

reading in a history of economic thought course. Biographies such as Patel's, I think, offer a natural space for the confluence and congregation of political economists, historians, and historians of economic thought.

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Raravikar, A., *India's External Commercial Borrowing Features, Trends and Issues*, Ultimate Associates Publisher, Nashik, 2020, pp. 56, Price ₹ 100/-.

Foreign currency denominated borrowings such as external commercial borrowings (ECBs) can act as a double-edged sword for corporates in developing countries. Potential corporates can get these funds at a relatively low cost. These funds are available for longer maturities than domestic funds. However, ECBs can make balance sheets of corporates more vulnerable to exchange rate fluctuations. Any unanticipated change in the exchange rate of domestic currency, more particularly a sudden drop in the price of domestic currency, against foreign currency can adversely affect the value of outstanding borrowing of business firms under ECB relative to the firm's assets and income. That will in turn affect the debt repayment capacity of the firm, causing an extra pressure on asset quality of domestic banking sector. Therefore, understanding intricacies of ECB is very important for supporting and stabilizing growth of the economy.

The book has come in right time. Given the situation in the world amid Covid 19 pandemic spread and the challenges it posed to businesses in continuing their operations, ECBs provide eligible businesses an alternative source to acquire funds required as per their debt plan.

The book has five chapters and an epilogue. First chapter deals with conceptual framework of ECB and discusses merits and demerits of it. Second chapter provides trends and progress of ECB in India. Third chapter looks at the evolution of regulatory framework of RBI pertaining to ECB. Fourth chapter examines the issue of external debt management with a specific focus on ECB

from the view of point of its linkages with key macroeconomic indicators. In this context, it reviews various empirical studies relating to different aspects of ECB. Fifth chapter discusses issues pertaining to external debt management in India. The book concludes by suggesting a cautious policy framework for encouraging ECB channel for firms and for managing the risk that ECB will pose to them.

In recent period, the ECB flow to India has been increasing. For the last one and a half decade, the annual flow of ECB rose from \$108 billion to \$54.9 billion, recording the growth of 14.9 per cent per annum. The annual growth rate of ECB through approval route was 31.7 percent much higher than that of automatic route, 18.6 per cent, from 2004-05 to 2019-20. The book identifies that this growth was mainly because of declining in LIBOR and other interbank benchmarks. The borrowers are diversified across sectors and maturities of the ECB ranged from short term to long term, one year to twenty years.

The book points out five regulatory characteristics of India's regulatory policy over the years. Initially it perceives ECB as a structure that is relatively more administrative cost oriented. Later on, it provided a broad preference for sectors that naturally enjoy better foreign exchange hedging. Then it started focusing on non-debt flows, putting more restrictions on financial intermediaries on recourse to ECB. Finally, it started looking at the problems of currency mismatches and thus the related political economy pressures.

The general public debt as percentage of country's total debt, both internal and external, is one of the crucial factors for economic stability in the country. Foreign currency borrowings involve exchange rate risk. The book looks at the status of India's external debt. External commercial borrowings occupy the largest share followed by Non-resident deposits. It is important to note that share of concessional debt in the total external debt has gradually declined suggesting that cost of external debt will not be cheaper forever for any country. As far as the external debt management is concerned, the author is of the opinion that India is one of the less vulnerable countries as the present value of debt is only about 30 of exports and 6 % of gross national income. Government is restricting the borrowings to multilateral and bilateral. However, external debt in absolute terms as well as a percentage of GDP, it is continually increasing for the last two decades.

The book observes that foreign cover (foreign exchange reserves) to external debt has declined over the period. Government's debt management strategy should avoid bunching of repayments. ECB policy should go as an integral part of overall external debt management policy of the government. Since ECB maturities is in long term in nature it does not put pressure on debt management compared to short-term borrowings. This can be an added advantage for those who are looking for a longer-term borrowing. But, the firm must look for hedging their exposures in order to get insulated from exchange rate risk. However, to make hedging more attractive, hedging cost must be lower. In this context, the book discusses various policies adopted by RBI. The book concludes by suggesting a few policy measures such as adopting a normative ideal approach for ECBs, encouraging ECB route for corporates aftermath Covid-19 pandemic due to the fact that some corporates

need large funds for long periods, motivating firms to get benefited from rock bottom touched global interest rates, using ECB route to raise the forex reserves and substituting ECBs for banks' credit since Indian banks have become risk averse as a result of severe degradation in their asset quality. RBI needs to revise its framework relating to ECBs in order to make it more attractive, accessible, and helpful in supporting India's growth requirements. Thus, the book touches upon very relevant issues pertaining to ECB mechanism. The book can be useful for students and researchers.

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Gourav Kumar Vani, Pradeep Mishra and P.K. Sahu, *Decomposition Techniques in Agricultural Policy Analysis: A Comprehensive Guide*, Jaya Publishing House, Delhi, 2020, pp. 109, Price not stated.

This book is an outcome of discussion held at Division of Agricultural Economics, IARI, New Delhi in December 2016. It attempts at providing a comparison between various methods of decomposition analysis in Agricultural Economics. The book is spanned over 10 chapters which are largely based on the existing literature published at various points of time.

After a brief review of studies which have used decomposition techniques to find sources of growth in Indian agriculture, the introductory chapter discusses classification of decomposition schemes as well as advantages and limitations of using decomposition techniques. From the second chapter it explains the various decomposition schemes such as additive/ multiplicative /pseudo additive schemes which are used for decomposing changes in agricultural output, aggregate farm revenue, value of crop production, mean and variance of production and cost of production which have been used in various studies. Using the database of already conducted studies, each of the chapters presents a technique of decomposition analysis for a different variable. The last chapter presents a comparison of the techniques and concludes on the note that the choice of technique to be used needs to be based on the objectives of the study undertaken.

It is a small book. The text is in 73 pages followed by a bibliography and appendices. The latter are mainly regarding Madhya Pradesh and pigeon peas. The themes covered in the book are mentioned above. It may be read by someone who has an interest in them. The authors caution a reader about four points while using these techniques, viz., (a) he must have some specific objective in mind before attempting to decompose the series, (b) he must know the limitation of the scheme for it will help him in avoiding erroneous conclusion, (c) none of these techniques/schemes is a tool of impact analysis, and (d) the focus of the study