

According to them work is not something that one does in order to prove oneself or demonstrate some other principle. It must also not be that which affirms one's intelligence, brilliance, inventiveness or virtuosity. As long as this is so, it will be fertile ground for ego demonstration. Rather work must be that dynamic process where in one's creative potential has the chance to unfold and express itself. Work must become worship; worship of one's creative urges and worship of that which is seeking to express itself through our agency. According to them dedicated work has to mean "work for the sake of work". This is called work commitment.

"Meaningful work" opens new ideas and approaches for exploration, it is a useful addition to books on work ethics, presented in a lucid style which is worth pursuing by all those working and teaching in the area of professional and business ethics as well as by general readers interested in the interaction between work and personal values.

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***Cases on South Asia : Human Resources and Industrial Relations Volume I : Case Studies; Volume II : Teaching Notes*** Edited by C. S. Venkata Ratnam & Published by : International Labour Office, Geneva (1999)

***Human Resource Development for Adjustment At the Enterprise Level Volume I : Participants' Manual; Volume II : Facilitators' Manual*** Edited by C. S. Venkata Ratnam & Published by : International Labour Office, Geneva (1999)

The two books reviewed here are both collection of case studies on firm-level restructuring in developing Asian economies. They have the common purpose of developing teaching materials, based on real experiences in relevant national contexts, for training of managers. The case studies have been sponsored by the Bureau for Employers' Activities of the International Labour Office, Geneva.

The first book presents 23 case studies covering the 5 countries in the South-Asia (Bangladesh-5, India-4, Nepal-3, Pakistan-5 and Sri Lanka-6).

They are divided in 5 themes : modernising and restructuring (5), privatisation (4), skills development (3), corporate decline and turnaround (5) and labour-management cooperation (6). Out of 23 firms studied, there are : 5 public enterprises, 4 MNCs, 9 private and 5 nationalised companies.

In the preface, the editor mentions that the cases were written by the executives of the employers' organisations, or their nominees and he acknowledges that "while some case studies are more complete and comprehensive in presenting data and information, others are a little sketchy". He attributes this to "the difficulty in accessing information in spite of the fact that the national employers' organisations themselves have been actively involved in the project". While one may appreciate the predicament faced by the editor, nevertheless, the output of an important project undertaken by the ILO deserves an objective review.

To be effective as a pedagogical tool, a case study must present, at the minimum, a data based description of the problems and their contexts. A good case study also needs to reflect the differing perceptions of the various stakeholders about the problems and their causes, as well as the environmental challenges being faced by the firm. In the absence of these two essential ingredients, a case study is unlikely to offer any drama or tension which is so very necessary to evoke the all important debate about the problems and their alternate solutions. As a learning tool, the case study loses its effectiveness if it fails to arouse such an active debate.

Judged against the above criteria, the quality of the cases presented in Volume I varies from 'good' to 'very bad', with a significant number lying towards the right (or, wrong !) end of the spectrum. On 'modernising and restructuring' theme, which perhaps is the key theme of this compilation, all the 5 cases are considered to be weak. As many as 3 (ABC Company, Nepal Bank Ltd., and SmithKline Beecham Ltd.) are so sketchy that they are unlikely to generate any meaningful discussion in any setting. Other 2 cases are bland narration of facts presenting no contra viewpoints which can enliven a case discussion. Durgapur Steel Ltd. Case offered a good opportunity for such a critical examination which was, however, not utilised. The 4 cases on 'privatisation' are of 'indifferent' to 'poor' quality, Bhrikuti Paper Mills Ltd.

Case has no focus, while Hinopak Motors Ltd. Is marred by poor presentation of facts. In contrast, the 3 cases on 'skills development' are well-written. Karachi Dock Labour Board Ltd. Case perhaps is the best, followed by the Padma Textiles Ltd. Case which can be used as a 'model' of modern approach towards skill development. Of the 5 cases on 'corporate decline and turnaround', 4 are outright bad. Star Mills Ltd. Case, which is the fifth on the theme, does not bring out any HR issues; it is more a case on post-takeover financial turnaround. There is nothing much to write home about the 6 cases on 'labour-management cooperation'. In many cases, the narration stops abruptly, after a bland recital of some incomplete facts.

Given the overall poor quality of the cases, one can only sympathise with the editor or whosoever (other than the case-writer) has helped in the preparation of the teaching notes incorporated in Volume II. The writers of the teaching notes must have had difficult times in 'teasing out', or sometimes even 'inventing', issues which were germane to the theme. With some exceptions, the overall quality of the teaching notes is good and they raise some very pertinent questions about the issues concerning restructuring at the firm level.

The second book, also written in two volumes, uses 12 case studies from 6 Asian countries (5 South-Asian countries and Philippines). These cases have been developed as training materials for designing a three-day training programme for managers on firm-level restructuring; particularly on how human resource and industrial relations issues are handled in the process of restructuring. Volume I is the Participants' Manual which has, apart from 12 case studies, two articles explaining the related concepts and also some materials for group exercise. Facilitators' Guide presented as Volume II has teaching notes and ready-to-use materials for overhead slides for presenting the concepts and the cases to the participants.

The 12 case studies presented are 2 each from the 6 countries chosen. The firms studied are all in manufacturing and there are 4 MNCs, 4 private and 4 public enterprises. The overall quality of the case presentations made in this book is much better and this is true of materials contained in both the volumes of the second book, when compared with the corresponding volumes

of the first. BOC India Ltd. Case stands out as the best in terms of conceptualisation of the issues, analysis of data and clarity of strategic initiatives taken by the firm. Voltas Ltd. and ABC Ltd. Cases also deserve mention as well-written cases. Quality of the remaining cases vary from 'moderately high' to 'low'. All in all, the second book should qualify as a competent compilation.

As an end-note the reviewer would like to observe that case writing needs special skills. Many of the episodes in the first book could have been covered into pedagogically useful case studies, if they were handled with necessary competence. As such they are unlikely to have much pedagogical value for two reasons. Firstly, their utility as a pedagogical tool will be severely limited by their incompleteness. Secondly, any instructor, other than perhaps the case-writer himself, is likely to find it very difficult to generate any meaningful discussion on the problems confronting the company and how to resolve them in the absence of much substance in these cases.

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***Managing Organisational Process : The Individual, The Enterprise, The Nation & Beyond*** by Gouranga P. Chattopadhyay, Calcutta : Eureka Publishers, 1999, 391p, Price Rs. 450/\$20.50 (Cloth)

I approached this book with interest, as its author has been a highly regarded management teacher as well as a noted personality in the psychoanalytic movement in our country. I have heard that many individuals and organizations have benefited immensely from his knowledge and applied work. So, for me, it was a journey of getting to know him somewhat closely through the pages of this book – the philosophy that guides/guided him, and the foundations on which he works/worked.

On the whole it was an interesting and informative journey for me, especially since I am not formally trained in psychoanalysis or on the contributions of scholars such as Freud and Erikson. Further, having read some of their works, neither do I swear by them or by the movements that