

Shorter Notices*

Prayag Mehta. *Psychological Strategy for Alternative Human Development: India's Performance Since Independence.* New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1998. 252 pages. Hardbound. Indian Rs 375.00.

A poor record of human development has left India not only far behind the developed countries but also the developing countries. Mehta presents a comprehensive account of the reasons for this failure and highlights a large number of inter-related issues which affect human development. The discussion on development programmes (for poverty alleviation, health-care, literacy, primary education, and protection of forests and environment) is based on secondary data as well as wide-ranging field discussions at the grassroots level. The analysis of these programmes points towards some dysfunctional systematic tendencies in their implementation which have significantly distorted them. Instead of pursuing the stated objectives of social development, the programmes have tended to alienate the people from the state. This behaviour is influenced by the traditional hierarchical values of superordination and subordination established in the social as well as in the administrative system. The book provides a conceptual framework for understanding such behaviours and values, and also the reasons for the state failures resulting in the denial of basic needs and rights to the people. Instead of empowering the people, these tendencies exhaust their energies, engendering low self-esteem and alienation.

In conclusion, the author suggests the psychological strategy for enhancing their self-esteem, personal efficacy, capability, and empowerment in order to accelerate both economic and social development in the country. Rather than totally ignoring the state, a combination of social mobilisation and active state intervention is proposed.

Martha Alter Chen (ed). *Widows in India: Social Neglect and Public Action.* New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1998. 455 Pages. Hardbound. Indian Rs 495.00.

The total number of widows in India is extremely large, about 8 percent of the female population. Among them almost 50 percent are above 50 years of age. Very little is known about their living conditions as hardly any literature or public debate or social policy has focussed on them. This volume is attempts to provide a better understanding of the social and economic conditions of widows, of widowhood as a social problem, and to promote public action in their support.

*By Afia Malik, Research Economist, Pakistan Institute of Development Economics, Islamabad, except where noted otherwise.

The first three contributions in Part I explore the dominant ideological construction of widowhood in India as well as the variations in local customary norms regarding widowhood. The next two chapters in Part II cover the demographics of widowhood, relating widowhood to mortality and aging. In the next four parts, four key areas for public policy and action in favour of widows are discussed. These include property rights, social security, employment, and social identity. These areas are explained with the help of case studies, as well as illustrative histories of individual widows. The contributors highlight how law and institutionalised gender inequality combine to restrict the human, physical, and financial resources available to widows, thus making them socially and economically vulnerable. Government and non-governmental efforts to rehabilitate widows are also discussed. This is a pioneering contribution in gender studies.

Aslam M. Chaudhary and Abdul Hamid. *Human Resource Development and Management in Pakistan*. Lahore, Ferozsons, 1999. xiv+216 pages.

Human resource development is a neglected area in Pakistan and most of the developing countries. As a result, economic growth in these countries is hampered by the low quality of human resources. The book contains a detailed analysis of different issues pertaining to human resources in Pakistan. It highlights the neglect and meagre financial allocation made for human resource development, particularly for women. It also provides comprehensive information on child labour, poverty, income distribution, imbalance of manpower, and unemployment. Small industry development is seen as a remedy to combat increasing unemployment. The information contained in the book is based on the new research findings of the authors. The book will be useful to policy-makers and researcher in the area of manpower planning and development. (Eatraz Ahmed)

Vivek Pinto. *Gandhi's Vision and Values: The Moral Quest for Change in Indian Agriculture*. New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1998. 176 pages. Hardbound. Indian Rs 295.00.

Gandhi's Vision and Values analyses the contemporary relevance of 'Hind Swaraj' (a polemical pamphlet Gandhi wrote in 1909) to Indian agriculture and planning. The author addresses distinct though interrelated themes which contribute to the overall understanding of the ethical and moral principles with which Gandhi experimented, initially in the thinking in 'Hind Swaraj' and then in agricultural communities, to reconstruct a harmonious, poverty-free, non-violent, and self-reliant society.

There are four chapters followed by a conclusion. Chapter 1 is on Gandhi's religiously-shaped views on agricultural development. In Chapter 2, the relationship between Gandhi's religious perspectives and agricultural issues is discussed. Chapter

3 reviews planned agricultural development in India during 1951–74, to demonstrate the failure of the current system in alleviating poverty. Chapter 4 explores the relevance of Gandhi's experiments and current alternatives. In the 'Conclusion', certain ways requiring full dedication are highlighted which would possibly affect the social transformation of agriculture and other sectors in accordance with Gandhi's vision of India.

Alan Thomas, Joanna Chataway, and Marc Wuyts (eds). *Finding Out Fast: Investigative Skills for Policy and Development*. New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1998. 376 pages. Hardbound. Indian Rs 395.00.

Finding Out Fast is about the skills and methods for investigating questions of concern for development policy and public action, and not just for academic research. The contributors provide guidance on how to locate, evaluate, and use relevant information, given the limited resources, time, and data.

The first section investigates how areas for investigation can be conceptualised. The core of the book is organised to cover the main generic skills required for carrying out an investigation. Three methods are discussed separately in three different sections: thinking with paper; thinking with people and organisation; and thinking with data. In the conclusion, the editors highlight personal effectiveness and integrity. They compare different contributors to the volume and discuss how to judge the worth of a policy investigation, emphasising the importance of the challenge and of trying not to get it wrong.

This volume will be a valuable guide for the making of competent investigators; also to understand how to use research effectively, and to evaluate the research by others critically.

Anant Phadke. *Drug Supply and Use: Towards a Rational Policy in India*. New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1998. 183 pages. Hardbound. Indian Rs 295.00.

The Indian drug industry has grown remarkably since independence, and is now self-sufficient in the whole range of drugs. At the same time, the majority of drug formulations available are irrational, causing wastage of people's money. The cut in the public sector drug budget has resulted in the severe shortage of drugs in public health facilities and in primary health units. The poor, who are the main users of these facilities are deprived of them as most of the drugs are marketed by the private sector. The people's money is being wasted not only due to irrational drug formulations, but also due to irrational use of rational drugs. How to deal with the predominance of unscientific drug formulae and how the situation can be remedied is the subject matter of this book.

Part I examines the track record of the drug industry internationally as regards production of safe and effective drugs. The issue of predominance of irrational drug formulations is also discussed here. Not only is the drug industry the main culprit responsible for the irrational, exploitative nature of drug production and sales, the doctors are equally responsible. An effort made by the movement for rational drug policy is also presented at the end of this part. Part II is based on a three-year study (1991-93) on the 'supply and use of pharmaceuticals in Satara District'. This part analyses the following issues: the contents of the doctor's prescription in comparison with the standard prescription for the diseases; financial wastage due to irrational prescriptions; private prescriptions in public clinics; the knowledge level that nurses have about the drugs they administer; and the drug requirements as compared with the current expenditure on drugs.

Norman Uphoff, Milton J. Esman, and Anirudh Krishna. *Reasons for Success: Learning from Instructive Experiences in Rural Development*. New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1998. 233 pages. Paperback. Indian Rs 250.00.

This is a companion volume to *Reasons for Hope: Instructive Experiences in Rural Development*, edited by Anirudh Krishna, Norman Uphoff, and Milton J. Esman (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1998). Here lessons are drawn from the cases presented in the previous volume that will assist both planners and protagonists of rural improvement, offering a more comparative and analytical perspective. The attempt is to distil, in an objective way, the state of the art of people-centred rural development. Some additional cases are also presented to expand the range of experience and maintain a geographic spread across Asia, Africa, and Latin America, with the majority of cases from South Asia.

Success and sustainability are argued to be matters of degree and probability. Those rural development programmes are considered to be successful which contribute in different ways and to different degrees to three main aspects of rural people's lives: productivity, well-being, and empowerment. Four criteria are identified as assurance of these outcomes: resource mobilisation in order to be self-reliant and self-sufficient; scaling up and expansion that will benefit people through technical and organisational innovations; diversification so that organisational capabilities are applied to solving problems in rural areas; and continual innovation—utilising learning process and problem-solving strategies, with maturing institutional relationships, that enable rural people to have more control over their situation and their future.

The emphasis throughout the book is more on ideas, leadership, and appropriate strategies than on money for the success of rural development programmes. What is needed is respectful collaboration between external and community actors which will make both outside initiatives fruitful as well as local initiatives more effective and widespread.

The volume extracts some general principles and operational guidelines from various case studies which would be of interest to planners, implementers, and evaluators of broad-based rural development.

Lalita Subrahmanyam. *Women Scientists in the Third World: The Indian Experience.* New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1998. 301 pages. Hardbound. Indian Rs 450.00.

This ethnographic study reflects on the lives and careers of women in science in the Third World where there is an academic environment that seems favourable to women, while at the same time there is an environment where it is difficult to survive. It is based on a case study, which covers all full-time female faculty members in the hard sciences at the University of Madras. The aim is to find out the patterns and differences in their perspectives, and the attitudes of academic women scientists toward themselves as women in science; their careers; their relationship with colleagues, male and female; their research interests; communication strategies and linkages; the manner in which their family life intersects with their careers; and the discipline of science and its value. All this describes the struggle of individual women in life and career in a male-dominated society. This discussion goes beyond the individual level and combines it with an analysis of the structures and organisational features that serve to maintain women in a marginalised position.

The book is divided in four parts. Part I constitutes the introductory section. Part II deals with issues and concerns that scientists face on account of gender. Part III deals with the problems that these women in science face because they are scientists and, more specifically, Third World scientists. The last part pulls together the various themes to weave the final product, the Indian experience.

The author concludes that women scholars suffer from two handicaps—they are affected by the neoclassical structures and activities which hamper all scientists from the Third World, while their careers are restricted by the constraints imposed by an essentially patriarchal society.

Thus two portraits emerge in this study; one of an Indian woman as a scientist, and another of an Indian scientist as a woman. These will be of interest to those in women's studies, science, and technology.

Philippe Cadéne and Mark Holmstrom (eds). *Decentralised Production in India: Industrial Districts, Flexible Specialisation, and Employment.* New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1998. 412 pages. Hardbound. Indian Rs 525.00.

Despite the rapid growth of industry in India since 1950, quality, variety, and technical sophistication are still lacking. Further, the country is rich in labour but is employing a small part of it, keeping the rest as surplus. With growing trends towards globalisation and liberalisation, it is very important to determine the right

path for future industrial development in India. This volume is a valuable contribution in this direction, with a specific focus on decentralised production in small and medium firms and on employment opportunities. It is a joint contribution of economists, sociologists, and social anthropologists, with an aim to suggest ways of learning from successful cases of decentralised production, on how the efficient networks of small, technically and economically interdependent firms can create more employment opportunities and help achieve economic growth.

The volume has four sections. The first section sets the terms of the debate about industrial districts, decentralised production, and flexible specialisation. This is followed by three case studies of Indian industrial districts in the making, based on engineering and new technologies. The third section is on the restructuring of older industries, which may or may not be capable of renewing themselves to meet the challenge of new markets and products. The first two chapters in the last section deal with the politics of industrial districts, including the role of business associations which provide services to entrepreneurs and relations with governments. In the conclusion, recent developments in Indian industrial districts are discussed, and the relevance of traditional networks to new economic activities is explained. By focusing on the emerging patterns of interdependence among small- and medium-size enterprises in India, this book breaks new ground.