

and fuller treatment in this book, as they might provide more relevant lessons for productivity management to these countries. For example, there are several case-studies—both success stories as well as failures—in regard to application of productivity management techniques in India in the fields of work-redesign, wage-productivity linkage, quality circles etc. and some of these were reported in I.L.O. journals and publications as well as in other professional publications. The author could have well utilised them in connection with the points and approaches discussed by him in this book. Possibly, similar cases may be available also from South Korea, Pakistan, Malaysia, middle-east countries and Latin America.

On the whole, this I.L.O. publication is a very useful handbook for practitioners, academics and students,—in other words, any one interested in management of productivity. Oxford and IBH Publishing Co. (Pvt.) Ltd. deserves thanks for making this useful book available to the Indian readers at a reasonable price.

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Industrial Restructuring and Union Power,
Ajeet N Matur, ILO-ARTEP New Delhi,
1991.

The response of many industrial enterprises to the official liberalisation measures adopted in India in the eighties with the consequent increase in domestic and international competition took the form of industrial restructuring. It involved changes in capital structure, technology, product mix, plant location as well as employment. The trade unions viewed these changes,—more importantly those connected with changes in technology, employment and, to some extent, plant loca-

tion,—with alarm, which in turn often caused negative responses in the form of strikes, demonstrations and political action. The impact of industrial restructuring on industrial relations in India deserves serious and systematic attention, not only as a matter of contemporary interest, but more due to its significance for the state policy of future in the area of industries and labour in the context of the growing tempo of such restructuring with India's arrival into the threshold of techno-electronic revolution in industrial production, information technology and management. Professor Mathur's monograph on "Industrial Restructuring and Union Power" is a welcome study in this respect on the micro-economic dimensions of economic restructuring and its interface with industrial relations in India. In view of I.L.O.'s concern with structural adjustments and its effects on employment, it has been quite appropriate for I.L.O.'s Asian Regional Team for Employment Promotion to sponsor a study on the subject, the findings of which have been published in the form of this monograph.

The book opens with a few introductory chapters clarifying the concepts used, outlining the objectives of the study and presenting the methodology as well as research design, coverage and hypotheses of the study. It uses mainly the qualitative approach to research, heavily leaning on the case-study method, instead of the statistical methods,—more popular with the social science researchers in India. While the present reviewer strongly believes in the appropriateness of the use of a systematic and conscious mix of the qualitative and quantitative tools in social science research,—which the author has used to some extent, in view of the lack of familiarity with the methodological basis of the qualitative research tools on the part of many researchers in India, an elaborate exposition of the case-study as a tool of

systematic research with some light on the methodological mix of the quantitative and qualitative approaches (or "triangulation", as described by some researchers in the U.S. Universities), could have enhanced the utility of the book. This would have been particularly relevant in view of the limited acquaintance with the potentials of the case study mainly as a pedagogic tool in the Indian Universities as against the realisation of its strength as a full-fledged method of social science research and teaching India. However, in terms of methodology, the author has well defended his use of the qualitative case-study approach against the more usual reliance on purely statistical approach in many models on union-management relations, by stating that qualitative analysis in these matters can better understand the issues under study, since the relationship revealed in the exclusively statistical research may be correlational, rather than revealing causation. These chapters are followed by a chapter on the highlights of the case-studies made by the author, another on their analysis and interpretation and a final one summarising the conclusions and the scope for further research.

Professor Mathur has made a very interesting contribution to the empirical knowledge in the field of studies on trade unionism in India by studying 6 cases of "no-union" enterprises. Strategy of positive "No-Unionism" in industrial/business enterprises was tried out in the U.S.A. in recent years in several industries. In India, however, the antipathy to trade unions in the past mainly took the form of negative "no-unionism" through the attempts at the forceful suppression of the formation of unions by means of victimization and strong-arm tactics of employers. The positive approach to "No-Union" strategy by means of good terms and conditions of work and welfare measures was not considered as feasible by many employers in the past. That

in India also this is now possible has been proved by some forward looking employers. The case-studies by Mathur in the above mentioned 6 enterprises, which included the negative as well as positive policies for non-Unionism, have thrown light on the conditions and the measures, which made this novel approach feasible in India. However, feasibility alone being not enough to clinch the question of desirability, the author should have examined in details the pros and cons of the positive "no-unionism" for enabling the practising managers of industrial relations to make a conscious choice between different shades of employers' responses to unionism, starting from negative 'no-union' policy on the one end, to the policy of integrative bargaining for joint problem-solving on the other end. The positive "no-union" policy, the accommodative collective bargaining and power bargaining or distributive bargaining, may occupy the intermediate positions between the two extremes.

Dr Mathur classified unions into "internal unions" and external unions, with the locus of decision making as the criterion. According to this classification, the internal union is one in which the de-facto decision making power is exercised by the leaders of the particular union concerned, irrespective of whether it is affiliated to a central union or not. In the external union that rests with external forces, e.g., management influence, or affiliation of unions which may be political, or influenced by some other outside forces. The nature of the union, external or internal, does not remain necessarily static. Mathur noted the case of 1 enterprise in the oligopolistic product market shifting from external unionism to internal unionism, while another enterprise of oligopolistic nature, shifted from external union-type to no-union type. From his case studies, he finds that movement from external union to internal union or no-union, and from

internal union to no-union is improbable in the competitive product market. It seems that the liberalisation of trade regimes either reduces the ability of the enterprises to make deals with external unions, or their political patrons, or induces them to take control of union, sometimes even to get rid of them. However, logically we have a doubt about this assertion of liberalisation inducing the employers to encourage positive no-unionism to get rid of them, since a most probable economic impact of liberalisation is expected to be the growth of competitiveness in the product market. This riddle is left unanswered by the author.

The author also finds in his case studies that internal unions are more constrained in taking effective steps for trade union confrontation in comparison to the external unions. However, logically this need not be necessarily true, as the workers' frustration and resentment may find expression in the growth of economic sanctions against employers, and either an internal union has to respond through confrontationist action or it may be born in response to this resentment of workers. In fact, in the history of Indian trade unions, cases have been noted in the past, where strike or other action of confrontation were sponsored by "internal unions", which originated from the rank and file workers' resentment against employers' policies. However, in most of these cases, trade unions shifted afterward to external unionism. The author also examined the question of the "price-tag" or the higher wages to be paid by employers to avoid unionism. On the basis of the given cases, he finds that out of the 6 cases, in 2 enterprises operating in the competitive environment no such price tag was attached, while in another competitive enterprise a price tag was accep-

ted on the basis of its projected growth in identified market segments, where it hoped to function as an oligopolist and believed that the employee response to the price-tag and resultant gains would offset such "Investment". On the other hand, the author found that a price tag was attached to every oligopolist "no-union" firm. This emerged as one indicator of difference between oligopolist enterprises and competitive ones in their choice in favour of a "no-union" firm.

The author also found that while no significant difference could be attributed to the "union type" in determining issues, priorities and stances on restructuring, the enterprises with internal unions were slower to respond to structural and other changes on account of their fear that this might, in turn, encourage an unwelcome change in the union type, i.e. from the internal union to the external union.

The author also confirmed the finding noted by many other researchers in their independent studies, that restructuring in the competitive as well as oligopolist enterprises involves in job-losses. The consequent apprehension of the negative response from the workers was found to be a major obstacle from the point of view of employers in taking a decision for restructuring.

On the whole, inspite of some shortcomings, which have been noted above—this study by Professor Mathur in a relatively infrequented area, should be accepted as a useful contribution to labour economics and industrial relations.

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