

Transformative organizations -- A global perspective. Edited by Vipin Gupta. 2004. New Delhi : Response Books - Rs. 980.00

“ Transformation is required in government, industry and education. Management is in a stable state. The transformation required will be a change of state, metamorphosis not mere patchwork on the present system of management. We must, of course, solve problems and stamp out fires as they occur, but these activities do not change the system” -- W Edwards Deming

“ If you always do what you do, will only get what you’ve got”. This is one way of looking at the future. Another viewpoint is that “Time is the greatest innovator.” People will push for change because they are dissatisfied, while events will push those who want to hold on to what they’ve got because they are satisfied. The only certainty about the future is its uncertainty, that there will be changes. People, society, technology and the eco-system do not stand still.

Organizations cannot stand still either. Those that wish to thrive, or even survive, have to change in tune with the society around them. One view of progress in Western countries could be that institutions do not change, they merely wither away allowing new ones to replace them. A transformative organization is “one that focuses on the enrichment and development of the values of modern co-operatives that can be shared with people around the world for dealing with specific situations and challenges.”

Transformative organizations-A global Perspective is a fine book, unified in its central concern, written by a first rate group of people, containing an excellent set of papers, all of great interest, to both management academics and practicing managers. The volume has a clear unity of theme and treatment. The papers are of uniformly high quality and their contents will be of interest to anyone interested in organizational theory, international management and overall, strategic management.

The volume opens with a paper by the editor himself along with Kumkum Mukherjee and Roma Puri on *Transformative organization* wherein they review the core insights of the transformative perspective with respect to change, leadership and learning. They also highlight the importance of four domains, i.e., the investor, competence, post competence and the spiritual, in the transformative decision making of organizations. *A model of the transformative organization* by the same authors follows next. Then comes Thillai A Rajan and V. Anand Ram's *Roles of principal players during restructuring*. Using a process framework, their study of the Orissa State Electricity Board looks at the sequence of events, actions and activities and identifies three phases in the restructuring process-impetus phase, reorganization phase and the consolidation phase.

Ram and Thillai's essay is followed by an excellent paper by Vipin Gupta, Deepak Kaul and Mrilanili Srivastava on *Knowledge Management and Change Process*. They focus on the works of the medieval saint and scholar, Kabir, (one of the greatest exponents of reforms in medieval India and also a key figure in the medieval knowledge school), and derive general implications and insights for the transformative organization in light of the current Indian and international research context.

Atul Mitra contributes the next paper, *Innovative compensation practices for organisation in India*, followed by Watkins and Jain's *Innovative compensation practices for organization in India*, and by Watkins and Jain's *Internalisation of small scale enterprise networks*. Based on the results of an empirical study, Mitra's study offers empirical evidence in support of the use of innovative pay systems to effectively design employment relationships within the Indian context.

Vipin Gupta, Ramesh Kumar and J. Raj Sekar's paper on *Transformative brand and organizational communication* is basically the clubbing of two related contributions. While the first one highlights how advertising has been used by multinational firms to create a lot of 'symbolic value', the second contribution describes the case of L & T. India in which the company transformed its communication to recognize its work force as entrepreneurial leaders.

It has been found that in the restructuring process, generally, managers tend to search for quick results to a deep-rooted organizational problem. But, these measures which may come up with short term financial gains can ultimately, destroy corporate capabilities of generating future revenue. Seungwha Chung and Gyeong Mook Kim's study on *Performance drivers of corporate restructuring in Korea* confirms this in the setting of observed negative effects of business diversitures as well as some positive effects of business expansions.

With China's entry into the World Trade Organization (WTO), the government is releasing state enterprises from state control, charging them to become globally competitive. This process along with the resulting benefits is discussed fully by Wang and Bouton in a well-researched paper, *Globalization of market-driven state enterprise, C & C, China*, followed by an interesting study on *Development of Chinese managerial behaviour* by Kai Cheng Yeu and Ping Fu. In another interesting paper, Tetsuo Abo develops an "integrated theory of management geography" using a comparative study of three different types of 'hybrid factories' of Japanese firms in the US, Europe, and East Asia.

The trans-Asian context, which forms Part-II of the volume, contains 12

well researched papers covering the Northern European context, the Anglo Cultures context, the Latin Cultures context and the Diverse Global context. Some of the worth-mentioning papers are : *Acculturation of cross-border acquisition-Cowboys in Germany* by Thomas Steger, *Functional flexibility in the Norwegian context - Strategic adaptation Vs. competence orientation* by Gooderham, Lowendahl and Nordhang, *Cultural symbols as change agents-International joint ventures in Mexico* by Anabella Davila and Edmundo Garcia, and Buller and McEvoy's paper on *Multinational ethical capability - A source or competitive advantage*.

An advantage of this volume is that it contains a useful introductory section summarizing the relevance of the contributing papers as well as concluding observations on transformative organization by the editor. However, no book of readings can provide a perfectly tight systematic analysis of a given field and this one is no exception, But, in **Transformative Organization**, the contributing articles fit into the main subject area framework to which the book is addressed and provide an illuminating analysis of a complex subject.

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Public Sector Restructuring and Industrial Relations - The Case of ITI Ltd., by Anil K. Sen. Gupta. 2002. New Delhi : Industrial Relations Association and Friedrich Ebert Stiftung (FES) in association with Excel Books. 303 pages (ISBN: 81-7446-331-3).

This book documents how industrial relations in post-independence India's first public sector company, Indian Telephone Industries (ITI) Ltd. evolved as the company went through a turbulent phase of restructuring, in the early nineties. The study has been conducted at both corporate and plant levels.

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