

Overall, the book is quite interesting to begin with but it loses its appeal pretty soon because of the uneven quality of the chapters. The author's attempt of compiling a set of papers written over a 15 year period without updating them has not worked for the book. There are a number of typographical errors which could have been easily avoided. On the whole, "India's Turn" does not quite turn it on for you.

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¹ Arvind v Arvind- The Economist, Jun 26th 2008

The Orderly Workplace: An Exploration into Holistically Disciplined Worklife, by Prem Chadha, New Delhi: Macmillan, 2007. Price: Rs. 585

This book is about institutionalizing orderliness at workplace. The author contends that the present-day organizations are characterized by chaos and disorder, and correcting this situation is the primary motivation behind his book. Drawing upon the experiences of several organizations, he suggests many ways of reducing disorder and increasing harmony at workplace. In fact the author often takes a wide sweep and draws from several disciplines (e.g., sociology, psychology) and sources (e.g., scholarly work, popular articles). This style of research and writing is both enriching and problematic. Such a diversity of sources is likely to appeal to the readers who have not cultivated a specialized interest in human behavior at workplace. However, the author has not been able to methodically fuse the diversity of perspectives and data sources into a coherent whole that will appeal to a researcher of organizational behavior.

The beginning of the book rightly highlights the critical role of people in organizations. The author then builds his argument by pointing out the inevitable uncertainties and chaos because of human behavior at workplace. The book is divided into three main sections: understanding orderliness, restoring orderliness, and institutionalizing orderliness. The author clarifies the concept of orderliness in the first section and discusses various elements of the societal and economic contexts that bear upon orderliness at workplace. The second section is about the strategies to bring about orderliness at workplace. In the last section, the author focuses on some of the time-

tested ways of institutionalizing positive workplace behaviors such as authenticity, equity and efficient structuring.

The first chapter contains a description of the socio-economic context which, according to the author, provides both order and disorder at workplace. The author tries to trace the roots of orderliness in what is happening around each one of us as individuals. In the second chapter, the author moves his analyses into the organization and discusses some elements of a high-performing workplace. He also proposes a typology of organization in this chapter. The third chapter is about the conceptual aspects of orderliness at workplace. In the fourth chapter, the author moves back and forth between general context and organizations and discusses some reasons behind disorder and its manifestations. The author sets the stage for the next main section of the book in the fifth chapter by describing the national economic scenario and how orderliness is useful.

Chapter six contains a description of several ways in which workplace discipline can be achieved. He rightly points out the supremacy of intrinsic sources of motivation over reward-and-punishment method of ensuring orderliness. In chapter seven, the author advocates the usefulness of some preventive measures that can help restore orderliness. The flavor of the next two chapters is dominantly reactionary wherein the author dwells upon how to correct and deter behaviors that disrupt orderliness. Chapter ten proposes some ways to provide incentives so that the right kind of behaviors can get a boost.

Chapter eleven provides yet another discussion on ways to institute orderliness. Here the analyses and suggestions are pegged at all the three levels of individual, teams and organizations. Next chapter is on justice in and out of workplace, and the author rightly points out the important role of fairness in instituting orderliness. In chapter thirteen, the author deals with the issue of organizational vision, mission, and culture in order to convey the importance of these macro variables in orderliness. The next chapter is on job design, and here the author discusses various considerations in an effective job design. The final chapter is on the critical issue of leadership. The author discusses several issues of leadership, and attempts to link them to the orderliness at workplace.

Despite the enthusiasm of the author, and his repeated attempts to offer a grand theory of orderliness at workplace, the book fails to inspire confidence. To begin with, the author celebrates the arguments put forth by Alexis Carrel, a Nobel Prize winning French surgeon in his book, "Man, The Unknown." However, Carrel was subsequently criticized for his views on eugenics in this book. Throughout the book, the author draws from several sources, and often without offering sufficient justification. Despite

this variety, the author seems to have ignored the mainstream management literature and research. This reflects poorly on the book, as it fails to convey what the mainstream research has to offer. Yet another surprising omission on the part of the author is the rich and celebrated literature on similar concepts from Japanese workplace. For example, Masaaki (1991) describes similar concepts in his famous book on Kaizen, which the author has ignored.

The book is rich in offering anecdotal evidence (for example, on p. 188) to support the assertions, but the rigor of analysis is missing. Suggestions are often derived from a loose analysis of evidence (for example, the advice on deliberately not outperforming your seniors on p. 95-97). There are some serious limitations of concept specification and theory building in the book. The author loosely derives the concept of orderliness, and includes too many attributes in it. He also fails to clearly communicate what is the boundary of this concept, i.e., what orderliness is not. As Osigweh (1989) has pointed out, such looseness is detrimental to a coherent transfer of meaning. Similar problems are also seen at the front of theory building, as the domain of theory (Dubin, 1978) never gets clarified. The author frequently moves back and forth between organizations and macro socio-economic contexts, and a reader is left wondering if this book is about orderliness at workplace or elsewhere. In his quest to celebrate and champion orderliness, the author has also failed to highlight and appreciate that conflicts, chaos and disorder have some positive organizational outcomes too. Overall, the book might appeal to general public, but it is not a scholarly work.

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