



## BOOK REVIEW

**Subhash Sharma: New Ideas in Strategic Thinking & Management -  
A Knowledge Tree of New Age Mantras:  
New Age International (P) Ltd., First Edition, 2016  
PP 1-210+xvi**

**Reviewer: N.S. Viswanath**

This book under review is based on the original work of Subhash Sharma in the area of Strategic Management. It is divided into five parts. There are sixteen chapters which is further sub divided into 89 themes. The author has followed phase-wise enumeration of theme of each part. In the area of knowledge creation, the three approaches i.e. quantitative - empirical, qualitative conceptual and creative –meditative are enumerated in detail. The description of the thought process moving from quantitative empirical to creative meditative is described by typology metrics. The author has succinctly divided intuition reality approaches into the above these to elucidate research approaches. Interestingly, approaches to research in mathematics, economics and social science have rationality & logic as their bases. The freedom of thought process uses words, metaphors and symbols to describe a concept. The author makes a comparison of scientific approach as against the approaches of scientists from psychology and physics and mathematics. The author documents some of the creative media research approaches which are likely to open up doors for rethinking. The limitation of the part one is that of accepting spirituality in the domain of scientific frame work. The author's contribution to enumerate thought processes using acronym is a thoughtful idea. Phrases such as VITAL, Diya, Rishi, META, WISDOM are all facilitators to capture and recapitulate the scientific method of investigation.

The author further examines the evolution of management thought by grounded praxis approach.

He develops paradigms and categorizes management thought process into American, Indian and Japanese. The roots of the contributors coming from respective countries are acceptable. However, categorization of management thoughts by country of origin such as American, Indian, Japanese has limitations. The thought process emerged from these companies during Industrial revolution and post world war II. After reading part one, the reviewer wondered as to why the author has not considered evolution of organization and its role in solving human problems. The concepts of Institution and Organization development are yet to find a place in the present book.

The 2nd part in this book concentrates on macro perspective associated with strategic thinking, symbols, yantra, connectivity, social order, measurement of happiness, National Business Units (NBUs) against Strategic Business Units (SBUs) are all covered in detail. The thematic description of macro perspective is loaded with coconut model, swastika, chakra and viswanization. There is an approach to action based corporate thinking which the author calls 'economics of chapatti making'. Interestingly, the author has in his mind, Indian society as back drop. Chapatti is used as symbol for production and to deliver prosperity, peace and justice for all. Since the enumeration is based on unification of Indian society, as against integration, there is lack of connectivity between the thought process and reality. The comparison of thought process of Gandhi, Nehru, Narasimha Rao, APJ Abdul

Kalam and Narendra Modi have been significant from time perspective. The analysis of such time oriented concepts leads to further clarity in the way the Indian economy is moving. The author connects economy with society by appropriate acronyms and metaphors.

The third part concentrates on models and mantras which the author calls as 'new'. The use of growth of plant life using BCG matrix is commendable. The author provides an integrated approach by extracting from the best of management scientists C.K. Prahalad, Michael Porter and Sumantra Ghoshal on performance of organizations. Introduction of stake holder happiness index (SHI) in assessing perception is interesting. The entire part is beset with acronyms such as CINE, METRIC, FATE, Anti-benchmarking, VISA, SWAN & SPOT. The author gets sparks through acronyms such as SPSS, KPCL, VSP and ODM. These acronyms are aptly tested by a case study on reengineering of an industry.

The part 4 of the book is enumerated on ethical foundation. There is a description for transaction to intra-personal as well as inter-personal references. The foundation of business is in ethics based on which transaction will make a great difference! The author speaks of character competence as against business competition. The thoughts projected in this chapter

apply to all types of organizations. Given the ethical foundation of an organization in business, long time survival and growth are ensured.

The last part of the book is again to coin strategies. The oceanic strategic approach is only with respect to driving organization towards success. The thoughts of the present thinkers in management are briefed. The new metaphors and model the author talks about is only for facilitation to recapitulate where ever necessary. There is however no sound basis of a theory in which metaphors can be used. Over use of metaphors may block thought process which is evidenced in Part 5 of the book.

The dilation of thoughts on strategic management is however new. The author deserves a special place in this area for linking up strategy with individual and the aggregate. The entire book can be made into five separate books by in depth analysis of the contribution made by management scientists.

The books of strategy by Hill & Jones, Alex Miller, C.K. Prahalad, Porter and Ghoshal are distinctly not different because of unification of the process of thought in their contribution. Subhash Sharma makes a distinct mark from all these for his creative linkage with acronyms in the area of management.