

Preface

The National Institute of Public Finance and Policy is an autonomous non-profit organisation whose primary functions are to undertake research, consultancy and training in the field of public economics and related policy.

The present study was commissioned by the Expert Committee on Excellence in Postal Services, Ministry of Communications, Government of India in February 1988. The focus of the terms of reference of the study was on evolving principles for determining the structure of tariff for various services provided by the Indian Postal Department. In several important respects postal services partake of the character of a public utility, and their pricing gives rise to intricate issues. Questions of efficiency and equity come up in a complex way. The study addresses these issues analytically, taking due note of the available literature on the subject. We believe this is perhaps one of the first attempts to suggest ways of designing the structure of the postal tariff in the country on rational principles. We hope the study will be of interest and use not only to policy-makers but also to the wider academic community working in this area.

The study was planned and conducted by Raghendra Jha, M.N. Murty and Satya Paul. The report was also drafted by the three authors jointly.

The Governing Body of the Institute does not take any responsibility for the views expressed in the report. That responsibility lies with the Director and more particularly the authors.

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