

Excellence and Leadership in the Public Sector: The Role of Education and Training, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, International Association of Schools and Institutes of Administration, United Nations, Austria, 2007, pp x + 159

Public Sector occupies an important place both in developing and developed countries. It is a significant constituent of the service delivery mechanism, and research and development in the various economies. The excellence and leadership in the public sector have emerged as the key determinant of the progress of the humanity. The book under review discusses the role of education and training in upgrading the excellence and leadership in the public sector. It is the product of the joint research by the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) and International Association of Schools and Institutes of Administration (IASIA) undertaken between 2003 and 2007. The book is prefaced by a detailed introductory note from Prof Allan Rosenbaum and Prof John-Mary Kauzya. A conceptual framework on 'Strengthening Public Sector Capacity for Achieving the Millennium Development Goals' by Prof Guido Bertucci follows the introductory note. The book is divided into three sections. Section I deals with 'Enhancing the Quality of Education and Training for the Public Sector'. 'Enhancing Leadership Capacity through Education and Training: An African Perspective' is the subject matter of the Section II. Section III incorporates 'Concluding Comments'.

The book deals with two separate but very closely related issues that, when taken together, will have a profound impact on the quality of governance of the world's nations during the next several decades. These two topics are how one best achieves true excellence in public administration education and training and how one prepares both the current and the next generation of governmental leadership to most effectively deal with the complex problems which the world's nations face.

Guido Bertucci in his paper titled 'Strengthening Public Sector Capacity for Achieving the Millennium Development Goals' identifies a number of factors that impede excellence and leadership in the public sector which include the changing role of the state due to national and international factors; the erosion of public sector human resource capacity; and the constraints in recruiting highly qualified personnel. Elaborating the challenges facing senior public sector leadership, he singled out some of the critical factors facing current and future leaders in the world. These comprise understanding globalization, developing strategic approaches to poverty elevation, developing conflict prevention and resolution strategies, building legitimacy of state institutions, learning to lead in a world of increasing interdependency and learning to lead with contradictions and paradoxes. Allan Rosenbaum's paper titled 'Excellence in Public Administration Education: Preparing the Next Generation of Public Administrators for a Changing World' identifies decentralization as the key factor for stepping up excellence and leadership in the public sector. He suggests various approaches to achieving excellence in public administration education and training. These include performance assessment, accreditation, focusing on competencies, building a community of excellence. He concludes that there is a need of not just learning but also of educating. In the study of 'The Management

Competencies of Senior Managers: A Look at Some OECD Countries', Mohamed Charib, Jacques Bourgault, Daniel Maltais and Lucie Rouillard outlined the management issues of the future, competency profiles in the various countries and focus of competency profile. The authors note that none of the profiles of the countries studied had a governance focus. Because of this, the managers are looking for management tools for the future to better manage the organizations and the changes that resulted from the earlier reforms.

Blue Wooldridge in the paper titled 'High Performing Schools and Institutes of Administration: The Role of Standards of Excellence' lists the attributes of high performing schools and lays down the standards of excellence which among other things include performance measurement and results orientation, competitive benchmarking, empowerment of employees, work through teams, training and employee development, motivated and committed employees, appropriate use of technology, value diversity, responsiveness to changes in the environment, effective communication and strategic planning. Shih-Hsien Chang in the paper titled 'Enhancing the Quality of a Public Administration Training Plan through Knowledge Management' discusses the role of knowledge management in the training plan. Identification of training needs, in his view, is the key to achieving success in the implementation of a training plan. Michael Brintnall in the paper titled 'Providing Support for Senior Public Officials: The Role of Professional Associations' brings out the need for providing training to senior officials to enable them to preserve their status, solve the problem of fraternization, improve professional position, meet pressures, absorb information, enhance policy expertise and knowledge, ensure independence and accountability and become effective manager. The professional associations could contribute their mite by providing relevant inputs to policy makers and managers in this regard. Hendri Kroukamp through his case study titled 'Public Administration Education and Training in South Africa: New Needs and the Implementation of New Approaches' highlights the various efforts that were made to establish networks consisting of academics, researchers and practitioners in the field of public administration and related disciplines to promote the transformation of public administration in South Africa, for example the New Public Administration Initiative (NPAI) in 1992, the Joint Universities Public Management Education Trust (JPUMET), the Association of Southern African Schools and Departments of Public Administration and Management (ASSADPAM) and KwaZulu Natal Regional Forum. He suggests that the training programmes should be supplemented with 'aftercare' programmes which could indicate whether the training need analysis was done properly and provide proof of the ability of training providers, not only in terms of the subject knowledge but in essence, of their ability to make it relevant to the world of work. R K Mishra discusses the Indian case of Public Administration Education and Training bringing out the fact that the lack of research orientation has hit the training very hard at the delivery level. He holds the public sector responsible for this limitation as it shuns its accountability in terms of allocation of resources and joint work with training providers.

John-Mary Kauzya in his paper titled 'A Leadership Capacity Enhancement Initiative for the African Continent' analyses the leadership capacity enhancement initiative of United Nations. The key issue facing senior public sector leadership in view of Kauzya includes development of future leaders, promotion of horizontal management, assessing and addressing the impact of HIV / AIDS, introducing performance management in the public services, managing rapid change and designing a strategic version and developing own-thinking capacity. The new areas

of leadership competency development range from diversity management, knowledge management, horizontal management to resource and information management, partnerships and negotiation skills, and communication and ICT skills. Facilitating large scale transformation would involve working with stakeholders, balancing and managing long term and short term objectives in the context of change, communication skills, creating a shared vision, and empowering employees. Kauzya presents framework matrix for target audiences such as Young and Mid-Career Civil Servants to be prepared for Global Leadership and Experienced High Level Civil Servants and Policy Makers. He offers some suggestions for leadership capacity enhancement initiative for the African continent. Patrick Fitzgerald in the paper titled 'Analyzing the Leadership Capacity Challenge: Towards Potential Intervention Strategies' touches upon leadership capacity approach such as leadership capacity as enhanced management skills, leadership capacity as managing differently, leadership capacity as formal knowledge, leadership capacity as surfacing and sharing tacit knowledge, leadership capacity as accelerated experience and broadened horizons, leadership capacity as self discovery, leadership capacity as the shaping of environments, and leaderships capacity as acculturation to 'Chaos'. He incorporates intervention modalities and experiences to reinforce his conclusion. Tag Elsir Mahgoub Ali in the paper titled 'The Role of Public Sector Leadership in Fostering Socio-Economic and Political Development in Africa' comments on the personal attributes of leaders such as vision, motives and trades, knowledge skills and ability and the soft aspects of leadership such as bias for action, obsession with quality, instilling unique values, and encouraging innovation. His model of leadership incorporates love, empathy, attention, dedication, enforcement of values, reward, synergy, hoopla, integrity and perseverance. John Ciyaga-Nsubuga in the paper titled 'Leadership Challenges in Mainstreaming Performance Enhancement in the Public Service' takes stock of the various competencies as being core to effective leadership. He provides an overview of Uganda's experience with public service reform. He concludes that the enhanced leadership skills and its transformation have secured significant gains in the struggle against poverty in Uganda. Discussing public service reforms in Uganda and their challenges, he points out decentralization of power to local governments, restructuring and rationalization of government ministries, public expenditure reforms, political-administrative interface, and lack of a structured management development programme for senior managers as the major tasks in building up public sector leadership. Whereas, Ousmane Batoko agrees with this line of thinking, and Turgay Ergun discusses in detail the joint UN / IASIA initiative to strengthen excellence and leadership in public sector through education and training.

The book under review is a marvelous research based attempt to show as to how excellence and leadership in the public sector could contribute to the creation of a new world in the 21st century. Although there are a number of forceful case studies incorporated in the book, it could have accommodated a few more to reveal the public sector transformation in Asia in general and South Asia in particular. A detailed annotated bibliography could have enhanced the value of the publication. All in all, the book makes an interesting reading and adds to the much scarce literature on leadership in public sector.

Reviewed by Professor R.K.Mishra, Director, Institute of Public Enterprise, Osmania University Campus, Hyderabad 500007, Andhra Pradesh, India.