication or multiplication of expenditure, searching for a better alternative for incurring expenditure and lastly optimisation of expenditure by making it productive and efficient. To illustrate the concept of ZBB, an excellent case-study on the continuance or discontinuance of a Five Star hotel of a Tourism Development Corporation has been included in this chapter. In the fourth chapter, recent developments, which have taken place in the adoption of ZBB both abroad and in India, are traced.

Chapter five is devoted to explaining the methodology employed for operationalising a system of ZBB. It also highlights the importance of evaluative techniques in applying ZBB methodology. The next chapter discusses the relevance of techniques like Pay Back Period, Accounting Rate of Return and Discounted Cash Flow for ranking expenditure proposals in order of priority. Chapter seven explains in detail the two important techniques of analysis, Cost Benefit Analysis and their application in a system of ZBB. The eighth chapter discusses in detail the use of performance norms under ZBB, to ensure efficiency and economy of expenditure.

The working of a management system, however, sound and logical, needs to be made functional, by recognizing and attending to the various problems and issues involved in its operation. Therefore, chapter nine of

this book has been devoted to discussion of these problems. The concluding chapter tenth sums up some of the important considerations and requirements for a successful implementation of ZBB in India.

The book is the outcome of the author's long experience of research, teaching, training and consulting assignments in various fields of financial management. Again, this was outcome of a research project sponsored by Indian Institute of Finance. Another specialty of the book is that the author has tested some of his ideas on ZBB with senior officials from Government, Public Undertakings etc before putting them into published work. All these add to a positive side of the book.

On the whole, the book is excellent and has been written to make the concept of ZBB of practical application in the conditions prevailing in India. Therefore, the book would prove highly useful and a great value to administrators, managers, professionals, teachers, trainers, scholars and graduate students of public administration, management and accounting. It would also be useful to those interested in a meaningful ZBB approach in their organisations.

Gakkai, Bharat Soka; *Budhas in our Midst : Victories in Daily Life;* 2018, Eternal Ganges Press Pvt. Ltd., Delhi, India, pp. 199, Price ₹ 295

"Buddha in our Midst" is about 31 ordinary people unleashing the limitless power within. Walk these 31 journeys that begin with impasse and impossibility, and experience how unshakeable faith, driven by the belief that our lives must be a light for transforms adversity into an exultation of achievement

It is possible to be truly happy in life even in the midst of problems, Infact, problems could be looked upon as stepping stones towards a stronger, more buoyant self, where the journey towards changing a situation becomes as invigorating as the goal itself.

Turn the pages of this book and read one empowering story after another. These are ordinary people who have transformed their lives by wining over seemingly impossible obstacles and hopeless situations. The stories spell hope and optimism and spur one on to fight the battle and win.

The sufferindg they faced were diverse: health conditions where there seemed financial problems, unbearable work situations, the pain of living with disability, facing humiliation, and injustice and, most difficult of all, tackling the deep negativity within. Every story reiterates the simple message: If I can, then so can you!

The prime point for all has been deep faith and conviction in Nichiren Buddhism. Based on the Lotus Sutra, this philosophy is premised on the fact that we can become happy and victorious, just as we are – right here, right now. The readers are introduced to the immense potential one have within him – manifested as courage, wisdom, tenacity, creativity – which one can tap through our faith and practice.

According to SGI President Daisaku Ikeda “The deeper the dark, the closer the dawn. However profound the suffering that envelops you, never forget the inner spark of hope and courage...”. And again, “The course of our lives is determined by how we react— what we decide and what we do—at the darkest of times. The nature of that response determines a person’s true worth and greatness”.

The journey for these 31 ‘buddhas’ was often a long one, punctuated by a series of setbacks that made it even more difficult. What motivated each person to keep moving forward was a deep compassion—the desire to be victorious to give hope to others. From this intent sprang a fiery determination and a never-say-die attitude.

President Ikeda says, “When your determination changes, everything will begin to move in the direction you desire. The moment you resolve to be victorious, every nerve and fibre in your being will immediately orient itself towards success. On the other hand, if you think, ‘This is never going to workout,’ then at that instant every cell in your being will be deflated and give up the fight”.

These wonderful stories are not just about achieving a goal but reflect a deep inner transformation that has made each a ‘different’ person. In Buddhist terms one could say each has awakened to their true potential, radiantly happy and expanding their life to bring joy to others.

Tracy, Brian; *Time Management*; Manjul Publishing House, Delhi, India, pp. 104, Price ₹ 250

One’s ability to manage his time, as much as any other practice in his career as an executive, will determine his success or failure. Time is the one indispensable and irreplaceable resource of accomplishment. It is your most precious asset. It cannot be saved, nor can it be recovered once lost. Everything one has to do requires time, and the better you use his time, the more he will accomplish, and the greater will be rewards.

Time management is essential for maximum health and personal effectiveness. The degree to which a person feels in control of his time and his life is a major determinant of his level of inner peace, harmony, and mental well-being. A feeling of being “out of control” of one’s time is the major source of stress, anxiety, and depression. The better one can organize and control the critical events of his life, the better he will feel, moment to moment, the more energy one will have, the better he will sleep and the more he will get done.

It is possible for one to gain two productive hours each working day, or even double his output and his productivity, by using the ideas and methods taught in the book. These techniques have proven successful for many thousands of executives in every field of endeavor, and they will prove successful for everyone too, as long as they have “desire”. One must have an intense, burning desire to get his time under control and to achieve maximum effectiveness; “decisiveness”, one must make a clear decision

that he is going to practice good time management techniques until they become a habit; “determination”, one must be willing to persist in the face of all temptations to the contrary until he has become an effective time manager; and finally, the most important key to success in life, “discipline”. One must discipline himself to make time management a lifelong practice. Effective discipline is the willingness to force himself to pay the price, and to do what one know one should do, when one should do it, whether he feel like it or not. This is critical for success.

The payoff for becoming an excellent time manager is huge. It is the outwardly identifiable quality of a high performer vs. a low performer. All winners in life use their time well. All poor performers in life use their time poorly. One of the most important rules for success is simply to “Form good habits and make them your master.” In the book, one learns on how to form good habits and then let them form him.

Remember that time management is really life management. Good time management and personal productivity begins by valuing one’s life, and every minute of that life.

One should say to oneself, “Life is precious and important, and I value every single minute and hour of it. I am going to use those hours properly so that I accomplish the most I can, in the time that I have.”

The good news is that time management is a business skill, and all business skills are learnable. Time management is like riding a bicycle, typing on a keyboard, or playing a sport. It is made up of a series of methods, strategies, and techniques. It is a skill set that you can learn, practice, and master with determination and repetition. The main purpose of learning and practicing time management skills is to enhance and improve the overall quality of your life. It is to increase the amount of pleasure and happiness you experience. A great life is one that is in balance. If you spend sufficient time preserving and enhancing the quality of your relationships, you will find that you get more joy, satisfaction, and fulfillment out of you work; you’ll find success.

The book lists twenty-one most important solutions to effective time management that almost all highly productive people have discovered and incorporated into their lives. It is an important read for all managers and MBA graduates.