

# 3D... IBA JOURNAL OF MANAGEMENT & LEADERSHIP

**Theme:**

**Consciousness and Leadership**

*Guest Editor*

**Sangeetha Menon**

*National Institute of Advanced Studies, Bangalore*

*Co-editor*

**Subhash Sharma**

*Indus Business Academy, Bangalore*



## INDUS BUSINESS ACADEMY

• BANGALORE • GREATER NOIDA

### **3D... IBA Journal of Management & Leadership**

*Publisher*



#### **IBA Publications**

IBA Campus  
Lakshmipura, Thataguni Post  
Kanakpura Main Road  
Bangalore 560 062

Printed at  
**Sadguru Screens**

*Subscription*

IBA Journal of Management & Leadership is published twice a year.

Annual subscription: Rs 400/-

© Copyright with IBA. No part of the publication may be reproduced in any form without prior permission from the editor of the journal. However, the views expressed in the papers are those of the authors and not of the Editorial Board or Publisher.

## EDITORIAL BOARD

---

### *Editor*

#### **Subhash Sharma**

Director, Indus Business Academy, Bangalore

### *Associate Editor*

#### **Divya Kirti Gupta**

Associate Professor,  
Indus Business Academy, Greater Noida

### *Members*

#### **Ananta Giri**

Professor, Madras Institute of  
Development Studies, Chennai

#### **Arvind Singhal**

Samuel Shirley and Edna Holt Marston Endowed  
Professor and Director, Sam Donaldson Centre for  
Communication Studies, Department of Communication,  
University of Texas @El Paso, El Paso, USA

#### **Atanu Ghosh**

Professor, Shailesh J. Mehta School of Management,  
IIT, Bombay and Visiting Professor, Indian Institute of  
Management, Ahmedabad

#### **Brajaraj Mohanty**

Professor, Xavier Institute of Management,  
Bhubaneswar

#### **Gopal Mahapatra**

Director, Organization & Talent Development,  
Oracle India Pvt. Ltd, Bangalore

#### **K.B. Akhilesh**

Professor, Department of Management Studies,  
Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore

#### **Pravir Malik**

President, Aurosoorya, San Francisco, USA

#### **R.K. Gupta**

Professor, Management Development Institute,  
Gurgaon

#### **R.D. Pathak**

Professor, School of Management and Public  
Administration,  
University of South Pacific, SUVA, FIJI Island

#### **R.S. Deshpande**

Director, Institute of Social and Economic Change,  
Bangalore

#### **R. Sampath**

Director, Quanta Consulting Inc., Los Angeles, USA

#### **Sangeetha Menon**

Professor, National Institute of Advanced Studies,  
Bangalore

#### **Siddharth Shastri**

Dean, Women's Institute for Studies in  
Development Oriented Management (WISDOM),  
Banasthali University, Banasthali

#### **Sorab Sadri**

Director, Abhijit Kadam Institute of  
Management & Social Sciences,  
Bharati Vidyapeeth University, Solapur

# Consciousness and Leadership: An Introduction and Invitation to Our Special Issue

During recent years the idea of 'Spirituality-in- Management' has acquired intellectual acceptance. In fact the broader field of 'Consciousness Studies' is now influencing the various disciplines of social sciences such as Psychology, Sociology, Political Science and Economics. New issues such as Gender issues, Environmental issues, Social Responsibility and Ethical issues etc. have also made it imperative to view decision making in social, economic and political contexts from the perspectives of higher consciousness. Consciousness Studies are also influencing the discipline of Management and Leadership as a need is being felt to evolve new forms of Organizations that operate from higher levels of consciousness. Gustavsson (2001) refers to them as 'Transcendent Organizations' driven by collective consciousness. As a result Management and Leadership concepts are changing. There is a shift from Peter Drucker's MBO - Management By Objective approach to Management & Leadership to MBHO – Management By Higher Objectives (Sharma, 2007) approach because Higher Consciousness leads to Higher Objectives. The present special issue of our journal provides some contours of 'higher consciousness' oriented new thinking in Management and Leadership.

Indian epic, Mahabharata is the story of decision making from higher consciousness. In the opening essay, Dharma in Mahabharata: Values for Management and Leadership, Swami Bodhananda, a leading spiritual guru whose work is widely known in the field of 'Indian Management', argues the need for bringing the Dharma and thereby higher consciousness dimension in visioning, envisioning, decision making and problem solving in all spheres of human activity. In the next article, Being and Well Being in Upanishadic Literature, Sangeetha Menon connects the idea of consciousness with well being. In organization context it implies overall well being of an organization. In next article, Divinity Quotient (DQ) and OSHE Philosophy of Management and Leadership, Subhash Sharma presents OSHE (Oneness, Spiritual, Humanistic, Existential) model of 'wisdom leadership' to bring organizations to higher levels of consciousness. In the subsequent article, Women Empowerment and the Collective Consciousness: Towards A New Model of Women Empowerment and Leadership, Farah Naqvi presents Parachute model of women empowerment and leadership. In next article, The Bhagvad Gita – Management Model Empowers Corporates and Society, G. Surya Prakash



Rao and Madhusudhan Prasad Varanasi suggest the Bhagvad Gita Management Model and provide some empirical evidence for the same.

Following Rao and Varanasi, Nisigandha Bhuyan highlights the importance of Character of the Leader for Organizational Integrity. She highlights the importance of social concerns and other dimensions of higher consciousness in the context of management and leadership. In next article, C.S. Sowmya presents a new leadership paradigm in the form of VICHAR (Value, Influence, Compensation, Harmony, Authenticity, Receptivity) model of leadership as an extension of VICAR model. In the next article, Hema D explores the theme of Good Governance Models from Ancient India and Their Contemporary Relevance. As ancient models were rooted in higher consciousness, they provide some new lessons for good corporate governance. In next article, Towards Excellence and Sustainability: An Intellectual Journey from Core Competence to Competitive Advantage, Jayshree Sadri and Bijoy Guha take us through a journey of the ideas of core competence and competitive advantage in the context of excellence and sustainability. This is followed by a case study by Suresh Maruthi on Strategic Response in Market Environment: An Examination Across Forms.

Subsequent articles in this volume continue the theme of consciousness and leadership through explorations of some new aspects of leadership. Ipshita Bansal in her article, Leadership Lessons from Nature: A Cosmic Perspective provides us seven forces model of leadership based on seven cosmic entities. In next article, From Freud to Fanna and Shunya: Quantum States of Mind as Foundation for 'Atmo'-Sphere Model of Leadership, Subhash Sharma presents a new framework of quantum states of mind and thereby suggests 'atmo'-sphere model of leadership as a new model of management and leadership. In subsequent article, Neelima Bhatt presents her article on Evolving the Feminine: Lessons in Self-Leadership and Self-Management from Women in Mahabharata. Evolving the Feminine also has a linkage with Subhash Sharma's OSHE Philosophy presented earlier in this volume. This volume concludes with a new vision of 'Indian Management and Leadership' rooted in 'Higher Consciousness' by Swami Bodhananda.

Book review section carries reviews of two books viz.

1. Management and Mahabharata, R. Narayanan and Swami Bodhananda,  
Review by P.N. Subramanian
2. Shunya Poems: My Experiments with Corporate Rhymes, Subhash Sharma  
Reviews by Neetu Jain, Pratima Verma, Farah Naqvi, Gauri Anand, Shruti Naik and  
Pallavi Sharda

We hope this volume will be useful to those who are interested to expand the field of 'Consciousness Studies and Management'.

**Sangeetha Menon**  
Guest Editor

**Subhash Sharma**  
Co-editor

## Contributors

---

- **Swami Bodhananda** is Chairman, Sambodh Foundation, New Delhi, e-mail: swamibodhananda@charter.net
- **Sangeetha Menon** is Professor, National Institute of Advanced Studies, Bangalore, e-mail: prajnana@yahoo.com
- **Subhash Sharma** is Director, Indus Business Academy, Bangalore, e-mail: re\_see@rediffmail.com
- **Farah Naqvi** is Assistant Professor, Indus Business Academy, Greater Noida e-mail: frh\_naqvi@yahoo.co
- **G. Surya Prakash Rao** is Associate Professor, St. Augustine PGC - Osmania University, Hyderabad, e-mail: suryaguda@yahoo.com
- **Madhusudhan Prasad Varanasi** is Associate Professor, School of Management Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru Technological University Hyderabad, Hyderabad, e-mail: drvmprasad@yahoo.com.sg
- **Nisigandha Bhuyan** is Assistant Professor, Indian Institute of Management Calcutta, Kolkatta, e-mail: nishigandhab@gmail.com
- **C.S. Sowmya** is Assistant Professor, Indus Business Academy, Bangalore, e-mail: sowmyacs@hotmail.com
- **Hema D.** is Assistant Professor, Indus Business Academy, Bangalore, e-mail: hemad.77@gmail.com
- **Jayshree Sadri** is Senior Management Consultant and Visiting Professor of HR at B Schools in Pune, e-mail: jayashree\_sadri@yahoo.co.in
- **Bijoy Guha** is Senior Management Consultant and Visiting Professor of Business Strategy at B Schools in Pune, e-mail: lydonguha@gmail.com
- **Suresh Maruthi** is Fellow, The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI), Bangalore, e-mail: maruthisuresh@yahoo.com
- **Ipshita Bansal** is Professor, Women's Institute for Studies in Development Oriented Management (WISDOM), Banasthali University, Banasthali, e-mail: ibansalindia@yahoo.co.in
- **Nilima Bhatt** is with Sampurnah, Bangalore, e-mail: nilima@sampurnah.com
- **P.N. Subramanian** is Chief Executive, Bodhananda Research Foundation for Management and Leadership (BRFML), Trivendrum, e-mail: brfml@asianetindia.com
- **Neetu Jain** is Assistant Professor, FORE School of Management, New Delhi, e-mail: neetujain@fsm.ac.in
- **Pratima Verma** is Professor & HOD, Department of Business Administration, The Oxford College of Engineering, Bangalore, e-mail: verma\_pratima@yahoo.com
- **Gauri Anand** is Ph.D. Research Scholar, WISDOM, Banasthali University, Banasthali, e-mail: gaurianand1124@gmail.com
- **Shruti Naik** is Assistant Professor, Indus Business Academy, Bangalore, e-mail: shrutinaikmba@rediffmail.com
- **Pallavi Sharda Garg** is Assistant Professor, Indus Business Academy, Greater Noida, e-mail: pallavi.sharda@gmail.com

# Contents

---

## Articles

1. Dharma in the Mahabharata:  
Values for Management and Leadership, *Swami Bodhananda* ..... 7
2. Being and Wellbeing in Upanishadic Literature,  
*Sangeetha Menon* ..... 14
3. Divinity Quotient (DQ) and OSHE Philosophy of  
Management and Leadership, *Subhash Sharma* ..... 30
4. Women Empowerment and the Collective Consciousness:  
Towards A New Model of Women Empowerment and  
Leadership, *Farah Naqvi* ..... 34
5. The Bhagvad Gita – Management Model Empowers  
Corporates and Society, *G. Surya Prakash Rao and  
Madhusudhan Prasad Varanasi* ..... 47
6. Character of the Leader and Organizational Integrity,  
*Nisigandha Bhuyan* ..... 57
7. From 'VICAR' of Leadership to 'VICHAR' of Leadership:  
A New Leadership Paradigm, *C. S. Sowmya* ..... 63
8. Good Governance Models from Ancient India and  
Their Contemporary Relevance: A Study, *Hema D* ..... 75
9. Towards Excellence and Sustainability:  
An Intellectual Journey from Core Competence to  
Competitive Advantage, *Jayshree Sadri and Bijoy Guha* ..... 89
10. Strategic Responses of Enterprises in Market Environment -  
An Examination Across Ownership Form: Case Study of a  
Regional Cooperative Milk Producers' Federation Ltd.  
(RCMPF), *Suresh Maruthi* ..... 97
11. Leadership Lessons from Nature: A Cosmic Perspective,  
*Ipshita Bansal* ..... 108
12. From Freud to Fanaa and Shunya: Quantum States of  
Mind as Foundation for 'Atmo'-Sphere Model of Leadership, ..... 112  
*Subhash Sharma*
13. "Evolving The Feminine" Lessons in Self-leadership and  
Self-management from Women in the Mahabharatha,  
*Nilima Bhat* ..... 119
14. Foundations For A Vision of Indian Management:  
Ten Salient Features of Indian Worldview that will  
Constitute the Fundamental Impulse of Indian Management,  
*Swami Bodhananda* ..... 122

## Books Reviews

1. Management and Mahabharata, R. Narayanan and Swami  
Bodhananda - Review by *P.N Subramanian* ..... 124
2. Shunya Poems: My Experiments with Corporate Rhymes,  
Subhash Sharma - Review by *Neetu Jain*, Review by *Pratima Verma*,  
Review by *Farah Naqvi*, Review by *Gauri Anand*,  
Review by *Shruti Naik*, Review by *Pallavi Sharda Garg* ..... 126





# Dharma in the Mahabharata Values for Management and Leadership<sup>1</sup>

**Swami Bodhananda**

*Chairman, Sambodh Foundation, New Delhi*

The art of management is to generate maximum result with minimal resources. The art of leadership is to motivate people to work as a team and to envision and realise desired goals in given time frames.

Much of the contemporary and modern management and leadership principles are learnt from conduct of war, church organisations and royal practices. The Mahabharata is such a rich storehouse of management insights. It is the story of a deadly conflict and eventually all consuming war between two royal houses, the Pandavas and the Kauravas, of ancient India.

Consisting of 100,000 verses, spread in 18 books, the Mahabharata is the premier epic of Indian culture. The war ends in total annihilation of the ruling families. But the main protagonists, the Pandava brothers, survive

the carnage and rule India for thirty-six years and then leave the kingdom to their survivors Parikshit, son of the slain Abhimanyu and to Yuyutsu, son of Dritarashtra.

The main characters in the Mahabharata are Bhishma, Dharmaputra, Krishna, Draupadi, Arjuna, Bhima, Kunti, Gandhari, Dhritarashtra, Vidura, Drona, Duryodhana and Karna. Primarily Mahabharata is the story of Dharmaputra's inner conflicts both as an individual and as the king concerning right conduct. What is 'right action' in an 'interactive world' is the primary subject of enquiry in this vast epic. Dharmaputra alias Yudhishtira is the epitome of this question. It is the same question that dominates the thoughts of modern leaders, managers, administrators, policy makers, scientists, scholars, thinkers and religious masters.

---

<sup>1</sup> This article was originally written for the Conference on Mahabharata and Management organized by Bodhananda Research Foundation for Management and Leadership Studies, in 2007, at Tiruvananthapuram.

## Primary Concern in Mahabharata

Right conduct or *dharma* is the primary concern in Mahabharata. Yudhishtira, Bhishma, Arjuna, Bhima, Draupadi and Dhritarashtra ask this question again and again in different contexts. Was it *dharma* on the part of Santanu to let his teen son Bhishma to forswear marriage and his right to the kingdom so that the divorcee old king could fulfil his carnal desire to marry the crafty fisherman's daughter? Was it *dharma* for Bhishma to spurn the love of Amba whom he took away by force of arms? Was it *Dharma* for Yudhishtira to engage in the game of dice and wage and lose Draupadi in the game? Was it *Dharma* for Bhishma and Drona to mutely witness the shameless and outrageous disrobing of Draupadi in the assembly of Duryodhana? Was it *Dharma* for Dhritarashtra to blindly assent to all the evil deeds of his stubborn son Duryodhana? Was it *Dharma* for Kunti to abandon her baby son Karna and then pretend that he never existed? Was it *Dharma* for Drona to manipulate the devotion of Ekalavya and ask for his thumb as gurudakshina? What to talk about all the apparently unethical advice that Krishna gave to the Pandava brothers! Arjuna thought that war was evil, but on Krishna's prodding fights the bloodiest of wars in known history. The ethics of war is a major concern in Mahabharata. The apocalyptical end of the war amply justifies that concern.

## Jaimini's Dharma

The *dharma* that Mahabharata is concerned with is radically different from the Vedic concept of *dharma*. Jaimini's *Dharma Sutras* deal with the purport of Vedic injunctions concerning rituals to be performed for getting progeny, cows, fame and heaven. The *Dharma Sutras* accept the Vedic text as authority in such matters. Hence focus is on the etymology of the text. On the other hand the Mahabharata is concerned with human beings in the social context and resultant conflicts, ethical dilemmas and the meaning of choice and action. Hence its concern is the conflicted individual in a complex society and the necessity of choice and action.

## Categories of Dharma

There are acts of charity, kindness and forgiveness depicted in this epic of treachery, murder and mayhem. The greatest act of forgiveness that I can remember is that by Draupadi when she forgives the unforgivable crime of Asvathama who cold bloodedly murdered all her sons and both her brothers in sleep. Karna gives away his armour, and Dharmaputra refuses to leave his companion dog at the gateway to heaven. In the Dvaita forest, Dharmaputra, when asked by the Yaksha who among his four dead brothers should be revived, asked for Nakula's life, revealing his sense of fairness to Madri.

So, what is *dharma* or right conduct? Before defining *dharma* let us see different categories of *dharma*. Primarily, *dharma* is divided into two: *pravritti dharma* that is conduct with reference to the other, and *nivritti dharma* that is discipline with reference to the self. Thus Vedic rituals and worldly activities of the householder to gain wealth, children, fame and heaven are called *pravritti dharma*. Practices to control the mind and realize the Self or God is called *nivritti dharma*. Another classification of *dharma* is *sanatana dharma* and *varnasrama dharma*. *Sanatana dharma* is the spontaneous action of a self realised soul and *varnasrama dharma* is the action expected of a person according to his/her inner disposition/*guna* and training/*karma*, age/*asrama* and the contingency/*desa-kala-nimitta* of the situation, which is otherwise called *svadharma* of the person.

According to this understanding people belong to four types – brahmana, kshatriya, vaisya and sudra, and four stages of life – student, householder, retiree and renunciant. The *svadharma* of a person is determined by the intersection of these two coordinates. Brahmana type pursues knowledge, kshatriya type pursues power, vaisya type pursues wealth and sudra type pursues service. The student engages in getting knowledge suitable to his calling, the householder engages in raising family and providing for

the community, the retiree spends time in social service and pursuit of inner truth and the renunciant immerses in spiritual ecstasy.

### Complexities of Life and Action

It is with in this broad framework that each individual finds his/her place and purpose. The Mahabharata asks questions concerning right/*dharma* and right conduct/*svadharma*. Thus *dharma* has three levels of meaning; transcendental/*sanatana*, transactional/empirical/*varnasrama* and personal/*sva*. One another component of *svadharma* is the concept of *apat dharma*, an emergency standalone action that one takes for self-preservation. Success and fulfilment in life depends on ones ability to integrate these three levels of meaning in thinking and daily conduct. The highest ideal of a Hindu is to live as a *jivanmukta* – the living liberated or enlightened in embodiment. Embodied enlightenment is exploring and expressing the infinite bliss and power of the Self through self-giving altruistic work in an interactive world. Individual fulfilment and the highest common good are not seen as contradictory values. Swami Vivekananda highlighted this motto for Hindus: *atmanastu mokshartham, jagat hitaya ca* – enlightenment through working for the well-being of the world. For the modern world, management Guru CK Prahlad has emphasised the practicality of this ideal in his famous book *Profit at the bottom of the Pyramid*. He says that companies can “do well by doing and being good”. Krishna, Rama and Gandhi are resplendent examples of this ideal of *dharma*.

*Dharma*, which is the central idea in Mahabharata, is a complex concept that reflects the complexities of life and action.

*tarko'hyapratishhta srutayo'vibhinna  
naiko'rishi yasyamatam pramanam  
dharmasya tattvam nihitam guhaayaam  
mahajano yena gata sa panthah*

Mahabharata - Vana Parva 313-118

Logic is shallow and uncertain, scriptures are many and contradictory; many are revelations

received by prophets; the Law of *Dharma* is hidden in mystery; the only light is the path followed by great men and women of action.

The best definition of *dharma* is that which good people practice. It is circular to say that good is that which good people practice. The question is ‘what is good’ before we settle on ‘who is good’. But still the fact is that the concept of *dharma* cannot be understood if distilled from the complexities of actual life. Lived life is the foundation of *dharma*. Mahabharata presents *dharma* inalienable from its context. *Dharma* is meaningful and recognisable only in contexts. What is brought into the foreground is *svadharma*, individual action in the community, with *sanatana*, *varnasrama* and *apat dharma* kept in the background.

### Definitions of Dharma

Thus we settle on a working definition of *dharma* as ‘that which good people do in the ups and downs of their daily life in a community’. Based on this working definition let us reflect on a few specific definitions of *dharma* from Mahabharata:

- i. *nyayayukta arambham dharma*  
Any undertaking based on justice and fairness.
- ii. *adrohena eva bhutanam*  
Any undertaking not injurious to other beings.
- iii. *na tat parasya samdadhyat pratikulam  
yadatmanah  
esha samkshepato dharmah*  
Briefly *dharma* means not doing to others what is unpleasant to oneself.

Mahabharata - Anusasana Parva 113-8

- iv. *dharmayatha sakti kritah*  
*Dharma* is action agreeing with ones knowledge and power.
- v. *veda pratyaksha-acaram pramanam tat  
treyam yadi  
jijnasa na kartavya dharmasya paritarkanat*

The three sources of understanding *dharma* are the scriptures, direct experience and conduct of good people; so logical enquiry is not advised in matters of *dharma*.

Mahabharata - Anusasana Parva 162-18

- vi. *sarva priyanugatam dharmam aahu manishinah*

Anything that springs from consideration for all is *dharma*.

- vii. *ahimsa-satyam-akrodha-danam etat catushtayam  
ajaatasatro sevasva dharmam esa sanatanah*  
The four components of eternal *dharma* are non-violence, truth, non-anger and charity.

Mahabharata - Anusasana Parva 162-23

- viii. *damena sadrisam dharma naanyam lokeshu sushruma*

There is no *dharma* other than self-control.

Mahabharata - Santi Parva 160-10

Self-control of the ruler and the ruled is central to the awareness and practice of *dharma*. In his *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* Edward Gibbon says that the fall in self-control was the main cause of the death of the mighty Roman empire.

- ix. *sarvesham yah suhrit nityam sarvesham ca hite ratah  
karmanaa manasaa vaacha sa dharma veda jajaale*  
Being friendly to all and engaged in promoting good of all by deed, thought and word is the essence of *dharma*.  
Tuladhara, the grocer instructs Jajali, the ascetic.

Mahabharata - Santi Parva 262-9

- x. *yat bhuta hitam atyantam tat satyam brevinyaham*  
That which promotes the well being of all is truth.

Mahabharata - Santi Parva 298-20

What is clear from all these quotes is that *dharma* is an absolute value beyond the relativism of logical formulations, but its application in daily life depends on many circumstantial factors. One important norm in its application is well-being of all or *sarva-bhuta-hitam*. The standard for general well-being is one's own well being or *sva-hitam*.

Adi Sankaracharya in his introduction to Gita bhasya gives a comprehensive definition for *dharma*:

*jagatah sthiti karanam  
praninam abhyudaya nisreyasa hetu  
yah sa dharmah  
braahmanaadyaih varnibhih asramabhih ca  
sreyorthibhih anushtiyamanah*

*Dharma* is that which sustains the world, promotes the material and spiritual well-being of beings and which is to be practiced by the four types of people belonging to four stages of life for their salvation.

The relative nature of practical *dharma* is expressed in the following verse in Mahabharata.

*tyajet kulaarthe purusham  
gramasyarthe kulam tyajet  
gramam janapadarthe  
atmarthe prithivim tyajet*

Sacrifice the individual for the sake of the family, sacrifice the family for the sake of the village, sacrifice the village for the sake of the country and sacrifice the country for the sake of truth or self.

Here Mahabharata unveils the individual as a complex web of relationships – the body-mind individual is a part of the family, family a part of the community, community is a part of the nation and the nation is part of the world, one whole being part of another larger whole. The famous evolutionary-spiritual-philosopher Ken Wilber coined a new phrase 'holonistic relationship' to capture this web-like nature of subject-centred existence. The true meaning of sacrifice is successive expansion of identity

awareness beginning from the limited body-mind to the limitless all-inclusive consciousness. One could hear the echo of the Kantian idea of 'enlightened self interest' in this formulation of Mahabharata.

### Three Values

The Mahabharata discusses three values in the context of *dharma*. They are *prabhava* – prosperity, *dharana* – sustainability and *ahimsa* – non-violence. The practice of *dharma* should lead to material prosperity, sustainable environment and protection from violence.

Chanakya says that right conduct and social harmony flows from material prosperity. Social harmony and peace with out equitable prosperity will neither be sustainable nor justifiable.

*ma te durbala cakshumshi pradaheyuh sa  
baandhavan*

Should you not along with your relations and friends be burnt down by the hot tears of the powerless and the marginalised.

Mahabharata warns arrogant callous kings. There is direct co-relation between artha – prosperity and *dharma* – harmony. Further, even the mighty Bhishma of the great vow, whose life was an uncompromising search for *dharma*, confesses in a moment of self-reflection:

*arthasya purusho dasa dasa tu artha na  
kasyachit  
iti satyam maharaja baddho'smi  
arthena kauravai*

Man is a slave of wealth, wealth is nobody's slave, this is the bitter truth, and even I am enslaved by the wealth of Duryodhana.

Financial security and independence are important components of character and integrity. It is natural that a low paid officer in a powerful position falls to the temptation of corrupt money and pleasures. *Dharma* should not be founded on the privation of people.

The classic definition of *dharma* is that which sustains the order and harmony of the world – *dharanat dharmam ityahuh*. Sustainability involves social harmony, environmental protection and equitable development. *Dharma* is a value system based on reciprocal relationships – between individuals, between individual and community, between community and environment and between the present and future generations. The basis of this harmony is the third leg of *dharma* that is non-violence.

Non-violence is protection of the weak from violence of the strong. Non-violence is also understood as the rule of law under which all are free to pursue their calling with out fear of the other, the majority or the powerful.

*adroha sarva bhuteshu karmana manasa gira  
anugrahascha danam ca silametat prasamyate*

Non-violence to all beings by word, deed or thought, benevolence and charity to all are aspects of praise worthy character.

### Further:

*santam bhitam bhrishta sastram rudantam  
paaragmukham parivahaica hinam  
anudhyantam  
roginam yacamanam na vai  
himsyat bala vridhou ca rajan*

The exhausted, scared, weaponless, weeping, withdrawing, supportless, surrendered, sick, and begging for mercy, children and old – these people are not to be killed.

This injunction based on *dharma* is diametrically opposed to the biblical injunction of total destruction of the enemy – their women, children, slaves and animals. It is this tradition of intolerance that the Europeans continued in their colonising campaigns in the Americas, Australia, Asia and Africa.

Gandhi's adherence to non-violence and independent India 's pursuit of secular democracy is based on the Hindu view of *dharma*. For creating a nuanced understanding

of *dharma*, Mahabharata brings different perspectives to throw light on this complex ideal. Two sobering perspectives on its soaring idealism are that of survival considerations and practicality. Two questions in determining *dharma* are: does it threaten physical survival and is it practical in a given situation.

If the answers are no then the contemplated course of action is *adharma*. In this formulation the Mahabharata precedes Darwin in accepting the theory of survival of the fittest. No theory of *dharma* can survive without taking note of this law of nature in action. A concept of *dharma* that is impractical has no value.

*svartho hi balavattarah*

Selfish interests are more powerful than the selfless, admits Mahabharata.

*artharti jivalokoyam*

All living beings are self centered.

*kasyacit naabhijanami pritim nishkaranamiha*

I know nobody who loves with out selfish motives.

*naasti jatu ripurnaama  
mitram naama na vidyate  
saamartyayogaat jaayante  
mitraani ripavasthata*

There is no permanent friend or foe, circumstances makes them so.

Mahabharata - Santi Parva 138-139

The pragmatic cynicism of Mahabharata goes further:

*artha yukta hi jayante pita mata sutastatha  
matula bhagineyasca tada sambandhi  
bandhavah*

All relations including father, mother, son, uncles, aunts, in-laws and others are all meaningful only if beneficial to the self.

*loko rakshati svaatmaanam  
pasya svaarthasyasaarataam*

People protect their interests first, therefore realise the power of self-interest.

*atma hi sarvada rakshyo darairapi dhanairapi*

Protect self-identity before protecting wife or property.

Here *atma* is the historical body-mind identity, not the transcendental self that does not require protection.

*samkshepo niti sastraanaam  
avisvaasa paro matah  
nrishu tasmaat avisvaasah  
pushkalam hita atmanah*

The sum and substance of prudence is doubt, do not trust anyone blindly for the sake of ones own good.

Mahabharata - Santi Parva 138-196

*Dharma* ideal should not lead to foolish, self-destructive actions and policies. Survival is paramount value, declares Mahabharata. A leader should act like Xen Xiao Ping of China who managed and survived a 360 degree about turn in economic policies; and not like Mikhael Gorbochev who could not survive his own reforms. A maximum leader harmonises self-interest with interests of the people he leads and also the interests of humanity at large.

*Dharma* in the wider context involves political decision-making. Politics is the arena where *dharma* is played out. Individual decisions are influenced by the climate and quality of politics. Mahabharata is acutely aware of this reality. Political authority has power over the individual and individual acts as a unit of the political system. Legislature, judiciary and the executive and the constitution exercise vast powers in setting the parameters of individual and collective choices. According to Mahabharata *dharma* as *rajaniti* is based on three factors – *danda*/governance, *raksha*/legal protection and *bala*/armed force. Good governance and rule of law are fundamental to the practice of *dharma*. So too is vital the

armed might of the state to protect law abiding citizens from internal and external threat. *Dharma* without armed might is toothless and ineffective. That is what we learnt at a heavy price from the Chinese. Our profession of friendship and enunciation of Pancha-seela principles did not stop the Chinese from grabbing our territories with force. Practice of *dharma* needs the protection of armed force. India as a Dharma-Rashtra has to keep its armed might in tact – nuclear weapons as well as delivery systems. Not to use it, but as a strategic force so that nobody will dare to threaten our way of life.

Mahabharata warns against people who misuse *dharma* ideals for partisan sectarian ends. They are condemned as *dharma vanijakah* – merchants of *dharma* and also dismissed as *dharma dhvajinah* – those who fly the flag of *dharma*. One is amazed at the foresight of Veda Vyasa, the author of Mahabharata,

in anticipating the phoney, hypocritical behaviour of modern politicians.

To conclude, Mahabharata prescribes the pursuit of Purusharthas – creature needs, wealth/security and freedom/happiness/knowledge within the framework of *Dharma*. The heart of *dharma* is balance between conflicting interests. It is the philosophy of rational, prudent pursuit of self-interest in an interdependent world. Adherence to *Dharma* secures self-interest optimally. Let us join Veda Vyasa in his clarion call:

*urdhva bahurvīramyēsha  
naca kaschit srūnoti me  
dharmaat arthasca kamasca sa  
kimartham na sevayate*

Both hands upraised I beckon humanity with the slogan: “*dharma* alone secures wealth, health, pleasures and happiness”, why not then follow *dharma*?



# Being and Wellbeing In Upanishadic Literature

**Sangeetha Menon**

*National Institute of Advanced Studies, Bangalore*

Besides the intricate metaphysical theories about self, classical Indian thinking focuses on the nature, possibility and relationship of our being with the inter-subjective world, and spiritual meaning of 'wellbeing'.

The distinct feature of the philosophical traditions of Indian thinking is its spiritual openness, by which I mean, not just a liberal philosophy, but the facility to integrate new experience and new understanding into an evolving scheme of ideas all leading and pointing to self-exploration. The ideal of spiritual living is given foremost importance. It is not to say that moral and epistemological theories, ethical guidelines and practices are less important in these traditions. But it is to suggest that all such theories and discussions are addressed from a spiritual platform where a discussion on the nature of wellbeing, the world of experiences and the relationship between them becomes the final goal of philosophical pursuit.

There are four major aspects of 'wellbeing' such as (i) unconditional love and non-dual, non-hierarchical experience, (ii) fearlessness and inner stability due to self-knowledge, (iii) the discipline of mind and integrated, harmonious living, and, (iv) empathy, and ability to communicate, discussed in diverse fashions, in and through the Upanishadic literature. Through a variety of patterns woven by the dialogue partners, object of inquiry, method of inquiry, and even guidelines for inquiry, what is presented side by side is an unavoidable connection between being and wellbeing, a total response to the nature both inside and outside.

This paper attempts to trace the concept of being and wellbeing in the Upanishadic and pre-Upanishadic period by an analysis of the Samhitas, Brāhmaṇas, Āraṇyakas and the Upanishads.



## **Saṁvāda-transforming dialogues**

The teacher-pupil relationship has a significant place in ancient and classical Indian philosophy from the point of view of pedagogy, character building, psychotherapy, and mainly in setting spiritual standards for the processes devised for formulating concepts and ideas, and building theories. Hence primarily the dialogue, Saṁvāda, is meant to lead to transforming experiences, in the process of which attempts are made jointly by the taught and the teacher to:

- (i) ascertain what is true knowledge,
- (ii) to understand new ideas, and,
- (iii) to understand the nature of the inquirer herself.

The third feature of Saṁvāda underlies the central concern of Indian thinking which also implies the method of defining, imparting and discovering a value for knowledge relating to the psyche of the person who does the teaching and the one who is taught. Through the structure and specificity of Indian metaphysics and epistemology is built a facility to develop a pedagogy fostering an integral development of not only the student but also the teacher. This is interesting because the hierarchy of teacher as the giver and the student as the receiver is often checked by the practice of teaching which adopts two methods which cannot be classified under monologic transference. The practice of dialoguing—Saṁvāda—and maintaining two distinct styles of argumentation while presenting a position—*purvapaksa* *uttarapaksa*—makes the Indian tradition a living one. These two practices also consider the cognitive and emotive development of the people involved while indicating an interactive socio-cultural context.

Saṁvāda plays a central role in understanding Indian philosophy as well as Indian psychology. Saṁvāda has references not only to logical and epistemological methods but also to states of mind which are important in the discussion about the primal nature of

self. Hence, the discussions on metaphysical and ontological issues are always interrelated to understanding ethical, axiological, aesthetic and spiritual issues. There is a constant attempt to reconcile and integrate different experiences, and the existence of contradictions so as to generate worldviews based on an understanding of life with answers for fundamental questions about self-identity, nature of world, creation, purpose of life, nature of knowledge, value systems etc.

The pre-Upanishadic literature initiates the first expression of dialogue in the form of prayers and hymns. As we come to the Upanishadic literature, Saṁvāda takes a distinct shape, with dialogues between the old sage and the young student, father and son, sage and king, sage and god, death and young boy, husband and wife, to list a few instances. The nature of Saṁvāda also takes different forms such as formal debate, argumentation, instruction, loving sharing and discussion.

Apart from the content of the dialogue, the process of dialogue plays an important role in contributing to the wellbeing of the partners involved. It gives total and one-time attention to how world views are formed, how mental and physical discipline are significant to conceive an idea, how way of living is connected with the self-identity of the inquirer.

## **Being and consciousness in the pre-Upanishadic literature**

Beyond the relative experiences but revealing through each and every experience is the one unifying principle of consciousness, which is the experienter's Self. This is the epitome of the teaching conveyed by the Vedic sages and the Upanishadic seers through a vast corpus of sacred literature. The phenomenon of a continuing identity in all experiences, holding all experiences together in different states, the mind-body relationship, the nature of the individual, his relationship with the world etc. have always been subjects demanding a deep probe. In this

context the Upanishadic Rishi puts forth the theory of encompassing consciousness and the identity of consciousness and the Self. Through this theory the Rishi presents a new discipline of psycho-ontology. He presents a psychology which explains and forms the basis of existence and values for living. Thus we have the profound Upanishadic statements like *aham brahmasmi*, 'I am the most encompassing', and *anandam brahma*, 'the most encompassing is bliss'.

One of the earliest documents not only of the Indian mind but also of the mind of the entire human race is the Veda. The Ṛg Veda deities represent the possibilities of infinite human relationships with the fundamental truth of man's existence namely consciousness. The Vedic people were able to connect their daily life with natural forces through a complex relationship which was influenced by awe, fear, praise and trust, as we see presented in a poetic fashion in the hymns. The Vedic people lived a comprehensive life full of feelings, urges, passions and joys. To them the external nature was not a rival to their inner aspirations, but a medium for free expression.

### Earliest signs

Earliest signs of a psychological inquiry into the first principle can be noted in expressions like, "Who has seen that the boneless bears the bony when being born first? Where may be the breath, the blood, the soul of the earth? Who would approach the wise to make this enquiry?"<sup>1</sup> "In the beginning there arose the Golden Child (*hiraṇya-garbha*); as soon as born, he alone was the Lord of all that is. He established the earth and this heaven: Who is the God to whom, we shall offer sacrifice?"<sup>2</sup> "Unsupported, unattached spread out downwards—turned—how is that he does not fall down? By what power of his does he move? Who has seen [that]? Erected as the pillar of Heaven he protects the firmament."<sup>3</sup> In these verses a psychological and epistemological distinction is made for the first time. The psychological distinction made is between the manifest and the unmanifest

nature of reality and their relation to the person who is in an awesome state of mind. And, the epistemological distinction made is between the direct and indirect knowledge. These verses also initiate a psychological inquiry into the nature of reality.

### Speech and mind

The initial attempt to connect the natural world and the psychophysical person was made by relating physical powers and psychic faculties to the portfolio of various deities.

Among the deities goddess *vac* is of psychological importance. *Vac* is the Vedic term referring to both speech and speech-consciousness. The hymn to *vac* says that all actions and powers are grounded in speech. It is the primordial energy out of which all existence originates and subsists. At the same time it goes beyond the heavens and the earth. Speech is also recognised as the first expression of truth when the hymn says, "When I partake a portion of this speech, the first products of truth come to me."<sup>4</sup> *Dirghatamas* proceeds, "From her (*vac*) flows the oceans; through her exist the four regions; from her flows the ground (*akSara*) of the Veda; on her the entire universe stands."<sup>5</sup> But three verses later, he reminds us that only the manifested forms of speech can be known and the deepest levels remain hidden. He further adds that prayer is the highest heaven in which speech dwells. We find many Vedic hymns in the form of prayers. Through prayer—the fundamental mode of speech-consciousness—the attempt made is for the individual mind to resonate with the cosmic mind.

The *yajña* performances are based on the psychology of speech-consciousness. Though the liturgical knowing-acting of sacrificial celebration, the limitations of ordinary existence and grounding of ordinary existence in more fundamental levels of consciousness is recognised and experienced. Thus the Vedic sage offers his oblations unto, "He who gives breath, he who gives strength, whose command all the bright gods revere, whose

shadow is immortality, whose shadow is death. . .".<sup>6</sup> The Vedic concept of *ṛta* also is a result of the recognition of a comprehensive and unifying principle. Vedic sages recognise *ṛta* as the rhythm behind the structuring of the dynamic aspects of the universe.

A more comprehensive nature of reality is admitted when in later *Samhitas* and *Brahmaṇas*, the superior nature of mind to speech is recognised. In a dialogue between the Speech and the Mind, *Prajapati* is made to describe speech as "Thou art the messenger of mind, for what one thinks of in the mind, one utters in speech."<sup>7</sup> In a developed version *Taittirīya Samhita* recognises the limitations of both speech and mind in defining the first comprehensive principle which is inclusive of speech and mind but not exhausted by them. It says, "Finite are the hymns, finite the chants, finite the ritual formulae, to what constitute *Brahman* however there is no end."<sup>8</sup>

In *Śatapatha Brahmaṇa*, we find an analysis of sleep consciousness where the superiority of *prāṇa* is recognised. The verse says, "And when he is asleep he does not, by means of them, know of anything whatever, nor does he form any resolution with his mind, or distinguish the taste of food with (the channel of) his speech, or distinguish any smell with (the channel of) his breath, neither does he with his eye, nor with his ear, for those (vital airs) have taken possession of him."<sup>9</sup>

*Śatapatha Brahmaṇa* thereafter gives a negative description of the first principle as *apurvam* and *aparavat* – of which there is nothing earlier and after. "This *Brahman* has nothing before it and after it."<sup>10</sup> In a later verse it adds, "It is this that the *Rishi* saw when he said, I praise what hath been and what will be, the Great *Brahman*, the one *akSara*; for indeed, all the gods, all kings pass into that *akSara*. . .".<sup>11</sup> It is *ekam* and *purnam*. It is the One principle which is given various names by the poets. Here we find the fundamental thought of the *Upanishads* already hidden in a germinal form.

## Principles of knowledge

We find the earliest analysis of cognition in *Śatapatha Brahmaṇa* where the universe is depicted as coextensive with the universal principles of name and form. "These, indeed, are the two great manifestations of the *Brahman*; and verily, he who knows these two great manifestations of [existence] *Brahman* becomes himself a great manifestation. One of these two is the greater namely Form; for whatever is Name is indeed Form; and verily, he who knows the greater of these two, becomes greater than he who wishes to surpass in greatness."<sup>12</sup> Objects are cognised with the help of name and form. Name comes from speech and form from mind. It is by mind that one knows form. The *Brahmaṇa* also says that one who understands this, understands the universe comprehensively. In a similar context *Atharva Vēda* says that the indescribable is the ground of all names and forms, the support of the whole creation. The same text in another verse describes this indescribable as "Desireless, self-possessed, immortal, self-proved, ever full of Bliss, inferior to none, ever young and everlasting is he, the soul of this universe, through his knowledge alone can one spurn death."<sup>13</sup>

The nature of the individual's mind is a subject dealt in detail in the *Upanishads*. The earlier *Brahmaṇas* and *Samhitas* give a prologue to the *Upanishadic* psychology of the individual. *Śatapatha Brahmaṇa* notes, "Let him meditate upon the 'true *Brahman*'. Now, man here, indeed, is possessed of understanding, and according to how great his understanding is when he departs this world, so does he, on passing away, enter yonder world. Let him meditate on the Self, which is made up of intelligence, and endowed with a body of spirit. . . that Self of the spirit (breath) is my self. . .".<sup>14</sup> Apart from the words *kratu*, *manas* and *samkalpah* denoting the psychological faculties, used in this verse, *manas* appears in the verses "Let us know each other's mind"<sup>15</sup> and "Let our mind be the same."<sup>16</sup> These verses also imply that the sages did have a

notion of the relationship between not only the individual mind and the cosmic mind but also the intersubjective relationship—between one mind and another mind. Śatapatha Brahmana further says that “One becomes, what one meditates on.”<sup>17</sup> Here we find the Vedic insight on the much discussed theme of knowing and being.

### **The first principle**

The ‘first principle’ which belongs to the last phase of Vedic cosmogony is not considered as a person but more as a psychic principle. The whole world is a sacrifice and the Gods perform their function through sacrifice. The concept of sacrifice leads to the analysis of the relation between the creator and the created. This analysis is elaborately done in the Purushasūkta and the Nasadiyasūkta. As far as the inquiry on the nature of consciousness is concerned, these hymns demand a careful study.

In the first verse of Purushasūkta reality is depicted as the virat Purusha or cosmic person, pervading the whole universe but as still beyond it. “Purusha is all this world, what has been and what shall be.”<sup>18</sup> The Vedic poet conjures a vast picture pointing out the extensive existence of Purusha with thousands of eyes and legs. The Purushasūkta speaks of an eternal sacrifice which sustains the whole world. The world is the one single being of incomparable vastness and immensity enlivened by the Purusha. Vēdas interpret creation as the manifestation of the first principle, rather than the becoming of something not hither to existent. “Verily, in the beginning this (universe) was, as it were. Neither non-existent nor existent, in the beginning this (universe), indeed, as it were, existed and did not exist: there was then only that Mind.”<sup>19</sup> The Nasadiyasūkta explains the universe as evolving out of the primary principle. In the first verse kama or desire is identified as the creative energy. But the last two verses, with a sceptical note exclaims “ko vēdah”<sup>20</sup> – who knows? – from where the creation came, for only one who was before

creation can really know that. The hymn marks the boundaries of a conceptual categorisation in terms of cause and effect and the limitation of causal theories to understand something which is prior to conceptual, dualistic thinking. It simply says that wholeness which can only be pointed as ‘That one’ is the ground of all existence – sat – and non-existence – asat. The mystery of creation can never be discovered conceptually. The only solution as given by the Upanishads is to know the nature of the inquirer herself who is amazed by causal mechanisms.

### **Mind in Vajasanēya Samhita and Aitarēya Āraṇyaka**

When in Purushasūkta and Nasadiyasūkta, reality is named as Purusha and tad ēkam, the Vajasanēya Samhita comes with a distinctive description of manah. Though the Samhita uses the word manah, it is to be noted that it is not in the sense of mental faculty, but as an integrating principle of consciousness. We find the step towards arriving at an integrating principle.

Consciousness illumines both one who is awake and one who is asleep (walking and sleep states), but is also beyond it. “May that mind of mine be of auspicious resolve, which is divine; which goes out afar when I am awake, and which similarly comes back when I am asleep; that which goes far and wide, and is the light of lights.”<sup>21</sup> The introductory verse also gives a theory of perception when it says that in the waking state, consciousness goes out far—dūram udaiti—to the world of objects and remains in ourselves during sleep. Manah is described as the power helping one in doing sacrifices and other duties.

It is the unique—apūrvaṁ—and sacred thing in the heart—antaḥ. It is the inner core of all beings. Consciousness is also expressed as the tripartite mental faculty like intelligence (prajñanam), feeling (cētas) and resolution (dhṛtiḥ). Thus it is experienced as cognition, affection and conation. Consciousness is the eternal—amṛtam—, light and life breath in all

beings, without which nothing is accomplished. The fourth verse describes consciousness as the eternal principle and hence holding in it together the past, present and future. Here the transcendent and the immanent nature of consciousness is recognised. Consciousness is conceived as the unifying principle of a non-conceptual nature which brings about the continuity of experiences. It is the basis—*otaṁ*—of all thoughts—*cittaṁ sarvaṁ*. The sixth verse gives an analogy of the charioteer. “May that mind of mine be of auspicious resolve, which leads and controls men; just as a good charioteer does the horses with his reins; that which residing in the heart of men is the swiftest and free from decay.”<sup>22</sup> Consciousness controls men, like a charioteer who leads and controls his horses. Consciousness resides in the heart—*hṛdipratiṣṭaṁ*—but also ramifies by going out swiftly—*javiṣṭaṁ*—and it never decays—*ajīrṇaṁ*. By referring to heart as the seat of consciousness, the intimacy of consciousness with the Self is underlined. The sole reality of consciousness is specified when it is said that it alone goes out swiftly. All the six verses of the Samhita end with the refrain ‘may my mind be of auspicious resolve, which is of the nature of this consciousness’. The world *manah* is not referred to as a mental faculty but as the Self. The prayer is made for the abidance of the mind in its real nature.

Aitarēya Āraṇyaka in its initial chapters brings the concept of ukta as the essence and the symbol of the universe. Ukta etymologically signifies that from which things arise, and therefore where things do depart. And later in the Āraṇyaka, ukta is replaced by atman. Ātman is that from which the five-fold ukta (the five elements) arise and resolve. As an advancement toward the atman concept, the second Āraṇyaka emphasises consciousness and intelligence. From the fourth adhyaya of the second Āraṇyaka begins the Aitarēya Upanishad which gives a remarkable analysis of the mental faculties and consciousness.

The Brahmanas and Āraṇyakas have a prominent place in Indian psychology. They

attempt to explain the multitudinous potencies of human mind. With the background of a psychological explanation they bring the concept of One comprehensive principle, which is named variously. In these descriptions we find an approach to the concept of the absolute as including and transcending all differences. Being and consciousness in the Upanisads

A very important concept in Vedic hymns is that of one reality—*ekaṁ sat*—which includes the variety of existence. The concept of the One principle is clarified and metaphysically shown as pure consciousness in Upanishads and is ontologically proved as the Self. In contrast to the objectivistic-reductionistic trend which, to a large extent, prevails in contemporary analytical philosophy and cognitive psychology, Upanishadic psychology insists upon the orientation towards subjectivity. With the emphasis on the foundation of thoughts namely consciousness, the Upanishads form the basis of the psychological principles developed in later systems of Indian philosophy.

### **Consciousness, the Encompassing and the Ultimate Reality**

The word used in the Upanishads to indicate the supreme reality, which is unchangeable and eternal is Brahman. Śaṅkarācārya derives the word Brahman from the root *bṛhati* which could be translated as ‘to exceed’, *atisayana*, and means by it eternity and purity. The same definition can be given to consciousness also. From the form in which it is presented, Maṇḍukya Upanishad is one of the latest among the Upanishads which presents pure consciousness as an immaculate notion, unmixed with sectarian views. The system is complete and described using terms which indicate the absence of any uncertainty. Consciousness is “not that which cognises the internal (objects), not that which cognises the external (objects), not that which cognises both of them, not a mass of cognition, not cognitive, not non-cognitive. [It is] unseen,

incapable of being spoken of, ungraspable, without any distinct marks, unthinkable, unnameable, the essence of the knowledge of the one Self, that into which the world is resolved, the peaceful, the benign, the non-dual, such, they think, is the fourth quarter. It is the Self; it is to be known."<sup>23</sup> Consciousness is not that which knows the external objects during the waking state. It is not that which knows the internal objects during dream state. Knowership cannot be attributed to it. At the same time it is not ignorance. Śaṅkaracarya explains *naprajñam* as *acaitanyapratiṣēta*.

Consciousness is that in which the whole world resolves, since it is not qualified by the experiences in the waking, dream and deep sleep states. Consciousness is *santam* since it is *avikriyam*—without any modifications. The prime nature of consciousness is that it is the invariable factor in all experiences. The Self is to be known as this consciousness.

The culminating point of the discoveries of Rishis, lies in the inclusion of all experiences in consciousness, but maintaining it as beyond and untouched by these. In various terms and expressions, we find this nature of consciousness, depicted in the length and breadth of the Upanishadic literature. The peace invocation in *Brādarānyaka Upanishad* describes the unmanifest Brahman (God) and the manifest Brahman (world) as whole. From the unmanifest Brahman comes the manifest Brahman. And retaining the wholeness of the world, the Whole (Unmanifest Brahman) ever remains. Śaṅkaracarya in his *bhaṣya* to this verse, says, *yat svarūpam, pūrṇatvam, paramatmabhavam*. Neither the immanence of consciousness lowers it nor its transcendence alienates it from the world. Consciousness is *pūrṇam*—mere fullness.

By distinguishing the conceptualisation of consciousness from the nature of its existence what is indicated again and again is (i) the experiencer is pure consciousness, and, (ii) individuated experiences are run in and through by pure consciousness. In *Caṇdogya*

*Upanishad*, Prajapati emphasises the nature of the Self as consciousness. It is unaffected by the changes of experience, but runs in and through the differences. The Self is not an abstract formal principle, but an active universal consciousness. Consciousness is both functionalistic and activistic. It is the sole reality.

Is this consciousness established on something else? In *Caṇdogya Upanishad*, Narada asks Sanatkumara, 'On what is Bhūman established?' and Sanatkumara answers, 'It can only be established on its own greatness or not even on greatness'. Bharadvaja adds onto this statement in *Arṣeya Upanishad*, "That light which shines ...incessantly... suffusing everything...when near it looks far away, when far away it looks near: None can transcend its greatness."<sup>24</sup> Consciousness is self-sufficient, self-explaining and self-supporting.

There is nothing exterior on which it depends. Hence it is "the Real, Knowledge and the Infinite"<sup>25</sup>—*satyam jñanam anantam*. Therefore if a person knows consciousness as not existing, he becomes as it were, himself non-existing; if a person knows consciousness as existing, then it is known that he exists. It is "by which the unheard becomes heard, the unperceivable becomes perceived, the unknowable becomes known."<sup>26</sup> *Yajñavalkya* describes consciousness as a given fact of all experiences and as the innermost Self which is the imperishable—*akṣaram*. Consciousness is the very principle of knowledge, in the light of which everything else is illumined. *Yama* rhetorically asks in *Katha Upanishad*, 'what else remains here?'—'*kimatra pariśiṣyatē?*'—and answers, 'This is verily that'.

*Chandogya Upanishad* and *Katha Upanishad* further describe consciousness as the One, the Infinite (*bhūma*) and the Bliss. It is the eternal amidst the transient, One amidst the many and the principle of intelligence. It is the infinite. "Infinite is Bliss."<sup>27</sup> And "to the wise who perceive him as abiding in



the soul, to them is eternal Bliss.”<sup>28</sup> On this description of consciousness as bliss, Gispert-Sauch makes an interesting remark: “From the highest peak of the integration of being, therefore, when one has achieved the perfect unity in which the totality is possessed, and all pluralism of dispersion is excluded, there flows the experience of the blissful character of existence.”<sup>29</sup>

### **Consciousness and Transcendence which is beside me**

The mind-body relation and consciousness-matter relation are the two problems found eternally evasive in the orient and occident. The debates between the realist and the idealist, and the behaviourist and the centralist look for a complete theory. The attempt to explain everything in terms of ideas has taken the idealist to a state, where she is unable to explain the world in which she lives. The attempt of the behaviourist to reduce everything to neurological stimuli and responses, condemn herself to a situation of retrogressive evolution, experiential stagnation and self-negation. When questions like ‘what is the nature of the world?’, ‘what is the nature of its basis?’, ‘what is the relation between the world and the individual?’, remain perturbing the human mind, the Upanishads come with life-transforming answers. A theorisation which is based on rigid distinctions and hierarchical classifications might qualify the Upanishadic concept of reality as pantheism, which strikes at the root of all distinctions. This is not a justifiable criticism. The Upanishads do not speak of a unitary principle, which is opposed to the multiplicity of creation. The ‘transcendence’ which the Upanishads highlight never signifies an aloofness or exclusion. The Upanishadic ideas of immanence and transcendence, creation and creator can be understood only through the principle of consciousness.

The Rishis expound consciousness as the ultimate reality, and identifies it with the Self.

At the same time, the Upanishadic seer gives a substantial explanation for the world. In the attempt to explain world as the heart-throb of consciousness, numerous doctrines on creation are enumerated. But the goal aimed by this doctrinisation is not the analysis of the world in parts, but the integral realisation of the Self as consciousness, which is the warp and woof of the world. Thus the very categorisation in terms of causality is cut asunder by the Rishi. The Upanishadic Rishi considers any doctrine on creation or causality as a myth to explain the mystery. It is important to understand at this juncture that causal theory by itself is limited since the very postulation of it is based on a dualistic assumption of a split reality – of origin and effect. ‘What is the original’ is not necessarily an appropriate inquiry, according to Upanishads, to understand the complexity of reality and possibility of human experiences.

The uncertainty on the origin of the world will remain till the Self is realised as consciousness, as the One behind the many. It is consciousness that which illumines all experiences and cognitions coming through the psychic faculties. It is described as *jyōtiḥ* *Samjyoti*. The world is meaningful only if it is seen in the light of its underlying substratum. *Brhadaraṇyaka* Upanishad therefore describes consciousness as *satyasya satyaṁ*. *Muṇḍaka* Upanishad says in personified terms, “He who is all knowing, One, the allwise whose is this greatness the earth.”<sup>30</sup> “Brahman, indeed, is this universe. It is the greatest.”<sup>31</sup>

The problem of the co-existence of plurality and unity is explained by Upanishadic psychology from two apparently contradictory angles. The non-existence of anything else before creation is maintained, along with the description of the unmanifest and manifest states of reality. And this apparent contradiction is introduced as a puzzle by the Rishi, not only to quiet the mind but also help ourselves abide on the sole reality of consciousness.<sup>32</sup> It also reminds us that it will not be a successful attempt if we try understanding creation using concepts which

are the resultant of the process of creation. From the first angle of explanation, that is the non-existence of anything prior to creation, we can find references like “there was nothing what so ever here in the beginning”<sup>33</sup>, “non existence verily was this (world) in the beginning”<sup>34</sup>, “in the beginning this (world) was non-existent.”<sup>35</sup> All these references are made to emphasise the inclusive and unitary existence of the Self, which is of the nature of consciousness. The Upanishads annul any independent existence of duality. It says “na iha nanasti kincana”<sup>36</sup>, “vacarāmbhaṇaṁ vikaro namadhēyaṁ.”<sup>37</sup>

From the second angle of creation and creator, Aitareya Upanishad speaks of the creator’s entrance into the body by the opening in the skull—vidriti. Bradaranyaka Upanishad adds that the creator entered up to the very tip of the nails. This anupravesa has for its object, “to become everything that there is” and for “assigning names into the objects and the evolution of their functions.”<sup>38</sup> Taittiriya Upanishad says, “Having entered it, He became both the actual (sat) and the beyond (tyat), the defined and the undefined, both the founded and the non-founded, the intelligent and the non-intelligent, the real and the untrue. As the real He became whatever there is here.”<sup>39</sup> Muṇḍaka Upanishad also gives a unitary description of reality as in the Purushasukta, when it says that the fire is his head, wind is his breath, moon and sun his eyes, he is the Inner spirit which dwells in things.

Again the Upanishads give metaphors like spinning of the web by the spider, the production of notes from musical instruments etc. It is the intimate relationship, tadatmya, or oneness between consciousness and its creative power that is conveyed, through these similes. Consciousness is not only the operative cause but also the material cause. It is not only the energising power but also the very substance of the universe. Taittiriya Upanishad describes consciousness as, “that, verily from which these beings are born, that,

by which, when born they alive, that unto which, when departing they enter.”<sup>40</sup>

### **Something so close to me, but evading**

Is the glory of consciousness confined to the spatio-temporal world? Muṇḍaka Upanishad answers that its glory is something which not only transcends the world but also is very intimate to oneself.

Consciousness manifests the mind and thoughts, the psychic and vital energy functions in and through it. On this unitive explanation of consciousness and world, Caṇḍogya Upanishad comes with the cosmological picture of consciousness as tajjalan. Saṁkaracarya in his bhaṣya to this verse, summarises consciousness as that from which matter (world) comes, in which matter dwells and finally that unto which it is resolved. From consciousness (tad) has the world arisen (jan). Therefore it is called taj-ja. And also it disappears (li) in the very same consciousness. It is absorbed into the essence of consciousness. Therefore consciousness is tal-la. It is consciousness which the world at the time of its origin breaths (an) lives and moves. Therefore in the three time scales of past, present and future, matter (world) is not separate from the essential consciousness. And the simple reason is that there is nothing which is outside and beyond consciousness. The attempt of the Upanishadic Rishi is to show the continuity of human life with that of universe. It is the saṁbhūti or the holistic vision which he speaks about.

### **Existence beyond death**

The Upanishadic eschatology adds a feather to modern eschatological studies by introducing the key concept of immortality. The Rishis define the state of immortality as the realisation of the Self, and mortality as being ignorant of it. Kena Upanishad says that man attains energy and vigour through consciousness and immortality through the knowledge of the Self as consciousness. Isa Upanishad adds that Self-knowledge rids one



of all sorrow and error. Not to attempt to win it is tantamount to suicide, and a life of blind darkness forever. Verily self-knowledge is immortality.

Is immortality a post-mortem phenomenon? Kena Upanishad and Katha Upanishad answers otherwise. "If here (a person) knows it, then there is truth, and if here he knows it not, there is great loss. Hence, seeing or (seeking) (the Real) in all beings, wise men become immortal on departing from this world."<sup>41</sup> The phrase 'departing from this world' in this verse implies not the physical death, but the psychological death. It is the death of the false notion of separateness. If so who suffers from physical death? Katha Upanishad reminds, "whoever perceives anything like manyness he goes from death to death."<sup>42</sup> The same Upanishad says that by realising the Self as eternal and immutable, one is liberated from death. And this realisation has to occur, in the very present life, while the body lasts. No future life is to be relied upon. Thus as per the Upanishadic eschatology, jivanmukti, liberation while alive, is the real immortality.

It selfdom speaks of videhamukti, liberation after death. Liberation from death is immortality. And liberation is knowing the Self as never born.

Again, mortality is conjured by the feeling of the 'other', something separate from consciousness. And immortality is seeing everything as the throb of consciousness. Candogya Upanishad remarks that, where one does not see the other, does not hear the other, does not understand the other, that is the Infinite. But where one sees the other, hears the other, understands the other, that is small. What is fullness is immortal and what is small is mortal. The same Upanishad says, "In the beginning...this being was alone, one only without a second."<sup>43</sup> Any sense of duality creates fear, the extreme of fear being fear of death. Brādaranyaka Upanishad says that primeval self feared as he was alone. But on finding out that since there is nothing other

than him whom he should fear, he became fearless. "It is from a second that fear arises."<sup>44</sup> Hence in the words of Katha Upanishad, the dhīra—the fearless—looks inwards, desirous of immortality. The nature of this inward vision is the realisation," the self, indeed is all this."<sup>45</sup> Thus according to the Upanishadic eschatology, liberation is enjoying the continuity of one's existence with the universe, knowing the Self as infinite consciousness.

### **Epistemology of Consciousness**

Self-knowledge is the key concept in the Upanishads and is closely connected with wellbeing. We find the frequently occurring refrain, 'yo evam veda'—'he who knows thus'. The remarkable note in Upanishadic psychology is the concept of the Self as the pure subject, which never becomes an object. It is endowed with all psychological faculties, usually attributed, to mind in modern psychology. When in the West, mind is considered to be the seat of psychological faculties, Upanishadic philosophers lower mind itself to a psychological faculty. Consciousness is that which is beyond mind and its functions. Upanishads give clear and distinct description for mind and its functions, its relation to the individual and the nature of Self-knowledge.

### **What my mind does**

The Upanishads refer to manas as the coordinating factor which governs the five organs of perception and five organs of action. It is ascribed of material origin. It also accounts for buddhi as the intellect, the organ of discrimination, ahaṁkāra as the organ of personal ego and citta as the sub-conscious mind. In the Aitareya Upanishad a distinction is drawn between consciousness as the real knower and mind as just a sense organ. The various functions which can be classified under the three categories of cognition, affection and conation are enumerated with much precision. "Perception, discrimination, intelligence, wisdom, insight, steadfastness, thought, thoughtfulness, impulse, memory

conception, purpose, life, desire, control"<sup>46</sup>—all these are identified as the operative names of consciousness. A further point of psychological interest is the analysis of the cognitive act based on the knower (prajña), intellect (prajña) and cognition (prajñana).

Do these mental functions have any independent existence? According to Aitareya Upanishad all mental processes are only the many names of consciousness. Brhadaranyaka Upanishad says, "when breathing he is called the vital force, when speaking voice, when seeing the eye, when hearing the ear, when thinking the mind; these are merely the names of his acts."<sup>47</sup> Consciousness appears in various forms through which it manifests, but also transcends it.

Kena Upanishad starts with the psychological inquiry as to what must be regarded as being behind the psychophysical functions, namely thinking, breathing, speech, vision and action. Why is that the mind is able to think? Who regulates the vital breath? How is that the mouth, eye and ear enable us to speak, see and hear? Are the sense organs autonomous or is there an entity which lies at the back of these? To these queries the Rishis reply that it is consciousness which is behind all the mental functions. But the sense organs or the mind cannot know it. Consciousness is beyond not only merely what is known, but also even beyond what is unknown. It is beyond the reach of knowledge as well as ignorance.

### **Consciousness is beyond logical structures**

Two major reasons can be cited for contending consciousness as beyond any conceptual reasoning.

- i. Logical concepts work only in the spatio-temporal framework of mind.
- ii. Consciousness is the innermost subject, which illumines everything and hence cannot be objectified.

Substantiating the first reason Taittiriya Upanishad and Kena Upanishad say,

"whence words return along with the mind, not attaining it"<sup>48</sup>, "there the eye cannot go, nor can speech reach."<sup>49</sup> Consciousness is not an object to be grasped by tarka, because it is the subtlest (anupramāṇat). Hence it is said in Brhadaranyaka Upanishad, "you cannot see the seer of seeing, you cannot hear the hearer of hearing, you cannot think of the thinker of thinking, you cannot understand the understander of understanding."<sup>50</sup> You can only be it.

Consciousness is the very principle which imparts meaning to all concepts and statements. Though it is unmoving, it is faster than the mind. Thus moving faster it is beyond the reach of senses. Ever steady it outstrips all that run. Thus it "is the ear of the ear, the mind of the mind, the speech, indeed of the speech, the breath of the breath, the eye of the eye."<sup>51</sup>

Consciousness is attempted to be given the best epistemological definition, when it is described as "prathibodhaviditām"<sup>52</sup>, by Kena Upanishad. Saṅkarācārya explains this description as bodham bodham prati viditām—which is known through every act of cognition. Every mental modification reveals the light of consciousness. Consciousness is co-inherent and co-existent in every piece of cognition. Consciousness is the witness of all states. It is sarva-pratyaya-darśi-cicchakthi-svarupa-matrah. Katha Upanishad describes it as the seer (vipascit), Prasna Upanishad, as the all-beholder (paridraṣṭur) and Svetasvatara Upanishad, as the spectator (sakshi).

Owing to the self-revealing nature of consciousness, the Upanishads discourage any categorical definition of it. By the description of consciousness using paradoxical phrases the Rishi endeavours to show that it is in all, but also beyond everything. Attributes both in positive and negative terms are employed and finally all negated. It is not a logical acquaintance of consciousness that is aimed at by the Upanishads but a concrete experience of consciousness.

On this Upanishadic style, Deussen remarks, "The opposite predicates of nearness and

distance, of repose and movement are ascribed to Brahman in such a manner that they mutually cancel one another and serve only to illustrate the impossibility of conceiving Brahman by means of empirical definitions.”<sup>53</sup> According to Saṁkaracarya, consciousness is without any empirical attributes—sarvasamsaradharmavarjita.

### **Consciousness, mental discipline and pure reason**

According to the Upanishads, if consciousness is misconceived as an object of knowledge it cannot be known. The Upanishad speaks of the self-luminous nature of consciousness. And this nature of consciousness is revealed not to the logical reason, but to a clear reason of sukṣmabuddhi. It is the reason which does not try to create something, but which comprehends which is already there. The Upanishad prays, “May the Supreme endow us with clear understanding.”<sup>54</sup> Katha Upanishad says that the Self reveals to a quiet and tranquil mind. In the words of Brhadāranyaka, “therefore...having become calm, self-controlled, withdrawn, patient and collected (one) sees the Self in his own self.”<sup>55</sup> The ‘self’ with which the verse ends denotes the mind.

In this context comes the Upanishadic idea of tapas. The meaning of tapas is not ‘self-torture’ as translated by Archibald Gough, but is the mental discipline. Rishis do not give a methodology to ‘capture’ the reality. The greatness of the Upanishadic concept of Self-knowledge is that it is vastutantrañāna and not Puruṣatantrañāna. It is the knowledge of the reality as it is. The goal of tapas is to allow the mental equipment to shine in its real nature. It is the mental-stillness that is meant by tapas.

In the Prasna Upanishad, Rishi Pippalada sends away the six inquirers for tapas, before any instruction. In Chandogya Upanishad, Satyakama-Jabala is asked to tend his teacher’s cattle, enabling himself to withstand the most difficult circumstances. Following the

injunction of progressive tapas, by Uddalaka, we see in Taittiriya, Bṛghu finally realising everything as his Self. In the Katha Upanishad, Naciketas is put to a test of patience for three days by Yama before he initiates a dialogue with him. The Maitri Upanishad even says that control of thought is liberation. “By freeing mind from sloth and distraction and making it motionless he become delivered from his mind (reaches mindlessness) then that is the supreme state...mind, in truth, is the cause of bondage and liberation for mankind.”<sup>56</sup> Tapas thus is not to be misinterpreted as mere ritualistic physical postures. Tapas in its truest sense is the mental competency required for Self-realisation.

### **Consciousness, me, you and our wellbeing**

The Upanishads synthesise the knowledge of the within with the knowledge of the without in a total comprehension of reality. It gives an integral vision by which the discordant notes of experience are held in harmony. For the same reason it advocates the full and complete expression of personality through inter-subjective mechanisms.

In this regard Upanishadic psychology gives a clear analysis of the ‘person’ and his ‘persona’. The Upanishadic words Ātman and Puruṣa denote the person. Saṁkaracarya defines these words. Ātman is that which pervades all, the subject which knows, and illumines objects and that which remains immortal and always the same. Puruṣa is sarvapuruṣaṇat—that which fills everything. These two definitions imply consciousness. The person is therefore identified with consciousness.

The persona comprises of sense organs, mind and intellect. The Katha Upanishad says that sense objects are higher than the sense organs, the intellect is higher than the mind. And the unmanifest (avyakta) is higher than the intellect. Above all, Puruṣa is higher than the avyakta. There is nothing higher than Puruṣa.

In the Chandogya Upanishad, Sanatkumara gives instruction for progressive meditation

on Brahman. He gives the inclusive hierarchy of name, speech, mind, will, thought, contemplation and understanding. He who meditates on name (material knowledge) becomes independent so far as it goes. He who meditates on speech as consciousness goes so far as speech goes. Will, thought and contemplation can take one only up to the respective limits. Taittiriya Upanishad describes the individual as vested with kosa or sheaths. They are the annamaya or the physical body, the prāṇamaya or vital breath, manomaya or volition, vijñānamaya or knowledge body. Prasna Upanishad, Candogya Upanishad and Maitri Upanishad give systematic explanation for the waking, dream and deep sleep states. The waking state relates to the physical body and the gross objects. In the dream state, sense organs rest in the mind and the mind creates its own spatiotemporal world and subtle objects. During the deep sleep, mind also reposes and rejoices in the unconscious. Consciousness is not any of these states, but runs in and through it. Mandukya Upanishad names the self in these states as Vaisvanara, Taijasa and Prajna, and Consciousness as the fourth 'stateless state'. Consciousness is Turiya. Ranade describes turiya as the 'fourth dimension of psychology'. None of the states colour consciousness, but they work in the light of consciousness, and hence it is turiya. In Prasna Upanishad it is said that you are united with consciousness every day without being aware of it—ahar ahah brahma gamayati.

It is in the light of this psychology that the Upanishad speaks of an ontologised epistemology or the concrete, continuing and inclusive realisation of consciousness.

### **'Knowing is being' or the ontologised epistemology of Mahavakyas**

In the West the major epistemological discussion is using descriptive analysis of the concept of knowledge with the help of epistemic concepts. In the Upanishads we find a holistic study about the connection

between knowledge and existence. There is no place for the split enterprise of epistemology and ontology, of knowing and being. The Upanishads, infact, is interested in how to be. Thus the student in Taittiriya Upanishad declares, 'aham annam...aham annadah' – 'I am the eaten as well the eater'. Matter, breath, mind and intelligence are no more alienated existence for him. He realises himself as everything. He overcomes the false notion of finitude. In his infinitude, he recognises himself as consciousness-bliss, from which everything is born, in which everything lives and unto which everything departs.

### **The great statements**

The psychological discoveries of the Upanishadic Rishi are epitomised in four great mystic statements, mahavakya, such as,

prajñanam brahma

—"Brahman is Consciousness"<sup>57</sup>

ayaṁ atma brahma

—"This Ātman is Brahman"<sup>58</sup>

tattvamasi—"That Thou Art"<sup>59</sup>

aham brahmasmi—"I am Brahman"<sup>60</sup>

The Upanishads introduce the ideas of immanence and transcendence to establish the sole reality of consciousness. Ontologically it is the whole world, epistemologically taken it is intelligence and axiologically taken it is bliss. This sole reality cannot be other than the inclusive principle of consciousness. Hence to the teaching of the Rishi, 'tattvamasi', the student's response is his realisation as 'aham brahmasmi', and understanding the whole world as aham eva idam sarvosmi – 'It is I alone which is all this'.

Many philosophers consider the ontology of the Upanishads as the zenith of human wisdom. In the words of Barnett, "the sum of Upanishadic teaching is that Brahman, the cosmic force manifested as a universe to the thought, is in essence one with that same thought, with the Atman or self."<sup>61</sup> Zaehner regards that "the great achievement of Upanishads is the...Brahman Ātman

Synthesis, that is the identification of the individual soul with the ground of the universe.”<sup>62</sup> Annie Besant summarises, “Brahma-vidya. . . is the central truth of the Upanishads. It is the identity in nature of the Universal and the Particular Self. . . such is the final truth, such the goal of all wisdom, of all devotion, of all right activity: That thou Art. Nothing less than that is the Wisdom of the Upanishads; nothing more than that—for more than that there is not. That is the last truth of all truths; that is the final experience of all experiences.”<sup>63</sup>

### Is there a gap between ‘knowing’ and ‘being’?

The Upanishads give no time lag between ‘knowing’ and ‘being’. It considers Self-knowledge as saksat aparoksa or immediate. The immediacy of knowledge surpasses all mediacy of senses. Atmajñana is being Atman. The knower and known coalesces in being. Hence the Upanishads give statements like “brahmavid brahmaiva bhavati”<sup>64</sup> and “brahmavid apnoti param.”<sup>65</sup> The act of knowing applies only for the removal of the false notion of separateness. Samkaracarya considers Self-knowledge as eternal, universal and necessary. It cannot be destroyed, though it may be obscured. The knowledge of the Self does not create emancipation, but is emancipation. The Upanishadic moksha hence is not a loss, but a recognition of the true nature of the Self. It is not having an idea of the Self, but the concrete experiencing of it. It is an experience of the present and not a prophecy of the future. The Upanishads describe it as seeing everything in oneself and oneself in everything. This vision is not a distinct knowledge but is a spontaneous being. It is the revelation of the whole in an instantaneity of moment.

Now, is this knowledge indispensable? The Upanishad cautions, that no calamity is greater than the absence of Self-knowledge, for it is the knowledge by which whatever is to be known is known. Thus in Upanishadic terms perfection is not an attainment of something

alien, of not embracing another. It is a state of mind. It is Self-abidance.

From the Brahmanas to the Upanishads we find a cosmology which, with more consistent analysis of creation reaches a psychology identifying the first principle with consciousness, which is the Self. This psychology cannot be criticised as agnosticism or solipsism as Johnston and Deussen does. To describe the fountainhead of knowledge, that is consciousness as something unknowable can only be a perversion of metaphysical language, Ranade says, “Existence is not existence, if it does not mean selfconsciousness. Reality is not reality if it does not express throughout its structure the marks of pure selfconsciousness. Self-consciousness thus constitute the ultimate category of existence to the Upanishadic philosophers.”<sup>66</sup> A.L. Basham says in his book *The Wonder that was India*, “The great and saving knowledge by which the Upanishads claim to impart lies not in the mere recognition of the existence of Brahman, but in continual consciousness of it . . . Brahman is the human soul, is Ātman, the Self.”<sup>67</sup>

### References:

1. Rg Veda: I.164.4. Quotations from the Vedas are taken from F. Max Muller, Ed. *Sacred Books of the East*, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 1978).
2. Ibid., X.121.1.15
3. Ibid., IV.3.5.
4. Ibid., I.164.37.
5. Ibid., I.164.32.
6. Ibid., X.121.2.
7. Taittiriya Samhita: II.5.11. Quotations from the Taittiriya Samhita are taken from F. Max Muller, Ed. *Sacred Books of the East*, (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 1978).
8. Ibid., VII.3.1.4.

9. Śatapatha Brahmana: X.5.2.15. Quotations from the Śatapatha Brahmana are taken from F. Max Muller, Ed. Sacred Books of the East, (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 1978).
10. Ibid., X.3.5.11.
11. Ibid., X.4.1.9.
12. Ibid., XI.2.3.5.
13. Atharva Veda: X.8.44.
14. Śatapatha Brahmana: X.6.3.1-2.
15. Ibid., X.191.2.
16. Ibid., X.191.4.
17. Ibid., X.5.2.20.
18. Purushasukta: X.90.2.
19. Śatapatha Brahmana: X.5.3.1.
20. Nasadiyasukta: X.129.6-7.
21. Jwala Prasad, History of Indian Epistemology, 3rd ed., (New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd., 1987), p.16.
22. Ibid., p.18.
23. Mandukya Upanishad: 7. Quotations from the Upanishads are taken from S. Radhakrishnan, Ed. and Tr. The Principal Upanishads, (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1989).
24. S.K. Belvalkar and R.D. Ranade, History of Indian Philosophy, vol.I, (Poona: Bilvakunja Publishing House, 1927), p.298.
25. Taittiriya Upanishad: II.1.1.
26. Caṇdogya Upanishad: VI.1.3.
27. Caṇdogya Upanishad: VII.23.1. 16
28. Katha Upanishad: II.2.13.
29. G. Gispert-Sauch S.J., Bliss in the Upanishads, (New Delhi: Orient Publishers and Distributors, 1977), p.202.
30. Muṇḍaka Upanishad: II.2.7.
31. Ibid., II.2.12.
32. Similar puzzling questions and contradictions are termed 'koans' by the Zen Buddhists and are employed as a technique to meditation.
33. Bṛhadaraṇyaka Upanishad: I.2.1.
34. Taittiriya Upanishad: II.7.1.
35. Caṇdogya Upanishad: III.19.1.
36. Bṛhadaraṇyaka Upanishad: IV.4.19—There is no plurality here.
37. Caṇdogya Upanishad: VI.1.4—Change is a mere matter of words, a simple name.
38. Caṇdogya Upanishad: VI.2.1.
39. Taittiriya Upanishad: II.6.1.
40. Taittiriya Upanishad: III.1.1.
41. Kena Upanishad: II.5.
42. Katha Upanishad: II.1.10.
43. Candogya Upanishad: VI.2.1.
44. Bṛhadaraṇyaka Upanishad: I.4.2.
45. Caṇdogya Upanishad: VII.25.2.
46. Aitareya Upanishad: III.1.2.
47. Bṛhadaraṇyaka Upanishad: I.4.7.
48. Taittiriya Upanishad: II.4.1.
49. Kena Upanishad: I.3.
50. Bṛhadaraṇyaka Upanishad: III.4.2.
51. Kena Upanishad: I.2.
52. Ibid., II.4.

53. Paul Deussen, The Philosophy of the Upanisads, Tr. A.S. Geden, (Edinburgh: Morrison and Gibb Ltd;1906), p.149.
54. Svetasvatara Upanishad: III.4.
55. Br̥hadaraṇyaka Upanishad: IV.4.23.
56. Maitri Upanishad: VI.34.
57. Aitareya Upanishad: III.1.3.
58. Br̥hadaraṇyaka Upanishad: II.5.19.
59. Caṇdogya Upanishad: VI.16.3.
60. Br̥hadaraṇyaka Upanishad: I.4.10.
61. L.D. Barnett, The Heart of India, 2nd ed., (London: North Book Society, 1913), p.27.
62. R.C. Zaehner, Hinduism, 2nd ed., (New York, Oxford University Press, 1966), p.18.
63. Annie Besant, The Wisdom of the Upanisads, 6th ed., (Adyar: The Theosophical Publishing House, 1974), p.2.
64. Muṇḍaka Upanishad: III.2.9.
65. Taittiriya Upanishad: II.1.1.
66. R.D. Ranade, A Constructive Survey of Upanishadic Philosophy, (Poona: Bilvakunja Publishing House, 1926), p.270.
67. A.L. Basham, The Wonder that was India, (Calcutta: Rupa and Co., 1967), p.252.



# Divinity Quotient (DQ) and OSHE Philosophy of Management and Leadership\*

**Subhash Sharma**

*Indus Business Academy, Bangalore*

Deriving from the concept of 'Dev-Sanskriti' (Divine-culture), during my visit to Dev Sanskriti University, Haridwar, in March 2010, I suggested the idea of Divinity Quotient (DQ) at the International Yoga Festival. While the ideas of IQ (Intelligence Quotient), EQ (Emotional Quotient) and SQ (Spiritual Quotient) have been well accepted, the idea of DQ brings into picture the dimension of 'inner divinity' as an aspect of human existence. This leads us to a holistic view of human beings in terms of IQ, EQ, SQ and DQ. DQ is a measure of expression of 'inner divinity' in day to day relationships and human existence.

The idea of DQ is closely linked with OSHE Philosophy of life that we will present

subsequently. Further to appreciate the holistic view of human beings we first present a model of SPIRIT as a foundation for expressions of Self and thereby expression of 'inner divinity' through 'inner divinity actualization and manifestation' (idam).

## **Defining SPIRIT:**

### **Towards A New Model of Self Rooted in SPIRIT**

Drawing upon the 'Panchkosha model' of human beings (annamaya, pranmaya, manomaya, vigyanmaya, anandamaya koshas), we can define 'SPIRIT' in terms of following three components viz.

---

\* This is a revised and extended version of ideas presented during the inaugural session of AIMS International Conference on Managing in Future: Role of Ethics, Spirituality and Human Values, organized by AIMS (Association of Indian Management Scholars) International, Indus Business Academy (IBA) and Dev Sanskriti University, held at Dev Sanskriti University, Haridwar, Aug 11-13, 2010



IT : Infinity & Transcendence  
 IR : Intuition & Reason  
 SP : Sense Pleasures

It may be indicated that these three components of SPIRIT also correspond to Body, Mind and Soul (BMS) view of human beings. Accordingly Spirituality implies convergence of three energies viz. Physical represented by Body, mental represented by Mind and soul energy (soul force) represented by Soul. It may be indicated that the focus of Body-centric world view is on Sense Pleasures (SP), Mind represents the faculty of Intuition and Reason (IR) and Soul centric world view implies appreciation of Infinity & Transcendence (IT). The three components of SPIRIT also correspond to Indian model of sthool, (gross), sukshma (subtle) and karan (supra-subtle) sarira (bodies). From the above definition of SPIRIT, we can derive a definition of 'Spirituality' in terms of a holistic world view represented by an integrative approach to life through an integration of SP-IR-IT (Sense Pleasure – Intuition & Reason – Infinity & Transcendence). Application of Spirituality to day to day existence implies taking such an integrative view of life and its management. In the context of Management, it implies combining three energies viz. BMS energies in managing institutions and organizations.

It may be indicated that Einstein's famous equation,  $e = mc^2$  also has a 'spiritual significance' when viewed from gross, subtle and supra-subtle perspective. In this interpretation, matter (m) represents the gross form, energy (e) represents subtle form and c (speed of light) represents the supra-subtle form. In this equation c (light) finds its expression in e (energy - wave form) and m (matter - particle form). Thus, this equation depicts both wave and particle nature of light

and shows an interconnectivity of both the forms of light.

Inspired by the above indicated 'spiritual interpretation' of Einstein's equation, in my book, Quantum Rope: Science, Mysticism and Management (1999, p. 98 ), I suggested a general equation of connectivity between gross (matter, m), subtle (energy, e) and consciousness (c, supra-subtle) levels of existence through the following equation:

$$e = mc^n, \text{ wherein } n = 1, 2, 3 \dots \infty$$

Essence of the above indicated definition of SPIRIT is captured by this general equation of relationship between gross, subtle and supra-subtle levels of human existence. This general equation also suggests that in the beginning of the universe – in its 'creation from shunya', consciousness (c) expressed itself in wave and particle forms. Thus, from the shunya, supra-subtle manifested itself in subtle and gross forms. In this interpretation, c, e and m were embedded in shunya and with Big Bang or similar other process c, e, and m emerged from shunya. When we use the phrase, 'From the shunya we emerge, into shunya we merge' (Creation from Shunya, 1993, p. 20 ), it implies emergence of c, e, and m from shunya and merging of c, e, and m back into shunya. This cyclical process may be repeated over a long period of time. In case of human beings this period corresponds to birth-death cycle.

The gross, subtle and supra-subtle experiences are also reflected in terms of three levels of human experiences viz. Pleasure-Pain, Joy of Creativity and Bliss & Peace. In fact, these three types of experiences can be experienced in many day to day interactions as well as in important events in one's life.

Above discussion is summed up in Table 1.

**Table 1: SPIRIT and Spirituality Defined**

Components of SPIRIT / Spirituality	Expressions	Equivalent Interpretations		
IT: Infinity & Transcendence	Bliss & Peace	Soul	Supra-subtle (Karan)	c
IR: Intuition & Reason	Joy of Creativity	Mind	Subtle (sukshma)	e
SP: Sense Pleasures	Pleasure-Pain	Body	Gross (sthool)	m

## **Implications of the Full Spectrum Approach to Self:**

### **From Gross to Subtle to Supra-subtle**

The above discussion on full spectrum approach to understanding Self through a new definition of SPIRIT and thereby Spirituality has implications for individuals, human society and knowledge systems. This approach suggests three fundamental shifts:

- I. From Darwin to Divinity
- II. From Freud to Fanna
- III. From Marx to Mahavira and Mahatma Gandhi

Darwin saw reality through the metaphor of jungle as he undertook his famous and well documented journey. Accordingly he emphasized the world view of 'survival of the fittest to eliminate the rest'. Ancient Rishis, saints and sages saw the reality from a cosmic perspective. They imagined themselves as part of the cosmos and not merely part of a jungle on earth. From this perspective came a divinity oriented world view of human existence. There is a need to once again look at human existence from the cosmic perspective.

In the field of Psychology, the idea of evolution of consciousness to the Fanna and Shunya levels can provide us ideas of for reaching the 'Farthest reaches of human consciousness'.

In the field of social change, there is a need to create transformation in social thought from violent oriented world view of Marx to non-violent world view of Mahavira and Mahatma Gandhi represented by Shunya ('inner silence') consciousness that can be referred to as 'Shuynom'.

Ideas of Darwin, Freud and Marx were influenced by the violent approach to life. They are rooted in the lower dimensions of SPIRIT. Time has come to create a shift towards higher dimensions of SPIRIT represented by Divinity, Fanna and Shunyum as they represent the subtle and supra-subtle dimensions of human existence.

## **Towards OSHE Philosophy of Management and Leadership**

Above discussion implies a shift towards OSHE Philosophy. In 2005, in the second revised edition of my book, Management in New Age: Western Windows Eastern Doors, I suggested the OSHE model with roots in 'Triguna theory' as a feminine counterpart to OSHA model of human beings (Sharma,1996). In my subsequent book, New Mantras in Corporate Corridors: From Ancient Roots to Global Routes (2007), I also presented a discussion on OSHA-OSHE model as an extension of the Shiva-Shakti, Adam-Eve and Yin-Yang ideas. OSHE model stands for the following dimensions of human existence:

- O : Oneness
- S : Spiritual
- H : Humanistic
- E : Existential

OSHE Philosophy implies taking an integrative view of Philosophy of Oneness (O), Philosophy of Spirituality (S), Philosophy of Humanism (H) and Philosophy of Existential concerns (E). OSHE Philosophy is also in consonance of the definition of SPIRIT presented in this paper. Further, OSHE expressions of Self also find expression in terms of three approaches to human relationships viz. Transactional (T1), Transformational (T2) and Transcendental (T3). O (Oneness) and S (Spiritual) correspond to T3 approach, H (Humanistic) corresponds to T2 approach and E (Existential) corresponds to T1 approach to managing relationships.

As OSHE model incorporates entire range of human experiences from gross to supra-subtle and is in consonance with definition of SPIRIT and Spirituality presented earlier, it has implications for Management and Human Development in terms of Holistic and Sustainable Approaches. In Corporate context it implies taking care of three Ps viz. Profit, People and Planet and thereby Triple bottom line. People and Planet dimensions find expression in the ideas of CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility) and Sustainability. In fact the OSHE model suggests

the need for the fourth bottom line based on Oneness perspective of human existence. This implies bringing the DQ dimension as the fourth bottom line. OSHE model's equivalence with triple bottom line concept is as follows:

OSHE Model	Equivalent phrases in Holistic Development
O	Cosmos
S	Planet
H	People
E	Profit

It may be indicated that OSHE model represents 'OSHE Energies' in terms of four energies viz. energy of divinity represented by energy of Oneness, energy of spirituality represented by energy of spiritual values such as love, compassion and devotion, energy of human values in terms of transformative impact of values such as justice, rights and duties; and energy of survival represented by transactional approach to relationships. Thus, OSHE model is also a foundation for operationalizing the concept of Dev-Sanskriti/Divine culture/Divinity Quotient (DQ) through expression of 'inner divinity' and thereby energy of inner divinity ('soul force' – 'atmik' force).

Fig. 1 presents the OSHE model for 'Divine culture' ('Dev-Sanskriti') vision.

O	Divinity Quotient (DQ)
S Spiritual	Spiritual values
H Humanistic	Human values
E Existential	Survival approach

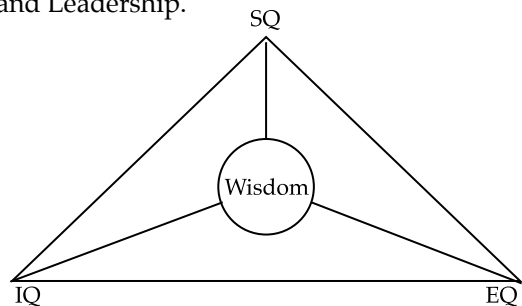
**Fig. 1: OSHE Model of 'Divine Culture' (Dev-Sanskriti) Vision**

### Wisdom Model of Leadership: Towards 'Corporate OSHE Model of Wisdom Leadership'

OSHE model also represents a 'Wisdom Model of Leadership' wherein a leader uses T1 (Transactional), T2 (Transformational) and T3 (Transcendental) styles in appropriate combinations for effective management. Since arriving at appropriate combination

is a matter of experience and wisdom, in corporate context, this model can be referred to as 'Corporate OSHE Model of Wisdom Leadership'. As OSHE model is in consonance with the definition of SPIRIT and Spirituality suggested in this paper, it is also a model for practice of Spirituality in Management through the 'wisdom' of integrating SP-IR-IT in management and leadership contexts.

It may be indicated that idea of 'Wisdom' in terms of its three aspects viz. cognitive, emotive and reflective, is now well accepted (Wisdom: From Philosophy to Neurosciences, Stephen Hall, 2010). These three aspects of 'Wisdom' correspond to IQ, EQ and SQ reflecting Head, Heart and Spirit / Consciousness perspectives to view reality around us. Fig. 2 presents the Wisdom Model of Management and Leadership.



**Fig. 2: Wisdom Model of Management and Leadership**

It may be indicated that Wisdom (Prajana/Pragya) Leadership implies that a leader uses IQ, EQ and SQ dimensions of her personality in all her activities. As a 'wise person' she also brings in the Oneness dimension (represented by O in OSHE model) in her activities drawing upon her 'inner divinity' (soul-force/'atmik power'/'atma's - sphere). Thus, she adds DQ dimension to her IQ, EQ and SQ aspects of Wisdom. Such a leader as 'Wise Guru' uses IQ, EQ and SQ and connects it with DQ represented by 'Wahe Guru' (cosmic consciousness). Hence, she tends to create 'divine culture' within the organization. One of the ways to assess the intensity of 'Divinity Quotient' (DQ) and thereby 'divine culture' within an organization is to measure the 'spiritual climate' of the organization.

# Women Empowerment and the Collective Consciousness: Towards A New Model of Women Empowerment and Leadership

**Farah Naqvi**

*Indus Business Academy, Greater Noida*

*This paper reviews literature on women empowerment and collective consciousness theory and thereby offers a new approach to looking at women empowerment and leadership and strategies for the way ahead. It throws light on the need for a collective consciousness for bringing real empowerment at grass root level. It introduces a new model on women empowerment and leadership based on the ideology of three leading Indian women who have made their mark in contribution to the society and country*

## **Introduction:**

The history of a social movement can shed light not only on its past contributions but also help us understand our present and give us some perspective on the direction to take in the future. Empowerment is a social experience that motivates people to transform their social location and effect the environment around them. It can be seen in examples such as the national and international women's movements and the struggles of immigrant

workers. Faced with war in the 20th century one of the shifts included women doing work that was traditionally considered male domain. They did this out of need to ensure the survival of their families. When the men returned, women realized that they had a strong contribution to make to society and were determined to be equal and active members. Absolute conviction or simply a strong desire to make change may have motivated women to begin this process of empowerment. "The roots of empowerment

lie in the multifaceted efforts of many of those who experienced domination to achieve self-determination and to free themselves from external control through revolution, other less violent forms of resistance and nationalism" (Stein, 1997).

Empowerment can be a "strategy designed to redistribute power and resources" or "is a social action process that promotes participation of people, organizations, and communities in gaining control over their lives in their community and larger society" (Stein, 1997). The discussion of empowerment in this paper will focus on women. The social structures or barriers in society that perpetuate unequal distribution of power and oppress women will be explored within group settings that involve the home, workplace, education and the pursuit of personal development. Empowerment can be experienced through education, research and development, campaigns, networking, training and media. It can be experienced through building a "collective" voice or through transformative learning. Durkheim (1933) defined the collective consciousness as "the totality of beliefs and sentiments common to average members of the same society. It is an entirely different thing from particular consciences, although it can be realized through them." This paper will study women empowerment from the perspective of the collective consciousness theory supporting it with the practical examples of the practicing ideologies of three leading women. A new model of empowerment proposed in this paper "the parachute framework" has been shared in the end which further gives impetus and new perspective to the understanding of women empowerment.

### **Understanding Empowerment**

Empowerment is a construct shared by many disciplines and arena like community development, psychology, education, economics, and studies of social movements and organizations, among others. How empowerment is understood varies among

these perspectives. In recent empowerment literature, the meaning of the term empowerment is often assumed rather than explained or defined. Rapport (1984) has noted that it is easy to define empowerment by its absence but difficult to define in action as it takes on different forms in different people and contexts. Even defining the concept is subject to debate. Zimmerman (1984) has stated that asserting a single definition of empowerment may make attempts to achieve it formulaic or prescription-like, contradicting the very concept of empowerment.

A common understanding of empowerment is necessary, however, to allow us to know empowerment when we see it in people with whom we are working, and for program evaluation. According to Bailey (1992), how we precisely define empowerment within our projects and programs will depend upon the specific people and context involved.

As a general description empowerment can be seen as a multi-dimensional social process that helps people gain control over their own lives. It is a process that fosters power (that is, the capacity to implement) in people, for use in their own lives, their communities, and in their society, by acting on issues that they define as important. It is multi-dimensional in that it occurs within sociological, psychological, economic, and other dimensions. Empowerment also occurs at various levels, such as individual, group, and community. Empowerment, by definition, is a social process, since it occurs in relationship to others. Empowerment is a process that is similar to a path or journey, one that develops as we work through it. Other aspects of empowerment may vary according to the specific context and people involved, but these remain constant. In addition, one important implication of this definition of empowerment is that the individual and community are fundamentally connected.

### **Women's Traditional Status and Shifts**

The roots of female subjugation go back

to ancient times where the role of the male was of food gatherer or breadwinner, and of woman to confine herself to domestic chores and the care of children. Referring to the need for female subordination, the great Hindu writer Manu in 200 BC said, 'be a young girl, be a young woman, or even be an aged one, nothing must be done independently, even in her house' (Natarajan, 2002). However there exists an ambivalent position in this as women had always enjoyed respect, love and honor in Indian society for God dwells in them in much more powerful form, this means, God dwells at a place where women are honored highly. This is again supported by Manu who says "where women are respected, there's the god's delight; and where they are not there all works and effort come to naught" (Nair, 2007). However subordinate treatment of women has been noted by economists and other social scientists in matters such as female education and nutrition. Widespread disparity in the literacy level between males and females exists in favor of the former. In the majority of Indian families, girls grow up in a culture that presumes that their duties and capabilities are different from those of the boys. Girls are socialized to be submissive. Over the past three decades or so, Indian women have started entering all occupations and have branched out into diversified professions, which were earlier considered exclusive male domains. These include banking, marketing research, advertising, civil services, police and armed forces and many new emerging fields related to IT and communication (Nath, 2000). There has been a considerable change in the attitude of parents, especially those coming from the urban middle class. In this context, it seems worthwhile to quote the Yin trinity model of Prof. Subhash Sharma (1996) that stands for Laxmi, Saraswathi and Durga representing money, knowledge and power. It implies an integration of these three factors in order to emerge as a super power. This current new age feminism represents the integration of these three factors of creation for the benefit of the society.

## Perspectives of Women Empowerment

The empowerment of women can be viewed from two different perspectives; there are the objective and subjective sources of women empowerment. Objective sources include economic resources, laws and institutional rules and norms held by others, while subjective sources are self-efficacy and entitlement. England (2000) argues in Presser and Sen (2000), that women are empowered by money, which comes to them through earnings, return on capital owned (land, stocks), their husbands' income and money provided by their parents or the state. Having a job is empowering. However, women's access to share in their husbands' income does not necessarily empower them. It seems that money benefits single women, including single mothers, who are the sole provider for their families. Economic resources may not only affect the individual women, according to England (2000), but also "women's average access to economic resources which also affects women as a group, since it affects the resources available for feminist collective action" (Presser & Sen, 2000,). England suggests that laws (rules of province, city, country) and institutional rules (corporations, banks, religious institutions) can empower or dis-empower women. Many of the laws operate indirectly through their effects on the economic resources. Social norms and values affect women in two ways. "First, the extent to which a woman has internalized feminist norms will affect her behavior in ways that affect her well-being. Second, the extent to which others subscribe to feminist norms will affect one's behaviour in ways that constrain women's ability to realize their goals" (Presser & Sen, 2000). Internal subjective states such as self-efficacy and entitlement are important to whether one will exercise power in one's self-interest. While self-efficacy is a belief that one's actions will have the intended effects, an entitlement refers to how much one thinks one deserves in comparison to others. "Without some degree of self-efficacy, one may fail to exercise power even when one's objective,



external resource situation would allow one to gain substantially from doing so, because one venomously believes it is hopeless" (Presser & Sen, 2000). When resources increase (resources, laws, rules and norms), one's self-efficacy and entitlement also increase and vice versa (Presser & Sen, 2000).

### **Power Structures that undermine Feminist Empowerment**

Various social forces influence women's lives, but women can be "active agents in resisting oppressive forces and shaping their own lives and learning" (Hayes & Flannery, 2000). The social structures that contribute to women's oppression are related to women's social identities, specifically gender, race, and social class. Patriarchy, which leads to gender-based oppression, is characterized by male domination and oppression of women. Sexism, which is related to patriarchy, is a power structure whereby women are defined as inferior and are subjected to "exploitation and demeaning treatment" (Kramarae & Treichler, 1985). Women have to struggle with the inequalities of patriarchal relations in work, in school, in the family and in relation to the state. Hayes and Flannery (2000), points out that women's jobs tend to be lower paying than men's. Even in the same occupation, women tend to be paid less than men. More women than men work part-time, in most cases to accommodate childcare and household responsibilities. "Women are often in positions that have limited power and autonomy and are more likely to be secretaries than managers, teachers than principals and nurses than physicians" (Hayes & Flannery, 2000).

Studies have shown that gender stereotyping in the curriculum of higher education still exists. For example, "men are often portrayed in leadership roles, whereas women are depicted as passive and subordinate" (Hayes & Flannery, 2000). Furthermore, faculty in higher education may interact differently with women and men in the classroom; for example, calling directly on men students

but not on women, responding to men's comments in greater detail than women's and interrupting female students more than men. Hayes and Flannery (2000) suggest that these biases may be related to faculty members' unconscious or conscious assumptions that men are more talented, more intelligent, or more serious students. In any event, faculty's biased attitudes towards male and female students reflect and reproduce inequitable power relationships that are linked to gender roles.

The home is not immune to the hierarchical structure of patriarchy. The patriarchal structure of society, in which women experience oppression and domination, is also replicated in families. Hence, in families, certain beliefs about the sexual division of labour are developed and members experience the effects of gender hierarchies in personal ways (Baber & Allen, 1992 as cited in Flannery and Hayes, 2000). Even when women work outside the home to support their families, they are still expected to do most of the housework and child-care tasks. Consequently, many women have learned to sacrifice their own needs in the interest of their families. Furthermore, some women have little say in the decision-making process in their own homes as a result of their subordinate role in the family. Then, too, women's oppressions in the home can be played out in more aggressive ways. Often, women are not only the victims of verbal and emotional abuse, but are also victims of physical violence, such as rape and murder. In many families, therefore, women may not question the husband's dominant role for fear of repercussion.

Gender oppression is one type of power relationship that women must deal with in their daily lives. However, other power structures, specifically racial oppression and class-based oppression, are just as pervasive and women need to develop strategies to resist these systems of oppression. In developing strategies to resist power structures that oppress them, women need to keep in mind that "race, class and gender are inter-locking

aspects of women's experiences that entitle certain people and deny status and power to others" (Hayes & Flannery, 2000).

### **Conceptualizing Women Empowerment**

Women's empowerment is a process in which women gain greater share of control over resources - material, human and intellectual like knowledge, information, ideas and financial resources like money - and access to money and control over decision-making in the home, community, society and nation, and to gain 'power'. According to the Country Report of Government of India, "Empowerment means moving from a position of enforced powerlessness to one of power". In their extensive review of research on women's empowerment, Malhotra et al. (2002) argue that international development research is approaching a consensus about the conceptualization of empowerment. As a starting point for their discussion, Malhotra et al. (2002) use a definition of empowerment suggested by Kabeer (1994). Kabeer's simple and illustrative definition of empowerment is "the expansion in people's ability to make strategic life choices in a context where this ability was previously denied to them" (Malhotra et al. 2002). From this definition Malhotra et al. (2002) suggest that empowerment contains two important elements that distinguish it from the general concept of "power," the idea of process or change from a condition of disempowerment and the concept of human agency, which implies choices made from the vantage point of real alternatives without severe consequences.

Women's empowerment, then, is conceptualized as an increase in agency over time. However, Malhotra et al. (2002) also concede that one of the main challenges created by this particular conceptualization of empowerment is measurement. Although demographers often measure processes or transitions (health transitions, fertility transitions, etc.), measuring a power transition is much more difficult. One factor that makes measuring empowerment as a process difficult

is the "enormous problem with regard to the availability of adequate data across time" (Malhotra et al. 2002). Even if longitudinal data on women's levels of power were available, there is the complicating factor that "the behavioral and normative frontiers that define appropriate indicators for measuring empowerment are constantly evolving" (Malhotra et al. 2002). As behavioral norms change over time, so are the behaviors that are indicative of power. As a result, it is not always possible to measure empowerment at two different points in time in the same way. Measuring women's empowerment with different variables makes quantifying gains in power and comparative analysis over time problematic. It is, therefore, almost impossible to measure women's empowerment quantitatively as a process and not necessarily desirable for demographers.

The second element of empowerment identified by Malhotra et al. (2002), agency, is seemingly less problematic to measure. However, the specific conception of agency in this conceptualization of empowerment is that women must be agents rather than only recipients of change (Malhotra et al. 2002). This understanding of agency grew from the empowerment approach to development, which emphasizes the importance of women's participation in policy and program development. This particular type of gain in agency cannot be accurately captured in survey research. For example, Malhotra et al. (2002) explain that there could be improvement in indicators of gender equality, "but unless the intervening processes involved women as agents of that change rather than merely as its recipients, we would not consider it empowerment". The difficulty of measuring the process of change and women's involvement in that process of change makes empowerment very complicated to measure from a demographic perspective. Kabeer (1999) identifies three main elements of empowerment. The "preconditions" of empowerment include economic as well as various human and



social resources (Kabeer, 1999). The exercise of power, or agency, in the presence of resources is the “process” of empowerment. The table given below (Ref Table 1) presents the

different dimensions of empowerment like economic, social, legal, familial, psychological and political in household, community and other broad arenas.

**Table 1:** Commonly used dimensions of empowerment and potential operationalization in the household, community, and broader arenas.( Malhotra, Anju, Sidney Ruth Schuler, and Carol Boender ; 2002).

<b>Dimension</b>	<b>Household</b>	<b>Community</b>	<b>Broader arenas</b>
<b>Economic</b>	Women’s control over income; relative contribution to family support; access to and control of family resources	Women’s access to employment; ownership of assets and land; access to credit; involvement and/or representation in local trade associations; access to markets	Women’s representation in high paying jobs; women CEOs; representation of women’s economic interests in macroeconomic policies, state and federal budgets
<b>Socio cultural</b>	Women’s freedom of movement; lack of discrimination against daughters; commitment to educating daughters	Women’s visibility in and access to social spaces; access to modern transportation; participation in extra-familial groups and social networks; shift in patriarchal norms (such as son preference); symbolic representation of the female in myth and ritual	Women’s literacy and access to a broad range of educational options; Positive media images of women, their roles and contributions
<b>Familial/ Interpersonal</b>	Participation in domestic decision-making; control over sexual relations; ability to make childbearing decisions, use contraception, access abortion; control over spouse selection and marriage timing; freedom from domestic violence	Shifts in marriage and kinship systems indicating greater value and autonomy for women (e.g., later marriages, self selection of spouses, reduction in the practice of dowry; acceptability of divorce); local campaigns against domestic violence	Regional/national trends in timing of marriage, options for divorce; political, legal, religious support for (or lack of active opposition to) such shifts; systems providing easy access to contraception, safe abortion, reproductive health services
<b>Legal</b>	Knowledge of legal rights; domestic support for exercising rights	Community mobilization for rights; campaigns for rights awareness; effective local enforcement of legal rights	Laws supporting women’s rights, access to resources and options; Advocacy for rights and legislation; use of judicial system to redress rights violations

<b>Political</b>	Knowledge of political system and means of access to it; domestic support for political engagement; exercising the right to vote	Women's involvement or mobilization in the local political system/ campaigns; support for specific candidates or legislation; representation in local bodies of government	Women's representation in regional and national bodies of government; representation of women's interests in effective lobbies and interest groups
<b>Psychological</b>	Self-esteem; self-efficacy; psychological well-being	Collective awareness of injustice, potential of mobilization	Women's sense of inclusion and entitlement; systemic acceptance of women's entitlement and inclusion

The above table operationalizes the dimensions of women empowerment at three different levels at household community and broader arenas. All the dimensions of empowerment taken above can be seen to be interlinked. For example economic independence can give women some degree of empowerment at the familial level when they have a say in the decision making at home, also enhancing their self esteem and psychological wellbeing. Similarly awareness of the legal rights can empower them socially as they question the existing patriarchal norms, fight against discriminatory treatment and gain access to social space. However empowering themselves at even household level is a challenging task for women as mostly they are the dependent members of the family and also because of the expected norms of behavior from a women in society. This paper will now give direction towards an approach that women can take for their empowerment in the following discussion.

### **Common cause, Collective Strength: Women Empowerment and the Collective Consciousness**

**Collective Unconscious:** Carl Jung is the most celebrated pioneer and authority concerning the theory of the collective unconscious. In short, the collective unconscious is a storehouse of latent memory traces inherited from human's ancestral past (Jung, 1968; Taub-Bynum, 1984). Given that all human life

emerged out of Africa, Bynum (1999) describes the collective unconscious as the following: "The African unconscious is the bedrock, the deepest root work of the primordial collective unconscious, the sea and ocean of consciousness that humanity has been immersed in since it left the hominid species on its own trek toward modern civilization". The term "collective" is used to distinguish between an individual or personal conscious and a universal conscious shared by humanity. The contents of the collective unconscious are not a result of an individual's personal experiences. The collective conscious, which can be described as the collective will (Asante, 1989), generally accepted truths, beliefs, and values of a community that create a common cultural identity, theme, and ideology, is rooted in or stems from the collective unconscious (Shelburne, 1988). The collective unconscious is made up of psychological archetypes. The term "archetype" is an ancient African word that means seed (King, 2001). Hence, archetypes are the seeds or patterns that form the basic blueprint for major aspects of the human personality. Archetypes pre-exist in the collective unconscious of humanity and repeat themselves in the psyches of humans and determine how they perceive, behave, and react.

**Collective Consciousness:** The term collective consciousness refers to the condition of the subject within the whole of society, and how any given individual

comes to view her/him self as a part of any given group. The term has specifically been used by social theorists/psychoanalysts like Durkheim, Althusser, and Jung to explicate how an autonomous individual comes to identify with a larger group/structure. Definitively, "collective" means "formed by a collection of individual persons or things; constituting a collection; gathered into one; taken as a whole; aggregate, collected" (OED). Likewise, "consciousness," (a term which is slightly more complex to define with the entirety of its implications) signifies "joint or mutual knowledge," "internal knowledge or conviction; knowledge as to which one has the testimony within oneself; especially of one's own innocence, guilt, deficiencies," and "the state or fact of being mentally conscious or aware of anything"(OED). By combining the two terms, we can surmise that the phrase collective consciousness implies an internal knowing known by all, or a consciousness shared by a plurality of persons. The easiest way to think of the phrase (even with its extremely loaded historical content) is to regard it as being an idea that we all share, whoever specifically "we" might entail.

**Women empowerment through Collective Consciousness:** According to Randall Collins (1994), Emile Durkheim discusses the power of a collective force but maintains that it is not separate from the individual. Collective consciousness does have an effect on individuals, but it is through individual consciousness that it exists. Durkheim theorizes that in a large assembly of individuals, *"we become susceptible of acts and sentiments of which we are incapable when reduced to our own force"*. It is through institutions that the collective consciousness is gathered and distributed (Durkheim, 1994). In Collins' 1994 anthology, Durkheim discusses religion as an example of such an institution (Durkheim, 1994).

Based in Stamford, CT, since 1994, Vistar a non-profit organization offering the possibility of group and individual awakening through Collective Consciousness shares in their

website that Collective Consciousness- a gathering of men and women aligned in agreement to a High Purpose--the Good, the evolutionary welfare of individual, race, planet, and consciousness--is a basis of true communication and an accelerator for the realization of Help--the Force that is, a field of Light, Intelligence and Power to affirm a new standpoint from which the issues of Mankind can be resolved into a Higher Triad, and from which Consciousness is realized as a practical power-filled experience of Man's Oneness with the Source. 'Empowered people' perceive themselves as progressively stronger and more confident to struggle for rights in a collective process. Empowerment will be manifested in different ways: in their capacity to understand and challenge power dynamics, in a positive shift in the way they view their own identity and position in the world, in their openness to review their values and beliefs, in their ability and confidence to mobilize and take action. In other words, empowerment is people building power within them and linking it to power with others in order to exercise power to make social change possible.

Since empowerment is a collective process that affects one's relationships with self and others, empowerment must go beyond the liberal perspective that tends to focus almost exclusively on the individual. To overcome poverty and social injustice it is necessary to face real – but sometime hidden – structures of domination and privilege which are maintained by diverse types of power relations. These can be especially difficult to confront individually since in some cases they involve not only challenging the oppressive exercise of power by public authorities but also by those closest to us - relatives and spouses or partners. For women, this can be particularly problematic and painful since raising questions about such relationships may mean that their sources of emotional and economic support may be threatened and their place in the community jeopardized.

This research paper aims to bring to fore

the idea of empowering women through generating a collective consciousness of the same. When all the poor and weak women come together, they are no more one. Similar state, problems and experiences create empathy. When it is coupled with a collective desire and consciousness to do something together and reduce their powerlessness then they are no longer weak and are transformed to agents of change instead of being recipients of change. This collective consciousness thus empowers each woman individually leading to overall empowerment. There are numerous examples in history of groups and societies which have moved from a state of powerlessness to a state of individual freedom and empowerment. One best example is the independence struggle of our country. Once the people understood the importance of freedom and a collective consciousness of the same was generated among the masses, it made them stand united and achieve it in its entirety. In other words it can be said that the moment one comes in contact with similar others and they join together for a common purpose it first empowers each member individually and the strength gets multiplied subsequently leading to overall liberation.

**Collective consciousness → Individual empowerment → Liberation from the state of powerlessness**

### **Towards A new Model of Women Empowerment and Leadership**

Differences such as those of gender, caste or creed have to be transcended to visualize the ideal of universal good. Prof Subhash Sharma (1996) puts forward the direct vision view or a holistic approach suggesting the yin yang integration and the concept of Ardhanarishwar as a foundation for an integrative vision for the liberation of humanity. Drawing upon the earlier discussion on collective consciousness, we suggest a new model for women empowerment and leadership taking some Indian women as illustrations. These illustrations represent practical examples to the points stressed in the

earlier paragraphs on collective consciousness as routes for true empowerment and leadership. These inspirational examples have relevance not only for the grass root level but also in the context of women working at relatively good positions in the corporate world. It can be termed as the Parachute model of women empowerment and leadership.

This model is inspired by the ideology of three leading Indian women shared by Usha Thakkar in her article titled "Indian Ethos and Management" published in the 3D: IBA Journal of Management and Leadership on the theme New Frontiers in Indian Management (2009). The lessons of these three leading women leads us to a new comprehensive framework which we refer to as 'Parachute model'.

- 1) **"We are poor but so many.... Ela Bhatt, Founder of SEWA"**: Self employed women's association (SEWA) consisting of more than seven million women members, has charted a new path in contemporary India. SEWA is both an organization and a movement. The SEWA movement is enhanced by its being a sangam or confluence of three movements: the labour movement, the cooperative movement and the women's movement. It is also a movement of self-employed women workers: their own, home-grown movement with women as the leaders.
- 2) **"Add one and one and that becomes eleven and not two... Smt. Ratan Shastri"**: Smt. Ratan Shastri a recipient of Padma Shri in 1955, Padma Bhushan in 1975, and Jamnalal Bajaj Award for outstanding contribution in the field of uplift and welfare of women and children worked tirelessly for women's education and nurtured Banasthali Vidyapith, Banasthali, Rajasthan. Banasthali University, now a leading national institution for education and training of women was founded in 1935. Ratanji could get little formal education owing to her early marriage but she is a true example of education as the "manifestation of perfection already in human beings".

3) **“Go together, grow together.. Usha Mehta”:** Usha Mehta was a renowned Gandhian and freedom fighter of India. She is also remembered for operationalizing the Congress Radio, also called the Secret Congress Radio, an underground radio station, which functioned for few months during the Quit India Movement of 1942. In 1998, the Government of India had conferred on her Padma Vibhushan, the second highest civilian award of Republic of India.

When these three ideologies representing the various facets of collective consciousness as well as empowerment, are combined together we arrive at a comprehensive model of women empowerment and leadership in terms of following three foundational concepts:

1. We are so many: Realize our collective strength. An organization represents the collective strength of its stakeholders. It represents a community. The phrase, ‘We are so many’, is a powerful expression of the collective strength and represents ‘Power of Many’.
2. One and one is eleven: It not only gives the message of team building but also suggests the idea of synergy.
3. Go together- grow together: In organization context it gives message of growth and development of all stakeholders and not just the shareholders and management.

This framework is represented in Fig. 1



**Fig 1: A Framework of Empowerment & Leadership**

We can also represent these three ideas through the Parachute diagram as shown in Fig. 2:



**Fig 2: Parachute model of women empowerment and leadership**

Parachute diagram has following interpretation in the light of discussion presented earlier:

- a) Open parachute reflecting a women who has shed her inhibitions and fear, symbolizing expansion and growth
- b) Each women taking responsibility for self empowerment then of others leading to one and one make eleven and not two.
- c) Thin wires or suspension lines when tied together forming a life saving device. Reflecting the power of collectivism, we are so many.

#### Interpretation of the model:

The word “parachute” comes from “para”, meaning “against” or “counter” in Ancient Greek, and “chute”, from the French word for “fall”. When each woman takes the courage to open oneself to the existing possibilities and empower themselves then only can the whole womenfolk liberate themselves from the challenges and problems faced by them at familial, organizational and societal level and counter all those factors that lead to their downfall in varied arenas. However this requires first the empowerment of the self.

Parachute is functional only once it is opened and takes its full shape. Similarly women have

to struggle and overcome their inhibiting thought processes that prevent them from taking a lead or a quantum jump. Once they realize this and blossom to their full potential as leaders then only can they bring a change in the world around them. Looking from another perspective; mind is like a parachute, it doesn't work if it is closed. Hence women by empowering themselves and moving ahead have to challenge those existing narrow minded people who think that the women have a role to play only within the boundaries of the house.

Looking into the structure of the parachute it is a very simple device which any one person with little instruction and practice can use unlike the aero plane that can be used by specialized trained people like pilots. It implies that every women at the grass root level in whatever capacity not necessary at the management level has the ability to capitalize on her own strengths and rise in life creating an identity for self. The best example of this can be seen in the poor women members of SEWA itself.

This driving statement given by Smt Ratan Shastri that **"Add one and one and that becomes eleven and not two"** brings out the power of one. Just like one candle has the potential to light many other candles and spread light, one person can take the parachute high in the sky and rescue his life by him/herself with the right knowledge and skill; similarly one empowered women enables empowerment of ten others, adding up as one and one makes eleven. This again calls for each women taking responsibility for empowering themselves which in turn will create an over all liberation. This perspective not only brings out new dimensions of arithmetics but also indicates faith in the individual as well as collective strength of people. It is this strength which has to be the driving force of our institutions as well.

Parachute gives a very joyful experience of flying in the sky symbolizing growth. Also parachute is made of thin wires but when

they are tied together they serve important function and create a powerful device. **As Usha Mehta states Go together, grow together**, the coming together and joining of hands by womenfolk could be the key to their growth and empowerment. The same point has already been reiterated in empowering women through generation of a collective consciousness of the same. This could be in varied forms be it network of support groups of women or the way women leaders at the top nurture the young talented women through proper mentoring.

The lines of **Ela Bhatt founder of SEWA that "we are poor but so many"** sets an example that poverty by itself is not a limitation and if there is a firm collective commitment its shackles can be broken. This power of collectivism and the collective consciousness approach for empowering women can again be seen embedded in the metaphor of the parachute that is made from thin, lightweight fabric, support tapes and suspension lines. The lines are usually gathered through cloth loops or metal connector links at the ends of several strong straps called risers that enables flight. It also reminds one of the famous short story often used as a metaphor for symbolizing the power of unity on the Doordarshan channel, where breaking a single stick is a matter of play and a collection of sticks when tied together gives added strength.

Lastly Parachute, a simple device that fills with air and retards one's fall is often used as rescue equipment. If women of the today want to rescue and liberate themselves from the domination they have to take the responsibility for the same on their own shoulders.

### **Conclusion:**

Growth of society requires the need of enabling our women in rural and urban areas. If women really want to empower themselves, it requires the coming together of the distributed energy, generation of a collective consciousness to work for the same. Our

Constitution has conferred and guaranteed equality before law, universal adult franchise and equal opportunities for men and women as fundamental rights. The status of women is undergoing a transition struggling to overcome the barriers in the family, society and organizations. This development-theory driven conceptualization of empowerment redress the women's empowerment issue with a new perspective of collective consciousness theory expressed through three 'visionary statements' viz. (1) we are so many, (2) one and one is eleven, (3) go together and grow together. It also brings out the need to explore into ways through which women can collectively come together, share a platform and pave the way ahead. The examples of the ideologies of three leading women considered in this paper for the framework of parachute model supports the literature with existential facts giving a fresh perspective and impetus to the issues of women empowerment and leadership.

## References:

1. Asante M. K. (1989). *Afrocentricity*. Trenton, NJ: Africa World Press.
2. Althusser, Louis. (2001) "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses Notes Toward an Investigation)." *Lenin and Philosophy and Other Essays*. New York: Monthly Review Press.
3. Bynum, E. (1999). *The African unconscious: Roots of the ancient mysticism and modern psychology*. New York: Teachers College Press.
4. Bailey, D. (1992) Using participatory research in community consortia development and evaluation: lessons from the beginning of a story. *American Sociologist*. 23 (4), 71-82.
5. Collins, Randall (1994). *Four Sociological Traditions*. New York: Oxford.
6. Durkheim, Emile (1893). *The Division of Labor in Society*. New York: The Free Press, England.
7. Paula (2000). "Conceptualizing Women's Empowerment in Countries of the North." pp. 37-65 in *Women's Empowerment and Demographic Processes: Moving Beyond Cairo*, edited by H. B. Presser and G. Sen. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
8. Hayes, E. & Flannery, D.D. (2000). *Women as Learner. The Significance of Gender in Adult Learning*. California: San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Inc. Publishers.
9. Jung, C. G. (1968). *Man and his symbols* (Reissue edition). NY: Dell Publishing.
10. Jung, C. G., Adler, G., Read, H., McGuire, W., & Fordham, M. (Eds.). (1980). *The archetypes and the collective unconscious (The Collected Works of C. G. Jung Vol. 9)*. Trenton, NJ : Princeton University.
11. Kramarae, C. & Treichler, P.A. (1985). *A Feminist Dictionary*. England, London: Pandora Press.
12. King, R. (2001). *African origin of biological psychiatry*. Chicago: Lushena Books.
13. Kabeer, N. (1994) *Reversed Realities: Gender Hierarchies in Development Thought*. London: Verso Publications.
14. Kabeer (1999). "Resources, Agency, Achievements: Reflections on the Measurement of Women's Empowerment." *Development and Change* 30:435-464.
15. Malhotra, Anju, Sidney Ruth Schuler, and Carol Boender (2002). "Measuring Women's Empowerment as a Variable in International Development." *International Center for Research on Women and the Gender and Development Group of the World Bank*.
16. Natarajan (2002). *Women and Indian Modernity. Readings of the colonial and postcolonial Novels*. New Orleans. University of the South.
17. Nath, Vikas (2000). *Empowerment and governance through information and*

- communication technologies: Women's perspective. Paper presented at the International Conference on Women in the New ICT Era: Challenges and Opportunities, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 23-24 October 2000. Available from <http://www.cddc.vt.edu/knownet/articles/WomenandICT.htm>
18. Nair (2007). *Sages through Ages*. Sanatana dharma. Author House Publishers.
  19. Presser, H. B. & Sen., G. (2000). *Women's Empowerment and Demographic Process: Moving Beyond Cairo*. England: Oxford University Press.
  20. Rapport, J. (1984). Studies in empowerment: Introduction to the issue. *Prevention in Human Services*, 3, pp1-7.
  21. Shelburne, W. (1988). *Mythos and logos in the thought of Carl Young: The theory of the collective unconscious in scientific perspective*. Albany, NY : State University of New York Press.
  22. Sharma Subhash (1996), *Management in New Age: Western Windows Eastern Doors*. New Delhi: New Age International Publishers.
  23. Sharma Subhash (2006). *Holistic Globalization: Implications for Women in Management and Development in "Women in Management and Development"*. WISDOM Banasthali Vidyapith. Navjeevan Publication. Jaipur.
  24. Stein, J. (1997). *Empowerment & Women's Health*. New Jersey: Zed Books.
  25. Taub-Bynum, E. (1984). *The family unconscious: An invisible bond*. Wheaton, IL: The Theosophical Publishing House.
  26. Usha Thakkar (2009). Indian Ethos and Management. *3D IBA Journal of Management and Leadership*. 1(1), 5-11.
  27. Zimmerman, M.A. (1984). Taking aim on empowerment research: On the distinction between individual and psychological conceptions. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 18(1), 169-177.
  28. [http://vistarfoundation.org/vistar\\_foundation.html](http://vistarfoundation.org/vistar_foundation.html)
  29. <http://www.oed.com/public/freeoed>





# The Bhagavad Gita – Management Model Empowers Corporates and Society

**G. Surya Prakash Rao**

*St. Augustine PGC - Osmania University, Hyderabad*

**Madhusudhan Prasad Varanasi**

*School of Management Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru Technological University Hyderabad, Hyderabad*

Survival strategies of a tiger are different from the survival strategies of a fish. One good reason is the difference in medium they operate. At the same time some strategies may be customized to some extent, but in most cases it like borrowed garments do not fit well. Western management models are adopted in Asian, Middle Eastern, African countries, to some extent by leaders/managers, but they must have experienced the difficulty in implementation as the context of development of the models differ in terms of beliefs, value system, attitudes and behavior. Stress, anxiety, wrong perception, superficial behavior, ethical dilemmas, bad governance, improper handling of crisis situations, ineffective communication etc. could be some of the problems in wrong application of the models.

Even if Indian or Japanese models are developed meticulously, Western countries may have problem in adaptation. Covey (2004) emphasizes on developing a new mind-set to achieve greatness. He writes in his book

8th Habit, "Tapping into the higher reaches of human genius and motivation – what we could call voice – requires a new mind-set, a new skill-set, a new tool-set, a new habit." The need of the hour is to develop a management model that is based on 'Universal Principles,' which is accepted and practiced across the globe, just like electricity discovered in West or paper invented in China is accepted and used in the world.

Sharma (1995) developed a number of management models which use the idea of East – West blend, that have direct relevance to corporate enterprises. This paper highlights The Bhagavad Gita – Management Model, which is the research outcome of the doctoral thesis on the topic "The Principles of *The Bhagavad Gita* As Tools of Management."

## **Need of Modern Day – The Gita-Management Model**

"Leaders often encounter the need to transform organizations from a low performance level to

an actual performance level or from an actual performance level to a high performance level.”<sup>1</sup> (Durbin, 2002) According to Indian scriptures and saints, Self- transformation is strongly recommended before one attempts to transform an organization, be it corporate, social, government, global. *The Bhagavad Gita* describes the process of transformation in detail elaborating different ‘Yoga Systems’, i.e., *Karma yoga*, *Jnana yoga*, *Bhakti yoga*, and *Raja yoga*.

situations, unfamiliar roles, and professional relationships.

## METHODOLOGY

A comprehensive study (2004-2009) which comprised empirical research, interviews and opinions on different issues relating to *The Bhagavad Gita* and management was undertaken by the researcher.

**TABLE # 1 Lord Krishna’s Message - Transformation of Arjuna**

Arjuna before <i>The Gita’s message</i>	Lord Krishna’s message	Arjuna after <i>The Gita’s message</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▲ Depressed</li> <li>▲ Fear of Sin</li> <li>▲ Doubting mind</li> <li>▲ Forgetting his Core duty</li> <li>▲ ‘I think..</li> <li>▲ Attached to family, friends and world</li> <li>▲ Not peaceful</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <i>Karma Yoga</i></li> <li>2. <i>Jnana yoga</i></li> <li>3. <i>Bhakti Yoga</i></li> <li>4. <i>Raja Yoga</i></li> <li>5. Mind’s Nature</li> <li>6. Things one should Offer to Him</li> <li>7. Universal form of the Supreme Being</li> <li>8. <i>Diva-Asura Gunas</i></li> <li>9. Benefits of Surrender</li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ No more depressed</li> <li>▶ Acting on Lord’s words, and do not carry sin</li> <li>▶ Stable minded</li> <li>▶ Duty bound</li> <li>▶ ‘I will do what Lord says’</li> <li>▶ Peaceful</li> </ul>

It can be observed from (Table # 1) that the action of killing the enemy after *The Bhagavad Gita’s message* did not change, but what changed in Arjuna was the ‘state of mind’. Before *The Gita’s message* he was not peaceful but after the message of Lord Krishna, he acted with wisdom, tranquil mind and followed instructions of the Lord. This idea of ‘action with wisdom, calm mind in chaos and following the Laws of Universe forms the basis of *The Gita - Management model*.

It is likely that this model may also draw the attention of non-Indian managers, being a model based on Ancient Indian Wisdom and also statistically proven. Since *The Gita - Management model* essentially based on the principle of ‘Steady Mind – *sthita-prajna*’, a quality desired in the corporate world, this model may also aid global leaders to handle opposing ideas, unexpected

One of the important objectives of the study is to develop a *Gita - Management Model* and Instrument, which would empower corporate leaders, managers and professionals to enhance individual and organizational performance. In this paper results of Regression Analysis (leading to proposed *Gita - Management Model*) carried out on five *Gita* principles and five managerial attributes are presented.

Out of 700 *Gita slokas*, five *slokas* or five principles and five managerial principles are studied, which are as follows: **TABLE # 2.**

Primary data was collected through administering a structured questionnaire to a sample of 170 respondents comprising entrepreneurs, managing directors, senior and middle managers. Fifteen interviews were also conducted. The respondents are classified

**TABLE # 2 : FIVE GITA PRINCIPLES AND FIVE MANAGERIAL ATTRIBUTES**

<b>The Bhagavad Gita Principles under study</b>	
Principle 1	Inner Peace ( <i>atma jnana</i> ) (Ch. 2, verse 55)
Principle 2	Stable Mind ( <i>sthita-prajna</i> ) (Ch. 2, verse 56)
Principle 3	Focus on Means ( <i>karma yoga</i> ) (Ch. 2, verse 47)
Principle 4	Mode of Goodness ( <i>sattva guna</i> ) (Ch. 14, verse 17)
Principle 5	Surrender ( <i>sharanagathi</i> ) (Ch. 9, verse 22 and Ch. 18, verse 66)
<b>Management Attributes under study</b>	
1. Time Management 2. Conflict Resolution (Interpersonal conflict handling grid- Kilmann and Thomas) 3. Leadership (Blake and Mouton's managerial grid) 4. Transactional Analysis (Eric Berne's theory) 5. Circle of Influence (Stephen R. Covey's model)	

into four groups i.e., no-answer, non-believer, moderate believer and strong believer.

#### **DESCRIPTION OF FIVE PRINCIPLES (based on The Gita verses) AND FIVE MANAGERIAL ATTRIBUTES**

##### **Principle 1 Inner peace helps in Self Transformation, which aids in organizational performance.**

"When a man gives up completely all desires of the mind, and becomes exclusively content with his mind fixed in the Self, then he is said to be of stable wisdom." - *The Bhagavad Gita* (2.55).<sup>2</sup>

##### **Principle 2 A Stable Minded person is neither elated with success nor depressed with failure.**

"One who is not disturbed in mind amidst the threefold miseries or elated when there is happiness, and who is free from attachment, fear and anger, is called a sage of steady mind." - *The Bhagavad Gita* (2.56).

##### **Principle 3 Focusing on the means is more important, than rigidly attaching oneself to the result of action.**

"You have a right to perform your prescribed duty, but you are not entitled to the fruits of action. Never consider yourself to be the cause

of the results of your activities, and never be attached to not doing your duty." - *The Bhagavad Gita* (2.47)

##### **Principle 4: By increasing Sattva guna - mode of goodness, real knowledge develops.**

"From the mode of goodness (*Sattva*), real knowledge develops; from the mode of passion (*Rajas*), greed develops; and from the mode of ignorance (*Tamas*) develop foolishness, madness and illusion." - *The Bhagavad Gita* (14.17)

##### **Principle 5: Surrendering to the Supreme Being during a crisis, a leader finds solutions.**

"The Supreme Being demands our total devotion, and enjoins us to surrender ourselves to Him completely. Then He will give what we lack, preserve what we have, and deliver us from sinful reactions." - *The Bhagavad Gita* (9.22 and 18. 66)

##### **Managerial Attribute 1 - Time Management**

Time management is one of the most vital skills leaders can develop. A good leader organizes and prioritizes his activities; time is used effectively for his personal and professional needs.<sup>3</sup>

### Time Management Grid

		Urgency	
Importance	Quadrant 1	Quadrant 2	
	Urgent and Important "Firefighting"	Important but Not Urgent "Quality Time"	
	Quadrant 3	Quadrant 4	
	Urgent but Not Important "Distraction"	Neither Urgent nor Important "Time wasting"	

Figure : Time Management Grid

*Effective leader/manager/professional strives to maximize Quadrant 2.*

### Managerial Attribute 2 - Conflict Resolution (interpersonal conflict handling grid- Kilmann and Thomas)

One of the inborn qualities of all living beings is to fight. Conflict is a process that begins when one party perceives that another party has negatively affected, or is about to negatively affects, something that the party cares about. Conflict could be over property, human rights etc. The result is hard feelings, broken friendships and / or broken business relationships.

Following are five Conflict Resolution Strategies 4 identified and if correctly applied, can lead to satisfactory solutions:

1. Competing (I win, you lose)
2. Collaborating (I win, you win)
3. Compromising (We both lose, we both win)
4. Avoiding (I lose, you lose)
5. Accommodating (I lose, you win)

*Effective leaders, managers ideally chose the strategy 'Collaboration', but based on the situation*

### Managerial Attribute 3 - Leadership (Blake and Mouton's managerial grid)

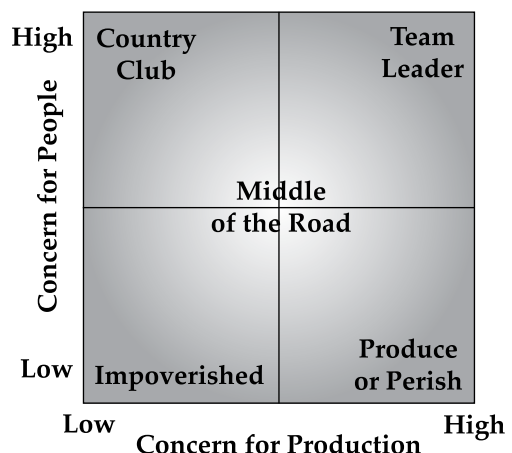
(Balancing Task - and People - Oriented Leadership)

Leaders, managers use different 'Leadership styles'. Some leaders are very task-oriented; enforce tight schedules, and they simply want to get things done. And some leaders are very people-oriented; accommodate peoples, needs, and keep people happy. And some leaders are a combination of the two. Based on the situation an effective leader may choose any of the leadership styles.

Robert Blake and Jane Mouton in the early 1960's developed a framework, called the Managerial Grid, or Leadership Grid. This Grid plots the degree of task-centeredness versus person-centeredness and identifies five combinations as distinct leadership styles.<sup>5</sup>

Using the axis to plot leadership 'concerns for production' versus 'concerns for people', Blake and Mouton defined the following five leadership styles:

Figure 1 : The Blake Mouton Grid



*Effective leaders, managers have High concern for Production and High Concern for people.*

### Managerial Attribute 4 - Transactional Analysis (Eric Berne's Theory)

Transactional analysis, commonly known as 'TA' is a neo-Freudian theory of personality and a systematic psychotherapy for personal growth and personal change. It was developed by Canadian-born U.S. psychiatrist Eric Berne during the late 1950's.

## Life positions

The phenomenon that colors every dyadic transaction with a general feeling (i.e. not a conscious philosophical position, but unconscious one) about life is called “a life position” in TA theory<sup>6</sup>. The four proposed “life positions” are:

1. “I’m Not OK, You’re OK” (I-U+)
2. “I’m Not OK, You’re Not OK” (I-U-)
3. “I’m OK, You’re Not OK” (I+U-)
4. “I’m OK, You’re OK” (I+U+)

*Effective leaders use the “life position”, “I’m OK, and You’re OK”.*

## Managerial Attribute 5 - Circle of Influence (Stephen R. Covey’s Theory)

Covey (1989), in the much acclaimed book “The 7 habits of Highly Effective People”, explains about seven habits, Be Proactive, Begin with the end in Mind, Put First Things First, Think Win/Win, ‘Seek First to Understand, The be’, Synergize and Sharpen the Saw. Covey also describes the concepts of ‘Circle of Concern’, and ‘Circle of Influence’. One can understand the degree of proactive ness by determining in which of the two circles one invests his time and energy.<sup>7</sup>

The concept of ‘Circle of Influence’ has been considered for the research study as one of the managerial attribute, because this is a desirable quality a leader, manager and a professional is expected to nurture.

## Regression Analysis

**H8:  $H_0$ . The Gita Principles have no influence on the managerial attributes such as Time management, Conflict resolution, Leadership, Transactional analysis and Ability to influence.**

The above hypothesis was tested with the Regression Analysis. Results are as follows:

- ▲ Time Management (Y) =  $.821 - .012 X(\text{belief})$   
(Important/not urgent)

- ▲ Conflict Resolution (Y) =  $.715 + .015 X(\text{belief})$   
(I win – You win)

- ▲ Leadership (Y) =  $.444 + .032 X(\text{belief})$   
(Equal concern for people and production)

- ▲ Transactional Analysis (Y) =  $.681 - .016 X(\text{belief})$   
(I’ am OK – You’re OK )

- ▲ Ability to influence(Y) =  $2.378 + .094 X(\text{belief})$   
(Circle of Influence-  
Stephen R. Covey’s model)

## Result:

The null hypothesis was rejected on the level of belief on leadership, conflict resolution and ability to influence and accepted on time management and transactional analysis.

## Conclusion:

If a leader/manager/professional has belief in the five *Gita* principles under study and practices them, he/she would excel in managerial attributes like leadership (equal concern for people and production), conflict resolution (I win – You win approach) and ability to influence (Circle of Influence – Stephen R. Covey’s model).

Based on the above results and conclusion, *The Bhagavad Gita – Management Model* was developed, which is as follows:

## Application of the Gita-Management Model to corporate situation

As part of the research design, interviews were chosen to be one of the two methodical approaches - along side a survey method. This is primarily because of the ability of the interviewee to give examples of the application of *The Gita* principles, understand the impact of the principles on the interviewee and the organization. More than ten interviews were conducted for managing directors, socially eminent people and experts in diversified fields. One of the interviews is highlighted below. Following question was posed to Sri. V. S. Rao, Managing Director, VBC Industries

**TABLE #3 THE GITA – MANAGEMENT MODEL**

<b>Belief and practice of all five <i>Bhagavad Gita</i> principles:</b>	<b>A leader/manager/professional can excel in the following Managerial Attributes:</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▲ Principle 1 - Inner Peace (<i>atma jnana</i>)</li> <li>▲ Principle 2 - Stable Mind (<i>sthita-prajna</i>)</li> <li>▲ Principle 3 - Focus on Means (<i>karma yoga</i>)</li> <li>▲ Principle 4 - Mode of Goodness (<i>sattva guna</i>)</li> <li>▲ Principle 5 - Surrender (<i>sharanagathi</i>)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>Conflict Resolution</b> (I win – you win approach - Interpersonal conflict handling grid- Kilmann and Thomas)</li> <li>➤ <b>Leadership</b> (Equal concern for people and production- Blake and Mouton’s managerial grid)</li> <li>➤ <b>Circle of Influence</b> (Stephen R. Covey’s model)</li> </ul>

Limited, Hyderabad and former Executive –In charge, Alloys Division, TISCO (Appendix #1 details his profile).

Question: As per the study based on 170 respondents, it is observed that the five Gita principles when practiced would result in better Leadership (equal concern for people and production), Conflict resolution (I win, you win approach) and Ability to influence (The Gita-Management Model). Do you agree? Can you narrate an example?

Sri V. S. Rao said that all the principles understudy form the essence of *The Gita* and are applicable to modern management. As a practitioner of *The Gita* principles he experienced that some principles play a dominant role in certain situations, while others play a supporting role. He narrated an example from his professional life.

In 1990’s Sri V. S. Rao was working in TISCO, Noamundi as Director of Mines. The township of Noamundi was built on Adivasi (tribal) land, and regular registration was not done. Instigated by some people of vested interests, Adivasis forcibly vacated TISCO employees from 300 houses and locked the doors.

As a Director in-charge of the township he had three options. One was to inform the head office and wait for a crisis team to arrive to resolve the problem and the second option was to call police. But he chose the third option

i.e., to resolve the conflict himself utilizing his leadership skills. With a calm mind he initiated the first step by accommodating the 300 families in churches and schools. He then invited the Adivasi leaders for discussions and made appropriate agreements, so as to resolve the conflict. The locks were opened in twenty four hours.

Sri V. S. Rao asserts that it is the value system that he had, and the value system of TISCO, that enabled him to deal with ‘Calm & Cool Mind’ during the crisis. He added that he regularly visited Lord Siva’s temple in Noamundi on Sundays. As part of corporate social responsibility he worked for the development of tribal people and visited Mata’s temple in their area, from where he derived courage, which also helped him in dealing the situation without any fear. He opines that a stable minded person is not perturbed in any situation. He adds that only a stable minded person will be able to see things clearly and understand situations with right perception. Regarding the possibility of a corporate leader attaining the state of mind as described by Sri Krishna in *The Bhagavad Gita* (which is not to get elated when profit/success/victory comes and depressed when loss/failure/defeat are experienced) he replied, “To achieve that state may be difficult, but people achieve it to some extent.”

He opined that “*The Gita*” has to be explained in a proper way, so that one understands the



meaning in the right perspective. Further, he emphasized that employees must be encouraged to read entire *Bhagavad Gita*, and understand the underlying linkages between each chapter and relevant *slokas*, rather than try to read few principles/*slokas*.

Note: From the above example it is evident that *The Gita - Management Model* may be applied to managerial situations. In this example, principles: Stable mind (which he nurtured from College days), Focus on means (which he practiced) played a dominant role, while Inner peace (which is bestowed by following moral values), Mode of goodness (which increases in a person by visiting holy places and disciplined life style) and Surrender (to some extent people with faith depend consciously or unconsciously on Divine's help), played supporting role. The impact these principles had on Sri V. S Rao, was to exhibit: Leadership skills (took a decision to solve problem on his own, though he had other options), Conflict resolution (amicably settled the issue with Adivasis) and Ability to influence (persuaded 300 families to take alternate accommodation, and influenced Adivasis to backfire instigator's perverted plans).

## Discussion

As mentioned in the 'Introduction' of this paper, Indian and Global leaders face many problems causing obstruction to organizational development. To counter these problems, there is a need for an acceptable management model, to be utilized by both Eastern and Western leaders. Such a model should empower leaders in managing organizations harmoniously. Scharmer (2005) supports the above point. He opines, "In order to access the deeper levels of learning and collective intelligence, leaders need a new social technology that activates and tunes three instruments; the open mind, the open heart, and the open will."<sup>8</sup>

Based on the Regression Analysis *The Bhagavad Gita - Management Model* is developed.

This model shows that if a leader, manager, professional, who believes and practices *The Gita* principles under study [inner peace (*atma jnana*), stable mind (*sthita-prajna*), focus on means (*karma yoga*), mode of goodness (*sattva guna*) and surrender (*sharangathi*)] - would excel in managerial attributes like leadership, conflict resolution and the ability to influence subordinates, boss and others. The message of *The Bhagavad Gita* is behind the success of Mahatma Gandhi. In his book, 'Studies on Gandhi', Patil (1989) writes that the "*Gita's* message of *Nishkama Karma*, or performing one's duty without any desire for fruit, strengthened his resolve to fight injustice. *The Gita* became his spiritual dictionary not because it answered all questions that he faced, but because it provides him with a key to solve all the problems that his struggle raised. He moved more and more towards *Gita* and aspired to reach its ideal *Sthita-prajna* which is dealt in depth in *Gita*."<sup>9</sup> Lessons from history teach us that successful kings, leaders followed ethical values and even in modern days successful organizations like General Electric, Tata, Infosys, Wipro are steered by leaders with strong ethical foundation.

The views of Joseph (1995) are worth mentioning here. James describes how the West failed, and how some of the pundits started scanning the Eastern horizon for inspiration. As a result, they discovered 'Zen' in Japan and 'yoga' in India. Furthermore he asserts, "A conscious effort to create respect, and form awareness and appreciation for the ancient Indian system of thought among managers and institutions is the need of the day."<sup>10</sup>

In last two decades, Indian management gurus' developed management models with origin in *The Gita*. Subhash Sharma developed a number of such models. He uses the idea of East - West blend and provides management models which have direct relevance for corporate enterprises. The examples of these models include the OSHA model (Sharma, 1985), the negergy-synergy grid (Sharma, 1996,

p.188), the 'MBA' (*Manas-Buddhi-Ahankar*) model (Sharma, 1996, p.209-214), a four steps model of enlightened leadership (Sharma, 1995), Total quality of Management (TQM), (Sharma, 1996), Omnijective OD (Sharma, 1997) and so on<sup>11</sup>. Some of these ideas have been tested in the organizational context and have been found useful by corporate managers in the analysis of cause for high negative energy or neergy in organizations<sup>12</sup>. Banerjee has developed the model of 'Mother Leadership' which is also rooted in the ideas from Gita and other Indian Scriptures (Banerjee, 1998).

Hee (2006) in his paper "A Holistic Approach to Business Management: Perspectives from *The Bhagavad Gita*" offers a Management Grid, consolidating the business perspective by focusing on evidence-based profit-centric approach and self control as promoted by *The Gita*. This Grid facilitates decision-making based on urgency and importance. Unlike conventional business models, this is based on the assumption of abundance instead of scarcity. He concludes his paper with this statement, "From *The Bhagavad Gita*, the essence of management can be summarized as 'self control,' focusing on *discipline* in perseverance, *detachment* from fruits of labor, and *devotion* to duty."<sup>13</sup>

Covey (2004) also emphasizes on developing a new mind-set. He writes in his book 8th Habit, "Being effective as individuals and organizations is no longer optional in today's world—it's the price of entry to the playing field. But surviving, thriving, innovating, excelling and leading in this new reality will require us to build on and reach beyond effectiveness. The call and need of a new era is for greatness. It's for fulfillment, passionate execution, and significant contribution. These are on a different plane or dimension. They are different in kind – just as significant is different in kind, not in degree, from success. Tapping into the higher reaches of human genius and motivation – what we could call voice – requires a new mind-set, a new skill-set, a new tool-set, a new habit."<sup>14</sup>

## Criticism of Spirituality

Robbins (2004) writes that critics of spirituality movement in organizations have focused on two issues. First is the question of legitimacy, that is, emphasis on spirituality can make some employees uneasy. However if the reasons for growing interest in spirituality like, the desire to integrate personal life values with one's professional life, temporary nature of jobs, stressful lives etc., are considered, then it is the time for organizations to help employees find meaning and purpose in their work and use the work place as a source of community.<sup>15</sup>

The second issue Robbins raises is that of economics. Are spirituality and profits compatible?

Robbins states that there is evidence that spirituality and profits are compatible. He cites three research studies. First is being a major consulting firm found that companies that introduce spirituality based techniques improved productivity and significantly reduced turnover. Second, another study found that organizations that provide their employees with spiritual development outperformed those that didn't. Third, other studies also report that spirituality in organizations was positively related to creativity, employee's satisfaction, team performance, and organizational commitment. An example of a company that embraced spirituality in workplace is Southwest Airlines. South west had the lowest turnover rates in the airline industry, it consistently had the lowest labor costs per miles flown of any major airline, it had few complaints, and arrivals are on time and are consistently profitable airline in the United States.

Lord Krishna, the embodiment of wisdom, who exhibited the qualities of Transformational Leader, preached *The Bhagavad Gita* to Arjuna, the embodiment of bravery and skill, to motivate him to do his duty when he faced an ethical dilemma: whether to kill his relatives and friends in the battlefield of Kurukshetra or not?. Like Shakespeare in Hamlet, Arjuna



was deeply agitated. Similarly, corporate leaders around the globe may gain Spiritual wisdom, and with calm minds, direct their subordinates with skills to overcome crisis situations, incorporate activities that contribute to spiritual development, realize organizational goals and participate in corporate social responsibility.

## Conclusion

As the study revealed positive results, all five principles of *The Bhagavad Gita* viz. inner peace, steady mind, focusing on the means, mode of goodness, and surrendering to the Supreme Lord during critical times may be applied to managerial situations to excel in time management, conflict resolution, leadership, transactional analysis and the ability to influence, which may contribute to create a new mind set, a skill set and a new tool set as emphasized by Stephen R. Covey in the above paragraphs.

If organizations encourage spiritual development, and enable individuals to achieve their individual wholeness, they are far more likely to make a truly valuable contribution to the organization. Athreya (2005) expresses that "Indian business leadership has also shown some distinctive tenets. Some of these are from India's spiritual tradition. Leadership is to be seen not as power, privilege and enjoyment, but as a sacred trust and responsibility. There is stress on public good, on all stakeholders and not just shareholder value maximization. The ideology includes ethics, social responsibility and philanthropy. The leader is expected to demonstrate 'self management', before being worthy of "organizational management."<sup>16</sup> Both 'Self management' and 'Organizational management' may be creative and effective when the principles of *The Gita* are applied. Jack Welch writes that "People with positive energy just love life."<sup>17</sup> *The Bhagavad Gita* could be a source book of positive thoughts and positive energy may bring about fundamental change in the interfaces of the global society; economy and polity.

## Appendix 1 - Profile of Sri V.S. Rao

Sri V. S. Rao, a Mining Engineer retired from Tata Steel as Executive In charge, Ferro Alloys and Minerals Division, in 1997. After more than 36 years of service he joined VBC Industries as Managing Director. He was also M.D. for Orissa Power Consortium Limited from the year 2000. During this period he had traveled abroad extensively and also presented Technical papers in various National and International Forums. He was:

- ▲ Past President "FIMI".
- ▲ Past President Mining Engineer's Association of India.
- ▲ Past President, National Institute of Small Mines.
- ▲ Past Vice Chairman, IFAPA.
- ▲ Past Director, Small Mines International (SMI), Canada.
- ▲ Member, Association of International Business Leaders, USA.
- ▲ Member, Central Advisory Contract Labor Board, Govt. of India.

## He has been awarded:

- ▲ NMDC Gold Medal for services to Iron Ore Mining.
- ▲ Dr. Coggin Brown memorial gold medal for services to Non-coal Mining Industry in 95.
- ▲ "Vikas Shree" award for application of computers in Mining and Environment.
- ▲ "Seva Medal" from St. John's Ambulance Association of India.

## References

1. DuBrin, A J., *Leadership Research Findings, Practice, and Skills*, Houghton Mifflin Company, U.S.A, 2002, pp. 69-70.
2. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, A.C., *The Bhagavad Gita As It Is*, The Bhaktivedanta Book Trust, 1983 (2. 55, p.143), (2.56, p.144), (2.47, p.134), (14.17, pp. 697-698), (9.22 p. 483 and Ch.18.66 p. 850).
3. *Time Management*, accessed in 2008, <http://www.teal.org.uk/sv/timemgmt.htm>

4. *Conflict Resolution*. [www.carltonstraining.com/conflict-resolution-strategies.htm](http://www.carltonstraining.com/conflict-resolution-strategies.htm)
5. *Blake Mouton Managerial Grid*, accessed in 2008, [http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newLDR\\_73.htm](http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newLDR_73.htm)
6. *Transactional Analysis*, accessed in 2008, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Transactional\\_analysis](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Transactional_analysis)
7. Covey, R. Stephen, *The 7 habits of Highly Effective People*, Simon & Schuster UK Ltd, 1989, p.81.
8. Scharmer, Otto C., *Theory U: Leading from the Emerging Future*, 2005, p.4.
9. Patil, V. T., *Studies on Gandhi (Ed.)*, Sterling Publishers Private Limited, New Delhi, 1989, p.18.
10. Joseph, James., "Self-Development for Crisis Management", *Ancient Indian Wisdom For Self development – HRM in Darsanas – II*, Ahmedabad Management Association, Ahmedabad, June 1995, p.1.
11. Sharma, Subhash, "Corporate Gita: Lessons For Management, Administration and Leadership", *Journal of Human values*, Management Center for Human Values, IIM Calcutta, July-December 1999, 5:2, pp.103-123.
12. Sharma, Subhash, *New Mantras in Corporate Corridors*, New Age International Publishers, New Delhi 2077.
13. Hee, Charles Chow Hoi, "A Holistic Approach to Business Management: Perspectives from *The Bhagavad Gita*", 2006, accessed in March 2009, [www.maicci.org.my/Gita%20Revised.pdf](http://www.maicci.org.my/Gita%20Revised.pdf)
14. Covey, Stephen R., *The 8th Habit from Effectiveness to Greatness*, Simon & Schuster UK Ltd, 2004, p.9.
15. Robbins, Stephen P., *Organizational Behavior*, 10th Edition, Prentice-Hall of India, New Delhi, 2004, pp.544-45.
16. Athreya, M., "Indian Managers Have Distinctive Strengths", *Indian Management*, July 2005, pp.34-40.
17. Welch, Jack and Suzy Welch, *Winning*, Harpar Collins Publishers Limited, 2005, p.84.



# Character of the Leader and Organizational Integrity

Nisigandha Bhuyan

Indian Institute of Management Calcutta, Kolkatta

**“Can anything be better for a country than to produce men and women of the best type?” – Socrates**

*Creating a culture of integrity in the organization is the best way to prevent any misconduct. In general, practices in any organization reflects the values, believes, and behavioral patterns of organization's operating culture. The operating culture of the organization is in turn greatly influenced and shaped by the value system of the leaders in the organization. It is the beliefs, assumptions, and value of the leaders which gets reflected in every aspect of building the culture of the organization starting from policy, practices, norms, standards and attitude. Following two important philosophical tradition i.e. Greek (Aristotle) and Indian (sāṃkhya school) we wish to demonstrate that values and virtues are more habituated then it is inherent. If emphasis is being put on the character building of the leaders, shaping an organization of integrity would be an easier challenge. We wish to focus on the fact that the character of a leader can significantly influence the culture of the organization. If leadership is laden with virtues the system and culture will most likely be instituted with value providing fewer opportunities for misconduct.*

## World order

As human civilization keeps evolving humanity struggles hard to maintain order in the world resulting in crisis and chaos in the form of economic recession and global warming etc. History is witness that the power of intellect

divinely bestowed on human species is the culprit that has created more morasses on earth then it has ever attempted to solve. The reason arguably is that the intellect like the free market is often not regulated by moral values. The faith that morality is an important component of any and every human endeavor

has not gone truly deep inside the human acumen and hence not seriously practiced. Hence, unregulated intellect has led to many disasters which actually has shaken the world order. Any advocacy and thereby attempt to separate ethics from any endeavor in life from economics to science and engineering is just a dangerous concept. If ethics and governance were followed in true spirit phenomena like economic recession, social unrest, and global warming would have been problems of lesser intensity. The world is going to undergo more such traumas of assault of rationalism upon the human spirit when the artifacts of genetic engineering and nano-technology will be integrated to our social living without taking proper care of their future implication to the world order.

## I

### Character

Socrates asked “can anything be better for a country than to produce men and women of the best type?”. This question stands relevance even today and more so when human species are empowered with the power of science and technology that constantly intervenes with the mechanism of nature. Hence the biggest challenge is to integrate intellect with nature. Many ancient eastern and western philosophical traditions especially the Greek and the Indian philosophical traditions have focused on the character building of individuals for a better world order. The main faith is that individual’s moral character can be shaped and strengthened by moral teachings. Although shaping character of an individual can be a difficult task as it involves working on the individual’s emotions as well as intellect. In western literature there is a contrasting faith developed during mid twentieth century that there is no disposition like character traits in individuals that can guide their behavior. Based on certain empirical investigations they argue that individuals are only victims of situations and are influenced only by situational pressures and they can be readily induced to fail the ideals of virtue and fortitude. This faith

is dangerous to the world order. Denial of the role of character negates role of character building and that in turn makes human beings vulnerable to the situational pressure leaving no room for accountability and responsibility of human subjects. When the role of individual’s character is denied, then the need to nurture ethical conduct is ignored. To undermine the role of character is to undermine the role of individual’s will completely. If the individual cannot be held responsible for their action attributing it all to the situation then we see no remedy for the transgression either in case of corporate or otherwise. The lapses if attributed only to the situational forces the individual is also made to understand that one’s role is negligible in bringing a significant change in the moral dynamics. In this paper, we are not questioning the authenticity of the empirical methods used nor are we questioning the view that human beings can be influenced by situational pressures but we emphasize the fact that moral character can be shaped and strengthened by teaching and training to withstand the pressure of the situation. In actuality aspects of individual’s character can bring significant change to the existing world order.

### Character Building: possibility and challenges

In Greek philosophical tradition the concept of character and virtue originated from the writings of Socrates, Plato and Aristotle. Modern virtue ethics draws heavily on the Aristotelian notion of virtue and character. To possess a virtue is to have a definite sort of character. Possession of virtue constitutes the states of character of its possessor. Character refers to an appropriate inner state of an individual, which gives rise to an appropriate response (in terms of behavior, action, decision etc.) to any given situation. Hence, character trait is understood as a ‘broad based disposition’ to respond in a relevant manner to situations of corresponding sort. For example, an individual possessing the virtue of honesty is broadly disposed to act honestly across circumstances. Virtue ethicists focus on the inner states of dispositions, habits

and a developed sense of personal integrity i.e. the character of the individual.

In eastern tradition the origin of these notions like character and virtue is comparatively prior. Both Confucius and Gautama Buddha discussed about the traits of character and described how we should live. There exists a concept of 'charitra' in Indian philosophy. A person of positive charitra possesses revered qualities of love, patience, forbearance, steadfastness. No empirical science can probably establish the propensities of good and evil qualities present in individuals. However, society always encourages cultivating good habits and refining the bad one. After all it is only humans who have the capacity to challenge their evil propensities and change their evil habits. However, this process must have to be facilitated by their social environment. Therefore, much emphasis is being put on the process of socialization and education of children during the formative years of their life. This is not to deny the fact that the nature of character can be modified during any stage of a person's life by modifying the accustomed process of thought and imagination. For any person of good character their thought, word and deed are one and the same. A contemporary religious prophet Sai Baba says to guard your character you must watch your words; watch your action; watch your thoughts; watch your character and; and watch your heart. Another concept in Indian philosophy is *Swabhava* which is somewhat closer to the concept of character. *Swabhava* means one's own way, one's very nature. It means the innate properties inherent in all beings and things which can be both physical and psychological. Human beings are constituents of both physical and psychological properties which vary in nuance. Though the essence is same the accidentals are many. The variation in disposition is best explained by the 'guna' dynamics of *sāṃkhya* philosophy. According to *sāṃkhya* philosophy the three essential elements of the entire universe including human beings are the three gunas of *Sattva*, *Rajas*, *Tamas* represented by metaphors of darkness, drive and illumination. These three essential qualities permeate the human

psycho-physical being in various degrees of permutation which explain the differences in their words, actions, temperaments, aspirations, values, drives, conduct and character. *Tamas* is born out of ignorance and cause of delusion. Predominance of *tamas* generates negative energy and drags the individual towards indulgence. *Rajas* is born out of desire and attachment. Predominance of *Rajas* creates a drive/passion for resulting in action but mostly driven by self interest. *Sattva* represents purity and predominance of *sattva* is illumination and self realization. The nature of each being is determined by the varying combinations of these gunas.

Individual (even organization, society and nation) can have varied tendencies depending on many factors including genesis and socio-familial orientation. Following *sāṃkhya* philosophy, Sharma (1997) divides the gene into three broad categories i.e. selfish gene that is predominated by animalistic characteristic of struggle for survival and self interest; noble gene predominated by humanistic characteristics of cooperation and concern; altruistic gene predominated by divine qualities of love and compassion. However, the transformative potentials of the psyche are ascertained.

Aristotle explained the dynamics by distinguishing between *temperate*, *continent*, and *akratic* individuals. *Temperate* people are those whose desires are directed naturally or through habit towards that which is good for the self and life in general. *Continent* people can make practical judgments, but they can also have unruly desires, desires contrary to what they think right. But they manage to control the unruly desires. *Akratic* individuals are those who are capable of making practical judgments, but fail to carry the judgment forward to the level of action. Weakness of will (*akrasia*) is identified with this failure of the agent, who nevertheless wishes to act virtuously. Perhaps an overwhelming prospect of some immediate benefit or pleasure obscures the agent's ability to carry forward the judgment to action. And this is achievable by practice and experience of them. Hence, Aristotle argues that the vice

of *incontinence* is not truly vicious. It in fact is curable in as much as respect for virtue still remains here and is evident in the practical judgment. So we conclude that both the faith: no internal traits (social scientist), fixed set of internal traits with no transformative potentials are dangerous faith.

Admittedly, number of *phronimoi* in any society is of necessity few who would resist the situational pressures no matter what comes on their way. In case of the general population there is a possibility of variation which depends upon many factors like, interest, inclination, culture, experience, exposure, maturity and many such other emotional, social and psychological factors. Variation of all these varieties makes the world as it is. The *phronimos* has skills in ethical discernment that most people may lack, but the skills are virtues and the result simply from good habituation and the use of reason. In our day-to-day endeavors, we do come across people who we know can resist situational pressure and make a coherent and good decision. We do come across people who can resist pressures, even at a considerable cost to the self, (e.g. certain whistle blower in corporates). Because people of good character identify that resisting situational pressure is in the best interest of the individual and society at large. We do hope that there are people who can and sometimes do persist and rise up against pressures and policies that violate the virtues.

Hartman (1996) says it takes reflective intelligence and consideration of an enormous amount of facts to establish a good character in a complex world. Good life is an integrated life, committed to a consistent set of values, principles, projects, and people and in many cases a community that can give it meaning. Good life is autonomous life and strong character is a necessary condition of the good life. Hartman (1996) rightly brings out the connection between good life, good community and a good individual. A man of practical wisdom is not a man from the other world. He is a practical man, a socio-political creature. His virtues and values are shaped here in this very world with both teaching

and experience. Good life is one that is lived in good community. Community includes, but is not limited to, one's family, school, and work place. And a community is good where agreements, rules and practices that shape the locally shared sense of right and wrong.

Darley (1996), while acknowledging that character can be partly molded by the environment in either direction of moral or immoral, nevertheless, identifies the need to nurture ethical conduct in business organizations. For example, sustained application of force in the conventional organizations of social control, e.g. police forces, prison guards, military forces etc., alters the character of those individuals caught up in the harmful activities. Similarly other organizations including business can foster evil in ways non deliberate by any of its constituent members. As Marshall Clinard says corporate crime is "a form of collective rule breaking in order to achieve the organizational goals." (Quoted in Darley, p. 15) Cases like flawed design of Ford Pinto, contraceptive by Robins Corporation, auditing flaws of Enron, WorldCom, Satyam etc. are all examples of such acts. However, there is also a reverse direction of this reinforcement. Reinforcement of sound ethical policies and rigorous ethical enforcement in corporations and in the business communities maximize the likelihood that people will conform to the right kind of corporate expectations. Virtue ethics flourishes with the idea that a person of developed moral character can and should resist pressures and policies that they find to be unethical.

The view that character is out and out vulnerable to situational forces is just over exaggeration of facts and it has severe implications for social living. When the role of individual's character is outrightly denied, the need to nurture ethical conduct is not recognized. Moreover, the fact that individuals can be, and are, influenced by situational pressures, do not in any way contradict the normative thesis that the moral character of individuals can be shaped and strengthened to withstand situational pressure by teaching, training and

habituation. Virtue ethicists only claim the later without contradicting the former. Virtue ethicists provide adequate understanding of different situations regarding when and how situational pressures influence action and behavior of individuals whose character traits are fully formed.

## II

### Organizational Culture

Life in general is being influenced by different forces including forces of market and forces of governance and forces of society. Ordinary individuals get entangled in the needs and demands of various quarters of life as best explained by McCoy (1997). Leader should be so constituted that he is able to guide his/her self along with his followers in the direction of convergence where there is no apparent conflict between the interest of the individual, the corporate and the world order. Various schools of Greek and Indian philosophy focus that it is the duty of the king to ensure the survival of all not alone the fittest as per the principle of Darwinian evolution. The role of corporate itself has evolved. From disapproval of 'trade for profit' from the time of Aristotle to consideration of wealth as backbone of nation by Adam Smith to defending only stockholder interest of Milton Friedman to multiple stakeholder model of Freeman to the integration of social and corporate objectives of C.K. Prahalad. Recently Shubash Sharma (2007) has suggested the need for integration of social discourse, corporate objectives and spiritual concerns.

Looking at today's first changing dynamic world what constitutes ethical behavior is a difficult question to ponder upon for ordinary individuals. It is further difficult question for people working in commercial organizations. It is in this context the culture of organization plays an important role. Social scientists define culture as the attitudes, values, beliefs, and behaviors that are shared by a group of people. (See Adler, 1986; Triandis, 1996). So culture is basically the evolving and evolved

norms of functioning. In that sense, each organization will have a unique culture of its own. Culture gets evolved, changed and modified with changes in factors outside and inside the organization. It is a recognized fact that the Leader is one important component in bringing change to the culture of organization. A significant component of the evolving culture of organization is nothing but the reflected vision of the leaders. Leaders create shape and change the culture of the organization. Change of leadership may change the course of things forever. Since they exhibit power and authority in the organization hence they are in a position to shape and reinforce virtuous behavior of individuals in the organization and can foster greater role in shaping the ethical climate of the organization. Hence, it is essential for the leaders to develop a firm character that would withstand the pressures of the situation. When the character of the leader is not firmly developed manipulations in the situation may significantly impact the behavior of individuals. Aristotle focused on the development of character with specific emphasis on practice of virtuous behavior.

### Process of socialization

A part of the objective of this paper is to demonstrate the relationship between leadership behaviors and organizational socialization. Socialization ensures the individuals fits well to the social context. Organization being a collective institution has greater power to control and shape individuals behavior. First of all organization's system and structure should support and reinforce value. It should foster a climate that encourages exemplary behavior. For this organizations need a comprehensive approach and compliance programs to detect prevent and punish violations.

Admittedly, the relationship and influence between the community and the individual are always two-way relationships. Communities including organizations and institutions have important role to play in providing opportunities for growth and environment conducive to ethical behavior. We discussed



in great length that strong moral characters are possible by indoctrination. As Aristotle has pointed out that for indoctrination the leader need to work on the follower's emotion as well as intellect. Working on these aspects of individuals is prudent for a person of practical wisdom who already posses a more firmly developed charter and practices virtue.

**It is believed that the manipulation of the emotional aspects of the individual supports more stringent character traits.** It is a different issue though to understand the dynamics behind of the emotional indoctrination. Ironically, the indoctrination by organizations like military or fundamentalist groups have many time proved to be forceful, not allowing the individual to change even while exposed to strong countervailing situational pressures. The socio psychological dynamics behind this indoctrination has a very important role to play. The commitments these people demonstrate are because the indoctrination is so very successful. However, their values and virtues may be questionable given their use of debatable and inappropriate mechanism of control. Likewise, negative forces in organizations may indoctrinate individuals to produce harmful actions for a short term profit. There may or may not be a difference in the socio psychological dynamics of this type of indoctrination.

The point that we are trying to make here is that the managers and especially the leaders should be indoctrinated with moral characters both in the educational institutions and in the organizational setup. These individuals can develop ability to challenge the wrong organizational forces. For example, a whistle blower who challenges the organizational wrong doing for a beneficial motive is an example of a person who acts on integrity or conscience by overcoming the force. Religion and spirituality can probably play a major role in shaping the system of values and virtues inevitable and necessary for character building of individuals. But the leader is the most responsible and most capable to set the culture of an organization

## References

- Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*. The Complete Works of Aristotle vol.2, ed. Jonathan Barnes. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984).
- Edwin, M. Hartman, *Organizational Ethics and the Good Life*. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996).
- Edwin M. Hartman, "An Aristotelian Approach to Moral Imagination." *Professional Ethics*, 8 (2000): 57-77.
- Edwin M. Hartman, "Character and Leadership" *Business and Professional Ethics Journal* 2(2001): 3-21.
- Gilbert Harman, "Moral Psychology meets Social Psychology: Virtue Ethics and the Fundamental Attribution error" *Proceedings of Aristotelian Society*, 99 (1998-99): 315-31.
- Gilbert Harman, "The Nonexistence of character Traits" *Proceedings of Aristotelian Society*, 100 (2000): 223-64.
- Gilbert Harman, "No character or Personality" *Business Ethics Quarterly* 13(2003): 87-94.
- M. Darley " How organizations socialize individuals into evildoing" in *Codes of Conduct: Behavioral Research into Business Ethics* Eds. D. M. Messick and A. E. Tenbrunsel (New York: Russell Sage Foundation, 1996), pp.13-43.
- McCoy, B. H. "The Parable of the Sadhu" *Harvard Business Review* (1997): 1-7.
- Robert C. Solomon, "Victims of Circumstances? A Defense of Virtue Ethics in Business" *Business Ethics Quarterly*, 13 (1) (2003): 43-62.
- Taormina, R. J., "Integrating leadership behaviors, organizational socialization, and organizational culture." *Leadership and Organization Development Journal*, 29(2008): 85-102.
- Sharma, Subhash, "From self-actualization to self-realization: Beyond the selfish-gene syndrome" *Abhigyan*, Vol. XV, No.4, 1997, pp.59-63.
- Sharma, Subhash, *New Mantras in Corporate Corridors: From Ancient Roots to Global Routes* (New Delhi: New Age International Publishers, 2007).



# From 'VICAR' of Leadership to 'VICHAR' of Leadership: A New Leadership Paradigm

**Sowmya C. S.**

*Indus Business Academy, Bangalore*

'All giving is not a debt we owe, but, instead, is a seed we sow'.

"Most people just laugh when they hear the secret to success is giving.  
Then again most people are not nearly as successful as they wish they were."

The book 'The Go-Giver', a business parable by Bob Burg and John David Mann, transforms the way the world does business. There seems to be a new trend in business literature that emphasizes that if human goodness is the core value of a business, success and riches will follow. The book continues that trend. The blurb on its front page "A Little Story about a Powerful Business Idea" does not even begin to describe the impact the book can have on business, and as with all good parable, on one's life.

The parable revolves around a young go-getter, Joe. In spite of all his efforts he is unable to reach the career heights he has set for himself. He is then introduced to this hugely successful person who goes by the name Pindar. Pindar

teaches Joe his trade secrets - that comes in the form of five laws - over a period of one week. As the name of the book suggests, the story teaches one to first start giving before one can start receiving. In the course of one week, Joe gets to meet five people - including a surprise guest - who explains to him an aspect of business (and life) by a personal example.

The 5 laws, called 'The Five Laws of Stratospheric Success', are beautiful in their simplicity.

They are

1. The Law of Value
2. The Law of Compensation
3. The Law of Influence
4. The Law of Authenticity
5. The Law of Receptivity

1. **The Law of Value** : ‘Your true worth is determined by how much more you give in value than you take in payment’.
  2. **The Law of Compensation** : ‘Your income is determined by how many people you serve and how well you serve them’.
  3. **The Law of Influence** : ‘Your influence is determined by how abundantly you place other people interests first.’
  4. **The Law of Authenticity** : ‘The most valuable gift you have to offer is yourself.’
  5. **The Law of Reciprocity** : ‘The key to effective giving is to stay open to receiving’.
- Situational Theories - Bogardus (1918); Hersey and Blanchard (1972); Hocking (1924); Pearson (1928).
  - Psychoanalysis Theories - Erikson (1964); Frank (1939); Freud (1913, 1922); Fromm (1941); H Levison (1970); Wolman (1971).
  - Humanistic theories - Argyris (1957, 1962, 1964); Blake and Mouton (1964,1965); Hersey & Blanchard (1969, 1972); Likert (1961, 1967); Maslow (1965); Mc Gregor (1960, 1966).
  - Leader – Role theory - Homans (1950); Kahn and Quinn (1970); Kerr and Jermier (1978); Mintzberg (1973); Osborn and Hunt (1975).

### **Review of Literature on Leadership in the Western World**

Researchers have defined Leadership in the following ways –

- As defined by Bennis (1959), leadership is the process by which an agent induces a subordinate to behave in a desired manner.
- Merton (1957) has shown that leadership is an interpersonal relation in which others comply because they want to, not because they have to.
- Roach and Behling (1984) has shown that it is a process of influencing an organized group toward accomplishing its goals.
- Campbell (1991) indicates that leadership is actions that focus resources to create desirable opportunities.
- The leader’s job is to create conditions for the team to be effective as shown by Ginnett (1996).
- Contingency Theory - Fielder (1967); Fielder, Chemers and Mahar (1976).
- Integrative; Transactional, Transformational; Value Based - Bass; Bennis (1984, 1992, 1993); Burns (1978); Downton (1973); Fairholm (1991); Covey (1992) O’Toole (1995); DePree (1992).
- Charismatic Leadership- Conger & Kanungo (1987); House (1977); Kets de Vries (1988); J Maxwell (1999); Meindi (1990); Shamir, House & Arthur (1993); Weber (1947).
- Result based Leadership - Ulrich, Zenger, & Smallwood (1999); Nohria, Joyce and Robertson (2003).
- Leader as Teacher - DePree (1992); Tichy (1998).

### **Leadership Theories: Review of Literature given by Stephen R Covey in ‘8th habit’ (2004) pp – 352 -358**

- Great Man Theories - Dowd (1936).
- Trait theories - L L Barnard (1926); Bingham (1927); Kilbourne (1935); Kilpatrick and Locke (1991); Kohs and Irle (1920); Page (1935); Tead (1929).
- Leadership as a Performing Art - DePree (1992; Mintzberg (1998); Vaill (1989).
- Cultural and Holistic Leadership - Fairholm (1994); Senge (1990); Schein (1992); Wheatley (1992).
- Servant Leadership - Greenleaf (1996); Spears and Frick (1992).

- Spiritual Leadership - DePree (1989); Etzioni (1993); Fairholm (1997); Greenleaf (1977); Hawley (1993); Keifer (1992).
- Solo and Team Leader - Belbin (1993).
- Action Centered Leadership - Adair (1973).
- Financial theory of Leadership - Prince (2005).
- Crucible theory of Leadership - Bennis and Thomas (2002).
- Era theories of leadership - Bennis and Thomas (2002).
- Level 5 leadership - Collins (2001).

### **Review of Literature on Leadership Laws**

Xenophon (Ancient Greek 430 – 354 BC), was a Greek historian, soldier, mercenary, and a contemporary and admirer of Socrates. He is known for his writings on the history of his own times, the 4th century BC, preserving the sayings of Socrates, and the life of ancient Greece. According to him the leadership laws are integrity, commitment, duty, and more.

William Cohen, author of “A class with Drucker”, gives his eight universal laws of leadership. They are (1) declare your expectations (2) show uncommon commitment (3) expect positive results (4) put duty before self (5) get out in front (6) maintain absolute integrity (7) know your stuff (8) and take care of your people.

Business Consultant Rob Sherman’s “12 Laws of Leadership” are (1) The essence of leadership is influence. (2) Leaders chart the course. (3) Leaders also develop relationships. (4) Leaders take responsibility for the acts of the team. (5) Leaders empower others. (6) Leaders understand that courage requires them to overcome their fears. (7) Leaders take risks outside of their comfort area (8) Overcome negative self-talk (9) Live their values consistently. (10) Leaders maintain a sense of perspective. (11) Leaders are constantly aware. (12) Leaders leave a legacy.

The five laws of stratospheric success will be tested by considering some of the finest examples of leadership. This will thereby demonstrate the importance of these laws in leading life and work, especially for leaders. A new leadership law ‘VICAR’ will emerge, which will act as a beacon for leaders and leadership around the world to follow.

Let us understand them one by one.

### **1. The Law of Value**

‘Your true worth is determined by how much more you give in value than you take in payment’.

Does it make money is not a bad question, it is a great question, it is just a bad first question. It starts to pointing off in the wrong direction. The question should be, does it serve, and does it add value to others. If the answer to that question is yes then one can go ahead and ask if it makes money. Exceed people’s expectations and they will pay more; but the point is not to have people pay more it is to give them more. Give give give, why? Because one loves to. It is not a strategy; it is a way of life. And when we do, then very profitable things begin to happen. All the great fortunes in the world have been created by men and women who had a greater passion by what they were GIVING, their service or product, than by what they were GETTING.

### **The Law of Value and Leadership Exhibited in Sam Pitroda, Pioneer in India’s Telecom Revolution**

Sam Pitroda (born 04 May 1942, in Titlagarh, Orissa) (Real name Satyanarayan Gangaram Pitroda) is an inventor, entrepreneur and policymaker. He is also widely considered to have been responsible for India’s communications revolution. As technology Advisor to the Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi in the 1980s, Mr. Pitroda not only heralded the telecom revolution in India, but also made a strong case for using technology for the benefit and betterment of society through several

missions on telecommunications, literacy, dairy, water, immunization, oilseeds etc.

Pitroda dreamt a dream of fixing one of the many problems that plagued India. The 1980s were the years when the migration of educated young people from India to developed countries mirrored more than career aspirations. It also reflected a willingness to leave behind family ties to join a world of modern communication. Sam focused on India's problem – an infrastructure of two million telephones for a population of 750 million was woefully inadequate – and he resolved that “he was going to fix India's problem.”

For a year, Sam Pitroda sought an appointment with former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. On being granted an appointment for 10 minutes (the time-keepers thought neither he nor the prime minister needed more), he declined to meet until he was given nothing less than an hour. After what became a famous hour-long meeting, Mrs. Gandhi observed, “This guy is possessed. He wants to do it. I don't know what, but he will do it.”

The prime minister required a year to be convinced that Pitroda's was indeed a selfless motive. When Mr. Pitroda was asked to quote his terms, he responded with a budget of 36 million rupees and 36 months to show his work, and an annual salary of 1 rupee for the next decade. Thus was conceived the Center for Development of Telecommunications that would eventually lay the foundation to make India the software hub that it is today.

Pitroda's secret of success was selfless sacrifice. When one's mission is to make a difference to the world rather than make a personal gain, one can draw courage from outside as everyone seeks to help to achieve that mission. Pitroda also believed that working from the top down was essential for a country like India with its millions of illiterate citizens.

### **Application of the Law of Value in Leadership**

Thus we see that the law of value is applied in the case of the telecom leader, Sam Pitroda. For

India, one of the greatest fortunes, the telecom revolution was created by a man who had a greater passion by what he was GIVING, than by what he was GETTING. Sam Pitroda is a classic example of a leader who demonstrates the law of value.

## **2. The Law of Compensation**

‘Your income is determined by how many people you serve and how well you serve them’.

Your compensation is directly proportional to how many lives one touches. It is not only a question of value but also of impact. You get to determine your level of compensation. Want more success? Find a way to serve more people.

### **Law of Compensation and Leadership Exhibited in Dr. Venkataswamy of Arvind Eye Hospital**

This is the story of a Rs. 50-crore organization that provides free services to around 70 percent of its customers. The non-profit organization does not depend on donations, but manages to operate on 40 percent margins.

It has been cited by management gurus as the perfect example of an organization that successfully redefined markets and customer service. What are we discussing here – a case study on corporate utopia? No, a brief history of Aravind Eye Hospital.

With 2.4 million served, the Aravind Eye Care System in India is in a way the McDonald's of cataract surgery: efficient, effective, influential and rare for health care in the developing world -- a clear financial success. It began with one man, Govindappa Venkataswamy (1918-2006), an ophthalmologist who died at age 87 after a long illness. Dr. V, as he was universally known, created one of the largest eye-care systems in the world, catering largely to the poor in Tamil Nadu, a state in southern India. He was inspired by the assembly-line model of McDonald's founder Roy Kroc -- learned during a visit to Hamburger University in Oak Brook, Ill.

The first Aravind Eye Hospital was a 10-bed facility started in Madurai by Dr. G. Venkataswamy with the vision of eliminating blindness among the poor. Today it has centers in five cities of South India and has cured more than 1.3 crore patients of blindness. In fact, the hospital's sales personnel have to meet annual targets for a certain number of free patients. The staff travels to rural areas to look for poor patients suffering from cataract and transport them free of charge to the nearest Aravind Hospital where highly qualified doctors perform state-of-the-art cataract surgery. The hospital has a self-sustaining business model – the fees obtained from the paying minority supports the cost of free medical care for the majority. Rather than depend on charity and founders, the hospital manufactures all the materials needed for surgeries and eye care, including intraocular lenses for which it has a 10 percent global market share. And what is Dr. Venkataswamy's vision? "To mass-market cataract surgery the way hamburgers and pizzas are marketed by Mc Donald's and Pizza Hut"!

The success of its business model depended on numbers. To serve more patients Dr. Venkataswamy educated his customer-patients. In doing so, he took the help of technology. He deployed technology to serve people who were not able come to hospital. In 2003, Aravind was utilizing 30 Internet kiosks in remote villages of Tamilnadu.

### **Application of the Law of Compensation in Leadership**

Thus we see that the law of compensation is applied in the case of leadership of Aravind Eye Hospital. Their compensation is directly proportional to the number of lives they touch every day.

### **3. The Law of Influence**

'Your influence is determined by how abundantly you place other people interests first.'

Survive, Save, and Serve are the three universal reasons for working. Survive to meet ones basic living needs. Save to go beyond basic needs and expand one's life. Serve to make a contribution to the world around. Unfortunately most people spend their entire lives focusing on the first, a smaller number focus on the second, but those rare few who are truly successful, not just financially but genuinely successful in all aspects of their lives, keep their focus squarely on the third. If we ask most people what creates influence what will they say? Money, power, etc... those things don't create influence, influence creates them, and now you know what creates it; Putting other people's interest first. What makes people attractive? They love to give; givers attract. That is why the law of influence works because it magnetizes a person.

### **The Law of Influence Exhibited by Muhammad Yunus of Grameen Bank**

The Grameen Bank is a micro finance organization and community development bank started in Bangladesh that makes small loans (known as micro credit or "grameen credit") to the impoverished without requiring collateral. The word "Grameen" is derived from the word "gram" and means "rural" or "village" in Bangla language. The system of this bank is based on the idea that the poor have skills that are under-utilized. A group-based credit approach is applied which utilizes the peer-pressure within the group to ensure the borrowers follow through and use caution in conducting their financial affairs with strict discipline, ensuring repayment eventually and allowing the borrowers to develop good credit standing. The bank also accepts deposits, provides other services, and runs several development-oriented businesses including fabric, telephone and energy companies. Another distinctive feature of the bank's credit program is that a significant majority of its borrowers are women.

The origin of Grameen Bank can be traced back to 1976 when Professor Muhammad

Yunus, a Fulbright scholar at Vanderbilt University and Professor at University of Chittagong, launched a research project to examine the possibility of designing a credit delivery system to provide banking services targeted to the rural poor. In October 1983, the Grameen Bank Project was transformed into an independent bank by government legislation. The organization and its founder, Muhammad Yunus, were jointly awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 2006.

Grameen Bank is best known for its system of solidarity lending. The Bank also incorporates a set of values embodied in Bangladesh by the Sixteen Decisions. At every branch of Grameen Bank the borrowers recite these Decisions and vow to follow them.

Muhammad Yunus has shown himself to be a leader who has managed to translate visions into practical action for the benefit of millions of people, not only in Bangladesh, but also in many other countries. Loans to poor people without any financial security had appeared to be an impossible idea.

### **Application of the Law of Influence in Leadership**

Thus we see that the law of influence is applied in the case of Muhammad Yunus of Grameen Bank. Grameen Bank's influence and success is because they placed the interests of the poor people first.

### **4. The Law of Authenticity**

'The most valuable gift you have to offer is yourself.'

We are our most important commodity. The most valuable gift we have to offer is ourselves. Reaching any goal takes 10% specific knowledge or technical skills, 10% max. The other 90 % is people skills, and what is the foundation of all people skills? Liking people, caring about people, being a good listener, those are all helpful but they are not the core of it. The core of it is who we are. It starts with

us. As long as we are trying to be someone else, or putting on some act or a behavior that someone taught us, we have no possibility of truly reaching people. The most valuable thing we have to give people is ourselves. No matter what we think we are selling, what we are really offering is ourselves.

### **The Law of Authenticity and Leadership Exhibited by Mahatma Gandhi**

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi (2 October 1869 – 30 January 1948) was the pre-eminent political and spiritual leader of India during the Indian independence movement. He pioneered satyagraha—resistance to tyranny through mass civil disobedience, a philosophy firmly founded upon ahimsa, or total nonviolence, which helped India to gain independence, and inspired movements for civil rights and freedom across the world. Gandhi is often referred to as Mahatma Gandhi ("Great Soul") in India and also as Bapu.

As a practitioner of ahimsa, he swore to speak the truth and advocated that others do the same. Gandhi lived modestly in a self-sufficient residential community and wore the traditional Indian dhoti and shawl, woven with yarn he had hand spun himself. He ate simple vegetarian food, experimented for a time with a fruitarian diet, and undertook long fasts as a means of both self-purification and social protest.

There is a story about Gandhi, that is a beautiful example of the power of authenticity. A woman once traveled to India to bring her son to see the famed spiritual and political leader. When they met, she said, "Sir, please tell my child not to eat sugar." The great man asked her please to return with the child in 30 days. Irritated and confused, she agreed and left. A full month later she returned and brought her boy to see the man.

Again she said, "We are back, it's been 30 days—please tell my child, to stop eating sugar." Gandhi tenderly looked at the boy and

said, "My Son, stop eating sugar." The boy agreed immediately, pledging that he would no longer eat sugar from that day forward. Grateful but still confused, the mother said, "I don't understand. Why did you make me leave and then journey all the way back here 30 days later, just so you could tell him what I asked you to tell him in the first place?"

Replied Gandhi, "Because 30 days ago, I was still eating sugar."

That's authenticity, and not only is that level of integrity the greatest gift you have to offer others, but it also bestows great power and makes one much more attractive to others.

One of Gandhi's quotes defines the essence of authentic leadership. "Always aim at complete harmony of thought and word and deed". In Bill George's book, *Authentic Leadership*, he explains, "After years of studying leaders and their traits, I believe that leadership begins and ends with authenticity. It's being yourself; being the person you were created to be... Authentic leaders are dedicated to developing themselves because they know that becoming a leader takes a lifetime of personal growth."

### **Application of the Law of Authenticity in Leadership**

Thus we see that the law of authenticity is applied in the case of Mahatma Gandhi, as the only gift he had to offer was himself.

### **4. The Law of Reciprocity**

'The key to effective giving is to stay open to receiving'.

The traditional bit of wisdom nonsense that everyone else has drummed into us is that: "it is better to give than to receive" it is insane to try to give and not receive. Trying not to receive is not only foolish, it is arrogant. When someone gives a gift, what gives us the right to refuse it, to deny their right to give. Receiving is the natural result of giving. Right now, this very instant, all over the globe, humanity is breathing in oxygen and breathing out carbon

dioxide. So is the rest of the animal kingdom. And right now, at this instant all over the globe the billions and billions of organisms of the plant kingdom are doing the exact opposite. They are breathing in carbon dioxide and breathing out oxygen, and there giving is our receiving, and our giving is there receiving. In fact every giving can happen only because it is also a receiving.

### **The Law of Reciprocity and the Leadership Exhibited by Ramon Magsaysay**

Ramón del Fierro Magsaysay (August 31, 1907 - March 17, 1957) was the third President of the Third Republic of the Philippines from December 30, 1953 until his death in a plane crash in 1957. He was elected President under the banner of the Nacionalista Party.

Shortly after his swearing in, he was offered his predecessor's massive closed Cadillac. He waved it away, selecting instead a borrowed Ford convertible with its top down.

During his term, he made Malacañang Palace literally a "house of the people", opening its gates to the public. He often used to say, "Don't call Malacanang a palace. Kings live in palaces. I am not a king". One example of his integrity followed a demonstration flight aboard a new plane belonging to the Philippine Air Force (PAF). President Magsaysay asked what the operating costs per hour were for that type of aircraft, then wrote a personal check to the PAF, covering the cost of his flight.

During the campaign, Magsaysay declared repeatedly: "Those who have less in life should have more in law". He had promised that voters would have the most responsive government in their history. "If you have got a problem, just let me know", he told his countrymen. To fulfill that promise, he created the Presidential Complaints and Action Committee (PCAC). His administration was considered one of the cleanest and most corruption-free; his presidency was cited as the Philippines' Golden Years. President Magsaysay was known as the "guy of the



masses". He was popular among the farmers and among other people who lived very simple lives. He was dedicated to helping his country and his people.

On March 17, 1957 when the news came that the President had been killed in a plane crash, the nation's worry was, "What can we do about Luz and the three children? We've just learnt that Magsaysay doesn't even own a house!". His net assets were valued at just 86,000 pesos.

Free for the first time of Magsaysay's strictures on private gain for his family, many offered help. A real estate developer donated a suburban Manila lot. Gifts of wood, cement and labour followed. Some 7000 Manila stevedores each contributed a tile for the building's floor. The only capital the Magsaysay family accumulated came not from the nation's coffers but from the heart of the people.

### Application of the Law of Reciprocity in Leadership

Thus we see that the law of receptivity is applied in the case of Ramon Magsaysay. Receiving a home was a natural result of all his giving nature.

In this paper, the five laws of stratospheric success were tested by considering some of the finest examples of leadership.

From this emerges a new leadership law for leaders – VICAR (Value, Influence, Compensation, Authenticity and Receptivity). VICAR in the broadest sense, (from the Latin vicarius) is a representative, anyone acting "in the person of" or agent for a superior. In this sense, the title is comparable to lieutenant, literally the "place-holder". Thus it is appropriate term for leadership.

The new leadership law VICAR, will act as a beacon for leaders and leadership around the world to follow. It will thereby demonstrate the importance of the five laws of stratospheric

success in leading life and work and business. Table 1 presents a summary of VICAR Model of leadership.

<b>Table 1: New Leadership Law – VICAR Paradigm</b>		
VICAR Paradigm		New Law for Leaders
V	Value	How much value a leader gives
I	Influence	How much other peoples interest come first
C	Compensation	How many people are served and how well
A	Authenticity	Offer yourself first
R	Reciprocity	Stay open to receiving

### Comparison with Dr. Subhash Sharma's Contributions to Indian Management

A leading Indian Management Thinker whose academic contributions to development of Indian management thought are widely acknowledged is Dr. Subhash Sharma.

Dr. Subhash Sharma is an acknowledged new age management thinker and has made a number of scholarly and creative contributions to the development of Indian management thought. His significant academic contributions towards a creative synthesis of Western and Eastern concepts in management and social thought have received wide attention and acknowledgement by many reputed scholars.

Dr. Sharma has authored well known and path breaking books, viz. Creation from Shunya (1993), Management in New Age: Western Windows Eastern Doors (WWED) (1996, 2006), Quantum Rope: Science, Mysticism and Management (1999) and Arrows of Time: From the Black holes to the Nirvana Point (2001) and New Mantras in Corporate Corridors (2007). A number of his scientific and spiritual



verses are quite popular among his students and professional managers across the country.

The leadership law, VICAR is compared to his new management models and tools that enhance our understanding of management and social thought. When the new leadership law is compared to the models of Dr. Subhash Sharma a new understanding of VICAR laws emerges.

### **The Law of Value and Dr. Sharma's Models of G/T Ratio, Ego to Eco in terms of Ahamkara to Aumkara**

As was earlier seen, the law of value states, 'Your true worth is determined by how much more you give in value than you take in payment'. This is compared to Dr. Subhash Sharma's model of G/T ratio. G/T ratio stands for Give / Take. How much one gives and how much one takes from the family, organization or society is a widely discussed idea. If G/T is greater than one, it implies that the person gives more than what he / she takes from the organization or society. This in itself is an indicator of inner motivation and the satisfaction one derives from the very act of giving more than what one takes. It is nature's nature to give more and take less. For example, sun gives light to all, its G / T ratio could as well be considered close to infinity. Individuals with high G/T ratio must be recruited to improve the performance of organizations. It may also be indicated that G/T ratio also provides an ideological foundation for the concept of 'Corporate Social Responsibility' as it indicates what a corporate is 'giving' back to the society from which it takes various sources.

This model is the key for the 'Ego to Eco' transformation as it suggests converting ahamkaara' (ego oriented worldview) into 'aumkara' (eco oriented worldview). G/T ratio of ego oriented managers and leaders is less than one, as they give less and take more.

In contrast G / T ratio of eco oriented managers and leaders is far more than one as they give

more and take less. For transformation from 'power to empower', mindset of managers should change from ego to eco.

### **The Law of Influence and Dr. Sharma's Classification of Genes in terms of Selfish to Noble and Altruistic Genes**

'Your influence is determined by how abundantly you place other people interests first.' This is compared to Dr. Subhash Sharma's framework of self development. In this framework are used the metaphors of selfish gene, noble gene and altruistic gene.

These metaphors provide us a 'theory of change' for self transformation as a basis for a better world. From Selfish gene, we move to noble gene and then on to altruistic gene. While modern management is rooted in the selfish gene paradigm, "New Age Management" calls for expanding the worldviews towards noble and altruistic gene paradigms and including them in the social discourse. From negative self actualization one moves to positive self realization to self realization (enlightened self interest) to SELF realization (enlightened collective interest).

### **The Law of Compensation and Dr. Sharma's RICH Model of Development**

As was earlier seen, the Law of Compensation states, 'Your income is determined by how many people you serve and how well you serve them'. This is compared to Dr. Subhash Sharma's RICH Model of Development.

The concept of RICH model provides us a basis for nation's development. The components of RICH model include Per Capita Resources, Per Capita Income, Per Capita Consumption and Per Capita Happiness. Thus the four factors of development are Resources, Income, Consumption and Happiness. The idea of per capita happiness could be indicative of the overall quality of life of citizens and it includes the spiritual dimension of life. This idea is viewed as a derivative from the concept of 'Gross National Happiness' (GNH of Govt of

Bhutan). The components of this index include environmental protection, economic growth, cultural promotion including spiritual and ethical values and good governance.

### **The Law of Authenticity and Dr. Sharma's Iasr Model**

'The most valuable gift you have to offer is yourself.' This is compared to Dr. Subhash Sharma's four steps model of self evolution and self development. The four steps constitute the step of indulgence (i) step of actualization (a) step of sacrificing (s) and step of realization (r). Thus this model can be referred to as the 'iasr' model of self development. As per this model, there are four types of individuals viz., those who are high on indulgence ie i scale, those who are high on actualization ie a scale, those who are high on sacrificing ie s scale and those who are high on realization ie r scale. Intensities of indulgence (i), actualization (a), sacrificing (s) and realization (r) vary from individual to individual. Accordingly there are four types of managers and leaders. Enlightened leadership by managers and leaders implies that managers should transcend 'i' and 'a' levels and reach the 's' and 'r' level. They are the true enlightened leaders.

### **The Law of Reciprocity and Dr. Sharma's Theory T: 3T Model of Interdependence, Symbiotic and Holistic Connectivity**

'The key to effective giving is to stay open to receiving'. This is reflected in Dr. Subhash Sharma's Theory T represented by 3T model of Interdependence, Symbiotic and Holistic connectivity. This concept is closely linked with three levels of existence viz. competition / conflict level of existence, co-operation level of existence and the symbiotic level of existence. First level is Darwinian approach to existence wherein the idea of 'survival of the fittest' rules. This is also the Transactional approach to life, wherein the basis of life is understood in terms of interdependence, symbiotic and holistic connectivity. While the first level of existence is driven by self interest, second level

is driven by enlightened self interest and the third level is driven by 'enlightened collective interest'. They represent three modes of existence viz. competition, co-operation and symbiosis.

Thus we find that for each law under the VICAR paradigm of leadership there are specific models of Dr. Subhash Sharma. Table 2 presents a summary of the same.

Table 2 : VICAR Laws and Their Operational Understanding Through Dr. Subhash Sharma's Models

VICAR Laws	Dr. Subhash Sharma's Models
The Law of Value	G/T ratio, Ego to Eco in terms of Ahamkaara to Aumkaara
The Law of Influence	Selfish gene to Noble gene to Altruistic gene
The Law of Compensation	RICH Model of development (Resources, Income, Consumption and Happiness)
The Law of Authenticity	Iasr model
The Law of Receptivity	Theory T: 3T model of interdependence, symbiotic and holistic connectivity

Finally, the paper brings about another law to give a definite and fuller perspective to the VICAR Law. That is 'The Law of Harmony' that has also been captured by Dr. Subhash Sharma 'Corporate Rhyme' titled as 'Harmony and Harmony' in his book, Arrows of Time (2001, p.90). If the leader is able to maintain harmony at the workplace, it will take leadership to a totally new level. Not only that, the new law will blend harmoniously with the other laws. So emerges a new leadership law, VICHAR which is VICAR + Harmony.

Thus VICHAR Law will bring about differentiation in leadership around the world

and will set a new standard in understanding the whole gamut of leader and leadership. If Corporate Leaders start following the VICHAR model, they will create 'Harmonic Corporations' that will create Harmony not only at workplace but also in society. Given the new age issues of gender conflicts, terrorism, environmental destruction, corruption etc. there is an urgent need for VICHAR leadership paradigm.

## References

- Adair, J (1973). *Action centered Leadership*, New York : McGraw Hill.
- Avolio, B. J., & Gardner, W. L. (2005, June). Authentic leadership development: Getting to the root of positive forms of leadership. *Leadership Quarterly*, 16 (3), 315-338.
- Avolio, B. J., Gardner, W. L., & Walumbwa, F. O. (2005). Preface. In W. L. Gardner, B. J. Avolio & F. O. Walumbwa (Eds.), *Authentic leadership theory and practice* (pp. xxi-xxix). Boston: Elsevier JAI.
- Bass (1990). *Bass and Stogdill's Handbook of Leadership*, : Free Press.
- Belbin, R M (1993). *Team Roles at work*: Oxford. Butterworth – Heinemann.
- Bennis, W G (1959). "Leadership Theory and Administrative Behaviour : The Problem of Authority," *Administrative Science Quarterly* 4 (1959), pp.259-60.
- Bennis W G, Thomas Robert J (2002). "Crucibles of Leadership," HBR.
- Blake R and Mouton J (1964). *Managerial Grid*, Houston : Gulf Publishing.
- Burg, Bob; Mann, John David (2008). "Giving it your All: Five principles for Creating a Culture of Excellence," *Journal for Quality & Participation*, Vol.. 31 Issue 2, p.20-24.
- Burg, Bob; Mann, John David. (2007), *The Go Giver*, Portfolio.
- Burns, J (1978). *Leadership*, New York : Perennial.
- Campbell, D P (1991). *Campbell Leadership Index Manual*, Minneapolis : National Computer Systems.
- Cohen, William A. (2009) *Leadership Laws in Leadership Excellence*, Vol. 26 Issue 1, p.16-16, 1p; (AN 36152733).
- Collins, Jim (2001). *Good to Great : Harper Business*.
- Collins, Jim (2005). "Level 5 leadership: The triumph of humility and fierce resolve," *Best of HBR*, HBR, July – August 2005, 136-146.
- Covey, Stephen R (2004). *The 8th Habit – From effectiveness to greatness : Free Press*.
- Day, David V (2000). 'Leadership development: A review in context', *The Leadership Quarterly*, 11: 581-614.
- Fielder, F E (1967). *A theory of Leadership Effectiveness*, New Delhi: McGraw Hill.
- Gardener, J (1986). *The handbook of strategic planning*, New York : Wiley.
- Ginett, R C (1996). "Team Effectiveness Leadership Model : Identifying Leveraging Points for Change," *Proceedings of the 1996 National Leadership Institute Conference*, National Leadership Institute.
- Greenberg Jerald and Baron Robert (2008). *Behaviour in Organisations*, 9th edition : Pearson Education Inc.
- Gordon Appel, S Thomas, V Schmid (2007) 'Impact of culture on the Style and Process of Management and Leadership in India', *Business and Economics*.
- Gustavasson, B (1992), *The Transcendent Organisation*, Stockholm: Department of Business Administration, University of Stockholm.
- Hersey, P and Blanchard K H (1982). *Management of Organisational Behaviour : Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice – Hall*.

- House, R J (1971). "A path goal theory of leader effectiveness," *Administrative Science Quarterly*, September, 321-338.
- Hughes, Ginnett and Curphy (1999). *Leadership*, Singapore : McGraw Hill International editions.
- Inspiring People: 50 who made a difference, A Reader's Digest Selection, 1993, RDI Print and Publishing Pvt. Ltd.
- James, William (1902), 'The Varieties of Religious Experience: A study in human nature'.
- John Berry (1992). *Cross Cultural Psychology: research and applications* : Cambridge Press, 2nd edition.
- Kotter, J (1985). *Power and influence: Beyond formal authority*, New York: Free Press.
- Mayo, Anthony; Nohria Nitin (2005). *In their time: The Greatest business leaders of the twentieth century*, Boston, MA : HBS Press.
- Merton, R K (1957). *Social theory and Social Structure*, New York : Free Press.
- Pareek Udai (2010). *Understanding Organizational Behaviour* : II edition, Oxford University Press.
- Prince, Ted E (2005). *The financial styles of very successful leaders* : McGraw Hill.
- Roach, CF and Behling O (1984) "Functionalism: Basis for an Alternate Approach to the Study of Leadership," *Leaders and Managers: International Perspectives on Managerial Behaviour and Leadership*.
- Sharma, Subhash (1996), *Management in New Age: Western Windows Eastern Doors*, New Delhi, New Age International Publishers, 2nd edition, 2006.
- Sharma, Subhash, (January – June 2003) '3T Model of Management and Leadership: Towards Holistic Management Approach, Management Perception, 5:1.
- Sharma, Subhash, (2007) 'New Mantras in Corporate Corridors: From Ancient Roots to Global Routes', New Age International Publishers, New Delhi.
- Sosik (2009). *Full Range Leadership Development* : Taylor & Francis Inc.
- Stogdill, R M (1974). *Handbook of Leadership : A survey of the Literature*. New York : Free Press.
- Tannenbaum, R. and Schmidt W H (1958). "How to choose a leadership pattern," *Harvard Business Review*, 36 92, 1958: 95 – 101.
- Thomas Robert J (2008). *Crucibles of Leadership*. HBR.
- Vroom V H and Yetton P W (1973). *Leadership and Decision Making*. Pittsburgh, PA : University of Pittsburgh Press.
- [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sam\\_Pitroda](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sam_Pitroda), retrieved on Oct. 2, 2010.
- Wall Street Journal Online, August 5th, 2006.
- [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grameen\\_Bank](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grameen_Bank), retrieved on Oct. 3, 2010.
- [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mohandas\\_Karamchand\\_Gandhi](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mohandas_Karamchand_Gandhi), retrieved on Oct. 2, 2010.
- [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ramon\\_Magsaysay](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ramon_Magsaysay), retrieved on Oct. 3, 2010.
- <http://www.authenticbusiness.co.uk/archive/authenticleadership2/>, retrieved on Oct. 3, 2010.
- <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vicar>, retrieved on Oct. 3, 2010.
- [www.wwedsubhashsharma.com](http://www.wwedsubhashsharma.com)
- [www.shunyacreations.com](http://www.shunyacreations.com)



# Good Governance Models from Ancient India and their Contemporary Relevance - A Study

**Hema D**

*Indus Business Academy, Bangalore*

Good governance, for ages, has been the ideal idea of political thinkers, policy planners, decision-makers and the academics. In any society, the basic concern of the citizens is the goodness of the government. And for this the systems and sub-systems of governance must be essentially efficient, effective, economical, ethical and equitable. In the same way, the governance process must also be just, reasonable, fair and citizen caring. To achieve these qualities of good governance, the machinery of governance must also be accountable and responsible. This quest for good governance has, since long, been the mainstay of the evaluation of the functioning of the powers that be. Academic discourse has been largely dependent upon the Western models of the concept of good governance. The study of political thought in present day India is fundamentally West-oriented

and West-based. But we find that this is not entirely a new phenomenon and the issue had found prominence in scholarly works on polity and society in early centuries also. We may begin with an attempt to trace the roots of our concern for good governance in ancient Indian scriptures taking into account the various scandals and corruption charges the present day governments and politicians are charged with. About 90% of the respondents of this study opine that good governance models can be conceptualized from ancient Indian epics like Ramayana, Mahabharatha, and Arthashastra etc.

## **Meaning of Governance**

The concept of “governance” is not new. It is as old as human civilization. Simply put “governance” means: the process of decision-making and the process by which decisions

are implemented (or not implemented). Governance can be used in several contexts such as corporate governance, international governance, national governance and local governance. Since governance is the process of decision-making and the process by which decisions are implemented, an analysis of governance focuses on the formal and informal actors involved in decision-making and implementing the decisions made and the formal and informal structures that have been set in place to arrive at and implement the decision. Government is one of the actors in governance. Other actors involved in governance vary depending on the level of government that is under discussion. In rural areas, for example, other actors may include influential land lords, associations of peasant farmers, cooperatives, NGOs, research institutes, religious leaders, finance institutions political parties, the military etc. The situation in urban areas is much more complex. Figure 1 provides the interconnections between actors involved in urban governance. At the national level, in addition to the above actors, media, lobbyists, international donors, multi-national corporations, etc. may play a role in decision-making or in influencing the decision-making process.

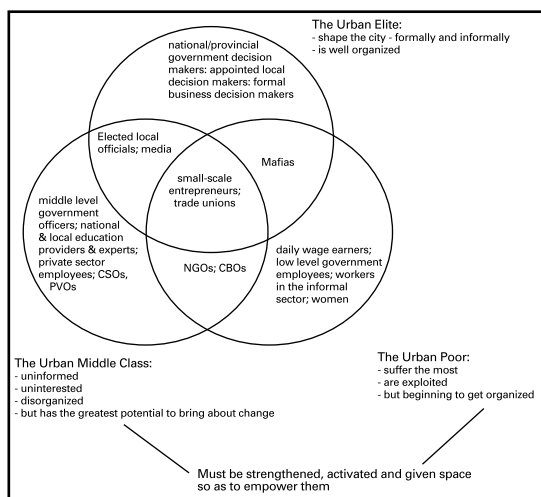


Fig 1: Actors in Governance

(Source: United Nations Economic and Social Commission for the Asia and Pacific-UNESCAP)

## Governance in Ancient India

With the beginning of civilization, there arose a need for smooth administration and division of responsibilities. Since the population started to increase, people grew concerned about welfare and able ruling. This led to the rise of an organizational structure that dealt with the nuances of firm ruling and governance. The ancient Indian government was very simple in structure. There used to be a tribe chief who used to appoint helpers to look over the smooth functioning of the society and dealt with grievances of people. With the coming of different empires, the government of ancient India took a more complex and elaborate form. The establishment of large kingdoms in India gave birth to the concept of having a King or a Maharaja who was the head of administration and the state. Everything worked under his command and no one dared to oppose him. He usually used to appoint a council of ministers who used to govern different areas of the state. During the 6th century B.C., 16 Mahajanapadas or 16 great kingdoms were established in India. In ancient Indian government, one finds the different elements of modern government also. This means that the foundation of the modern day government was laid during the ancient times itself. The ancient Indian government had three major components in the hierarchy. They were: Legislative, Executive and the Judiciary. The chief head of the three departments was the King. Effective judiciary made sure that crime was under control and the offenders got the apt punishments for their crimes. The ancient Indian government had an effective way of keeping tabs on what people thought of the administration. This was kept in check by a very secretive system of spies. The king used to be updated about what is happening in his kingdom regularly by these spies who used to roam around in the kingdom in disguise. There was effective military and the soldiers were well trained in the art of warfare. There were regular updates of population, birth rate, death rate, etc. Despite a huge empire, administration was controlled

and highly effective in ancient India. Since there were many kingdoms and many systems of governance in ancient India, it is difficult to analyse each one of them. Hence the researcher has chosen the three important and very effective governance models from ancient India- Ramayana, Mahabharatha and Arthashastra.

### **Governance in Ramayana**

Ramarajya as has been described in Ramayana had all the characteristics of democracy. In spite of the fact that there was no electoral procedure in those days like the one in the present day democratic system, the public opinion was taken into account and was given due importance. Notwithstanding, there was no written constitution of Ramarajya, the citizens enjoyed the right of equality and avenues of development were open to all. In the eyes of law, all, whether rich or poor, a royal or a beggar, were the same. Everyone enjoyed the socio-religious freedom. Ramarajya, as Gandhi has also said, was not a Hindu rule, it was the kingdom of God. Although Rama was the ruler, every person had a right to speak his or her mind. The main characteristic of Ramarajya was that it covered all aspects of democracy as mentioned above. It set a high standard of an ethical and moral conduct. There was all likelihood of getting justice. That is why, Mahatma Gandhi acknowledged Ramarajya as true democracy. In his own words, "In the Ramarajya the meanest citizen could be sure of swift justice without an elaborate and costly procedure. Even the dog is described by the poet to have received justice under Ramarajya."

### **Governance in Mahabharatha**

Rajadharama, Dandaniti, Arthashastra, Rajyashastra and Nitishastra are some of the terms describing the study of politics in ancient India. Dandaniti is most frequently used among them. Mahabharatha is presumably the first Indian treatise on the science of governance. There is one huge Rajdharama section discussing governance

besides Sabhaparvam and Vanaparvam. The King will be the head of the state and it is his duty and responsibility to protect the people and their properties. He must be compassionate to people of all sections of the society. The king was considered to be the servant of the people. Dharma and justice are given utmost importance. There are lot of guidelines given for law and order, tax collection, revenue collection, military functioning and the republics.

### **Governance in Arthashastra**

The Arthashastra is essentially a handbook for the guidance of the governing group, a manual for the practicing politician. In the significantly major portion of it, Kautilya prescribes for specific need and uses tested administrative procedures. The procedures, thus prescribed, the indications of good governance, have not lost their relevance till date with reference to the socio-political and cultural contexts in India. It has been rightly observed that the Samhitas of the Yajurveda and the Brahmanas had developed the old Vedic principle of king's obligation towards his subjects. Similarly, in an age of monarchy and legitimized ascriptive inequality, Arthashastra alone describes the king a servant of the state who would harbor no personal likes and dislikes; it would be rather the likes and dislikes of the servants that would be followed by him. In Arthashastra, it is said that after the disappearance of the gods, who failed to bring the people under their control through benevolence, they assigned the duty of protecting people to a king in human form after taking from the Moon, the Sun, Indra, Vishnu, Kubera and Yama the qualities of beauty, lustre, prowess, victory, renunciation and restraint respectively. When the king insisted upon obtaining the help of the law (dharma) for fulfilling his task of protection, the gods created the same as his second: what is called the coercive authority (danda) (of the ruler) is the cause of dharma, and the king who knows this should inflict danda even upon his (guilty) father. Thus, the theory of divine



creation of the temporal ruler does not make him immune to the use danda or coercive authority even upon himself in person. Danda ensures promotion of proper and equitable distribution of social gains, for material prosperity and spiritual enhancement. These novel suggestions of Kautilya are relevant even in the age of modern democracy

### Types of governance models in the contemporary world

- a) Dictatorship: Rule by single leader who has not been elected and may use force to keep control in a military dictatorship, the army in control. Usually, there is little or no attention to public opinion or individual rights. E.g. Iraq.
- b) Totalitarian: Rule by a single political party. People are forced to do what the govt tells them and may also be prevented from leaving the country. E.g. China.
- c) Theocracy: A form of a govt. where the ruler claims to be ruling on behalf of a set of religious ideas, or as direct agents of God. E.g. Iran.
- d) Monarchy: It has a king or queen who has absolute powers. Power is passed along through the family. E.g. Jordan.
- e) Parliamentary: It is lead by representatives of the people. Each one is chosen as a member of the political party and remains in power as long as his or her party does. E.g. Israel.
- f) Republic: A republic is lead by representatives of the voters. Each one is individually chosen for a set period of time. E.g. USA.
- g) Anarchy: It is a situation where there is no govt. This can happen after a civil war in the country, when the govt is destroyed and rival groups are fighting to take its place. E.g. Afghanistan.
- h) Revolutionary: The existing structure is completely overthrown by a completely

new group. The new group can be a very small group like military, or very large as in popular revolution. After a period of time this becomes another type of govt. E.g. USSR, France, USA etc.

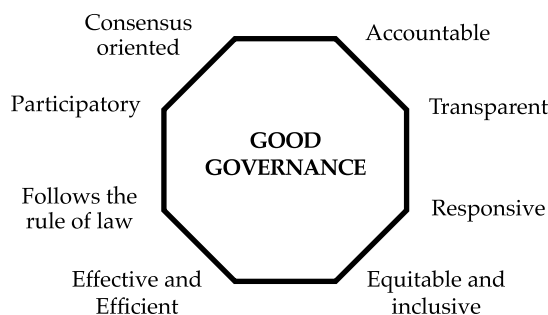
- i) Oligarchy or Plutocracy: A form of govt which consists of rule by elite group of people who rule in their own interests especially the accumulation of wealth and privilege. Only certain members of the society have valid voice in the govt. This can reflect economic interests, a particular religious tradition (theocracy) or familial rule (monarchy). E.g. Pakistan.
- j) Democracy: In a democracy, the govt is elected by the people. Everyone who is eligible to vote- which is a majority of the population-has a chance to have their say over who runs the country. E.g. India.

### Characteristics of Good Governance

#### Contemporary standards of good governance:

According to United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and Pacific (UNESCAP), good governance has 8 major characteristics. It is participatory, consensus oriented, accountable, transparent, responsive, effective and efficient, equitable and inclusive and follows the rule of law. It assures that corruption is minimized, the views of minorities are taken into account and that the voices of the most vulnerable in society are heard in decision-making. It is also responsive to the present and future needs of society.

Figure 2: Characteristics of good governance



(Source: UNESCAP)

Based on a long-standing research program of the World Bank, the **Worldwide Governance Indicators** capture six key dimensions of governance (Voice & Accountability, Political Stability and Lack of Violence, Government Effectiveness, Regulatory Quality, Rule of Law, and Control of Corruption) between 1996 and present. They measure the quality of governance in over 200 countries, based on close to 40 data sources produced by over 30 different organizations worldwide and are updated on an annual basis since 2002. So we can conclude saying that today's governance quality for a given nation state is measured broadly on these parameters.

- i) Consensus oriented
- ii) Participatory
- iii) Follows the rule law
- iv) Effective and Efficient
- v) Accountable
- vi) Transparent
- vii) Responsive
- viii) Equitable and inclusive.
- ix) Corruption Free
- x) Strategic vision

**Problems of Governance in India:** India's problems stem more from important issues like lack of transparency, lack of accountability and corruption. One of the solutions is to harness the potential good governance. If there is good governance and people start asking questions about things relevant to them, it will bring in transparency and accountability. The above mentioned factors of good governance are adopted in India as well, but when it comes to implementation things are not up to the standards. There are various incidents to highlight problems with the present state of governance in India and there is a fear and anxiety that poor governance may have implications on the overall development of India as a country.

**Need for the study:** If we study the journey of India as a nation state after independence in the year 1947, a lot of progress has been achieved. A good GDP, privatization,

liberalization, globalization, flow of FII's, growth of IT, BT, BPO etc has made lot of jobs available to the working populace of India. There is a significant improvement in the standard of living and quality of life of the people of this country. But on the flip side, the gap between the haves and have-nots is increasing day by day which raises doubts about the inclusive growth which is an indicator of good governance. When the issues like high inflation, corruption, lobbying, farmers' suicide etc arise, nobody in the system is held accountable. So given these situation, can we still say we are having an ideal governance in place? To a large extent, no. If go back to ancient India and analyze our scriptures like Mahabharatha, Ramayana, Arthashastra etc, lot of discussion has been done on good governance. It is unfortunate to note that Mahabharatha as well as the most of the other early Indian writings including the Vedas, Ramayana, etc have generally been looked upon as either literary or religious works of early Hindu society. And therefore , serious attempts to look in to these grand old treatises for tracing the links of modern issues have largely been ridiculed as parochial, fundamental or otherwise . This study is being conducted to study and understand the governance models adopted in ancient India by the then kings and rulers and relating them to the present day governance structures.

**Data collection:** Data collection was from both primary and secondary sources. Secondary data was collected through original sources of Ramayana, Mahabharatha, Arthashastra and other published articles. For the state of present day governance in India, data was collected through a questionnaire.

**Type of Sampling:** Cluster sampling method was adopted for collecting the data through the questionnaire. The questionnaire was distributed to 70 respondents and only 54 filled in questionnaires were used as the rest of the questionnaires were incomplete.

**Profile of the respondents:** The questionnaire was distributed to 3 different groups: Firstly,

the government officials, secondly, the corporate employees and thirdly the general public. The data was collected in Bangalore only except 3 questionnaires which were from outside Bangalore. The age group of the respondents ranges from 30 to 50 years for the first two groups and for the third group it ranges from 20 to 50 years. The data from first group was collected through various departments like Police department, Education department, Revenue department, department of public distribution etc. The data from the second group was collected through employees of various companies like Wipro, HP, Logica, L&T, TATA Steel, ICICI Bank. In both the groups the employees are in middle level management. The data from the third group was collected through different groups like students, lecturers in private institutes, NGO representatives, entrepreneurs etc. Out of total respondents 14 were female and 40 were male.

#### 4. Data Analysis and Interpretation:

##### 4.1. Existing state of governance in India:

The data was collected through a questionnaire for this particular analysis. The number of respondents was 54. Cluster sampling method was adopted.

**Table No.1 : Impact of governance on quality of life of Individuals**

Nature of response	Number of respondents	%
Governance has an impact on quality of life of individuals	49	90%
There is no impact of governance on quality of life of individuals	5	10%

**Inference:** 90% of the sample population feels that the governance will have an impact on the quality of the life of the individuals.

**Table No 2 : Respondents rating of characteristics of good governance**

Characteristics of good governance	No of respondents	%
Consensus oriented	32	60%
Participatory	38	70%
Transparency	49	90%
Follow the rule of the law	43	80%
Efficient and effective	43	80%
Accountable	51	94%
Responsive	38	70%
Equitable and inclusive	49	90%
Corruption free	51	95%
Strategic Vision	32	60%

**Inference:** Among the 10 characteristics of good governance given, respondents rate transparency, accountable, corruption free, effective and efficient, equitable and inclusive and follow the rule of the law as the most important characteristics.

3. 100% of the respondents feel that the present state of governance in India is not effective and efficient.

**Table No 3 : Reasons for the failure of governance in India**

Reasons for the failure of governance	No of respondents	%
Corruption	54	100%
Dynasty politics	41	75%
Caste system	47	87%
Lack of leadership	27	50%
Politics not viewed as a career	47	87%
Vote bank/ communal politics	33	62%
Ineffective judiciary	33	62%
% Other factors	20	37%

**Inference:** The reasons for the failure of governance in India as per the respondents: Corruption, dynasty politics, caste system, lack of leadership, politics not viewed as a career, vote bank/communal politics, ineffective judiciary, and other factors.

**Table No 4 : Indicators of Non-effective and inefficient governance in India**

Indicators	No of respondents	%
Inflation	14	25%
Corruption	54	100%
Scams at regular intervals	41	75%
Gap between haves and have-nots	41	75%
Human development Index	41	75%
Others	7	13%

**Inference:** Respondents feel following are the factors which indicate problems with the governance in India. Inflation, corruption, scams reported at regular intervals, gap between haves and have-nots, human development index and others (13%).

- About 90% of respondents feel even the Corporates are responsible for the present state of governance in India after taking into account the recent revelations like Radia tapes.

**Table No. 5 : Characteristics of good governance compromised in recent scams like 2G, Common wealth games, Adarsh scam, Radia tapes and inflation**

Characteristics of good governance	No of respondents	%
Follow the rule of the law	41	75%
Accountable	41	75%
Transparency	49	90%
Equitable and inclusive	21	38%

**Inference:** In the recently reported scams like 2G, common wealth games, Adarsh scam, Radia tapes and inflation, according to the respondents, following are the characteristics of good governance which are compromised the most. Follow the rule of the law, accountable, transparency, equitable and inclusive.

- About 90% of the respondents feel that good governance models can be conceptualized from ancient Indian epics like Ramayana, Mahabharatha, and Arthashastra etc.
- Non-criminalization, effective judiciary, improved transparency, accountability and participation from public, independent bodies with prosecution powers, compulsory voting, increase in literacy rate, encouraging honest people to enter politics are the few suggestions given by the respondents to make the governance more effective.

## Analysis of Kingdom governance models from ancient India

### RAMAYANA

Rama's system of administration was a true democracy. He was an ideal king, self-disciplined, obedient, dutiful, patient, dignified, a man of word, law-abiding and coordinator. What people expect of a democratic state-liberty, equality, rights, duties etc.? They are indispensable to democracy. Besides, more important is that the progress of all is assured; law protects everyone; and above all, people realize that they are an integral part of government. No one should feel that his say has no importance and that he is ignored. A person must be accorded justice if his right of equality is at risk, his entitlement or liberty is suppressed, his path of progress is obstructed or one has failed to do the duty to him. The main characteristic of Ramarajya was that it covered all aspects of democracy as mentioned above. It set a high standard of an ethical and moral conduct. There was all likelihood of getting justice.

It is now apparent that Gandhi considered Ramarajya truly democratic, as there was no possibility of injustice therein. Where justice is available even to a common man, there will be no occasion for exploitation. Non-violence would exercise an overbearing influence and peace would be rife among all. Under these circumstances, one and all would be able to pursue undeterred the goal of their life. In short, justice was the yardstick of democracy. According to principles of governance during Ramayana, the concept of democracy can only be realized if justice is made ubiquitous. According to Rama, a critical factor in good governance is the quality of ministers. Courageous, knowledgeable, strong-willed men with a high emotional quotient as ministers are key to effective governance. The emphasis is on competence and confidentiality. A decision on a complex issue neither to be taken unilaterally nor in consultation with too many people. There should be an efficient core group. Appointing tested men of noble lineage and integrity for strategic positions is the key to successful government. Moderate taxes should be levied on the people, lest they revolt. Trade and agriculture are important according to Rama and wants rulers to ensure good irrigation facilities rather than being overly dependent on rains. Traders need to be ensured of a fear-free environment and their grievances should be redressed promptly. Protecting the forests and maintaining livestock have also been dealt with as important aspects of effective governance. In fact, the vision of the Ramayana has eternal relevance. Law and justice, finance and business, corruption framing of innocents for monetary gains, injustice to the poor are all mentioned. In short, the concept of governance in Ramayana is "to provide the maximum happiness for the maximum number of people, for the maximum period, based on the principles of Dharma-righteousness and moral values" Ramayana is India's national idea and is a symbol of good-governance, which we lack in the modern societies.

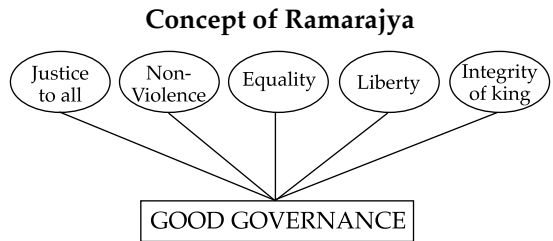


Fig 3: Concept of Ramarajya

### Mahabharatha

There is an elaborate discussion between Bhishma and Yudistira in Shanthiparva, the twelfth parva from among the eighteen parvas of the Mahabharatha about proper functioning of the government, duty of the perfect king and his duties towards his subjects etc. This episode is also known as '*wisdom literature*.'

#### Few important points to be noted are:

There is nothing which contributes so much to the success of kings as truth. This means ethics and righteousness/ Dharma play a major role in success of a government. So what is Dharma? *Mahabharata* (Shanti Parva, 109.9-11) says: "Dharma has been explained to be that which helps the upliftment of living beings. Therefore, that which ensures the welfare of living beings is surely Dharma. The Mahabharata (Shanti Parva, 90.3) also says that "The proper function of the king [or any ruler or politician] is to rule according to Dharma and not to enjoy the luxuries of life." Thus, a politician is not meant to take advantage of his position, but to execute his duties with the welfare of the people in mind, under the guidance of the rules of Dharma. This means that Dharma is not the teaching of a religion, but it is the global ethical standard that we all need to learn. It is the very content that forms good character, proper intentions, the means for making fair and just decisions, and good and effective plans for our future. The basic rules of Dharma, as explained in the *Manu-samhita* (10.63) are: "*Ahimsa* (non-violence), *Satya* (truthfulness), *Asteya* (not acquiring illegitimate wealth), *Shoucham* (purity), and *Indriyanigraha* (control of the senses) are, in

brief, the common rules of Dharma for all classes of men.”According to Mahabharatha the sphere of the state activity is extended to almost all the walks of life. The state in ancient India was thus the main centre of the society and the primary equipment of the welfare of the people. It was in this backdrop that a serious, methodical and proper study and prescription of the functions and various aspects of state was considered necessary. The king is the first and foremost part of the state. Most of the well being of the state depends on the king. Therefore, all the writers of ancient Indian polity had given the king prime importance.

The most important discussions in Shanthiparvam are related to:

1. Divine origin of the king
2. Virtues of an ideal king
3. Duties of the king
4. Recruitment of government officials
5. Revenue administration
6. Division of labor

The perfect functioning of the state machinery depends on the efficiency, honesty, diligence and patriotism of the government employees at various levels. The king should always select employees very carefully after thoroughly scrutinizing their nature, character, efficiency and loyalty. Covetous and foolish people should never be appointed as government employees. Duties should be assigned to persons on the basis of their capabilities, and competence and the hierarchy as regards duties should be strictly maintained and overlapping and confusion should be avoided.

According to Mahabharata the major sources of state revenue consist of one sixth of the income from land, fines and forceful collection from the offenders. But in collection of taxes the king should always abide by the norms and principles laid down by the relevant sastras. Violation of this may lead to disaster for both the king and the kingdom. Taxes should never be imposed without considering the capability of the payee. The economic

prosperity of the country depends a good deal on the agriculturists and traders and they should never be oppressed by undue taxes.

In short, we can conclude that, in Mahabharatha, the foundation of good governance is righteousness in public affairs. The rulers and the employees who have taken oath of their offices to uphold Dharma/ righteousness and to take care of public needs, must not act unethically and unjustly because if they do so, they will not only destroy the moral basis of governance but will also turn a state into a hell.

### Dharma as a pillar for good governance

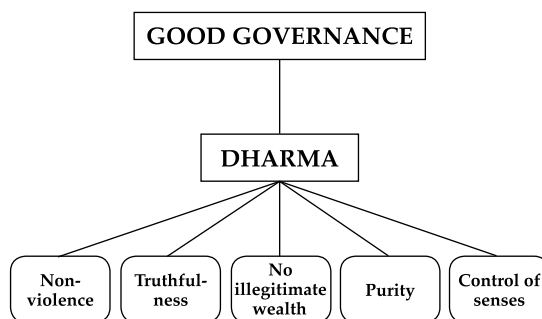


Fig 4: Dharma as a pillar of good governance

### Arthashastra

The Arthashastra was authored by Kautilya around 300 BC. In both internal administration and foreign relations, the comprehensiveness of its treatment is almost unparalleled. Although Kautilya proposed an elaborate welfare state in domestic politics, he proved willing to defend the general good of the state with harsh measures. The declared aim of the Arthashastra is that it sets before the ruler the goal of expansion eventually ending in the conquest of the world and describes ways of attaining that goal. The ruler must aim to be a Vijigishu, one desirous of conquering other territories aiming to ensure *Yogakshema* and *Lokasamgraha* of his subjects. *Yogakshema* means to ensure welfare of the state and subjects implying happiness, prosperity, peace and bliss of his people so as to achieve

Lokasamgraha which means to do what is beneficial to people. Kautilya regarded economic activity as the driving force behind the functioning of any political dispensation. In fact, he went to the extent of saying that revenue should take priority over the army because sustaining the army was possible out of a well-managed revenue system. Kautilya was a true statesman who bridged the gap between experience and vision. For Kautilya, good governance was paramount. He suggested built-in checks and balances in systems and procedures for the containment of malpractices. Kautilya's philosophy is based on the principles of "sam, dam, dand, bheda" (persuasion, temptation, punishment, and division) as various, different, and sequential means to achieve an end. Kautilya used the word 'dharma' (which in general, means 'duty') and righteousness in personal and social conduct. He described the basic ethical (dharmic) values as, "Duties common to all - ahimsa (abstaining from injury to all living creatures); satyam (truthfulness); cleanliness; freedom from malice; compassion and tolerance.

The Arthashastra equates political governance with economic governance. The end is economic governance while political governance is the means. But as economic objectives are not realized in the absence of political ones, then political governance becomes an end and economic governance the means. *'The end justifies the means'*, this is supposed to be the basis of Kautilyan and Machiavellian philosophy. Political power and material wealth according to Kautilya are the means and ends of governance. And good governance - political or economic - depends upon justifying the ends and means as the socio, economic and political conditions.

Good governance in Kautilya's literature is aimed at fulfilling the welfare of the people. "In the happiness of the King's subjects lies his happiness, in their welfare, his welfare. Whatever pleases him personally, he shall not consider as good, but whatever makes

his subjects happy, he shall consider good." The jargon related to Human Resource Management was not prevalent then, but its essence was widely practiced in Kautilya's times. The King should look to the bodily comforts of his servants by providing such emoluments as can infuse in them the spirit of enthusiasm to work. He should not violate the course of righteousness and wealth. Thus, he shall not only maintain his servants, but also increase their subsistence and wages in consideration of their learning and work. Kautilya said that good governance and stability go hand in hand. According to him, there is stability if rulers are responsive, responsible, accountable, removable, and recallable, otherwise there would be instability. Kautilya's Arthashastra identified the significance of training and learning. It clearly stated that training imparted discipline. Kautilya stated that investment in human capital especially in higher education would have a greater impact on the growth and development of the economy.

### Good governance in Arthashastra

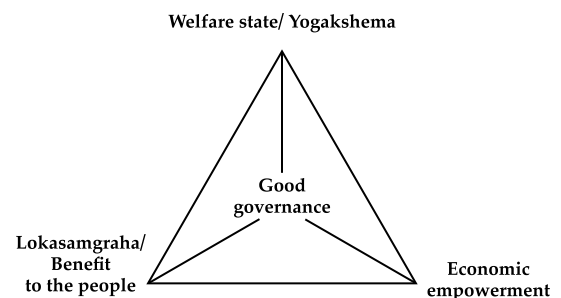


Fig 5: Good governance in Arthashastra

### A conceptual model for good governance

If we observe the existing parameters of measuring the quality of governance of a particular nation, the parameters are quite exhaustive and include all most all the important aspects of a good governing state. The parameters like transparency, accountable, equitable and inclusive, responsive, follow the rule of the law etc are the pillars of Indian democracy. Each and every minister takes



oath of serving the society selflessly and to the benefit of the poor and weaker section. But what is written in the constitution and what actually happens is completely contradictory. The kind of scandals and scams reported in the past one to two years has completely damaged the image of emerging India. So where is the problem? If we analyze the concept of Ramarajya, which was a true democracy according to Gandhiji, there is one aspect we are missing out in our factors of good governance i.e. non-violence or absence of violence. In India, the problem of Naxalism or Maoists is not new. The problem of tribals and other weaker section of the society are not addressed by the respective governments and people turn to violent protests which results in such organizations. If people are happy with the governance there should not be such kind of reactions from the society. This itself indicates that everybody is not happy with the governance and they have reached a point of revolting against the ruling.

Secondly, in Mahabharatha lot of importance is given to Dharma/righteousness, which talks about the ethical dimension of the leaders. Even in Arthashastra, Kautilya stresses on this aspect as an essential quality of a successful leader. India's major problem of governance is due to lack of Dharma or righteousness amongst the leaders. Right from electoral process, nothing is transparent. Election commission of India says that the elections should be fair, no inducement to the voters should be done, the campaign process should be just and fair. But cash for votes is so common in India, that people have accepted this as a part and parcel of their lives. This is just a tip of an iceberg. Corruption continues to dominate in almost all the sections of society: Be it an educational institution, a hospital, government offices, private firms etc. So the whole concept of Yogakshema/welfare state and Lokasamgraha/benefit to the people fails. So what is the solution to this problem? In a hugely populated, multi-cultural, fragmented society like India can one EC or CBI or one

Supreme Court control everything and assure a welfare state? The answer is a big no. Here comes into picture the concept of Dharma/righteousness. The leaders and bureaucrats should practice righteousness. Since it is a qualitative factor, measuring righteousness might be a problem. But it can be taken as integrity of leaders. It is very important to include qualitative factors as well to measure the quality of governance in a particular country.

### **Conceptual model of good governance for India**

There are three worldviews and correspondingly three models of man, society and organizations (Sharma 2007). The three worldviews rooted in these visions are 1) Utilitarian; 2) Egalitarian; 3) Ethicotarian and corresponding building blocks for organizations and society are 1) Efficiency, 2) Equity and 3) Ethics including environmental ethics. The utilitarian philosophy is best reflected by the efficiency approach to life, human relationships and management. It has a strong 'market focus'. The egalitarian philosophy is best reflected by equity approach to life, human relationship and management. It has a strong 'social focus'. The phrase 'Ethicotarian' philosophy which Prof. Subhash Sharma (2007) coined is reflected by ethical approach including environmental concerns to management of human affairs. It has a strong 'self development' focus. If we apply these worldviews to the ancient governance models of India, we can draw the below given inference.

1. Ramayana-Egalitarian: The main feature of egalitarian view is equity and if we observe the features of Ramarajya, it majorly stresses on equality and justice to all.
2. Mahabharatha-Ethicotarian: The underlying foundation for Ethicotarian view is ethics and governance in Mahabharatha is also based on 'Dharma' or righteousness.

3. Arthashastra-Utilitarian: Utilitarian is based on the concept of efficiency and Arthashastra endorses efficiency through welfare state and economic empowerment.

When we talk about ideal governance model all the features indicated above play a vital role along with certain existing factors.

Egalitarian view+ Ethicotarian view  
+Utilitarian view + Existing factors=Ideal Governance Model

The major gap between the existing features of ideal governance and the ancient governance models is the fact that the existing features do not include qualitative factors like righteousness and integrity of leaders, happiness quotient of a country, welfare state etc which are also very important components for determining the state of governance for any given country.

We can also bring in the concept of *character competence* here. (Sharma, Subhash, 2002). The idea of character competence brings `the concept of ethics and character into sharper focus. It could well be considered a foundational concept for better governance. It will be easier to rank the nations on a

character competence scale, because data on several surrogate measures is easily available. For example, data on corruption can provide us a measure on the character competence of a nation. By considering these theoretical foundations, the author has developed a new conceptual model for Ideal governance. There are few new factors suggested along with the existing factors which play a very vital role in determining the quality of governance of country.

**Conclusion:** Till date when we talk about measuring the quality of governance, importance is given only to the measurable factors like transparency, accountability, responsive etc. This will hold good to the countries where the leaders are having high integrity and system is very strong. In one of the news discussion on Times Now news channel with reference to money laundering in the Swiss bank, a Swiss bank officer was quoting "In USA, whoever is the guilty becomes punishable. Even a governor will go to jail if he or she has done something against the law. But in India we have not seen any such person going to jail even though there are very huge allegations on them". This statement itself indicates the kind of perception other

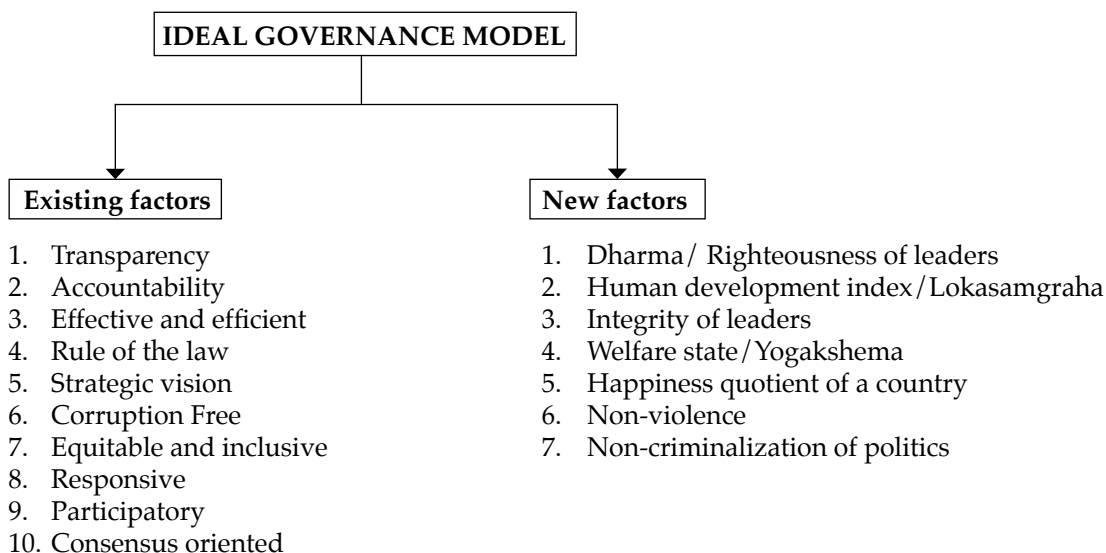


Fig 6: Ideal Governance Model

countries are having with reference to governance quality in India. It clearly says that the factors like transparency, accountability, rule of the law, corruption free etc are completely compromised. But we cannot talk about it as these things never get proved in the public glare and we continue to assume that all the factors of good governance India has adequately adopted. It is high time that qualitative factors listed above should become a part of assessing the quality of governance in India. All these factors played a major role in our ancient governance models. Even though the governance models we discussed before are centuries old, they are highly relevant even today with few appropriate changes as and when required. So we can conclude saying that ancient governance models give right clues and direction to the leaders for a good governing state.

#### References:

- Stein, Burton and Arnold, David (2010), "A history of India", John Wiley and sons publications.
- Agarwal S.K (2008), "Towards improving governance" Academic foundation publications.
- Singh, Balmiki Prasad (2008), 'The challenge of good governance in India-Need for innovative approaches', second international conference of the Global Network of Global Innovators, Ash Institute for Democratic Governance and Innovation and John F. Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, March 31 – April 2, Cambridge, Massachusetts, USA.
- Sharma, Subhash (2002), "Character Competence of the corporation", Journal of Human values, Management center for Human Values, IIM Calcutta, July-December 2002, pp.107-118
- Sharma, Subhash (2007), New Mantras in Corporate Corridors-From Ancient Roots to Global Routes, New Age International Publishers, pp 443-457
- Sharma, Subhash (2007), "Ethical Foundations of New Corporate Model: Implications for Strategy and Leadership", 10th International Annual Convention of Strategic Management Forum held at IIT, Mumbai on the theme, Strategic Management for Firms in Developing Countries, 10-12th May
- Sharma, Sanjeev Kumar (2003), "Good governance in Ancient India-remembering kingship in Shanthiparvam in Mahabharatha" Meerut journal of political science and political administration, Meerut, Vol. VI, No-1, Jan-June 2003, pp 109-123
- Sharma, Sanjeev Kumar (2005), "Indian Idea of good governance-revisiting Kautilya's Arthashastra", Dynamics of administration, Lucknow, Vol. XVII, No 1-2, Jan-Dec 2005, pp 8-19
- Sharma, Sanjeev Kumar (2008), "Spheres of public governance in India: Reflections of Abhigyanashakunthalam of Kalidasa" Journal of political studies, Vol. II, No I, pp 6-16
- Department of Economic and social welfare,(2007) "Public governance indicators-A literature review" United Nations
- Balasubramanian N (2005), "Corporate governance in India-traditional and scriptural perspectives", Chartered secretary, March 2005, pp 385-388
- Sharma L.N. and Susmita Sharma, Kautilyan Indicators of Good Governance, Indian Journal of Public Administration, Vol.XLIV, No.3, July September, 1998, p.296
- O.P. Diwedi, Common Good and Good Governance: Administrative Theology Dharma of Public Officials, Indian Journal of Public Administration, Vol.36, No.3, July-September, 1990, p.261
- Sharan, P Ancient Indian Political Thought

- and Institutions, Meenakshi Prakashan, Meerut, 1978, p 186
- Kumar, Ravindra (2007), “Why Rama and Ramayana remained ideal for millions especially for Gandhi”, Global politician, 10/1/2007
  - Pathak, Pramod and Singh, Soumya (2003), “Ramayana’s tips for good governance”, Sept. 22nd, 2003, Times of India
  - [www.partnerships.typepad.com/governancereview](http://www.partnerships.typepad.com/governancereview)
  - [www.iloveindia.com/history/ancient-india/index.html](http://www.iloveindia.com/history/ancient-india/index.html)
  - [www.unescap.org/pdd/prs/ProjectActivities/Ongoing/gg/governance.asp](http://www.unescap.org/pdd/prs/ProjectActivities/Ongoing/gg/governance.asp)
  - <http://www.scribd.com/doc/27653550/management-lesson-from-GITA-and-RAMAYANA>
  - <http://knowledge.wharton.upenn.edu/india/article.cfm?articleid=4567>
  - <http://www.scribd.com/doc/36167073/Paper-Mahabharat>



# Towards Excellence and Sustainability: An Intellectual Journey from Core Competence to Competitive Advantage

**Jayashree Sadri**

*Senior Management Consultant and Visiting Professor of HR at B Schools in Pune*

**Bijoy Guha**

*Senior Management Consultant and Visiting Professor of Business Strategy at B Schools in Pune*

This paper is based on the work done by the two authors in the areas of excellence and sustainability along with Sorab Sadri since 2005. C.K. Prahalad and Gary Hamel in their landmark article in the *Harvard Business Review* introduced the phrase 'Core Competence' 1990. They define Core Competence as an integrated bundle of skills and technologies, a messy accumulation of learning, which contributes, to a business's competitive success. This paper argues that when a firm fails to correctly identify its core competencies, it misses good opportunities and chases poor ones. Hence, proper identification of core competencies is necessary to be able to use them to gain competitive advantage. This is one big lesson that Indian business and industry can ill-afford to overlook if they are to remain globally competitive.

Sadri *et al* (2009) and Jayashree *et al* (2008) have maintained that organizational change

is non linear and non Newtonian. In this race for the survival of the fittest what matters is core competency upon which divergent competency rests (Sadri and Jayashree 2010) go on to say that this cutthroat competition brings out utilitarian perspective among managers and people tend to become selfish. They have between 1999 and 2009 argued that values and ethics form the base on which organizational excellence rests. Organizational excellence, Sadri and Guha, elsewhere argue cannot be an end in itself and must lead to sustainability. This is the fundamental logic on which this paper's argument has been developed. The authors argue that core competence leads to competitive advantage that in turn is the basic element for both excellence and sustainability.

Some authors have used the phrase 'capability' or 'core capability' as better expressing the dynamic learning process involved. These terms define those unique capabilities,

knowledge and behavioral routines that are potential source of an organization's advantage. The idea that complex internal capabilities are critical to firm's success is not new as core competence. Philip Selznick, in his book, *Leadership in Administration*, was one of the first writers to acknowledge that factors internal to an organization, such as its personnel and its previous experiences, are crucial to its chances of success in executing a Chosen policy. In essence, Selznick argued that in field of business activity past determines present. He said that an organizations developmental history results in its having special limitations and capabilities - a character, or emergent institutional pattern that decisively affects the competence of an organization to frame and execute the desired policies'. This he called as 'distinctive competence'. The goal of corporate strategy was to match a firm's distinctive competence with available opportunities and thereby gain competitive advantage.

Robert Hayes, writing in *Harvard Business Review* in 1985 criticized what he called the ends-ways-means approach to strategic planning. He questioned whether managers should decide on strategy before deciding on the means of implementing that strategy. He advised managers 'Do not develop plans and then seek capabilities; instead, build capabilities and then encourage the development of plans for exploiting them'.

The central proposition of this group of writers is that organization is an accretion of specialized resources, which can be used to gain a privileged market position - a sustainable competitive advantage. Firms acquire, develop and expand their resource bundles over time, and because organizations follow different developmental paths, firms have different resources. Hence the organizations history and experiences, its character and culture, and its strengths and capabilities all contributes to its strategy and indeed are crucial in determining in success of that strategy.

At the business level, a key idea is that competitive advantage stems from the firm's unique resources and capabilities, which are hard for competitors to imitate or acquire. At the corporate level resource based theorists perceive the firm as bundles of resources which can have different applications; that is, the firm's resources can be deployed in different businesses with different end products. Using the language of resource-based school, Barney argues that a firm's resources and capabilities are competitively important if they are (1) valuable, (2) rare and (3) difficult to imitate.

1. The *value* of a resource depends on the opportunities available for exploiting it, and these opportunities can change. For example, IBM's capabilities in mainframe computers became less valuable as personal computers became more sophisticated and cheaper.
2. Competitively important resources are also *rare*. If many competitors have the same or similar capabilities, none of them will have a competitive advantage.
3. The third criterion for the competitively important resources is that they are *difficult to imitate*. As many physical resources are easily imitate, rivals can build similar plants or copy a process technology. It is far more difficult to imitate capabilities that depend on teamwork, culture and organizational routines. These resources are usually complex, the result of a firm's own history and of numerous small decisions overtime which contribute to the development of unique capabilities. Barney cites the example of Hewlett Packard's corporate adjure, which encourages teamwork and co-operation across divisions. This has enabled HP to use its technologies in varied products - printers, plotters, computers and electronic instruments - and to make these products compatible. Rival fauns may be able to duplicate the technology of HP's products, but it is not easy for competitors to imitate the culture and organizations, which underpins HP's success.

Capabilities are often a firm's most important resources because they are valuable, rare and difficult to imitate. At the same time, the complexity and opaqueness of a firm's capabilities creates a management problem of its own. To capitalize on an organization's resources, managers need to be able to identify them, make decisions about how to exploit them, and know how to expand them. Without this knowledge, successful strategies would only be the lucky result of historical decisions or accidents. To understand how firms acquire and expand their capabilities we have to turn to learning theory. There then emerges a symbiotic and indeed dialectical relationship between people management and corporate strategy that allows the company to thrive on the cutting edge of market competition by harnessing the tools provided by emergent technology and binding it with innovative practices. There may indeed be some amount of serendipity in this but usually this is the result of astute strategic planning, monitoring and execution.

### Organization As Learning Systems

Learning is one of the most important factors in developing and managing an organization's core capability. Organizational learning can be defined as the capacity or process within an organization to maintain or improve performance based on experience. Learning is a systems-level phenomenon because it stays within the organization, even if individuals change. Learning is as much a task as the production and delivery of goods and services. It does not mean organizations could sacrifice the speed and quality of production in order to learn, but, rather, that production system be viewed as learning systems. While companies do not usually regard learning as a fixation of production, research on successful firms indicates that three learning related factors are important for their success.

1. Well-developed core competencies that serve as launch points for new products and services.

2. An attitude that supports continuous improvement in the business's value-added chain.
3. The ability to fundamentally renew or realize an aim.

These factors identify some of the qualities of an effective learning organization that diligently pursues a constantly enhanced knowledge base. This knowledge allows for the development of competencies and incremental or transformational change. In these instances, there is assimilation and utilization of knowledge and some kind of integrated learning system to support such 'actionable learning. Indeed an organization's ability to survive and grow is based on advantages that stem from core competencies that represent collective learning.

Although, not all learning is the same, some learning is dysfunctional, and some insights or skills that might lead to useful new actions are often hard to attain. However, some learning does lead to development of special skills leading to organization's core competencies.

### Core Themes

1. **All organizations are learning systems:** All organizations have formal and informal processes and structures for the acquisition, sharing, and utilization of knowledge and skills. Members communicate broadly and assimilate values, norms and procedures both in formal and informal way. In short, all organizations, in some way or other, are learning systems.
2. **Learning conforms to culture:** The organization's culture or subcultures determine the nature of learning and the way in which it occurs.
3. **Style varies between learning system:** There are a variety of ways in which organizations create and maximize their learning. Basic assumptions about the culture lead to learning values and investments that produce a different



learning style from a culture with another pattern of values and investments.

4. **Generic processes facilitate learning:** How will an organization maximize learning within its chosen style does not occur haphazardly. Data suggests that talking about the 'learning organization is partially effective, some policies, structures and processes do seem to make a difference. The difference is in how easy or how hard it is for useful learning to happen, and in how effective the organization is in 'working its style'.

Whatever the organization's choice, the following are three guidelines for developing and implementing a chosen strategy for improving organizational learning capability:

1. Before deciding to become something new, study and evaluate what you are now. Without full awareness and appreciation of current assumptions about management organization and learning, it is not possible to grasp what is being done well and what might be improved or changed.
2. Organizations can change in major ways if people experience success with more modest, focused, and specific changes. As with many skills, there is a learning curve for the skill of managing and surviving transitions. Large-scale change requires that many initiatives be put into place in a carefully designed, integrated sequence.
3. Organizations must consider cultural factors in choosing and implementing any strategy, particularly when considering how it does specific things. For example, in a highly individualistic society like the United States or the United Kingdom, skill development focuses on individual skills; in comparison, more communitarian societies such as Japan or Korea have traditionally focused on group skill development. Moving from one pole to another is a major cultural change to simply improve on the existing orientation is much easier.

## Targeting A Company's Core Competencies

By recognizing its core competencies, a company can clearly define organizational boundaries and focus resources for maximum advantage. The authors outline an approach for identifying those competencies that can provide a company with the best chance to achieve long-term competitive advantage. The twin concepts of core competence and business processes figure prominently in most discussions of corporate strategy. The core competence concept helps top managers answer the fundamental question 'what should we do?' and the business processes perspective addresses the question 'How should we do it?'

Both concepts are indispensable in guiding firms to achieve enduring competitive advantage and superior profitability. Both are founded on a simple notion: that the firm is a system of activities, not a portfolio of individual products or services. Some activities are performed so much better than the competition and are so critical to end products or services that they can be described as core competencies. When a series of activities are organized into a system that works better than the sum of its parts, this business process can also create competitive advantage, even if component activities by themselves do not.

Business process reengineers have developed an analytically rigorous discipline that can systematically applied and plainly communicated to others. For the core competency concept to achieve this same success it must be linked to the underlying business economics that drive competitive advantage and it must be applied in the same systematic manner as the business process concept.

Once it is determined that a firm enjoys a comparatively strong activity position, the next logical question is 'So what?' Achieving strong activity position is by critical to competitiveness only when the particular activity adds *significant value* to the end product or service.

There is a disturbing tendency today to identify characteristics such as 'quality products' and 'a good reputation' as core competencies, when these characteristics are really the result of performing discrete activities well. In failing to associate specific, underlying activities with these claimed competencies, managers are unable to focus on preserving and strengthening the building blocks that create quality products in the first place. Business analysts must dig deeper. When they do, they will find that real core competencies are tangible value added activities that are performed more effectively and at lower cost than that of the competition. These unique and enduring activities constitute a firm's core competencies. When a firm fails to correctly identify its core competencies, it misses attractive opportunities and chases poor ones.

#### **Four Imperatives of Core Competencies**

Once the senior management develops the strategic intent to identify, nurture and organize around activities that can be made unique and enduring, a few rules must be followed to transform this commitment into competitive success.

**Rule 1: Avoid laundry lists:** If senior management settles on more than a handful of key activities or core competencies, it is probably over reaching and certainly ignoring the intent of the word 'core'. Many successful companies have targeted either one or two key activities. Identifying key activities is one of the most important contributions senior management can make. Proposed core competencies should:

- Contribute significantly to the ultimate value of product or service.
- Represent a unique capability that provides enduring competitive advantage
- Have a potential to support multiple products or services.

**Rule 2: Achieve senior management consensus on core competencies:** What

business are you really in? is the basic session. Evaluating potential core competencies using the screening approach is a necessary but insufficient step in building a competency-driven organization. If competencies are to be nurtured and shared widely through the firm, senior management must reach consensus on which these are and act on the results of their selection process. In working to build senior management consensus on key activities, good results can be achieved using following approaches (among others):

- Activity-based benchmarking.
- Employee and asset distribution.
- 'What if' scenario development.

Activity based benchmarking is technique that can steer debate away from subjective opinions and toward hard facts. For example, if the vice President of operations claims that order processing and fulfillment is a core competency, he should develop a persuasive argument by demonstrating and enduring competitive advantage in order-processing speed, cost and customer satisfaction.

A compelling argument can also be built by answering some simple questions about an organization's internal configuration, for example: 'What do your employees do? Where are your assets?' If 80% of a company's employees are on the plant floor, the Marketing Vice President must argue persuasively to convince his colleagues that marketing and sales is really a key activity. After all, people embody collective learning, which becomes a formidable competitive weapon when it is built up and shared among a large number of employees.

'What if' approaches are also useful in working such a group to select core competencies? A senior management deadlock can often be broken by working out the implications of selecting a single core competency as a guide for future actions. In a deadlocked situation, one might ask, what actions are implied by the adoption of core competency 'X'? What products and markets are most attractive given

this core competency? What will the company look after five years from now, if competency 'X' guides our actions? These same questions should be answered for each proposed core competency. While this approach may seem simplistic, it can be combined with other, more analytical approaches to help the group reach consensus on a core competency (or two) that makes the most sense for the corporation.

**Rule 3: Leverage the core competencies inside the organization:** Once senior management identifies and agrees on the firm's core competencies, it must work zealously to ensure that competencies are continually strengthened, shared widely throughout the corporation and managed in the way that best preserves the competitive advantages they create. The importance of this mandate cannot be stressed enough if senior management fails to organize around the key activities, they will disappear. Actions that may be necessary to best exploit the identified competencies range from physically reconfiguring disparate manufacturing processes to simply communicating more effectively. Consider the case of leading international manufacturer of electrical products. Division A developed the expertise in the design and manufacture of surface mounted printed circuit boards and used this skill to reduce the costs of its products. Division B could have benefited from Division A's surface-mount expertise and in return could have driven down costs for both divisions by increasing overall volume. Instead, Division A jealously guarded its capabilities and Division B continued to struggle. This behavior cannot be tolerated if key corporate skills are to be exploited to their fullest potential. New approaches to project coordination and interdepartmental communication can help to break down the barriers. The goal of the adaptive organization is to ensure that the best core competencies, whether embodied in technologies, process, or employees, are *linked to the most promising market opportunities* so that learning is maximized and travels quickly throughout the corporation.

**Rule 4: Share core competencies outside the corporation as well:** Sometimes sharing and nurturing core competencies within a corporation is not enough. As markets evolve, new activities may be required. Moreover, in today's global marketplace, even giant corporations blanch at the cost of launching new products and entering new markets. With product life cycles shrinking and R&D costs skyrocketing, some companies find it easier to embrace their competitors rather than fight them.

Collins and Porley have studied multinational alliance behavior and observe that 'the corporation of the future will need to take a more dynamic view of its business. There is often insufficient time to switch from one mode of operation to another as markets evolve {through their product life cycles}. From the very start of new business, companies must find ways of building competency in each area of competitive advantage - even if they are not well placed to do so on their own.

Identifying core competencies and inspiring the organization to nurture and organize around them is one of the most important contributions senior management can make. In addition, selecting the wrong competency or too many core competencies is one of the worst conceivable management errors. The process of redefining core competencies should be undertaken every three to five years as part of a periodic review of corporate strategy. When any industry undergoes a fundamental change in its value-added structure, a reassessment is critical. Often management cannot respond fast enough and heavy losses result.

Companies with a widely shared understanding of their unique enduring capabilities and the evolving value-added structure of their industries will above the competition. Firms that define their competitive advantage based on structural superiority in the discrete activities they perform are more often than not long-term winners; these companies turn their

competencies into competitive weapons, not competitive traps. Thus companies can use their core competencies to gain competitive advantage.

### Critical Analysis

In order to use their core competencies to competitive advantage, firms need to first have a clear understanding of their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT). This will help them to understand their internal capabilities and capitalize on them. Firms in the same industry often make similar diversification moves, identifying areas with technology or products similar to those of existing businesses. The result is often intense competition and disappointing performance. To avoid these problems, managers should broaden their understanding of their firm's core capabilities and identify what makes their company different and unique. A company's core skills might be in particular functions, such as marketing, or they might be derived from long experience such as expertise in coping with unstable prices. Capabilities might also be based on the interaction of different functions, as in a company where the sales and research functions work closely together to solve customer problems, or, they might involve a complex set of skills, as in a capability in administering franchises. Every firm has its own history and experiences, and even firms in the same industries will have different sets of core skills. A firm's capabilities can provide a guide to new areas of business, if it identifies businesses where it can exploit its core skills. Thus if firms make a mistake in identifying their core competencies, they will invest in areas where their resources will be wasted. Managers should be able to do optimum utilization and allocation of resources. When a firm fails to correctly identify its core competencies, it misses good opportunities and chases poor ones. Hence, proper identification of core competencies is necessary in order to be able to use them to gain competitive advantage. This is one big lesson that Indian business and industry can

ill-afford to overlook if they are to remain globally competitive. And for this excellence and sustainability are the *sine qua non*.

### Bibliography

1. Clarke, Thomas and dela Rama, Marie (eds.) (2006) *"Corporate Governance and Globalization"*, CA: SAGE, London and Thousand Oaks.
2. Durkheim, Emile (1947): *The Division of Labour in Society* (translated by G Simpson) the Free Press of Glencoe, New York.
3. Durkheim, Emile (1895) (1950): *The Rules of Sociological Method*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago.
4. Drucker, P. F. (1996): *Innovation and Entrepreneurship*, Harper Business Books, New York.
5. Galbraith J K (1977): *The Age of Uncertainty*, Houghton Muffin and Co, Boston.
6. Gouldner, Alvin (1971): *The Coming Crisis of Western Sociology*, Heinemann, London.
7. Hippargi, S and Kothari P (2010) A Utilitarian Perspective on Business Ethics during Times of Recession, being a paper presented at the *International Conference at BVIMR New Delhi* March 2010.
8. Jayashree S (2003) Towards Business Excellence: Postulating the New Strategic Triad in Upinder Dhar and Santosh Dhar (eds) *Shaping Management for the 21st Century*, Indore Management Association, Indore.
9. Jayashree S (2005) Business Ethics, Corporate Governance and Organisational Excellence, *Prestige Journal of Management and Research*, Vol. 9, No 1, April.
10. Jayashree S (2007) *Ethics and Managerial Styles in the Future*, *Indira Management Review*, February.
11. Jayashree S et al (2008) *Theory and Practice of Managerial Ethics*, 2nd edition, JAICO Pub Co., Mumbai.

12. Jayashree S, Sadri S and Nayak N (2009): *A Strategic Approach to Human Resources Management*, JAICO Pub Co. Mumbai.
13. Hamel G and Prahalad C K (1994): *Competing for the Future*, Cambridge Mass., Harvard Business School Press.
14. Hamel G and Valigangas (2003): *The Quest for Resilience*, Harvard Business Review, September.
15. Hammer, M. and Champy, J.(1993): *Re-engineering the Corporation: A Manifesto for Business Revolution*, London: Nicholas Brealey
16. Kuhn, Thomas (1962): *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago.
17. Lele, Milind M. (1992): *Creating Strategic Leverage: Matching Company Strengths with Market Opportunities*, John Wiley and Sons Inc., New York.
18. Monks, R. A. J. and Minow, N (1995): *Corporate Governance*, Basil Blackwell Inc., Massachusetts.
19. Parsons, T and Smelser, N. J. (1956): *Economy and Society: A Study in the Integration of Economic and Social Theory*, Routledge and Kegan Paul, London.
20. Prahalad C K (2009) *The Fortune at the Bottom of the Pyramid*, Pearson Education, South Asia.
21. Rawls J. (1971): *Theory of Justice*, Harvard University Press, Boston.
22. Shleifer, A. and Vishny, R.W. (1997): A Survey of Corporate Governance, *Journal of Finance*, 52 (2).
23. Sadri S and Jayashree S (1997) Chief Executives and Organisational Change, *South Asian Journal of Management*, July-December.
24. Sadri S, Jayashree S and Ajgaonkar M (2002) *Geometry of HR*, Himalaya Pub house, Mumbai.
25. Sadri S, Jayashree S and Nayak N (2009): *Implementing Organisational Change*, IMED Journal of Management and Social Research, Vol. II NO 4, October.
26. Sadri S and Jayashree S (2010) Oorganizational Excellence and Business Sustainability under conditions of Economic Recession [a considered opinion from an Indian perspective] being a paper presented at the International Conference at BVIMR in New Delhi, March 2010
27. Sadri S and Jayashree S (2010): *Business Ethics and Corporate Governance: towards organisational excellence*, Current Publications, New Delhi
28. Sadri S, Guha B S, Jayashree S (2010) *Managing for Excellence*, PHI , New Delhi
29. Sharma, Subhash (2007): *New Mantras in Corporate Corridors: from ancient roots to global routes*, New Age International Publishers, New Delhi.
30. Tara,Shahrukh N(2007):Excellencethrough Corporate Governance: an investigative study in Mumbai, *Unpublished Ph D Thesis*, Bharati Vidyapeeth University.
31. Thompson, Laura (1961): *Towards a Science of Mankind*, McGraw Hill Book Co., New York.
32. Weber, Max (1933): *The Methodology of Social Sciences*, the Free Press of Glencoe, New York.



# Strategic Responses of Enterprises to Changes in Market Environment - An Examination Across Ownership Form: Case Study of a Regional Cooperative Milk Producers' Federation Ltd (RCMPF)\*

**Suresh Maruthi**

*The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI), Bangalore*

The liberalisation process that India initiated in 1991-92 policy makers has endeavoured to reduce the role of business in many sectors of business. The reform process has largely focused on the private sector and the public sector. The focus on the cooperative sector has been less. Developing countries such as India have problems and constraints that are different in nature in comparison to the industrialised countries in the context of infrastructure, capital, professional and managerial resources. In spite of the above the limitations competition has intensified after the process of reforms. Enterprises have expanded, launched new products and diversified their portfolio of businesses. Many established business houses moved away from their conservative ways of doing business and

have become market oriented. Liberalisation has also brought in new competitors and opened up opportunities in areas hitherto reserved for the public and cooperative sectors. The responses of enterprises to changes in the market environment have not been uniform. While a few public sector enterprises have been able to cope with the changes, others have not been able to respond appropriately leading to unprofitable performance. The Navaratna public sector firms have been proactively responding to changes in the market environment. In the context of the cooperative sector the responses have been mixed. While GCMMF, a producer-owned dairy cooperative federation that markets the Amul brand of dairy products has been able to contend with the changes in the

market environment by devising strategies in a manner better than government controlled federations despite both forms having to face the same industry environment. It would also be interesting to see how leadership of organisation is constrained or aided by the ownership form in responding to the market environment. Hence analysing the strategic responses of enterprises across ownership forms is an area of interest to researchers as well as decision-makers. Presented here is the case study of a Regional Cooperative Milk Producers' Federation.

### Select Literature Review

Chandler (1962) explores the relationship between strategy and structure and defined strategy as "the determination of the long-term goals and objectives of the enterprise and adoption of courses of action and allocation of resources necessary for carrying out these goals."<sup>1</sup> Ansoff (1965) considered strategic decisions were primarily concerned with external rather than internal problems of the firm and specifically with selection of product-mix which the firm will produce and the markets to which it will sell.<sup>2</sup> Andrews (1971) considered corporate strategy as a pattern of decisions in an enterprise that determines and reveals its objectives, purposes, produces principal policies for achieving the purposes, defines the range of businesses the company intends to pursue and the kind of organisation it wants to be and the nature of contributions it provides to its stakeholders.<sup>3</sup> Porter (1985) proposed that the main focus of strategy formulation was to cope with competition. Miles and Snow (1978)<sup>4</sup> proposed the framework for strategic adaptation of organisation in relation to the environment and an adaptive cycle and each of the organisation types develops its strategies for responding to the environment, and each has a particular pattern of technology, structure, and process that is consistent with its strategy. These organisation types were called, by them as, the Defender, the Reactor, the Analyser, and the Prospector. Reactors are organisations

in which top managers frequently recognise the changes and uncertainty occurring in their organisational milieu. These organisations have weak responses and are often lack in relation to the environment. This type of organisation does not have a steady strategy-structure relationship and does not make changes of any sort until driven to do so by environmental compulsions.

Mintzberg and Waters (1981) while analysing the history of the Canadian Lady, looked as to how strategies were formed and formulated in organisations and viewed strategies "as patterns in streams of decisions" and focused on tracking decision-streams over a period of time in strategy development, and the forces that influenced the strategy.<sup>5</sup> Prahalad and Hamel (1990) proposed the theory of core competence. Derek Abell (1978)<sup>6</sup> proposed the concept of strategic windows and focused on matching environmental situations with organisational capacities in a scenario where market changes can have serious impact on the organisation.

In the Indian context the research studies have focused largely on the private sector and to an extent on the public sector. According to Murthy (1987), strategy in public enterprises, implied a stream of decisions that helped the organisations' survival by meeting the requirements of stakeholders<sup>7</sup> by bringing about alignment of the stakeholders. In another study Murthy (1984)<sup>8</sup> proposed a framework of three stages in the evolution of strategic management of public enterprises. According to him enterprises start with strategies that are more influenced by ideological and value considerations of key decision-makers than economic aspects in Stage I. In Stage II there is a balance between the two aspects, there is emphasis on growth and diversification. In the final stage, the enterprise internalises the values and aligns them with the business aspects in a manner acceptable to external decision-makers. Many such studies relate to pre LPG era, hence, there is a question of their contemporary relevance and limited utility.



Prof. Subhash Sharma (1999) in his book, *Quantum Rope*, proposed the idea of CINE matrix<sup>9</sup> and also used this framework of controllable and non-controllable factors, addressing internal and external factors that limit organisations in the context of Indian tea industry and used it to develop action plans.<sup>10</sup> The framework classifies a factor into any of the four cells: controllable-internal, controllable-external, non controllable-internal, non controllable-external. In recent times he extended this model to joint diagnostic analysis of situations by all stakeholder-groups and for managerial action in the efforts to shift the non-controllable to controllable domain (Sharma 2007).<sup>11</sup> Karki (2004) emphasised the need to embrace careful and suitable corporate strategies, as Indian organisations faced an environment that was complex, fast, dynamic and forms part of the global business and proposed a root-branch framework.<sup>12</sup>

After liberalisation was set in motion in India there have been research efforts to understand enterprise level responses to the same. Issues in creating successful new products by enterprises for competitive advantage were explored by researchers (Krishnan and Prabhu, 1999).<sup>13</sup> Venugopal (1998) examined two enterprises in electronics and paper industries and attempted to document, analyse and explain the content and process of strategic response of public enterprises to deregulation and changes in public policy with respect to the public sector.<sup>14</sup> Thomas (2003) looked at strategic management issues specifically with respect to Indian NGOs and concluded that their dominant mode of strategy formulation was experiential rather than by design and the initial directions given by NGO founders and the ability of the NGO to access financial resources were critical.<sup>15</sup> Ray and Chittoor (2007) to understand the strategic responses of Indian pharmaceutical industry to liberalisation used five in-depth case studies and concluded, based on initial research, that forces of economic liberalisation aid internationalisation and it is an important factor in the emergence of third world MNCs.<sup>16</sup>

Maheshwari (2007) analysed six cases of turnaround management in the Indian context covering the public sector and the private sector and identified the type of ownership as an internal factor and a fast changing external environment as an external factor that caused external decline.<sup>17</sup> This analysis leads one to infer that:

- Strategy involves taking decisions having long-term impact
- In the Indian business scenario strategy has to be seen in the context in which it has been formulated
- Enterprise level strategic responses have been studied in the Indian context during post-liberalisation phase
- There are not many studies on strategic management of enterprises in the cooperative sector including aspects pertaining to strategic leadership

## **Methodology and Sources of Information**

The case study presented in this paper is part of a larger research endeavour to explain the differences in the strategic responses of enterprises to market environment across different ownership forms covering the public sector, private sector, producer-owned cooperative and government controlled cooperative thus differing in nature of ownership and control. The present case study focuses on the Regional Cooperative Milk Producers' Federation (RCMPF).

Case method was chosen as the research method for this study owing to the fact that this method enables us to understand the situation and the context effectively for reasons listed below:

- Case study as a research tool helps in comprehending the "how" and "why" of a situation and aids deeper examination
- "Real business of a case study is particularisation and not generalisation" (Stake as quoted in Naumes and Naumes 1999)<sup>18</sup>

In the words of Yin (1981), a case study is an “empirical enquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real life context”. Case research is preferred in this study as it allows the researcher to investigate deeper into the situation where aspects such as the responses of enterprises are unique and cannot be generalised easily. The case study emerges as a suitable method where the research seeks to develop deeper understanding of a given situation (Yin 1989).<sup>20</sup>

The sources of information for this research study include:

- Case research on different facets and various operations of RCMPF
- Reports and documents prepared by the organisation
- Indepth interviews of key executives at RCMPF and select member dairy unions to gain insights of RCMPF, its strategy and marketing responses
- Examination of management literature particularly in strategic marketing, business growth in the Indian context covering other industries particularly growing ones
- Examination of other material including newspaper reports pertaining to RCMPF

### **Evolution of RCMPF**

Regional Cooperative Milk Producers’ Federation (RCMPF) is the apex cooperative body representing dairy farmers in a large state of India. It is also the agency to implement dairy development activities in the state. The evolution of RCMPF is somewhat different from similar dairy federations in other parts of India. The state government has played and continues to play an active role in the management of RCMPF. This organisation has maintained a strong relationship with the National Dairy Development Board (NDDB), the apex body for dairy development at Anand and often perceived as a collaborator of NDDB in all its new initiatives.

Dairy sector in the state, prior to cooperativisation was the responsibility of the state Animal Husbandry department. A large dairy with a capacity of 1.5 lakh litres per day was set up in 1965 in the state capital.. In June 1974, an integrated project was launched with the major objective of restructuring and reorganising the dairy industry on the basis of a cooperative model and to provide infrastructure for dairy development. In 1975 the project was initiated with the support of the World Bank and covered the southern districts of the state. A public sector organisation Regional Dairy Development Corporation (RDDC)\* was set up to implement the project that ended in 1984. The dairy development activities were expanded to include the entire state barring a few talukas. RDDC was restructured as Regional Cooperative Milk Producers’ Federation (RCMPF), as a cooperative producer-owned structure in May 1984 with an IAS officer deputed from the state cadre as its head. RCMPF implemented the Operation Flood-II (of NDDB) in the state and subsequently Operation Flood-III till 1996.

### **Objectives of RCMPF**

RCMPF has the following objectives with respect to dairy development in the state.<sup>21</sup>

- Providing assured and remunerative market for the milk produced by the farmer members
- Providing quality milk to urban consumers
- To build village level institutions in the cooperative sector to manage dairy activities
- To ensure provision of milk production inputs, processing facilities and dissemination of know-how
- To facilitate rural development by providing opportunities for self employment at the village level and opportunity for steady income

RCMPF, following the Anand model of dairy cooperatives, has sought to eliminate middlemen and producers with the help of

professionals employed by them to manage the institutions.

At present, RCMPF has a network of 13 district level milk producers' unions under its umbrella covering all the 28 districts in the state. The federation has 17 liquid milk plants, 2 product dairies and 39 chilling centres, with a total processing capacity of 25.90 lakh litres of milk per day.<sup>22</sup> The turnover of RCMPF was around Rs. 2707 crore in 2007-08. RCMPF is among the large dairy federations in India and is counted with GCMMF in terms of its relevance to the dairy sector in India. In some ways, the contribution of RCMPF by generating income to the state's rural areas is significant. The linking of villages through dairying to the urban markets by RCMPF has resulted in significant development in districts that have limited rainfall and constraints for setting up other enterprises.

RCMPF's turnover increased from Rs. 90 crore in 1985-86 to Rs. 1050.34 crore in 2000-01 and further to Rs 2013 crores in 2006-07 (Rs 2707 crore in 2007-08). The average sales of milk rose to 21.29 lakh litres per day in 2007-08 from 6.15 lakh litres per day in 1985-86.<sup>23</sup> The processing capacity increased from 8.60 lakh litres per day in 1985-86 to 25.90 lakh litres per day in 2006-07. In the process, another public sector firm Regional Milk Products Limited was merged with RCMPF. The federation marketed its milk and other products under the brand name BRIGHT. The 13 milk unions, under the umbrella of RCMPF, marketed milk under BRIGHT brand name in their respective geographical domain. Marketing of all value added products and sale of liquid milk in the state capital city and outside the state was the responsibility of RCMPF. The federation was also responsible for market development activities, brand building, and coordination across unions and handling of surpluses and shortages of liquid milk across unions. RCMPF has also under its control a quality control laboratory and a Central Training Institute.<sup>24</sup> The quantity of milk sold is estimated to be 21.29 lakh litres per day in 2007-08.<sup>25</sup>

## **Industry and Marketing Environment of RCMPF**

One of the most important aspects of the industry structure of RCMPF is that most of its customers, even the literate among them, do not understand as to what constitutes good quality milk. Aspects such as low bacterial count, hygienic sourcing and manufacturing do not cut much ice with customers. At the same time, thickness of milk is often perceived as the most important aspect of quality by consumers.

The average per capita consumption of milk has improved over the years under Operation Flood. Of the estimated 20 lakh litres per day demand in the state capital city, an estimated 12.5 lakh litres per day is met by RCMPF. Consumption of unbranded and loose milk is still prevalent with an estimated 20% of the consumers dependent on it. Small hotels and sweet shops, in general, purchase unbranded milk. Very little quantities are met by cattle maintained in the city.

In line with liberalisation, the delicensing of dairy sector to some extent has taken place and after modification of Milk and Milk Products Order, there has been an entry of private players in the milk market. Brands such as Gold, Star have emerged as competitors for BRIGHT in the liquid milk market. In addition, multinational companies such as Nestle, Britannia have also entered the dairy market. Private processors have also set up facilities to cater to the market in the state capital. These include major private players such as Gold, Star, Twinkle, Happy etc. Besides other cooperative set-ups such as GCMMF (Amul) have also entered the regional market with more products. Thus RCMPF has to compete with other established cooperative enterprises as well.

RCMPF has, as pointed out earlier, evolved from the public sector RDDC, and later RMPL\* was merged with it. RCMPF had to rationalise its human resources policies in the mid 1980s to bring about uniformity.

Subsequently dairy producers' unions were formed, as per NDDB's policy, as the middle tier in the cooperative network. All such unions, 13 in total, which are constituents of RCMPF have their own milk processing facilities. A few unions mostly in southern part of the state generate surplus milk and have developed considerable organisational capabilities. RCMPF has to take care of the developmental needs of dairy unions of northern part of the state. These unions have been set up later and are smaller than those in the southern part. Unlike dairy unions in southern part of the state, those in northern part are yet to acquire significant marketing strengths in their respective geographical areas. It is also the policy of the state government to support all developmental initiatives in the northern districts, which are underdeveloped. RCMPF, as a government controlled cooperative has to adhere to the policy of the state government. RCMPF, for instance, has to adhere to Government policy and direction even in aspects such as increasing the prices of liquid milk marketed to urban consumers. Distribution of liquid milk is a challenge due to high perishability. In 1989, RCMPF marketed liquid milk through 500 agents covering 52 routes. In 2007, in the state capital alone, liquid milk is marketed through 2500 agents covering 230 routes. In addition, increasing urbanisation has led to expansion in the geographical area under the state capital, thus distributing packaged milk to the area is itself a challenge.

### **Marketing of Products by RCMPF**

Products manufactured by RCMPF include in addition to Milk, Butter, Ghee, SMP, BRIGHT Great, Curds, Indian sweets such as Mysore Pak, Peda, Badam Powder, Paneer, Flavoured Milk and ice-creams. In all these products categories RCMPF is a market leader in the state except in cases such as butter, SMP, ice-creams etc where GCMF (Amul) is the market leader. As a dairy enterprise, in the initial years, RCMPF focused only on distribution of milk. It was only in 1989 more

products in addition to milk were launched. These products according to a study, included curds, sweetened condensed milk (for defence), ice-cream, skim milk powder, whole milk powder, peda.<sup>26</sup> In 1991-92, RCMPF made a serious attempt to understand and enter the ice-cream market. An exhaustive study indicated a growing market for ice-creams in the state capital city.<sup>27</sup> RCMPF, however, did not make a concerted effort to enter the ice-cream market despite favourable market conditions as it was operating in captive market for liquid milk and production was focused to meet the objective of meeting the liquid milk requirements of consumers. It would be obvious from examining the Strategic Marketing Plans of RCMPF's constituent unions and based on discussions with RCMPF officers that the dependence of the unions on the market in the state capital was very high (50% to 98% of their total sales). There is also scope for developing a clear strategy for setting up of sales depots in the nearby states of India.

### **Strategic Responses of RCMPF**

The strategic responses of RCMPF in the context of changes in the market environment are as follows:

- **Strengthening of distribution network:** Given the importance of distribution to dairy consumers RCMPF has expanded its dealer network. It has also created Any Time Milk Counters, Centralised Depot Marketing System and appointed exclusive dealers for BRIGHT Great. It has made a concerted effort to penetrate the retail market by focusing on milk in sachets and reducing bulk vending.
- **Launching of new products:** earlier RCMPF was a bulk seller in the ghee market. In recent years it has focused on the retail market for ghee by packing them in pearlpet jars, sachet etc. It has also introduced BRIGHT Great in tetrapack which has been a successful product. Cashing on the health consciousness it launched BRIGHT Great

Health. Its flavoured milk has been popular in urban areas. It also made a successful entry in the Indian sweets market in the state. Targeting the retail market, RCMPF also launched SMP in metallic polythene packs.

- Increase in production capacity.
- Training of officers: Using IRMA, RCMPF undertook major MDPs on brand management, energy management, marketing skills programme and quality management programme for its officers.
- Quality initiatives of RCMPF: it has made a beginning to introduce quality management practices.
- Union level responses: The intermediate tier in the Anand model of dairy cooperatives is the dairy cooperative union. It plays a very critical role in linking the dairy producer to the market. Formulation of Strategic Marketing Plan by each (major) constituent union, with the support of NDDB, has been an important response.
- Investment in Marketing Research.
- Participation in the Mnemonics Campaign of NDDB: This is a kind of co-branding program conceived by NDDB and supported by the board to counter market entry of strong MNC brands (This uses the 'drop' logo of NDDB in all milk sachets).<sup>28</sup>
- Alignment with NDDB's Vision 2010: In the light of liberalisation and delicensing of the dairy sector, RCMPF has aligned itself in formulating strategies in the following major areas, which in turn have been derived from NDDB's Vision 2010: <sup>29</sup>
  - Productivity enhancement.
  - Cooperative Business (procurement, processing and marketing).
  - Quality Assurance Programme.
  - National Information Networking.

The various responses of RCMPF have been summarised in Table 1

### Analysis

A crucial question is that does the nature of ownership affect the strategic decisions of RCMPF. This has to be examined from different perspectives on the basis of the following:

- whether RCMPF's responses have been market driven
- whether RCMPF has to adhere to the priorities of the state government in relation to its business objectives and
- whether market opportunities have been missed despite favourable market environment
- whether ownership form has constrained the leadership in responding in a comprehensive manner

An analysis of RCMPF responses to market environment indicates that most of the responses have been internal to the organisation. An analysis of RCMPF's strategic responses indicated that most of their responses arose from internally controllable capabilities and therefore it increased milk distribution routes and started "Any-time" counters. Even entry into new products such as Indian ethnic sweets was due to availability of surplus ghee and surplus product manufacturing facility. Thus some of the responses such as new product launches were not exactly in relation to market changes but owing to internal stimuli. Expansion of production facility was in response to support available from NDDB. In the area of pricing of milk it has to adhere to the government's priorities. The government also has a say in fixing the procurement price of milk. RCMPF also has to adhere to the policy of dairy development of the whole state and hence has to carry the additional responsibilities of strengthening the smaller dairy unions in northern districts of the state.

**Table 1: Responses of Regional Cooperative Milk Producers' Federation**

	<b>Internal</b>	<b>External</b>
<b>Controllable</b>	<p><b>Responses Initiated:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creation of centralised depot marketing system in RCMPF</li> <li>• Initiating direct sales to institutions</li> <li>• Launching of new products such as Indian sweets to overcome surplus supply of ghee/availability of manufacturing facility</li> <li>• Launch of homogenised toned milk</li> <li>• Training of officers</li> <li>• Limited interventions in quality</li> <li>• Limited interventions in energy management in plants</li> <li>• Creation of Any Time Milk counters in the state capital</li> <li>• Strengthening of distribution network in the state capital (introduction of more routes)</li> </ul> <p><b>Limited Responses:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In setting up a strong product management team</li> <li>• Limited IT network</li> </ul>	<p><b>Responses Initiated:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing the wholesalers in nearby states</li> <li>• Exclusive dealers for BRIGHT GREAT</li> <li>• Launch of BRIGHT GREAT, BRIGHT HEALTH to meet emerging health conscious market segments in State capital</li> <li>• Increase in production capacity</li> <li>• Launch of homogenised toned milk</li> </ul> <p><b>Limited Responses:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In strengthening brand management</li> <li>• Limited response to opportunities such as launching ice-creams</li> <li>• Limited efforts to increase penetration in nearby states and having a clear depot management strategy</li> <li>• In reducing the state capital focused marketing</li> <li>• In moving towards a strong retail marketing</li> <li>• In gaining access to major Indian markets for BRIGHT by having alliance with other cooperatives</li> </ul>
<b>Non-Controllable</b>	<p><b>Limited Responses:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In reducing inter-union competition among various dairy unions</li> <li>• Formulating a management policy for small sized cooperative dairy unions in northern parts of the state</li> <li>• No change management/ OD initiative for a market oriented culture</li> <li>• Reduction in dependence and handholding support from NDDB</li> </ul>	<p><b>Limited Responses:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Countering entry of private players in the state capital market</li> <li>• Limited advocacy to capitalise on favorable policies with NDDB</li> <li>• Inadequate lobbying for autonomy with State government in matters relating to recruitment, appointment, promotion, finance, pricing etc.</li> <li>• Networking with other cooperatives for furthering its marketing strategies</li> <li>• Handling of differing perception of the state government with respect to increasing retail price of milk</li> </ul>

*Source: Based on Sharma (2007), discussions at RCMPF*



In contrast, GCMMF's responses have been market oriented whether it is launching new products, strengthening of the Amul brand and establishing strategic alliances with dairy cooperatives in different parts of the country. GCMMF also operates as a full-fledged producer owned cooperative and pursues its business objectives as a professional enterprise. This is primarily because of its autonomous character with little dependence on the government.

RCMPF lost a major 'strategic' window of ice-creams that was open in its respective business. It could have entered the ice-cream business in the state capital in the mid 1990s when the market conditions were favourable with only a few players. In the ice-cream business it has been a late entrant. Similarly it did not enter other product categories such as cheese spread and cheese cubes as well despite favourable consumer perceptions. There have been many aspects in the controllable and non-controllable domain, both addressing internal and external aspects, to which RCMPF responded to in a limited manner, as the risks, resources, time and efforts that were required were high. RCMPF just did not move strategically by perceiving the need to respond and was satisfied by staying within its existing 'comfort' zone arising out of its nature of a government controlled cooperative. This resulted in RCMPF missing market opportunities when favourable conditions prevailed. In addition, it did not get into any strategic alliance with any other cooperative to expand its reach in other major cities. RCMPF could have also made efforts to penetrate large milk markets in other states. RCMPF has had varying perceptions with the state government on the issue of increasing the prices of milk and was restrained from doing so, by the state government. (The Regional High court has rejected RCMPF's interim prayer in this regard).<sup>30</sup>

Another aspect of strategy is organisational adaptation with a view to developing strategy in relation to the environment. Using Murthy's

framework one could say that RCMPF is in stage II where it has been making an effort to reconcile social ends of meeting the state government's rural development initiatives.

Using Miles and Snow's framework (1978) one could infer that RCMPF is mostly a reactor, an organisation in which the top management perceives change and uncertainty in their environments, but has been unable to respond effectively. The alignment between strategy and structure has been found to be limited, and very limited changes were introduced in the structure evidenced by the fact, despite introduction of many products, yet had not formed a strong product management group. This is an area that has not been adequately addressed by the leadership as the focus in the initial years was on meeting the social goals outlined by the government. Moreover in the initial years owing to RCMPF's origin as a government department and later as a public sector organisation the leadership was drawn from the civil services. Thus leadership process seems to have been influenced by the ownership form. In addition, an important aspect of strategy implementation is tenure of the CEO, another dimension of leadership. In the case of RCMPF, the tenure of the chief executive is similar to a government position and hence changes are made on retirement of the incumbent MD. In contrast, in GCMMF there have been only three chief executives in several decades of its existence thus ensuing strategic direction and responses to changes in market environment.

## Conclusion

RCMPF has built a strong infrastructure in the state for procuring, processing and marketing of milk and has linked the rural dairy producers to the urban market. It has a formidable presence in dairy business within the state. Though the contribution of RCMPF is quite phenomenal but given the rapid changes taking place in market with increasing competition from both the private sector players and other dairy cooperative



federations it is important that RCMPF needs to be more market oriented. Its strategies have largely been reactive and responses to market changes have either been due to environmental pressures, prodding from the apex body NDDB or due to internal organisational stimuli. The state government's priorities continue to dominate RCMPF's strategic responses given RCMPF's origin as a government project. It would be useful to examine scope for greater strategic autonomy to RCMPF subject to meeting specific business objectives (similar to those of Navaratna PSUs) and strengthen strategic competence of the leadership. These are areas that can be considered by policy makers, management experts in RCMPF and NDDB. Such an effort would encourage the leadership of the organisation take more risks, respond comprehensively to changes in the market environment, operate in the non-controllable external domain and help RCMPF in its path towards becoming a more successful, producer-owned organisation with market orientation.

Note: This paper is based on author's Doctoral Research.

## References

Exact title of a few references cited have been masked for the purpose of confidentiality

1. Chandler, Jr, Alfred. D. (1962) as quoted in S. Shivaramu (1999), *Strategy Formation*, New Delhi: Wheeler Publishing, p. 93.
2. Ansoff, H. I. (1965), *Corporate Strategy: An Analytic Approach to Business Policy for Growth and Expansion*, New York: McGraw Hill, pp.1-241.
3. Andrews, Kenneth. R. (1980) as quoted in S. Shivaramu (1999), *Strategy Formation*, New Delhi: Wheeler Publishing, p.39. (Also see Andrews, Kenneth .R.(1971), *The Concept of Corporate Strategy*, Homewood: Dow-Jones-Irwin)
4. Miles, Raymond. E., Charles C. Snow, Alan D. Meyer, Henry J. Coleman Jr., (1978), *Organisational Strategy, Structure, and*
- Process, Tokyo: McGraw-Hill Kogakusha, pp.3-30.
5. Mintzberg, Henry and James. A. Waters (1984), *Researching the Formation of Strategies: The History of Canadian Lady 1939-1976*, in *Competitive Strategic Management*, R. B. Lamb (Ed), Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, pp.62-93.
6. Abell, Derek (1978), "Strategic Windows", *Journal of Marketing*, July, pp.21-26.
7. Murthy, K. R. S. (1987), "Do Public Enterprise Need a Corporate Strategy", *Vikalpa: The Journal for Decision Makers*, Vol.. 12, No: 2, April-June, pp.9-19.
8. Murthy, K. R. S. (1984), *Strategic Management of Public Sector Enterprise – Framework of Analysis*, BP 178, Ahmedabad: Indian Institute of Management, pp.1-33.
9. Sharma Subhash (1999), "CINE Matrix for New Age Management" in *Quantum Rope: Science, Mysticism and Management*, New Age International Publishers, New Delhi, pp. 109-114.
10. Sharma, Subhash (2000), "Forward Engineering for Strategic Gearing: the Indian Tea Industry", *Management Review*, Bangalore: Indian Institute of Management, June, pp.57-65.
11. Sharma, Subhash (2007), "CINE Matrix: a Model of Strategic Scanning" in *New Mantras, in Corporate Corridors- from Ancient Routes to Global Routes*, Bangalore: New Age International, pp.315-326.
12. Kharki, Rajnish (2004), "Corporate Strategy of Indian Organisations: the Root-branch Framework", *Vikalpa: The Journal for Decision Makers*, Vol.. 29, No: 3, July-Sept, pp.1-13.
13. Krishnan, Rishikesha.T. and Ganesh Prabhu (1999), "Creating Successful New Products-Challenges for Indian Industry",

- Economic and Political Weekly, July 31, pp. M114-M119.
14. Venugopal, R. (1998), Strategic Response of Public Enterprises to Deregulation and Changes in Public Sector Policy: A Study in the Context of Indian Central PSEs, unpublished FPM thesis summary, Ahmedabad: Indian Institute of Management (mimeograph).
  15. Thomas, Manoj (2003), "Strategic Management in Indian NGOs: Practices and Constraints", *Decision*, Vol.. 30, No: 2, July-Dec, pp.129-148.
  16. Ray, Sougata and Raveendra Chittoor (2007), Internationalisation as a Strategic Response to Institutional Transition: Evidence from the Indian Pharmaceutical Industry, Working Paper Series, No: 608, Kolkata: Indian Institute of Management, June, pp.1-37.
  17. Maheshwari, Sunil. K. (2007), *Organisational Decline and Turnaround*, New Delhi: Sage Publications pp.1-37.
  18. Stake R E, as quoted in William Naumes and Margeret Naumes (1999), *Case study research*, London: Sage Publications, p.60.
  19. Yin, Robert K. (1984), *Case study research: design and methods*, Beverly Hills: Sage Publications, p.17.
  20. Yin, Robert K. as quoted in William Naumes and Margeret Naumes (1999), *Case study research*, London: Sage Publications, p.59
  21. RCMPF (2007) publication, April, p.1.
  22. RCMPF (2007) publication, April, p.7.
  23. RCMPF (2007), MIS Statement, Feb, p.1.
  24. RCMPF (2007) publication, April, p.14.
  25. RCMPF (2007), Integrated Business Plan 2007-08, March.
  26. IRMA student report (1989), Anand: Institute of Rural Management, pp.1-40.
  27. IRMA student report (1991), Anand: Institute of Rural Management, pp.1-57.
  28. NDDDB (2002), Mnemonics Plan, Anand: National Dairy Development Board, pp.1-2.
  29. RCMPF (2007), Draft Integrated Business Plan 2007-08.
  30. A leading newspaper report.
- \* Note: exact names of organisations disguised.
  - \* Brand names of the products have been disguised.



# Leadership Lessons from Nature: A Cosmic Perspective

**Ipshita Bansal**

*Women's Institute for Studies in Development Oriented Management (WISDOM),  
Banasthali University, Banasthali*

There are two ways of studying a subject, to approach it as a process and to appreciate it as an essence. In the former procedure of study, the subject is viewed as history, while in the latter it is taken in its capacity as a permanent element which moves through history unaffected by the change of context, space, and time to be treasured and adopted for the betterment of mankind, that is, the philosophic thought, contained in the literature developed over a long historical journey.

India, being one of the oldest civilisations on earth with at least five thousand years of documented history, has had a living and dynamic culture of unbroken continuity since its beginning in the distant past. Despite being subjected to numerous invasions and plunderings at the hands of foreigners she has managed to survive, adopt, adapt and grow, unlike many other civilisations of the world, which although being young and vibrant withered away with the passage of time.

This fact forces one to ponder over the reason

of this phenomenon. If we consider a nation as an organisation then it follows that, the growth and sustainability of an organisation depends upon its leaders' vision, value system and management practices. Though management is relatively new science but it is an old art, an art which the Indian leaders in the form of kings and sages have practiced with great acumen.

The Indian leaders and academicians of contemporary times should familiarize themselves with the concepts and practical processes of self management and leadership handed down to us through Indian psychophilosophic thought. The need is to return to our classical base which is ever enduring.

One such source of immense value related to Leadership is Manusmriti. Manusmriti more formally called as 'Manav Dharma Shashtra' is one of the ancient Indian texts of high authority and merit which touches upon almost every aspect of human life. According

to Anne Besant, the Manusmriti deserves the thoughtful attention of the Indian and English people alike and contains ideas and suggestions of the greatest value for all who are interested in the vexed questions of the day. Undoubtedly the best compliments paid to the sacred teachings of Manusmriti comes from Maurice Maeterlink the Belgian savant. Speaking about Manusmriti he says “there never was and never could be, I believe more impressive spiritualization than this, nor more logical, more unassailable, more elastic in the sense that it is founded on realities and never one more divinely human.”

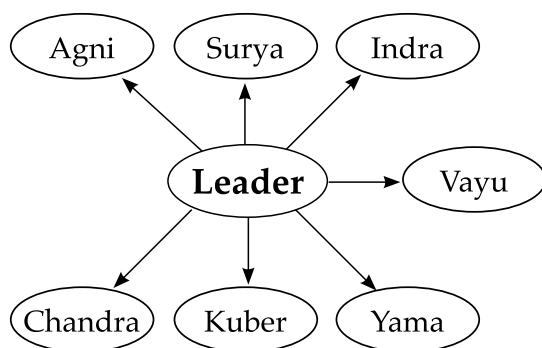
From Manusmriti we can draw important insights about various aspects of Leadership relating to the requisite traits and behaviour of a leader in different situations. We can also notice in Manu Smriti the understanding of ‘transformational’ and ‘Visionary’ leadership.

### Characteristics of an Effective Leader

Manu equates a leader with all the forces of nature combined together and thus having the power and ability of having a profound influence over his followers.

The God has created king by parts each of Indra, Vayu, Yama, Surya, Agni, Varun, Chandra and Kuber and because of having these diverse, divine, elements in him, he is the brightest of all.

### Seven Forces Leadership Model



*The Model denotes that the leader should have the strengths and qualities of 7 cosmic forces to make him a complete and effective leader.*

A leader should possess the characteristics of the following forces of nature to make him an effective leader.

- (1) **Indra**-Denoting the force of charisma and the ability to satisfy all his stakeholders. Just as Indra during the monsoon blesses everybody with wealth and prosperity, in the same manner, a leader should also have the ability and willingness to satisfy all his stakeholders.

The King should satisfy the desire of his populace in the same manner as Indra satisfies the people by granting them rain during the rainy season

- (2) **Vayu**-Denoting the force of progress, dynamism and having the ability of scanning every nook and corner that is every little detail of the relevant and general business environment

Just as Vayu enters and circulates in the body of an individual to give him life, so the king should also send his spies to circulate around, to gather information of all sides.

- (3) **Yama**-Denoting the ability to keep everybody on the right track and within limits making the subordinates understand that their ineffective performance will lead them to Nark (hell denoting punishment) and effective performance will lead them to Swarg (heaven denoting reward and recognition). Also like Yama a leader should be totally objective in performance appraisal and reinforcement without colouring his judgment with bias or personal interest.

When the time of death comes, Yama doesn't differentiate between friend or foe. In the same manner the king should provide justice to all

- (4) **Surya**-Denoting the force of enlightenment in the form of new mission, vision, or innovation.

Just as the Surya takes away the water from earth slowly in eight months, so

should a king take away the revenue from his populace slowly and steadily.

Another characteristic which Manu attributes to Surya is the tendency of having concern for his people. As Surya sucks out the water from earth slowly in no less than eight months, in the same manner a leader should not exploit his or her subordinates demanding extraordinary results in a short span of time. This concept is totally in opposition to the philosophy to Taylor's multiple piece rate system' where the worker is prodded to work beyond his endurance by enticing him with a higher piece rate for production beyond the standard.

- (5) **Agni**-Denoting the power of knowledge in the form of the ability of a leader to be

informed about the latest developments in the theory and practice of his field.

- (6) **Chandrama**-Denoting the ability to make everybody happy through his pleasant personality leading to effective interpersonal skills.

- (7) **Kuber**-Denoting the power of financial acumen which is the basis of wealth and prosperity of the organization.

Cosmic Forces Leadership theory doesn't only speak of the trait that a leader should possess, as does trait theory developed by the modern thinkers, but also goes a step a step ahead to link the traits with the needs of followers clearly stating how each required trait caters to particular need of the followers.

### Framework of Cosmic Forces and the Leadership Relevance

S. N.	Cosmic Force	Quality	Leadership Relevance
1.	Surya (Sun)	Hope  Enlightenment  Balanced Approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leader induces hope and optimism in her people</li> <li>• Leader has knowledge and under strong of past and present and vision for the future</li> <li>• Leader is able to create a balance between needs of the people and the organization.</li> </ul>
2.	Indra (God of Thunder)	Charisma  Ability to satisfy the needs of the people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leader has charismatic personality and thus ability to influence people</li> <li>• Leader is aware and concerned for the needs of the people and makes effort to satisfy than</li> </ul>
3.	Vayu (Air)	Life giving  Dynamism  All pervasiveness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leader continues to induce fresh life in to the organisation through her initiatives.</li> <li>• Leader is always vigilant about her environment and dynamic with respect to her decisions.</li> <li>• Leader knows what is happening in farthest and smallest areas of her organisation.</li> </ul>
4.	Yama (God of Death)	Fearsome  Just in punishing and rewarding.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leader keeps people disciplined for fear of punishment and negative reinforcement.</li> <li>• Leader is objective in her assessment and appraisal.</li> </ul>

S. N.	Cosmic Force	Quality	Management Relevance
5.	Agni (Fire)	Facilitator  Purifier	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leader facilitates the inception of various projects and programs with her energy and insights</li> <li>• Leader cleanses the system of ineffective policies, systems and people.</li> </ul>
6.	Chandra (Moon)	Pleasant Personality  Calm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leader has a pleasant personality resulting in good inter personal relationships</li> <li>• Leader is always calm, whether the situation is peaceful, or volatile so is able to take correct decisions</li> </ul>
7.	Kuber (God of wealth)	Resources and Wealth  Financial Acumen	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leader is able to generate wealth for the organisation and her people.</li> <li>• Leader has knowledge and ability to take healthy financial decisions</li> </ul>

*For the leader to be effective it is necessary that, she has a balance of all the 7 qualities. Predominance of few and absence of some others will make the leader imbalanced in her approach and thus ineffective.*

## Conclusion

A leader who has an optimum balance of the qualities of all the seven cosmic forces in her personality then she will be able to work well in all the three dimensions related to leadership position. She will be able to manage her self very well. Consequently she will be setting good example for her people to follow and be respected for her qualities. She will be able to maintain a position of command and control among her people and vis a vis her competitors. Due to her balanced approach she will be able to achieve an optimum state of concern for people as well as concern for system discipline.

At a more larger level such a leader or group of leaders will prove to be Yug Srishta of an era like Satyug where all the people and activities are in harmony, everybody fulfills one's duties and there is growth and contentment all round.

## References:

1. The Encyclopedia Britannica U.S.A. 1976 Vol.14 P- 812.
2. Shastri D.D. (1962) Sankshipt Manusmriti Vishveshwaranand Vedic Shodh Sansthan. Punjab P-89.
3. Sharma R.S. (1967) Manu Smriti Bhasha Tika Sahit Sansthan Dharma Press Moradabad P- 369.
4. Bhatt R. (1985) Manu Smriti Chaukhamba Sanskrit Prathishthan Delhi P-281.
5. Prasad B & Majumdar R.C. (1990) The history of Culture of Indian People Vol.2 The Age of Imperial Unity Bhartiya Vidya Bhavan, 6th edition Bombay P- 840-841.
6. Personal Communication with Dr. Subhash Sharma, Professor & Dean IBA- Bangalore.



# From Freud to Fanaa & Shunya: Quantum States of Mind As Foundation for 'Atmo'-Sphere Model of Leadership\*

**Subhash Sharma**

*Indus Business Academy, Bangalore*

In this paper we present a framework of five quantum states of mind reflecting the five levels of consciousness. On it basis we develop the ISOM (Inner Search Outer Manifestation) concept of leadership, wherein the level of inner consciousness of a leader is reflected in his thoughts and actions. Further, based on these ideas, we suggest the 'atmo'-sphere model of leadership wherein a leader transforms a society or organization based on her/his 'soul force' / 'atmik power' / inner divinity. Through expansion of their atma's sphere such leaders change the atmosphere around them. History provides us many illustrations of such leaders who through ISRON (Inner Search for Realization of Oneness-Nirvana) route created transformation in social atmosphere through their soul force (atmo-sphere) and thereby changed the course of history.

For developing the framework of five quantum states of mind, we draw upon ancient Indian

wisdom literature, Guna theory from Indian thought, identifies three attributes of nature viz. Tamas (T), Rajas and Sattava (S). Broadly, this nature of nature finds its reflection in three forms of energies viz. Violent energy, Vibrant energy and Silent energy. We can refer to them as X, Y and Z forms of energies. We can further extend this idea by including Subtle and Supra-subtle forms of energy viz. Kosmic (K) and Transcendent (T) forms. Thus, we can identify nature's energy vector as (X, Y, Z, K, T). This energy vector finds its manifestation in varying forms in nature and human societies. This energy vector also represents five levels of consciousness of an individual viz. X, Y, Z, K and T. A person operating from X level of consciousness uses violent approaches and violent energy to solve the problems of human existence. As she moves from X to higher levels of consciousness she uses creative and non-violent approaches

---

\* This is a revised and extended version of the paper presented at the AIMS International Conference on Managing in Future: Role of Ethics, Spirituality and Human Values, organized by AIMS (Association of Indian Management Scholars) International, Indus Business Academy (IBA) and Dev Sanskriti University, held at Dev Sanskriti University, Haridwar, Aug. 11-13, 2010.



Guna theory also gets reflected in human mind that operates at Violent (Tamas), Vibrant (Rajas) and Silent (Sattava) and Supra-silent (Subtle and Supra-subtle) levels. Drawing upon this idea and extending it further, we can identify following five quantum states of mind:

1. Fight
2. Flow
3. Fly
4. Float
5. Fanna-Shunya

At Fight level, human mind indulges in violent behavior mirroring the violent dimension of nature. In this state, mind is like the 'wild animal' and wants to be 'king of the jungle'.

At Flow level, human mind operates in vibrant mode reflecting vibrant energy in varying forms. In this state, mind 'flows' like a river. At Fly quantum state, human mind wants to 'fly' like the bird and reach places/ levels of Space Time Consciousness (STC) that may not be possible to reach physically. For example the metaphor of 'flying swan' ('luft-hans') is an interesting metaphor to describe this state of mind. In Indian tradition, phrases such as 'raj hans' and 'paramhans' are widely used in spiritual literature. It may be indicated that during dream state of consciousness, one can easily observe the 'flying experiences of mind'.

In the Float quantum state, human mind floats like the cloud. Echo of this state of mind can be found in poetry of Kalidasa as well as in Wordsworth's Daffodil and other poems. Many poets imagine themselves as 'cloud' and capture their experience of being a 'cloud form' in their writings.

In the Fanna-Shunya state, mind is fully merged with cosmic consciousness. The phrase Fanna is widely used in Sufi tradition and refers to complete dissolution of self in cosmic consciousness. Similar phrases are used in many spiritual traditions of the world e.g. Nirvana and Moksha in Indic traditions. We can also refer to it as 'Shunya dissolution'

state wherein an individual's consciousness merges into 'Shunya'.

It may be indicated that above presented five quantum states of mind are also in consonance with five energies framework presented in this introduction.

### **From Alpha to Omega and Beyond: Mind at 789 level of META Experiences**

'Alpha to Omega' is a widely used phrase. However, we need to extend this idea in terms of a new phrase viz. Alpha to Omega and Beyond. Beyond Alpha and Omega is the concept of Shunya/ Atma. In my book, Shunya Poems (2010, p.6) I suggested the idea of 789 states of consciousness on the basis of the metaphor of seventh heaven, eight chakra and ninth cloud. Such states of consciousness can be experienced through Moments of Enlightenment, Transcendence and Awakening (META: Shunya Poems. p. 6). At Fanna-Shunya/'Atmik' level, mind experiences moments of enlightenment, transcendence and awakening and thereby the 789 states of consciousness. Maslow talks about 'Peak experiences', however, META (Mind's Enlightenment Transcendence and Awakening) experiences are 'super-peak experiences' within reach of every human being.

While there are 'technical' meanings of Moksha and Nirvana, we can consider them as 'states of consciousness'. When viewed in terms of highest states of consciousness, Moksha, Fanana and Nirvana represent the super peak experiences at the supra-silent levels of consciousness. They also represent the 'Shunya experiences' of mind as mind during these states mind experiences, 'fullness in the void'. This state of consciousness takes us beyond the Alpha and Omega states of mind.

Various modes of nature in terms of violent, vibrant, silent, subtle and supra-subtle, can be represented by Alpha, Omega and Shunya/ Atma symbols. Thus, Guna theory

of Tamas, Rajas and Sattava qualities of nature can be expressed in terms of Alpha, Omega and Shunya/Atmik states of consciousness. As indicated above, at Shunya state of consciousness mind is at 789 level arising from META experiences. We can also refer to such experiences as Bindu experiences as Shunya can be represented by a Bindu/Point. Atma is also represented by a point and its force field can be represented by a sphere leading us to the concept of 'atmo-sphere'. Bindu experiences imply experiencing Beauty, Infinity and Divine Unity (BINDU). Thus, Moksha, Fanna and Nirvana states of consciousness take us to BINDU (Beauty, Infinity and Divine Unity) state of consciousness. These different states of consciousness can also be referred to as BINDI (Beauty, Infinity, Divinity) state of consciousness representing the convergence of three supra-subtle forces viz. Force of Beauty, Force of Infinity and Force of Divinity. Hence, we can define Self-realization in terms of realizing these three inner forces and manifesting them in the outer world. This is the essence of the ISOM (Inner Search Outer Manifestation) concept of leadership that we present in subsequent discussion.

### Geometry of Five Quantum States: Rectangle, Triangle, Circle and Beyond



Before we present the ISOM model, we present the concept of geometrical figures to depict the five quantum states of mind. In my book, Shunya Poems (2010), symbols of Rectangle, Triangle and Circle have been used widely and many readers have asked me the reason for using it. These symbols essentially represent various quantum states of mind.



Rectangle represents a philosophy of life, wherein everything is measured in terms of length and breadth. Measurement is at the root of this type of measurement approach. We are quite used to this approach in our day

to day life. When we buy a house, its price is quoted in terms of per square feet.



Triangle has many meanings. It represents dialectical synthesis of opposite forces. When viewed as mountain, it represents flow of river from the top of the mountain. Hence, it could be considered as representing the flow state of mind.



Circle represents the expansion of mind. Hence, it could be considered as symbol for flying experiences of mind.

∞ At the float level, mind admires the infinite nature of nature and thus experiences the experience of infinity. Hence, symbol of infinity captures this quantum state of mind. It may be indicated that at this level mind is in the Realm of Infinity (ROI) and experiences infinity in every dimension of nature. When our mind reaches this level, we 'see' flowers as intertwined infinities ( $\infty$ ). Nature reveals itself in the form of 'geometry of divinity' as mind experiences infinities in every creation. This state of mind can also be referred to as 'sky consciousness' as sky is a metaphor for infinity.

- At the fifth level, infinities collapse into a Bindu (Point). Further, infinite energy of mind can be represented by a point (Bindu/Shunya/Atma). 'Atmo-sphere' represents both the point and sphere i.e. atma and its invisible force field represented through invisible sphere. 'Creation from Shunya' implies creation of ideas from this state of consciousness. At this level, mind shows 'charismatic creativity' and there is direct perception (Darshan) of Beauty, Infinity and Divine Unity (BINDU).

We can also broadly associate these symbols with the idea of X, Y, Z, K and T levels of consciousness and corresponding five energies discussed earlier.

Above discussion is summarized in Table 1 indicating five quantum states of mind and corresponding levels of consciousness represented by various geometrical figures.

**Table 1: Five Quantum States of Mind and Corresponding Levels of Consciousness**

State of mind	Symbolism	Consciousness level/ Expression in Energy Form
Fanna-Shunya	● Bindu/ Atma (Atmo-sphere)	T (Supra-subtle)
Float	∞ Infinity	K (Subtle)
Fly	○ Circle	Z (Silent)
Flow	△ Triangle	Y (Vibrant)
Fight	□ Rectangle	X (Violent)

It may be indicated that above indicated symbols also represent the gross, subtle and supra-subtle forces/energies of mind. Rectangle and Triangle represent the gross force of mind, Circle represents subtle force of mind and Infinity and Bindu/ Shunya/ Atma represent supra-subtle force. Further, it may also be indicated that the framework of quantum states of mind presented in this paper has a parallel in 'Chakra theory' from Ancient Indian Psychology.

#### **Implications for Psychology: From Freudian Id to Spiritual Id**

In my book, *New Mantras in Corporate Corridors* (2007, p. 284), I suggested the idea of 'Spiritual id' wherein 'Id' stands for 'Inner divinity'. Field of Psychology is now evolving from 'Freudian Id' towards 'Spiritual Id' as ideas such as Fanna, Nirvana, Moksha, Shunya are being accepted in one form or other. With Freud, Psychology moved away from Confession to Couch. However, under the impact of Yoga, Meditation and 'Consciousness Studies', discipline of Psychology has moved beyond the Couch towards Consciousness. As a result it is moving towards 'Spiritual Id' leading to realizing the importance of 'chetan shakti' (power of consciousness of consciousness). Fig. 1 presents these shifts in the field of Psychology.

Confession → Couch → Consciousness →  
→ Towards Fanna and Shunya

#### **Fig 1: Evolution of Psychology from Freud to Fanna & Shunya**

Prof. M. S. Thimmappa, Former Professor of Psychology, Bangalore University and Former Vice Chancellor of Bangalore University is a well known psychologist. In his inaugural address in 2003, in a Seminar on 'Spirituality and Leadership for Organizational transformation', organized by Sambodh Foundation and Bangalore Management Association, Dr. Thimmappa talked about Fight Vs Flow models in Psychology and indicated that even Maslow's Self-actualization model of growth of personality has a hidden Fight orientation. Though Maslow took us beyond Freud, however, his model also seems to have a latent Fight orientation. If we reduce the five categories model presented in this paper to three broad categories viz. Fight, Flow and Fanna & Shunya, then we can foresee the future evolution of Psychology from Fight to Flow to Fanna & Shunya. This evolution can also be represented by the concept of Alpha, Omega and Shunya/Atma presented earlier in this paper. In future, Psychology may move beyond its Alpha and Omega approaches to Fanna/Nirvana/Shunya/Atma approach represented by 'Spiritual Id'.

It may be indicated that the framework of Alpha, Omega and Shunya can be useful to human beings in their self-evolution from Alpha personality (Fight) to Omega

personality (Flow) to Shunya personality (Fanna/ BINDU) representing the a full spectrum approach from Freudian Id to 'Spiritual Id'.

Yoga, Meditation and 'Consciousness of Consciousness' (YMCC) represent three knowledge streams of Indian origin that are now influencing not only the field of Psychology but also the field of Management and Leadership. Knowledge stream of Yoga is now popular across the globe. Knowledge stream of Meditation ('Dhyana') found its expression in the form of Zen-Buddhism and subsequently influenced the Western nations. Knowledge stream of 'Consciousness of Consciousness' ('Chetana') is now finding its expression in 'Consciousness Studies'. Through Yoga, Zen and 'Consciousness Studies', these knowledge streams are influencing various social sciences as well as cultures across various nations.. In general, these knowledge streams provide us a direction for ISRON (Inner Search for Realization of Oneness-Nirvana).

### **Implications for Management and Leadership: Towards A New Typology of Managers and Leaders**

The framework of five quantum states of mind presented in this paper also provides us a new model of personality. In this model, there are five types of human beings with five types of mindsets viz. Rectangle types, Triangle types, Circle types, Infinity types and Bindu/Atmik/Atmo-sphere types. Rectangle types display rectangle approach to life. They are calculative in their approach. They see life only in Quantitative terms. Triangle types look at life in terms of balance between contradictions and they attempt to achieve a reconciliation through dialectical synthesis. Circle types take an inclusive view of life. They tend to include every one in their circle of consciousness. Infinity types take a cosmic view of life. Hence, their perspective of life is cosmopolitan, cosmotarian and cosmotivistic.

Bindu/ Atmik/Atmo-sphere types look at life as a Creation and creative process originating from Shunya/ Universal Spiritual Consciousness (USC).

In consonance with this model of personality, there are five types of managers and leaders who can be referred to as X, Y, Z, K and T types. Their characteristics are as follows:

1. Rectangle Managers and Rectangle Leaders: They view organizations purely in quantitative terms. They are control and order oriented. Most of the management thought as well as theory and practice of management has originated from Rectangle approach. These X types of managers and leaders operate from X level of consciousness and therefore tend to use X form (violent/ authoritarian form) of energy in managing their organizations.
2. Triangle Managers and Triangle Leaders: They view organizations in dialectical terms and see various underlying forces in terms of thesis-antithesis and synthesis representing a triangle. They use co-alignment approach to achieve a balance between opposing forces that find manifestation in organizations in varying forms. These Y types of managers and leaders operate from Y level of consciousness and therefore tend to use Y form (vibrant form) of energy in managing their organizations.
3. Circle Managers and Circle Leaders: They view organizations as 'Omega circle' and tend to take a holistic perspective through 360 degree approach. They strive for 'shared vision' and team oriented and collective approach to decision making and implementation processes. These Z types of managers and leaders operate from Z level of consciousness and therefore tend to use Z form (silent form ) of energy in managing their organizations.
4. Infinity Managers and Infinity Leaders: They tend to view organizations as an 'Infinite container' of energy – an 'akshya

patra'. They recognize the infinite potential of every human brain and tap it for the benefit of their organization, movement or revolution. These K types of managers operate from K level of consciousness and therefore tend to rely on K form (subtle form) of energy in managing their organizations.

5. Bindu/Atmik (Atmo-sphere) Managers and Bindu/Atmik (Atmo-sphere) Leaders: They are creators. They create businesses, organizations, institutions from nothing. They start from Shunya and convert their 'Shunya dreams' into reality. They draw upon their 'atmik power' (soul force/atmo-sphere/inner divinity) and create change through the same. They create spiritual synergy and thereby transform societies and institutions. Gandhi used this approach during India's Freedom struggle and created a new narrative in world history viz. a non-violent approach to change and liberation. His example was also followed by Martin Luther King to change the course of history in USA. These T types of managers and leaders operate from T (Transcendent – Atmo-sphere) level and therefore tend to rely on T form (supra-subtle) of energy in managing their organizations.

The above presented framework can also be viewed as a five steps evolutionary framework of leadership wherein enlightened leaders evolve 'Step by Step' from step 1 of Rectangle Leadership to step 5 of Atmo-sphere Leadership. There is also a possibility of 'quantum jump' to higher levels of consciousness on the 'ladder of consciousness'. This may also happen due to extra-ordinary experience that an individual may undergo. For example, in South Africa, Gandhi was thrown out from train and this experience led to a 'quantum jump' in his level of consciousness and subsequently he evolved as Mahatma.. It may be indicated that all five types have their utility in varying forms in different contexts. In Corporate context,

at operations level, Rectangle types are well suited, at managerial level, Triangle types are needed and at strategic level, Omega circle, Infinity and 'Atmo-sphere' types are required.

### **Towards ISOM (Inner Search Outer Manifestation) Concept of Leadership**

An individual's 'Inner Search' finds expression in 'Outer Manifestation' in varying forms. This observation leads us to the concept of ISOM (Inner Search Outer Manifestation) as a foundational concept of leadership. Outer manifestation is also a reflection of inner qualities of a person. A good artist will reflect his/her inner qualities in his/her work of art. Similarly a good leader also reflects his/her inner qualities in his/her ways of Thought and Action (T-A). As leaders evolve from Rectangle T-A (Thought-Action) approach to Triangle, Circle, Infinity and 'Atmik' levels, their actions and creations also reflect such approaches. An organization is essentially an extension and expression of the 'Self' of the leader. This view of organization as 'Self-expression' of its leaders brings a fundamental shift in the way we think about organizations.

'Omega Circle' leaders tend to be highly participative in their style as compared to Rectangle and Triangle type leaders. Similarly the Infinity and 'Atmik' types tend to be visionaries as they always think in terms of futuristic vision and they manifest their inner energy in their creations whether it is business development or institution building or nation building. They tend to be 'Corporate Rishi' and 'Corporate OSHE' who bring their inner spiritual energy into display in every sphere of their activities. .

Alpha leaders reflect their 'inner violence' and 'inner turbulence' or the Freudian Id in their relationships with others and in their world view. Even Terrorism can be viewed as reflection of 'inner turbulence' of an individual or even a nation. Omega leaders (Omega Circle leaders) reflect their 'inner vibrant energy' in their relationships and in their world view. They are tolerant to the view point of others

and this is reflected in their ability to synthesis different and contradictory perspectives. Shunya leaders/ Corporate Rishi/ Corporate OSHE reflect their 'inner calm' (inner spiritual energy) or 'Spiritual Id' in their vision and relationships. Through 'Spiritual Praxis' and 'Inspirational Motivation' they inspire others and channelize energy in a constructive way. As indicated earlier, Fight, Flow and Fanna-Shunya represent the world views of 'inner turbulence' 'inner vibrant energy' and 'inner silence'. These world views are also reflected in the leadership styles of Alpha, Omega and Atmik/ Atmo-sphere leaders.

### **Concluding Comment:**

#### **Towards 'Atmo'-Sphere Model of Leadership Through ISRON Route**

The ideas presented in this paper provide us a philosophy of life in terms of five quantum states of minds and thereby five quantum states of consciousness represented by Rectangle, Triangle, Circle, Infinity and Bindu/Shunya/'Atmo'-sphere. Each state leads us to a model of leadership. However, there is an evolutionary dimension to stages of development of leadership through five steps represented by five quantum states. As a leader evolves to the 'atmo-sphere' stage through ISRON (Inner Search for Realization of Oneness-Nirvnan), she develops a capacity to transform the atmosphere around her through her soul- force i.e. force of her consciousness originating from her inner divinity.

It may be indicated that human civilization is also on a journey of consciousness. Wars in the past reflected the Rectangle state of consciousness that promoted hate ideologies. Now, 'collective consciousness' is now moving beyond the Rectangle to Triangle perspectives and we can also see the signs of Spiritual perspectives represented by Circle, Infinity and Shunya/Atmo-sphere. In fact, today's society and Corporations need many new leaders who can transform their

organization's culture (atmosphere) through their 'atmo-sphere' (soul-force).

Note: This paper expands author's ideas presented in his earlier writings. In particular, readers may refer to the following books and related writings:

1. Sharma Subhash (1996 & 2006), *Management in New Age: Western Windows Eastern Doors*, New Age International Publishers, New Delhi
2. Sharma Subhash (1999), *Quantum Rope: Science, Mysticism and Management*, New Age International Publishers, New Delhi
3. Sharma Subhash (2001), *Arrows of Time: From the Black holes to Nirvana Point*, New Age International Publishers, New Delhi
4. Sharma Subhash (2005), "Space Time Consciousness: Towards A Speculative Convergence of Science & Spirituality through Unfolding of Universal Spiritual Consciousness", in *Landscape of Matter*, (ed) Sharath Ananthamurthy, Meera Chakraborty, M.C. Radhakrishna, Bangalore University, Bangalore, pp. 207-213.
5. Sharma Subhash (2005), *Quantum States of Mind: Ordinary Perception to Extra-Ordinary Perception*, Psychological Studies, Vol.. 50 no. 1, pp. 9-15.
6. Sharma Subhash (2007), *New Mantras in Corporate Corridors: From Ancient Roots to Global Routes*, New Age International Publishers, New Delhi
7. Sharma Subhash (2009), "Osmotic Meditation: A New Tool for Stress Management and Mind Expansion", 3D... *Journal of Management and Leadership*, Vol.. 1, No.1, July-Dec. 2009, pp. 100-107.
8. Sharma Subhash (2010), *Shunya Poems: My Experiments with Corporate Rhymes*, IBA Publications, Bangalore.





# “Evolving the Feminine” Lessons in Self-leadership and Self-management from Women in the Mahabharatha\*

**Nilima Bhat**

*Sampurnah, Bangalore*

**Nilima:**

I AM Ganga, the Eternal Flow of Pure Consciousness that permeates through all of Creation. In the Heavens I AM the Akash Ganga, the Milky Way that spirals forth billions of Stars. On Earth, I AM the River Ganga who drapes the bosom of Bharat-Mata to nourish and redeem Her children.

Inside every Human, I AM the Antar Ganga, the secret, sacred central axis that goes through their spine to bring balance between Heaven and Earth, Spirit and Matter.

As the impartial witness of TIME since CREATION, I played my Divine role through each of the 18 chapters of Mahabharata, the Great Story of India.

It was coming to the end of the Dvapara Yug. A time of half-Light even if not full blown

Age of Kali. And even revered Maharathis had their dark-sides. While the Collective Human Psyche polarised into supremacy of the Patriarchy, the women of the Mahabharata are no less responsible for the Great War that brought about Yugaanth, the end of an Age.

Look closely and The Mahabharata is also the story of the Evolving Feminine.

Take Gandhari.

(Priyadarshini enter.)

Chair with Dhritrashtra as black puppet, Priyadarshini, show shock and anger, disguise/alternate with piety upon seeing that you are married to a blind/inert man.

Go through your drama of also tying a blind-fold on your eyes.

Pick him up and dance him around, stumbling yourself and getting no help from him.

---

\*This is the textual rendering of a dance-drama presented by Sri Shakti in February 2010 during the occasion of the international conference on Mahabharata and Management at IBA, Bangalore.



Message clear to audience that instead of one ineffective person (him), you are now two ineffective and therefore dangerous people.

Ganga: Gandhari represents the Unconscious Feminine..The suppressed intuitive, creative, nurturing side that not only blinds us but leaves the Masculine capacities of reason and decisiveness - inert and ineffective. The marriage of the Blind Feminine with an Inert Masculine unleashes destructive forces

beyond our control.

*Lesson to ponder: As Gandhari blindly emulates Dhritrashtra, are Women in Management too trying to become a 'Man in a Man's world'? At what cost?*

*'The Feminine' exists in every man and woman.*

*I ask you, what capacities have you lost by blinding your Feminine side?*

....

<p>'Thinking women' are not necessarily 'Conscious' women..The game on this Planet seems to be about POWER. And <b>Satyavati</b> thought she could reclaim her power by staking her womb, and its ability to bear a male child.</p>	<p>And my dear <b>Kunti!</b> She who was so self-less in her service of Durvasa that the great sage gave her a boon to father a child from any of the gods she invoked. Paradoxically, a woman so empowered by the gods themselves chose to surrender her power to the Men of her age and live within the iron-grip of Patriarchy. Afraid of what 'They' would say, a victim of man-made norms, she abandoned Karna, her first-born, son of Surya himself!</p>
<p>Alas, history has not been kind to Satyavati. She manipulated and traded her Feminity in return for Power and Prestige, resulting in Bhishma's terrible vow of celibacy. The one event that rippled disaster to many men and women alike... <b>Satyavati</b>, the 'thinking woman' proves as manipulative and power hungry as the 'thinking man'.</p>	<p>Kunti on the other hand spent all her life dutifully serving the throne of her husband and sought justice for her <u>sons</u>. At every moment of Truth, she gave up her needs and her power to MAN, be he Father, Husband or Sons. Mistakenly self-surrendering to the Masculine out of Fear instead of The Divine, out of Love. Its Victimhood perpetrates the Perpetrator.</p>

Look closely and Satyavati and Kunti are not too different. Both represent the **Misdirected Feminine**. In their distorted relationship with Power, they are equally polarised and uncentred. The giving up of one's power is no less dharmic as is the grabbing of power.

What does Satyavati teach you? Is there a Satyavati in you? How do you use or abuse your Feminine Power?

.....

What can we learn from Kunti? Never sacrifice out of Fear! Our duty is to choose Love, not Fear.

Have you had a Kunti dilemma...being forced to choose one person over another? What dictated your choice? Fear or Love?

And finally, Draupadi!

Emotional, feisty, wilful daughter of the Earth!  
As different from me, daughter of the Heavens!

Supremely Human, she was all Woman.

(Ranjini, full abhinaya of navarasa)

Yes, Man and Woman are equal, yet the Masculine and Feminine natures within are different!

At his moment of Truth, Arjuna stood on his chariot in the middle of a war-zone (battlefield) and loses his nerve, his mind and turns to the Divine, Lord Krishna, for WISDOM. "Tell me my Dharma! What is the right thing to DO!" he cries.

Draupadi too had her own singular moment of Truth. In a party-hall, in the middle of a war-game! With emasculated husbands on one side and lustful brothers-in-law on the other, she faced the ultimate humiliation.

(Disrobing scene..)

At her moment of Truth, she chose to SURRENDER. Unlike Kunti, not to Men, but to the Divine. Not from Fear, but from total Bhakti.. Faith and Love for the Divine. And she achieves a miracle.

While Arjun -the man- sought Wisdom and Understanding from Krishna through his mind, Draupadi - the woman - closed her mind and opened her heart, trusting a Higher Power to intervene and do Justice.

Arjuna had to understand the essence of the Gita. Draupadi LIVED it spontaneously.

Our Masculine Mind is very good at understanding and formulating. But it is the Feminine Heart and Body that has been given the capacity of surrender to a Higher Order.

**Draupadi represents the Redeemed Feminine** in each of us.

*As Managers and Leaders today, do you know when to let go and let God?*

.....

And so, we return to the beginning to understand the end.

I AM the Antar-ganga within each of you. The central axis that centers, balances and harmonises all dualities, the Kurukshetra within, into a Dharmakshetra.

**I represent the Divine Feminine**, the Supreme Shakti of Pure Consciousness that flows through and vivifies you. I AM the Great Mother from which your essence has emerged and is sustained and into which it will return.

I AM the bridge across the abyss that connects the Divine to the Human. No one reaches the Lord without Me.

So come, surrender your Masculine left-brain, mind, reasoning and strength to Me. Your Sun energy...and I will divinise it!

(Surya Namaskar)

Let me flow into your Feminine right-brain, heart, feelings and flexibility. Your Moon energy...and I will perfect it!

(Chandra Namaskar)

The Mahabharata started the age of Kali. As we have come full circle and lived through the distortions caused by the fractured psyche, It's time to become Whole again. The New Age will be birthed not by incomplete men and incomplete women, but by the Whole Man and the Whole Woman, each integrated around their centering axis, sourcing full-spectrum consciousness from their Antar-Ganga! Balanced, Harmonised, Complete! Gifting their Wholeness to each other and the world.

Anchor in Me, with a balanced Mind and an evolved Heart. The Whole Human can lift this Earth up to Heaven and bring down Heaven upon Earth

(Nilima, Priyadarshini and Ranjini chant beej mantras of awakened chakras)

“Om Lam Ma, Om Vam Ma, Om Ram Ma, Om Yam Ma, Om Ham Ma, Om Ksham Ma, Om Sri Ma.

Om Sri Ma, Om Ksham Ma, Om Ham Ma, Om Yam Ma, Om Ram Ma, Om Vam Ma, Om Lam Ma, Om Sri Ma”

Return to Me anytime through your harmonised breath

(Anulom-Vilom **Invite all to join**)

Chant after me and know the peace that you are ever whole, complete, purna!

“Om, Purnamadah, purnamidam,

Purnaata, purna mudachyate

Purnasya, purnamaadaaya

Purna mevaavashishyate

*That is perfect – this is perfect.*

*What comes from such perfection truly is perfect.*

*What remains after perfection from perfection is yet perfect.*

Om shanti shanti, shantih.

*May there be peace, and perfect peace!*

Tathastu. And so it is.

# Foundations for A Vision of Indian Management: Ten Salient Features of Indian Worldview that will constitute the Fundamental Impulse of Indian Management

Swami Bodhananda  
*Sambodh Foundation, New Delhi*

Just as American management as a collective body thinks of creating wealth for America and Japanese management body thinks of creating wealth for Japan, Indian management has to be a collective conscious and unconscious process to create wealth for India and enhance the standard of living of Indians.

Indian corporations based in India or run by Indians must have global reach and presence and must occupy the first 25 positions in the honour list of Fortune 500 Magazine. That is the spirit with which we are thinking of Indian management – both in terms of theory and practice. Management has to be based

on certain vision and worldview that people share. It is such vision that determines the psychology and social behaviour of people.

**Let me enumerate 10 salient features of Indian worldview that will constitute the fundamental impulse of Indian management.**

- (1) Indian worldview is basically pluralistic. It accepts different perspectives and narratives of reality. This is reflected in the Vedic dictum – Truth is one; but wise persons describe it differently.
- (2) Indians are oriented towards globalism though they are fiercely patriotic. They

situate themselves in the global context. This is reflected in the statement *vasudaiva kutumbakam* – world is one family.

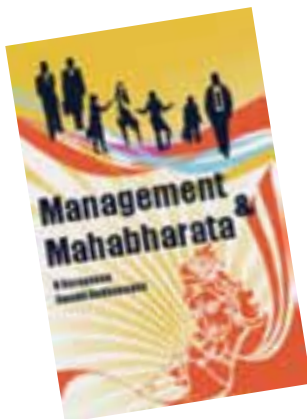
- (3) Indians regard the material world as an expression, an inalienable part, of the spiritual reality. Hence they have a healthy respect for nature and all living forms. This is represented in the Vedic statement that god exists with thousand heads, hands and mouths – *sahasrasirsha purusha...*
- (4) Indians consider the material world to be a constant flux and change and full of contradictions and paradoxes. Hence they welcome and appreciate change as a fundamental nature of reality. This is indicated by the Vedic ideal of *maya* and the dictum *charaiveti charaiveti*.
- (5) Indians consider that wealth and prosperity are created by a joint enterprise of give and take between gods and humans. This is known as the *yajna* culture that is indicated by the Gita statement *anena [yajnena] prasavishvadhvam esha vaha astu ishta kamaduk*.
- (6) Every human being is an infinite resource. Hence the greatest wealth is human resource – the power of consciousness and knowledge. This is indicated by the statement *tatvamasi*.
- (7) The Indian theory of karma says that every individual through his moment

to moment choices become responsible for his destiny. This shows the power and creativity of individual choices. Karma theory is based on the proposition that cause and effect are inseparable – *karyakaranayoh abheda*.

- (8) Indians believe that the world is to be enjoyed and it can be enjoyed only if the enjoyer develops dispassion and detachment. This is indicated by the Upanishadic statement *tena tyektena bhunjita*.
- (9) Indians believe that no individual can avoid work. What gives fulfillment is not result of work but the very process of working. Hence the Gita dictum: enjoy work without reacting to the fruits of work – *karmanyevadhikaraste ma phaleshu kadacana*.
- (10) Indians believe that moksha, individual growth, and *lokasamgraha*, common good are complementary pursuits. This is indicated by the Gita statement: *karmana eva hi samsiddhim astita janakadeyah; lokasamgraha evapi sampasyan karma kartum arhati*.

The challenge for modern Indian management is whether we can build a management theory based on these 10 principles that Indian managers can practice in the work place and boardrooms and compete with the rest of the world in creating wealth and prosperity for Indians.





**3D...  
IBA JOURNAL OF  
MANAGEMENT  
& LEADERSHIP**  
Vol:2 ■ Issue:1 ■ January-June 2010

### BOOK REVIEW

# Management and Mahabharata

**R. Narayanan and Swami Bodhananda**

**Ahmedabad Management Association and Sambodh Foundation, 2010**

**Reviewed by P.N. Subramanian**

*BRFML, Bodhananda Kendram, Kalady, Trivendram*

This book authored by R. Narayana and Swamin Bodhannada integrates lessons of Mahabharata for effective management in contemporary context. Narayanan is a veteran management practitioner, having led high performance teams at the Indian Space Research Organization and Tata Consultancy Services Limited. Swami Bodhananda is an accomplished teacher of Vedanta and meditation. He is the spiritual founder of several organizations in India and USA.

Several spiritual leaders and corporate executives are in continuous search for wise solutions to contemporary management and leadership challenges. Management and Mahabharata documents an ongoing conversation between scholars of Mahabharata and present day leaders, between tradition and modernity, between the enlightened one and the technocrat. It takes its inspiration from the great men and women of Mahabharata who lived life heroically, took risks in pursuing their

passions, fought wars to expand their kingdom and finally renounced everything.

Mahabharata is concerned with dharma, while modern management is concerned with choice. What would be the right choice that maximizes the stakeholders' value and the common good? Just as economics developed from being the science of wealth to that of welfare and then to be the science of choice, management has also progressed from dealing with assembly line production to shareholders' value and then to consumer satisfaction and stakeholders' value; from concern with raw material, to capital, to technology, to innovation and knowledge, and human assets. Ultimately management is concerned with human beings as choice makers. The complexity and variety in current society add to the difficulties in making wise choices. In this sense, we interpret the dharma of Mahabharata as a strategy that helps achieve maximum good to maximum people using minimum resources – an optimization

algorithm. That is where Mahabharata and modern management converge – both are concerned with choice, a ‘right choice’ that will promote human well-being in a given context and under given constraints.

Food habits, means of communication, travel, leisure and professions may have changed, but emotions such as anger, lust, ego, and envy have remained the same. Dhritarashtra divided the kingdom between Pandavas and Kauravas to avoid escalating violence, but it only intensified the jealousy and feud. Don’t we see echoes of it in the India-Pakistan partition? The Pandavas razed their part of the forest land to build a brand new empire. There was much collateral damage done to flora, fauna and tribals. Demigods and demons joined together to fight against such wanton destruction of the environment, but to no avail. Even five thousand years ago, resistance offered by environmentalists got crushed under the might of corporate development.

The book maps complex scenarios in Mahabharata to current social and economic problems. It advocates a critical evaluation of solutions found in a different era and a different context. Only talking about the past will result in a doomed future; not taking cognizance of past failures will result in wasted efforts. Several real-life corporate stories are juxtaposed with anecdotes in Mahabharata either for reusing an earlier strategy or discarding a strategy that is out of context. While not attempting to present a template for every possible conflict situation in the modern context, the book attempts a meta-model that can produce templates for every parameterized situation. Specifically, Transformation of a decadent society, Problem-solving in a complex setting, Continuous learning and Leadership imperatives are addressed in separate chapters. The hand drawn sketches at chapter separators add value to the running text.





**3D...  
IBA JOURNAL OF  
MANAGEMENT  
& LEADERSHIP**  
Vol:2 ■ Issue:1 ■ January-June 2010

### BOOK REVIEW

# Shunya Poems: My Experiments with Corporate Rhymes, Subhash Sharma IBA Publications, Bangalore, 2010

**Review by Neetu Jain**

*FORE School of Management, New Delhi*

'Shunya Poems: My Experiments with Corporate Rhymes' exemplifies a poetic approach that has evolved from the author's experiments and work. The author of the book is known in the management area for his unique approach to management education which is known as Poetic approach or Creative Meditative approach. This approach emerged out of author's experiment with the students and corporate people in various walks of management. By his enormous contribution, he is considered as a pioneer in this approach.

The book which is under review is divided into three parts. Part -I deals with author's experiment with corporate rhymes. His work and experiments on corporate rhymes has been cited in newspapers quite often. The author's list of experiments is never ending as his creativity knows no bounds.

Part- II incorporates 'Shunya Poems' which are twenty one in number. One of these poems "Jhansi se Jehan Tak" was recited by the author

during 'Lal Quila Kavi Sammelan' 2010, organized by Hindi Academy, Government of Delhi on the occasion of 60th Republic day. Therefore, the first para of the poem was included in the telecast of the Kavi -Sammelan by Doordarshan on DD1 on 26th Jan.

Part- III quotes corporate rhymes that became institutional songs. The 'Step by Step' poem, 'Matter and Anti matter' poem and Light in my heart poem 'became institutional song of Indus Business Academy (IBA), SVAYASA (Swami Vivekananda Yoga Anusandhana Samsthan) and WISDOM (Women's Institute for Studies in Development Oriented Management) respectively.

This book also presents some photographs of candle light experiment from the archives of IBA, Bangalore & Greater Noida and WISDOM. The book ends with beautiful review of the author's books by different scholars and publishers.



A human being has two parts of brain , Left brain and Right brain. Left brain is associated with logic, reasoning, analysis and rationality. On the contrary, right brain is responsible for emotions, art, philosophy and creativity. Most of the management gurus have contributed to the management field by their quantitative research work but the work of Dr. Sharma falls in the category of 'Creative- meditative research'. All the practitioners, researchers and academicians in management will not be bereft of good meditative work because of the thought provoking work of Dr. Sharma in the form of compilation of his thoughts and philosophy in the seven books available to the management fraternity. He applies his right brain to develop a systems or holistic approach to management in a systematic poetic manner.

It is a creative presentation of the author's earlier works and publications, in addition to many corporate rhymes finding ground. It truly reflects how management ideas have evolved poetically in the mind of the author over the last two decades. The book is very impressive and inspires the individuals to have a fresh perspective to view things, situations and events.

Dr. Sharma has been experimenting with the idea of corporate rhymes since the induction of first batch of WISDOM students in 1996. I can vouch for the same as I belong to the first batch of WISDOM , when he started his experiments with corporate rhymes. All the students were

given assignments to write a theme paper on drawing management principles and lessons from any poem. Initially we were hesitant to adopt the idea but gradually as we proceeded to work on it, we found it quite refreshing and innovative to relate a poem to management concepts taught in the class as it gave us an opportunity to use our right brain and relate to our own selves and explore our hidden potential. Later on we adopted the author's song " There is light in my heart....." as WISDOM song. We also got an opportunity to undergo 'Candle light experiment' which in a way was a means to expand our mental horizons by varied creative interpretations. It was an experiment to reflect on various issues which a manager may confront in his / her day to day life. We therefore, internalized that the key to success lies within our own self and the importance of teaching through corporate rhymes.

The various poems in the book portrays the author's in-depth understanding of various social, cultural, political and ethical issues. The book is well structured, narrated in lucid style and simple language and insightfully organized , therefore, keeping the reader glued throughout. It makes a significant contribution towards improved understanding of concepts of Indian management. The book's style of presenting experiments with poetic expression and poems widens the scope of its readership from management community to most people who have interest in this area.



**Shunya Poems: My Experiments with  
Corporate Rhymes, Subhash Sharma  
IBA Publications, Bangalore, 2010**

**Review by Pratima Verma**

*Department of Business Administration, The Oxford College of Engineering, Bangalore*

“Pulkit hota manav ka tan man” is what exactly happens when you read Prof Sharma’s poems. Corporate honchos are busy talking about meltdown, higher productivity and everything which leads to stress, for them Shunya poems is breeze of fresh air. It has become need of the hour to follow some ‘Meditation-school of thought’ to remain fit. Cliché, it may appear but it has been observed that, knowledge workers follow a vicious circle of knowledge; as a result they get stressed, at the same time stressed out, motivated and enlightened by the same.

This book comprises of sacred number 21. All poems are unique in their own way. Author has captured all positive colours of life. Few interesting mantras which are answer to many unanswered questions of corporate world.

The first poem itself is enough to thrill you with the idea of “Creation from Shunya”. This poem as well as ‘In the Beginning, There was a Bindu’ and ‘A Start from Lota’ give enough inspirational dosage to budding entrepreneurs.

Author has to some extent tried to clear of his debt towards motherland through his poem, “Jhansi se Jahan Tak”, at the same time gave a message that usually NRI’s give their extra bit as they leave everything back to realize their dreams.

SAARC nations have been trying their best to have their say and identity in international forum, they will be surely delighted to know that Dr. Sharma through his poem “Ek Nai vani” has introduced the idea of “Saarcistani”, a word which imbibes unity, presents seven nations as one.

“Shunya Poems” create its own niche due to one more reason; today’s management gurus are busy advocating to work on different skills to be successful, but only few are suggesting to explore our inner-self, Indian ethos and master it for long-term and sustained growth, on the contrary Dr. Sharma has taken care of the same through his poems, ‘Ek naya Raga’, ‘Uski Or’, ‘Ek Aumkara’ & ‘Tu Hai Kaun’.

It has been stated by behavioral scientist that successful managers are those who chip in their maximum time in networking, ‘Tum Ho Kaise’ poem deals with the same by providing a healing touch to inter-personal relationships.

Author has depicted his trademark of setting self-explanatory abbreviations, through poem, ‘M.B.A.’-Mind Balancing Attitude, ‘GOD: Great Order & Disorder’. He has bestowed management as highest form of karma by addressing it as ‘Udyog’.

Your Heart will surely feel ‘Garden Garden’ after reading this small awesome book.



**Shunya Poems: My Experiments with  
Corporate Rhymes, Subhash Sharma  
IBA Publications, Bangalore, 2010**

**Review by Farah Naqvi**

*Indus Business Academy, Greater Noida*

*“From the Shunya we emerge, in the Shunya we merge Evolution and involution are this world’s final urge”*

Prof. Subhash Sharma - Creation from Shunya (1993), p. 20

Shunya - the Sanskrit word denotes a metaphysical reality. It is on account of Shunya that everything becomes possible. Sometimes represented as the dot the centre of the energy vortex, it also incorporates the idea of zero. It is nothing yet it is everything. It is called Shunya meaning absolute void, and bindu, the seed, the source of all energy.

Shunya poems can be seen as the reflections of an author who has in a unique way an experience of association with many ‘Creations from Shunya’, particularly in the management education field in India. These institutions are now well known at the regional, national and international levels. Educated in India and USA, Dr Subhash Sharma holds PhD from the University of Southern California, Los Angeles and Post Graduate Diploma in Management from Indian Institute of Management, Ahmadabad with earlier background in science. His significant academic contributions towards a creative synthesis of Western and Eastern concepts in management and social thought have received wide attention and acknowledgement by many reputed scholars.

If you have come across a small book with a very attractive black cover page depicting the big bang, and the first poem as “Shunya se Srishti ka Sarjan” ; you have probably laid your hands on the most recent book by the author Prof. Subhash Sharma titled “Shunya Poems: My experiment with Corporate

Rhymes” which presents new ideas and mantras in management and social thought in the form of collection of 21 poems. It is not often that one comes across something that is so insightful that meets perfectly the adage of ‘small is beautiful’. This book offers a collection of poems that are characterized by easy insight into simple human relations, gentle irony and a realistic view of the world in which we live. In his work he expresses his thoughts, vision and comments over the contemporary society and state, but what gives you pleasure reading this is its simple and easy way of narrating the thoughts that are surprisingly refreshing and enjoyable though they are about simple and very ordinary country people and their commonplace problems and wishes.

Influence of a number of sources can be seen in his poetry. These include the spiritual as well as the scientific traditions and their possible merger. The poet beckons current reality and then transforms it to tomorrow’s dream-dawn by way of his beautiful expression. The book is a wonderful rendition of word play and peaceful meditations. None of the poems are more than a single page long, which makes them easy to read. Shared below is one of my favorite poems – ‘I am a free verse’ which is a wonderful treat as it leaves the reader with a feeling of self empowerment and strength that one can shape the destiny as he/she wants; somewhat describing the characteristics of individuals having an internal locus of control, emphasizing the need to have faith in oneself. It also enthuse the reader with a positive feeling of a liberated self somewhat akin to Vivekananda message in his last Para of his song titled- “The song of the free”(quoted below: Table 1).



theory a sentient force of will influenced by human drive and yet operating well below the perceptual conscious mind. For Freud, the unconscious is the storehouse of instinctual desires, needs, and psychic actions. One of the deep hidden desire of the author to unite people with a common thread, probably operating at his unconscious level can be seen manifested in different poems shared in this book. For instance:

- (1) The poem 'Ek nai vani' (table 2) will ignite the readers heart with the feeling of universal unity.
- (2) The author gives a new raga to sing in another poem where he writes:

"Boli bharat desh ki janta  
Raam Allah god Ananta" 2.4-1  
Yehi to hai naya 'Raga Ananta'  
Raam Allah god Ananta" 2. 4-8

This poem is a powerful act of conscience that explores the fragile yet common soul of all humanity.

- (3) The following poem gives the message for racism in a very powerful yet implicit way:

"White is black and black is white  
They are the two forms of the same light" 2.20-6

- (4) People who create differences on the basis of religion/caste must read this beautiful poem that starts with;

"Sab Dharmon ka ek hi taraf ishara hai  
Ram bhi hamra aur Rahim bhi hamara hai" 2.5-1

The above was just a glimpse of one aspect of the author relating to "We are One" that I couldn't resist sharing. This small book will take you on a journey about life, people, relationships, self reflection, capitalism, liberation, a state of consciousness, positive energy and imagination. After all bustle of your active life you can really find this book a source of refreshment yet leaving you with thoughts to ponder. It is heartening to note that many of the author's corporate rhymes have become institutional songs which are covered in the Part III of this book. 'Step by step'- the song of success has been adopted by the students of

IBA Greater Noida and Bangalore. The song of creativity, optimism and wisdom titled 'Light in my Heart' has been adopted by the students of WISDOM Banasthali Vidyapith. The song of leadership 'Matter and anti matter' is the song adopted by students of SVAYASA, Bangalore. One striking point to notice is that each poem ends with three symbols –a circle, a triangle and a square that gives a mystical effect which has many connotations including the earth, universe and the cosmic consciousness.

It is said that inside each human being there is a poet. The poet in Prof. Sharma has attempted to touch upon the loftiest heights of truth and has tried to create from his visualizations a positive movement in the world. He has not tried to seek out something which is extreme or exotic yet leaves the readers with thoughts that will last. I can't resist quoting these few lines from this book that will give you a picture of the heart of the poet in him (somewhat answering the question 'Who am I' which was a part of the exercise that I did as a psychology student), describing him best and rest I leave it to you to be mesmerized by the whole range of small poems in this book aptly titled Shunya Poems.

"Na manas ,na budhi na ahankara  
Mai to hoon sirf ek aumkara 2.6-1  
Behti hai jaise ganga ki dhara  
Mai to hoon sirf ek aumkara 2.6-2  
Choo loon mai dharti choo loon kinara  
Mai to hoon sirf ek aumkara 2.6-3  
Ek aumkara ek aumkara  
Mai to hoon sirf ek aumkara" ...2.6-4

## References:

- Subhash Sharma(1993), Creation from Shunya, Anand Press, Anand, Gujarat.
- **Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.** (accessed on 11th May'2010).
- [http://www.poetseers.org/the\\_poetseers/vivekananda/vivekanandas\\_poetry/the\\_song\\_of\\_the\\_free](http://www.poetseers.org/the_poetseers/vivekananda/vivekanandas_poetry/the_song_of_the_free) (accessed on 11th May'2010).
- <http://www.wwedsubhashsharma.com/> (accessed on 11th May'2010).
- <http://www.shunyacreations.com/> (accessed on 11th May'2010).

# Shunya Poems: My Experiments with Corporate Rhymes, Subhash Sharma IBA Publications, Bangalore, 2010

**Review by Gauri Anand**

*Research (Ph.D.) Scholar, WISDOM Banasthali University, Banasthali*

As I read the Shunya Poems, I feel the magic of the 'corporate rhymes' flowing through me like the flow of water. These poems represent the flow of ideas and experience of Prof. Subhash Sharma, who is an acknowledged Management Guru, Corporate Poet, Creative Thinker & Writer and Researcher and above all 'WISDOM Guru' not only for students of WISDOM but also for others, whom he nurtures and provides direction.

This book is divided into three parts

Part -1 emphasizes upon 'my experiments with corporate rhymes.'

Part-2 emphasizes upon 'Shunya Poems' and

Part-3 emphasizes upon 'Corporate rhymes that became institutional Songs'

**Part-1** elucidates Prof. Sharma's decades experiences with students and corporate testing and developing the unique methodology of Corporate Rhymes to teach Management, Leadership and Self-development concepts.

**Part-2** presents Shunya Poems. These are the blend of thoughts and vision. Author has finely defined and focused his views for a new divine society in the form of 'sacro-civic' society which is free from racism, religion wars and ism wars.

The Poems can be sub-divided into following categories:

1. About a New Religion
2. About MBA Concepts
3. About boundary-less Nations
4. About Consciousness
5. About Balance in Cosmos

A brief discussion on these themes is presented below:

## **1. About a New Religion**

A new definition of religion is given via *Ek Naya*

*Raag* ( p.23) and *Uski aur* (p.24). In these poems poet has given a new approach for religion. Dharm is not only about rituals and customs, it is about love and humanity. Religion is like music, as music remains same for all the audience. It is like a flow in which every body is engrossed. As Poet has already stated RAGA as Ram, Allah, God and Ananta therefore the new definition for religion is Infinity, it is *ananta*. He has also mentions the crux of Veda in his poem *Uski Aur*. 'A New Consciousness is arriving' (p.42) states 'God is one'. Transcending all ideologies, books and all castes and religions we should understand that God is LCD: Love, Compassion and Devotion (p.42). In the poem 'I am a new religion' (p.43) poet further makes us understand about the concept of 'new religion'. It is **Being a Higher Being** (p.43) who is full of Love, Compassion and Devotion (LCD). With his poem we understand the crux that the main purpose of religion is to evolve internally to this level.

## **2. About MBA Concepts**

In his three poems i.e. Hello Hello O Beauty (p.32), *Tum ho Kaise* (p.30) and "A Start from Lota" (p.47) poet provides new insights to the concepts of Capitalism, Inter Personal Relationship and Leadership. Poet has clearly defined the magic of beauty. and linked it with capitalism. How every one is attracted towards beauty and then they forgets "All that glitters is not gold".

In the poem *Tum ho Kaise* (p.30) effect of interpersonal relationship is on human society is presented through the idea of healing touch. When we have a transformative relationship with people, we don't harm them. Poet wants to tell us that if we have symbiotic relationship with nature then only we can save it. Using nature as a metaphor for being, Prof. Sharma has clearly stated the role of Interpersonal Relationship and



its value in not only short term perspective but also in the long term perspective.

"A Start from Lota" (p.47) depicts the leadership qualities of a person who can become the future of nation and can become an example for the nation and the new generation.

### 3. About Boundary less Nations

This category includes three poems i.e. "Ek Nayi Vani" (p. 21), "Black is White" (p.46) and "GOD: Great Order and Disorder" (p. 41). With his poems he has awakened the masses that we should not discriminate on the basis of caste, creed, religion or color. We all are branches of the same tree. The base is same.

For the people living in the SAARC nations, he provides us a vision of 'United Saarcistan' (US) through his poem, Ek Nayi Vani (p. 21).

### 4. About Consciousness

This category includes seven poems i.e. "Jhansi se Jehan tak" (p. 18), "Ek Aumkara" (p.26), "Tu hai Kaun" (p. 28), "I am happy you are happy" (p. 38), "My heart is feeling garden garden" (p. 39), "When thousands kites fly"(p. 40), "I am a free verse" (p.44).

In this category poems relate to the idea of expansion of consciousness. Through the expansion of consciousness human beings can understand that GOD is 'Truth within' and its expression through love and wisdom can improve self as well as human conditions of living. When we are happy, mind, heart and the whole universe starts radiating positive energy which leads to spiritual level and from it to oneness, Oneness towards *Prakriti*.

According to *Samkhya Cosmology*, after attaining the spiritual level mind becomes cosmic mind and the whole universe becomes one body which is regulated by *Prakriti* which is cosmic consciousness. Here poet through his poems defines expansion of consciousness as cosmic consciousness and extension of cosmic consciousness is Advait which he states in the form of his poem "Tu hai Kaun" (p.28). When I go through this poem I am reminded of famous words by Shankaracharya on Advaitism as

"I am neither the mind nor the body, nor am I the organs, I am Existence Knowledge Bliss Absolute, I am He, I am He." (Shakracharya, *Nirvana Shaktam*).

### 5. About Balance in Cosmos

This category includes four poems i.e., "Shristi" (p. 16), "Yeh kis kavi ki kavita"(p.34), "MBA" (Mind Balancing Attitude, p. 36) and "In the Beginning" (p.45).

In this category poet elaborates '*Nirman of Shristi*' (*Creation of World*) through a Bindu. Bindu is the infinite energy which created the whole 'Shristi (universe). Though it was created from the same origin but an imbalance has occurred in *Prakriti*, the nature. Therefore to create balance Yoga is required. Yoga is balance. It is balance of mind, body, emotions, knowledge, experiences etc...

### Part 3 emphasizes upon 'Corporate Rhymes that became Institutional Songs'

Prof. Sharma's Corporate Rhymes have been adopted as institutional songs. These rhymes are not only motivational and leadership songs but also very inspirational. "Step by Step" (p.51) is adopted by students of Indus Business Academy, Bangalore and Greater Noida as their Institutional Song. "Light in My Heart" (p.53) is adopted by students of WISDOM, Banasthali, Rajasthan and "Matter and Anti Matter" (p.52) by Msc (Yoga and Management) students of SVYASA (Swami Vivekananda Yoga Annusandhana Samsthana) University, Bangalore.

Through 'Step-by-Step' process I discover 'Light in My Heart' and use this awareness and awakening to creatively deal with day to day problems, existential contradictions and paradoxes in day to day life manifesting in the form of 'Matter and Anti-matter, Actions and Reactions'. Thereby I hope to achieve success in my journey from 'Jhansi se Jehan tak'.

In conclusion, I find Shunya Poems as an inspirational book not only for the MBA students but also for the working professionals and general readers. In fact it is for all those who are interested in expanding their mental horizons through creative poetic insights. In essence it is a book of Reflections for Reflections.



# Shunya Poems: My Experiments with Corporate Rhymes, Subhash Sharma

IBA Publications, Bangalore, 2010

**Review by Shruti Naik**

*Indus Business Academy, Bangalore*

Dr Subhash Sharma's book titled "Shunya Poems, My Experiments with Corporate Rhymes" is versatile, vivacious and exuberant for readers of all ages. It is highly motivating and inspiring for all those struggling men, women youngsters for enduring hardships and their day-to-day problems. It is a pleasure for all age groups to read and feel relaxed and laidback. On a serious note, it has very deep meaning and can be practically applied in real life.

These poems can be very good learning sessions for toddlers as they will not only enjoy the rhyming poems with good composition given by Dr Sharma in a few poems, but also realise the deep impact and significance of these poems in their lives as they grow up. These poems can be compared to Francis Bacon's essays which have teachings of great principles and moral values in our lives. The poem "GOD" stresses on truth, dharma and God which are all synonyms according to the author. Francis Bacon also speaks on similar lines in his essay on truth. These poems can also be compared to certain poems written by William Wordsworth. "My Heart is Feeling Garden Garden" is the best example. This perspective of the poems is from English literature point of view.

Some poems also, in a way, propound the theory of existentialism by Jean Paul Sartre. For example, "Tu Hai Kaun", "Ek Omkara", "I am a Free Verse" and "I am a New Religion" which implies "collectivism" rather than "individualism". "I am a Free Verse" also implies the teachings of Brahmarshi Patriji.

Some of these poems also may prove very effective for budding entrepreneurs as the future in India lies in creating and building confidence in the minds of entrepreneurs. So these poems will prove to be handy. Even Abdul Kalam had a vision of young Indians to explore in the areas of entrepreneurship as our country needs more leaders in order to become a developed nation.

In many of his poems like "Ek Omkara", "Tum Ho Kaise", "When Thousand Kites Fly" and "I am a Free Verse", there is a constant use of word 'tara', 'star'. This shows that the author believes in constant illumination of the 'heart', 'soul' and the 'mind'. This also shows the never-die attitude or never-give-up attitude of the author which the readers need to grasp and always apply throughout their lives. Most of his poems like "Ek Nayi Vaani", "Ek Nayi Raaga", "Uski Aur", "A New Consciousness is Arriving", "Black is White" and "I am a New Religion" implies how deeply the author is troubled due to various disturbances in India due to caste and religious differences and outside India due to racial discrimination. Through these poems, the author wants to convey a message of world peace.

Some of the poems like "A Start from Lota", "Step by Step", "Matter and Antimatter", "Light in My Heart", etc imply lot of inspiration and motivation to the management students to move ahead in life, make path breaking innovations and become great leaders having a deep sense of compassion and sustainable development.

Poems like "Tum Ho Kaise" has very powerful metaphorical phrases like 'barsey', 'bole', 'bahti', 'chamke' etc. which imply execution of plans and continuous action which should be the essence of all the readers' lives throughout.

To conclude, poems like "I am Happy, You are Happy" indicate a new window of management just like the 'Johari window' where not only humans but nature is also a part of the matrix creating spiritual synergy. Also, poems like "When Thousand Kites Fly" implies the author's noble intention of the impact which thousands of his readers will have after reading this poem in order to not only become creative but also to feel liberated and to reach the zenith of success which he/she has planned to carve for himself in his journey of life.

**Shunya Poems: My Experiments with  
Corporate Rhymes, Subhash Sharma  
IBA Publications, Bangalore, 2010**

**Review by Pallavi Sharda Garg**  
*Indus Business Academy, Greater Noida*

Shunya - the starting of everything. To unravel the mystery I read the book shunya poems. The poems are very different from the ones which I had read earlier. I am a person who has a technical bent of mind (owing to my educational qualifications i.e MCA) but on reading the poems I felt as if they are some or the other way reflection of my life and giving me direction. Today the world needs an inspirational and motivational guru and the poet Dr.Subhash Sharma has achieved the same through his poems. The poet has written the poems keeping in mind the present state of society. The poems act like a mirror to the world and gives inspiration to the readers to think about themselves, think about developing a beautiful world. The USP of the poems is the language: Simple and Easily Understandable. The poems are written in very simple language and one is able to learn from them easily.

Though all the poems are very inspiring and motivating but the poem which I liked most is "Ek Aumkara" . While going through the contents the title instantly caught my attention and I immediately opened the poem. 'Aumkara' the name of god. The poem reflects

my aspirations, my dreams, and my aim in life. It gives me a vision to start my journey to achieve excellence. . It gives me the strength to go ahead to accomplish my goals.

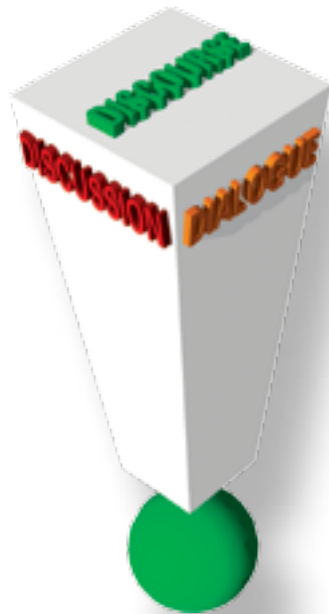
The other poem which I liked is "Ek Nai Vani". This poem is very relevant in today's time when the politicians are fighting in the name of religion. The poem is a revolution in itself asking the people to be united. The poem is not limiting itself to the nation but urges the SAARC nations( developing) nations to work together for the betterment of the human race.

Also the poem "Light in my heart" which has been taken as WISDOM song is very beautiful. It lifts one's mood. There is flavor of freshness and youth in this poem.

The poems act as stimulant; they stimulate one's mind and soul. They simulate a person to stand up, with all the energy and start working to achieve his goal. Each poem teaches us a different lesson be it "A Start From Lota", "MBA (Mind Balancing Attitude)", or "Step by Step". To be true, all poems from this book inspire me in varying forms.







## **3D... IBA Journal of Management & Leadership**



# INDUS BUSINESS ACADEMY

## **Bangalore Campus**

Lakshmipura, Thataguni Post, Kanakapura Main Road  
Bangalore - 560 062. India

- Ph: +91-80-2608 3764 / 770 / 709 • Fax: +91-80-2608 3708 / 717
- e-mail: [ibajournal@iba.ac.in](mailto:ibajournal@iba.ac.in)
- [www.iba.ac.in](http://www.iba.ac.in)