



Review

Reviewed Work(s): Occupational Values and Business by Baldev R. Sharma

Review by: S. K. Roy

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education and training.

—SAMUEL PAUL

(Dr Samuel Paul is Director, Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad).

OCCUPATIONAL VALUES AND BUSINESS; by *Baldev R. Sharma*, New Delhi, Sindhu Publications, 1974, 80 p., Rs. 21.

The adjustment problems which the MBA's are facing in Indian organizations are evident. Quite apart from the generational problems, a relationship of conflict appears to exist between the older executives and the younger managers, which finds expression in mutual antipathy, insecurity, and defensive behaviour. Assessment of the occupational values of business management students is particularly relevant in this context. Even generally, the study of occupational values is both theoretically significant and practically useful. At the societal level, intergroup commonalities over values promote stability in the system, while differences result in conflict; at the organizational level, value systems are related to such outcomes as motivation and morale and at the individual level, personal value systems of people affect their perceptions of success, reactions to organizational pressures, and determination of what constitutes ethical behaviour.

Indian evidence on occupational values is practically non-existent. Baldev Sharma's monograph-length book under review is perhaps a pioneering attempt. It tries to answer four interrelated questions: (i) What are the characteristic values and attitudes of business administration students?; (ii) How do Indian business students compare with their counterparts in the USA in terms of values and attitudes?; (iii) Are there any cultural universals in the sphere of occupational values and attitudes?; and (iv) What is the relative importance of occupation vis-a-vis culture in shaping the values of future business managers? The first two questions are significant practically, while the latter two are important for understanding the psychodynamics of occupational adjustment.

The findings of the study are both interesting and significant. Consider, for example, the following:

- Among the students of business administration studied, there was no significant difference between the two societies, India and the USA, in the emphasis on "getting ahead" in life (p. 23).
- Compared with their American counterparts the Indian students are less likely to be bothered by their scruples in pursuance of the success goal. Practically as many Indian students agree with

- the following statement as disagree: In order to get ahead in life these days, you cannot afford to be too squeamish about the means you use (p. 24).
- Earning a good deal of money is ranked by Indian students as the foremost reason why they chose business administration as a career (p. 26).
  - Both groups of business students de-emphasize people-oriented values at work. The Indian students gave the value of being "helpful to others" the lowest rank, while the Americans too place it as one of the last three goals. The picture of the typical business student that emerges from the data is one of a self-centred man who believes in the philosophy of every-man-unto-himself (p. 28).
  - "To be free from supervision" is one of the last things that business students are concerned about (p. 30).
  - Both groups of students believe that, more than anything else, they have to talk their way to success in the managerial career. Communication is viewed as the major secret of success! As against this, the Indian students ranked out of 18 alternatives, "hard work and effort" 11th in order of importance.

Sharma usually collects and analyses his data competently, and the present book is no exception. One comment about the nature of the data in relation to the inferences drawn is, however, in order. Value is a cardinal concept in psychology the measurement of which by means of the questionnaire always faces the twin methodological problems of validity and social desirability. Sharma's findings that, for example, Indian and American business management students share substantial commonality of occupational values, might indeed be questionable. Theoretically it can be argued cogently that, despite the common denominator of the managerial occupation being present, more valid measurement would have thrown up the culturally-determined differences between the two groups. From this point of view, the use of semi-projective instruments, or at least depth interviews with the students complementarily to the questionnaire, would have been useful.

Second, the interpretation of the findings is often quite unpsychological. For example, to attribute the Indian students' emphasis on earning money to the structure of the job market (p. 31), or to say that the case method of teaching at IIM, Ahmedabad, convinced them of the utility of "talking one's way to success" (p. 31-32), is clearly untenable; more sophisticated discussion of the role of perception and motives in value formation would have enriched the book.

Third, the author's insistence that the managerial occupation

primarily influences the values, and not the socio-cultural differences between India and the USA, also demands a far more adequate theoretical discussion of the determinants of occupational values. Even within the given data, this could well have been attempted. Fourth, the limitations of the sample cannot be overlooked, although the author has himself pointed it out.

Finally, while discussing the applied implications of the study, the author could well have been less conservative. Using the quantitative data as the base, more extended discussion of the relevance of the findings could have been done with reference to the author's own observations of Indian organizations and also the available Indian literature bearing on managerial attitudes and behaviour.

The book should be highly recommended, on the one hand, to organizational managements who employ the MBA's, and, on the other, to management academia for pursuing this important line of research. Both the groups would find the book immensely readable.

—S. K. ROY

(Mr. S. K. Roy is Associate Professor of Organizational Behaviour, Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore.)

**INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT OF INDIA—POLICY AND PROBLEMS;** edited by C. N. Vakil, Orient Longman Limited, 500 p., 1973.

The book consists of thirty-eight articles on different aspects of industrial development in India written by several authors and edited by Professor C. N. Vakil, the celebrated economist. In addition, there is an introduction and a paper on the life and achievements of Shri Kamalnayan Bajaj, the famous industrialist, known for his philanthropic attitude, in whose memory the book has been published. The book, running into five hundred pages, covers several aspects of industrial development such as the different facets of industrial policy, industry and finance, industrial management, technological development and employment, self-reliance and foreign investments, infra-structure for industrial development, locational aspects of industries, social aspects of industrialization, and the future of Indian industry. The papers are grouped under seven sections: (1) Different Facets of Industrial Growth, (2) Industry and Finance, (3) Management in Industry, (4) Other Aspects of Industrial Development, (5) Self-reliance and Industrial Development, (6) Social Justice and Industrial Growth, and (7) The Future of Indian Industry. Section 8 contains, This was a Man—Kamalnayan Bajaj: A Profile by N.G. Jog.

The book is concerned primarily with the institutional aspects