

jumps into new policy initiatives designed to alleviate youth unemployment, while cutting back on funding for education at all levels, Canadian academics would do well to take a closer look at the issues and enter the debate of which this book is a part.

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Singhal, R.P. *Revitalising School Complexes in India*. Atlantic Highlands, N.J.: Humanities Press, Inc., \$13.75 (U.S.).

This is a valuable book for educational planners, administrators and teachers. It is packed with information and carefully based interpretation. Some chapters tend to favour a little too much technical analysis but this need not take away from the interest and relevance for the general reader.

Dr. Singhal provides some convenient overviews (with some key tables) of the Indian scene: isolation between neighbouring schools, alienation between schools and other educational institutions of higher order, problems of inadequate monetary inputs and the need for optimum utilisation of available resources. He also provides profiles of integrated planning for school complexes and identifies some significant predictors of the revitalising process. Two important concerns are school-community relationships and effective institutionalization of the innovative experiment.

The major theme of the book concerns effective adoption of innovative changes in school systems and analyses of constraints which may typically block such efforts in India or similar situations elsewhere. The problems include a resistance to change (among teachers, heads of schools, educational administrators and even the community), inadequate involvement of teachers, an overemphasis on (autocratic) centralised planning, and absence of a strong political will or support (according to Dr. Singhal's analysis the failure of the School Complex Innovation in Bihar was caused mainly by the change in the state government . . . "When the new Education Minister announced that the scheme was to be withdrawn . . ."). In contrast, the success of the Maharashtra experiment indicated that integration (properly coordinated linkages between change-agent activities and client activities) and decentralisation are crucial for success of any innovation. "The system of 'school complex' and the principle of 'rapport' which constitute vital elements of RBP (Rapport Based Programme) in Maharashtra are important instruments of participative and non-authoritarian functioning of schools and the department of education" (p. 139).

It is particularly important, in the context of Indian education, that the change being planned through any innovation be 'incremental' rather than of any 'fundamental' type. Quoting the OECD Report (1974) on the "Creativity of Schools", Singhal observes that while fundamental changes need both inducement and coercion from outside the school, the incremental change - affecting as it does the practice of the teacher rather than his role - depends on the nature of internal organisation and relationships in it. The integrated planning model of the RBP School Improvement in Charholi (Maharashtra) aimed quite realistically not at altering the teacher's role but at introducing some significant changes in that role.

Dr. Singhal presents an optimistic report of this change with an encouraging account of the feasibility of the Maharashtra experiment for other states in India.

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