

**Managerial Unionism** by Baldev R. Sharma, Shri Ram Centre for Industrial Relations and Human Resources, New Delhi, 1993 pp. 291.

Collective fronts formed by managers have been researched for the first time in India in this seminal work. Sharma traces the evolution of the process at enterprise level together with national developments that aided or impeded the urge for non-workmen to collectivise. Sharma also offers us a glimpse of the enabling provisions and features of managerial collective voice mechanism in some countries.

Managerial unionism in India is predominantly found to be in public enterprises with membership ranging from supervisory officers to positions of Directors. The study based on a sample of 40 enterprises finds office-bearship to be mainly with junior managers and a split in the collectivity between hard-liners ('*garam dal*') and passive compromises ('*naram dal*'). Increasingly, agitational and militant methods are also being adopted by these associations. Sharma sees their *raison d'être* in helping members cope with feelings of relative deprivation, in defending against attacks from unionised workmen and in alleviating dissatisfaction and alienation due to instabilities at the top and bureaucratic functioning.

The author favours enactment of laws to confer special status on these collectivities to legitimise them as channels of communication distinct from trade unions. However, the author does not delve into the adversarial nature of stratification in the industrial sociology of India. Thus, he ignores the important dimension of linking and integrating organisational sub-classifications to foster teams that may rely on the concept of self-managed enterprises by engaging in management rather than in countering a process mistaken for a collective noun. It is this that causes protagonists to feel they do not belong and places them in competition for organisational space with other such groups like unions of workmen. Sharma also does not tell us anything about the changing role of collectivities, their motives and their powerbase at a time of profound restructuring. This renders the analysis a bit dated and out of context because there is no mention of the internal dynamics of management structures, systems and processes in relation to the phenomena that has been studied.

In sum, a good informative, well researched book and a useful contribution though it leaves the reader wondering why the influences of and on managerial unionism with respect to process are missing.

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