

BOOK REVIEW

M.K. Bhasin and Veena Bhasin 1997. *Human Ecological Studies : Schedules and Programme*. Delhi : Kamla-Raj Enterprises. pp.iii+179, Rs. 550-US \$ 60/-

The book under review is a Special Issue of the "*Journal of Human Ecology*", an international, interdisciplinary journal of man-environment relationship. There is a dearth of literature on schedule preparation and data analysis for empirical research on human ecological studies. Most of the existing literature on the aforesaid areas are fragmentary by nature and thereby fail to provide the researchers with a proper understanding of various aspects of human ecology. The book by Bhasin and Bhasin is an humble attempt to bridge up this gap. Hence it under review is an welcome addition to methodology on human ecological research.

The Preface of the book deals with some basic concepts of environmental studies such as, ecology, natural resources, pollution, urban environment, disruption of ecological systems, ecological accounting, solutions, population control, etc. It then suggests ideal research design with respect to human settlements, biological environment and social environment. A short profile is also presented on the study design for data collection and methodology. The preface at the end includes some recent references relating to human ecological studies.

The volume contains a number of exhaustive schedules to document the various aspects of human ecology. The procedure of coding and data analysis has also been dealt by the authors. The exhaustive glossary of the volume makes it more comprehensive and scientific.

The section containing the model schedules deals with schedule for general information, schedule for village, schedule for household, schedule for biological variables and schedule for genetic variables. The schedules for general information give an extensive coverage of the various sectors at the Block /Tehsil/Sub-Tehsil level. The schedules pertaining to village cover the aggregate village profile in terms of these sectors. In case of household schedules apart from participation in various sectors of the

economy there is also a coverage of social practices and position of women and children, marriage practices, fertility behaviour, mortality patterns, health and nutritional status, migration etc. The schedule for biological variables seeks to collect physiological information, anthropometric measurements and haematological variables. The schedule for genetic variables seeks to collect information on serological biochemical genetics and other character such as cytogenetic behaviour and colour blindness. Though the schedules are primarily of structured nature and with an orientation to gather quantitative information, yet sometime these include a few open ended questions. The questions are followed by extensive notes on various terms/items referred to in the schedules. As the schedules are increasingly used for the collection of variety of data in human ecological investigation and in other social science investigations, researchers engaged in empirical studies will find these model schedules as very important document at the formulative stage of their research. The following section deals with the procedure of coding and data analysis. It gives an extensive list of variables used in the database and their value codes and scores. An illustration of tabulation procedure would have been very useful at this stage.

The section dealing with statistical methods gives a summary of the various conventional tools of statistical analysis and some illustrations giving methods of computation. However, here the techniques of multivariate analysis such as "PCA", "Factor Analysis", "Discriminant Analysis" and "Cluster Analysis" would have been more useful to the researchers.

The next section dealing with measures of demographic transition is very relevant for scientific research. The various demographic measures defined in this section are related to sex composition, age composition, economic activity, educational characteristics, population distribution, growth of population, mortality, fertility, nuptiality, migration, methods of population estimation and projection and above all the demographic models. These measures acquire rel-

evance as these variables are covered under the household schedules. At the end, the glossary section is well documented and clarifies the various concepts in a lucid way.

Bhasin and Bhasin no doubt offer a new approach and out look to the human ecological studies. The style of presentation of the material in the book compels the reader to visualize himself in the midst of research methodology. On the

whole the book will be of great use to those researches involved in the fields of environmental science, public administration, population studies and human ecological studies.

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BOOK REVIEW

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