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BUILDING STATE CAPABILITY

Evidence, Analysis, Action

Book Review

M-Phil Development Studies-21
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Introduction:

The motto of 'Doing Development Differently'.

What causes the failure of the organizations?

Problem-driven Iterative Approach, henceforth referred to as PDIA, is recommended.

Problems with State Capabilities

The causes of a continuous decline in the capabilities of state organizations:

1. Capability Trap
2. Isomorphic Mimicry
3. Over-ambitious Policies

Organizational Capability

Need for organizational capability for the implementation of the policy formula and achievement of normative objectives

1. Agent
2. Mismatch between objectives and goals
3. Will of agents

Call for Strategy- Matching Capability to Tasks

Need for developing organizational capability that matches the task at hand.

The complexity arises when operating relationships between politicians, sitting government, bureaucracy, and, citizens are disjointed.

Call for Action- Policy Implementation

Policy implementation is crucial for building state capability.

1. The process involves constructing the problem by highlighting and making it part of the political agenda, deconstructing it into smaller parts for contextual solutions.
2. The Problem Driven Iterative Adaptation (PDIA) approach includes experimental repetition, prompt decision making, and legitimizing reforms.

Call for Action- Community Involvement

Involvement of the community to find more than one solution for the problem.

The find-and-fit process for building the state capability is dependent on the availability of the authority.

Furthermore, a well-developed communication strategy can be used to persuade authorizers to take new initiatives.

Lastly, broad engagement and, the role of leader is essential for reforms as it provides support and combine efforts to address shared risks and problems



Conclusion:

The book has successfully elucidated the need for abandoning the replication of best solutions and shifting to contextualized problem-driven solutions.

It has described that leadership and political will are important to conceive broader engagement.

It can be concluded that indigenous knowledge, context, and will are the prime requirements to create legitimacy for policy intervention in the short term and transformation in the long term.

Critical Analysis:

1. The term “State” has seemed to appear as a standard phenomenon. The discussion in the book was built on the assumption that all states have identical political and security situations.
2. No sufficient acknowledgment of other factors which diminished the capability of institutions in the developing world like colonialism (physical and nonphysical), extraction of resources by developed countries.
3. The book also does not investigate the politics of provision which generally come with preconditions from the top levels of the governments and out of control of the practitioners in the field.
4. The aspect of the political economy seems missing as many decisions are influenced by international organizations (IOs) in the case of developing countries.