

Shorter Notices

Tushaar Shah. *Catalysing Co-operation: Design of Self-Governing Organisations.* New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1996. 313pp. Hardbound. Indian Rupees 375.00

This book analyses and highlights the factors responsible for making self-governing people's organisations succeed in the highly competitive world of today.

The book has three main divisions: Part I deals with the "Chemistry of Co-operation", Part II presents three case studies, and Part III is a synthesis of the author's findings from his research.

Conventional wisdom lists a number of theories that lead to successful co-operatives. These include leadership and good management, favourable social conditions, the existence of homogeneous groups, and a participatory approach. However, the author of this book highlights other aspects which do not form part of the conventional wisdom in binding and managing self-governing people's organisations. These factors include *Design*, which, according to the author, is the central determinant of the performance of an organisation while the other three supporting factors are "self-creating", "self-propagating", and "self-preserving". These do not depend on good leadership nor on favourable social conditions but on securing and retaining the support of members of such self-governing people's organisations.

This is an extremely practical book and would be of immense value to those engaged in the co-operative movement.

A. M. Shah, B. S. Baviskar, and E. A. Ramaswamy (eds). *Social Structure and Change: Women in Indian Society.* Volume 2. New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1996. 214pp. Hardbound. Indian Rupees 265.00.

This collection of articles is part of a series of five volumes being published to honour India's eminent sociologist and social anthropologist, M. N. Srinivas. The focus of the volume is on the status of women in Indian society. In all, there are seven papers by noted academics, such as T. Scarlett Epstein, Uma Ramaswamy, Joan P. Menchen, and others, that examine the changing status of women in Indian Society. The areas covered are gender bias in development policies; women's participation in production processes in rural as well as urban settings; socio-cultural dimensions of women's education during the colonial period; and an examination of the reasons responsible for female infanticide in Northern and Western India. In particular, these essays discuss issues that are related to the survival of the girl-child, her access to education, participation in productive activity, and her right to natal property. The data used to support the arguments put forward by various authors are based on both primary as well as secondary data. To conclude, much of the information presented here would be of great use to scholars engaged in research in the areas of gender studies, social change, sociology, and social anthropology.

A. M. Shah, B. S. Baviskar, and E. A. Ramaswamy. *Social Structure and Change: Complex Organisations and Urban Communities.* New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1996. 286pp. Hardbound. Indian Rupees 325.00.

This is the third volume in a series of five volumes honouring M. N. Srinivas, India's eminent sociologist and social anthropologist. It contains ten articles by noted contributors which examine a broad range of issues in contemporary organisational and urban sociology, with special reference to industry, government, educational institutions, agricultural marketing, and urban life. Thus the material in this volume presents a detailed picture of the impact of society on industry and of technology on caste and status, to mention a couple of areas. Of specific interest is the manner in which traditional values and cultures change and, in turn, affect industrial and urban structures and processes.

The recent economic liberalisation in India and its impact on the urban industrial scene is also discussed and measures are suggested to bring about change in a harmonious fashion.

This is an important book as not much research has been undertaken in this area, particularly in the South Asian region. It highlights the stresses and strains faced by a rapidly urbanising society, and will prove to be of much use to researchers in urban and labour studies, management, and social anthropology.

Tirthankar Roy (ed). *Cloth and Commerce: Textiles in Colonial India*. New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1996. 338pp. Hardbound. Indian Rupees 425.00.

This volume consists of ten articles that discuss the role of the textile industry in India in stimulating trade with Europe during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. These articles are important as they also shed light on the early stages of industrialisation in India. Hence, these articles are basically economic-historical in context and specifically examine the scale of expansion of export markets, its impact on artisans, the effect of competition between artisans and machinery as from the nineteenth century, the effects of the timing and limits of deindustrialisation on the Indian economy, and the significance (for producers) of changes in the consumption of cloth. A significant conclusion that emerges from a reading of the articles in this volume is that the introduction of machinery had a number of consequences, both adverse as well as beneficial. The book is an interesting addition to the economic history of India in the colonial period.

Manabendur Chattopadhyay, Pradip Maiti, and Mihir Rakshit (eds). *Planning and Economic Policy in India: Evaluation and Lessons for the Future*. New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1996. 214pp. Hardbound. Indian Rupees 275.00.

In 1991 the Indian economy was liberalised, with more emphasis being laid on the market economy and less on government control. This liberalisation has resulted in an on-going debate about the future of the Indian economy. This book has articles written by a number of noted Indian economists. The subject matter of the articles is quite varied but the dominant discussion in the first group of papers ranges round the issue of planning. The focus is on the strengths and weaknesses of planning in India and its future in the more liberal economic environment that is being put in place in India. The second group of papers examines Indian economic performance from 1950. The findings here have important implications for the future of Indian economic development. The book raises a number of unresolved issues and problems that affect the Indian economy.

Katar Singh and Vishwa Ballabh (eds). *Co-operative Management of Natural Resources*. New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1996. 271pp. Hardbound. Indian Rupees 350.00.

The management of the natural resources of a nation is an important factor affecting the level and pace of development. After the failure of both privatised and centralised public management of natural

resources, especially of common pool resources, another alternative of cooperative/collective management, suitable both politically and socially, has been strongly proposed.

This book is the outcome of a comprehensive collaborative research programme. Chapter one is a general introduction to the subject; the rest of the volume documents fourteen selected cases of cooperative management of land, forest, water, and fisheries in different regions of India. The case studies describe and analyse in detail the content, evolution, organisation, economics, functioning, and management of these co-operatives. Further, these studies evaluate the performance of these co-operatives and identify factors affecting their performance. Finally, on the basis of the lessons drawn from the studies, contributors provide practical guidelines on how to organise resource-users and enable them to manage common pool resources more efficiently, equitably, and sustainably.

This book would be of particular interest to policy-makers and development practitioners. It will also be valuable supplementary reading for courses in natural resource and environmental economics.

Barbara Hariss-White. *A Political Economy of Agricultural Markets in South India, Master of the Countryside.* New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1996. 425pp. Hardbound. Indian Rupees 395.00.

This book is a snapshot of rapidly growing agricultural markets in India. The book explains the threatening position of deregulation for both efficiency and equity, in contrast to the prevailing neo-liberal economic environment in India. It examines the institutional and logistical systems in the agricultural markets with the aid of data on five major commodity markets. In addition, it analyses the linkages of agricultural markets to money, land, and labour, stressing the way in which power is institutionalised. This also highlights the shift in the Indian agrarian environment, where landlords are now deriving profits from marketing rather than from land ownership. The book concludes that political economy is related to the central concerns of development policy such as efficiency, equity, internal diversification and its socio-economic consequences, the role of the market in rural development and in the social relations which structure production, and institutional diversity and autonomy. In this analysis of the political economy of complex market systems, the author also addresses policy issues relating to technology, regulation, and employment.

Kumadini Dandekar. *The Elderly in India.* New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1996. 229pp. Hardbound. Indian Rupees 295.00.

This book discusses the conditions of the old people in India, with emphasis on those residing in the state of Maharashtra. The elderly in India are facing a variety of problems including economic, health, non-working status, lack of independence, clash of life-styles, and generation gap. Over time, better health facilities have resulted in increased longevity of life. But the absence of adequate official policies and voluntary action programmes has further aggravated the miseries of the older generation.

The book, on the basis of a sample survey of 50,000 households in India, describes regional variations and differences between the rural and urban old in terms of health problems, financial constraints, and both geographical spread and functioning of old-age homes. It evaluates the efficiency of existing schemes and also suggests new institutional arrangements for the rural old as better and cheaper alternatives in comparison to old-age homes. Old-age homes may be practical for urbanites but they are not so in a rural environment. This book is useful reading for sociologists, social workers, demographers, and policy-makers.