

work is different from other so-called successful projects in this respect. Most health projects unless they are willing to take large funds from donor agencies, or be supported by big institutions, cannot do any worthwhile work in the field of delivery of health services. (Chattisgarh Mines Shramik Sangh's health work in Rajhara is an exception which hopefully, would duplicate elsewhere.) Health education/conscientisation as a part of broader political work is a low-cost but challenging and important work which has so far not been attempted. This is in contrast to the numerous funded projects in the field of delivery of health care. It must be pointed out that the report under review does not cross this conventional barrier.

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A Bird's Eye View of Psychology

Psychology In A Third World Country—The Indian Experience by Durganand Sinha, 1986, Sage Publications.

THE term 'psychology' is a concept borrowed from the West. Thus initial studies were naturally based on Western concepts. This of course does not mean that psychology has not evolved any roots of its own in India. But it is undeniable that Western psychologists and ideas have permeated every aspect of our life and behaviour. Sinha repeatedly brings out this truism in this book covering the psychology scene in India. The purpose of this monograph, done at the instance of UNESCO, was broadly to examine the impact and role of psychology in a Third World country like India.

It is but natural that psychologists in India are very much influenced by the West in the kind of research work done. The offspring is bound to imitate its parent till such time that it can form its own ideas and opinions and finally enter its own creative phase. Psychology today in India could be said to have arrived. We are not only able to evolve our own theories and concepts but are also in a position to influence the world at large.

Sinha traces the growth of 'psychology' in India in four phases pre-Independence, post-Independence phase of expansion, phase of problem-oriented research and finally the phase of indigenisation. This can be looked at another way in developmental terms. The infant stage of being shackled to the West; the childhood period where aping went on; the adolescent phase when Indian psychologists tried to break away from the bonds of the West; attempted to coin their own terms and asked questions of their parents and their motives, changed and adapted values and attitudes to suit their environment; and the adult phase where indigenous research is being done and a certain amount of influence being wielded on others, especially in the Third World countries.

The author seems to have taken an unduly critical attitude particularly in his review of the post-Independence period—like a harsh parent! Fortunately, as the review proceeds a more objective account is seen.

The bulk of the presentation is in terms of enumerating the research work done in India covering different areas and branches of psychology. But in the area of testing, there do seem to be some gaps. Several tests have been adapted and

are apt to our conditions do not figure, e.g., Bhatia's tests and child development tests.

Psychology has made quantum jumps in the 60s and 70s but what has not been done is to dispel the wrong notion that psychology means something to do with abnormal people—being the layman's understanding. All the research done is commendable, but what has this resulted in terms of follow-up actions and policies? The author himself puts the impact of psychology in these words, "Psychology in India has made significant contributions to the individual and unlimited spheres of our life like in industry, educational and clinical fields because they share many characteristics of similar institutions in western societies where this discipline has developed. But on a macro level and on larger social issues such as poverty, inequality, social justice and social change, psychology has yet to make a significant impact." The author's message to practising psychologists and scholars to be 'indigenous' and 'Indian' in their pursuits is very apt for psychology to enlarge its role in our national life.

The book would have added to its stature if the author, with his vast knowledge and experience, had given more emphasis to the future trends and directions that Indian psychology should take—to make it more meaningful and relevant to our society and solving its problems.

The overall merit of the book lies in its broad canvas giving a bird's eye-view of the psychology scene in India. It could be a good reference source for scholars and educationists alike to be aware of what is happening around the country. Its bibliography is in itself a mine of valuable information. Altogether, the book is a commendable effort.

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