

## BOOK REVIEW

**Casual Labour of Kanpur : Their Living and Working Conditions, K. G. Agrawal, National Labour Institute, New Delhi**

This slim volume is based on the author's survey of 135 casual workers in Kanpur, a city with more than 15,000 casual workers. These workers are employed either on a regular basis by the Railways, PWD, MES, and the textile mills, or are unattached and have to find employment on a day to day basis. The author has posed a series of questions to them regarding their working and living conditions, wages and economic situation, migration, family and social life, aspirations, and health and medical care.

His general observations are far from surprising for anyone familiar with the dismal, almost Dickensian, state of affairs of casual labourers in India's urban labour markets. Casual workers are ignorant of the Minimum Wages Act and other protective labour legislation. Ironically, it is the State, as well as the organised sector, that are the biggest employers of this strata of Indian labour reserve. All existing laws are in fact circumvented by public bodies when the need arises to hire temporary workers.

The author does note the existence of differences within his sample of casual workers. For example, badli workers in the textile mills are clearly better off than casual workers employed by the Railways, the latter typically having worked 5-10 years without being regularised. He also notes the existence of sex discrimination with respect to work allocation and wages in the Kanpur casual labour market.

The vast number of tables occupy the major portion of the monograph. No statistical tests are carried out (they could have been) and the monotonous description of the tables could undoubtedly have been made more interesting. But for the latter, the author would necessarily have had to relate his findings to the vast body of theoretical literature on this topic.

The monograph could also have been edited more carefully, for example, on page 12 the

author's imposed metaphor fails : "They are very sore with the management and have a feeling that their blood is being sucked. They are so resentful that they are almost revengeful." And again, on page 74 : "Casual labour of Kanpur does not have much of education unlike casual labour of Delhi who have good education."

Finally, the author's finding that union presence alters the work-life experience of casual labour confirms my hypothesis that unions can qualitatively change the nature of unorganised urban labour markets. The question that remains (for Kanpur's casual workers and for workers all over) is why unions do not organize the unorganized?

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**Organizational Behaviour Process by Uday Pareek, Rawat Publications, Jaipur, India 1988, Page 367, Rs. 90.00.**

This book will be a useful resource for those who are interested in Behavioural Science and Organizational Behaviour. In addition, it will be a valuable guide to those who are interested in public policy, business environment, and social issues in management.

The structure of the book is consistent with its stated objectives. Twenty three chapters divided into five parts or sections serialized from A to E, deal with behavioural processes relating to persons, roles, teams, and finally the organization.

Chapters 1 and 2 describe the importance of the behavioural processes in organization and the relationship between societal culture and organizations. These two chapters lay the basic approach and foundations of this book.

Chapter 1 argues that the concept of process essentially concerns with the question of "how" or the overall dynamics which underlie the behavioural interactional dimen-