

Indian Knowledge Systems in Management Practices: A Holistic Approach to Organizational Excellence

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Introduction:

India occupies a unique position in the annals of civilization and history. One of the oldest civilizations in the world, the Indian civilization has a strong tradition of science and technology for which our culture is always unique by nature. The history of Ancient India means it was a land of sages and seers as well as a land of scholars and scientists as well as the store house of knowledge and wisdom. Recent research has proved that we were so advanced in the field of science and technology in the field of making the best steel in the world. India was substantially contributing to the field of science and technology since the centuries long before the introduction of modern laboratories. Many theories, concepts and techniques were discovered by the ancient Indians to the world civilization. It has aptly marked and strengthened the fundamentals of modern science and technology to the external world. Since, some of these ground breaking contributions have been acknowledged by the western world, whereas some facts are still in the process of exploration or unknown to the world civilization. It has a glorious past, rich cultural heritage, a splendid legacy of scientific ideas and indigenous technology.

Keywords: Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS), Management Practices, Yoga, Ayurveda, Vedic Philosophy, Arthashastra, Ethical Leadership, Organizational Culture, Employee Engagement, Sustainability, Holistic Management.

Reference of Management Concepts in Ancient India:

The Indian Sanskrit writing is rich by various subjects. They range from literature, Chemistry, Law, Astrology, Space Science, Medicine, Surgery, Engineering, and Mathematics. The western Management concepts have arisen after Industrial Revolution, i.e. after 18th century; whereas many management concepts are traced back to Bhagwat Geeta, which is about 5000 years back. Even some concepts are found in Chandogya Upanishad and Tatyary Upanishad, of which the period goes still back. The Tirukkural written by Tiruvalluvar also deals with many management

theories and systems. Acharya Chanakya (Vishnugupta or also Kautilya) has written an epitome called as “The Arthashastra”, which as per the title, does not deal with only Economics, but Finance, Political Science, Law, Administration and Management. It is a landmark work translated in many languages of the world; and what he has stipulated is much before all the Economists like Marshall, Pigu, Ricardo and so on. Even his concepts as well as the theories propagated by Tiruvalluvar about the management are outstanding and original, which later many Western Management thinkers like Mayo, Peter Drucker etc. have written. Ancient Indian Sanskrit literature (Writings) has touched almost all aspects of Management and Administration. It is said that a nation can win a war only if its army is guided by an efficient leader. In the same way, an organization can run smoothly if its leaders are competent, humane and empathizing with their team members.

Modern management envisages this and a good leader precisely does this. A manager must control his mind completely. He should focus on his objectives and his mind should remain unwavering, so that he achieves for what he is aiming. One who has acquired knowledge becomes one who has conquered himself. Only those who have equipped themselves well with the knowledge of the world will be in full control of their own self. Only such persons will be able to conquer the six senses, which distort the intellect and reason when not well controlled. Chanakya does not feel the need to enjoin the student, to urge the student who has acquired the right type of worldly knowledge through humbly serving the teacher, to control himself totally. He knew that the guru-sisya (teacher-student) learning process is such that a manager who, becomes knowledgeable in this manner automatically conquers his own self. This requirement is applicable even more to the CEO positions, because a Chief Executive Officer is in such a leadership position that he can either make or mar the enterprise. This total control of oneself is necessary in a professional manage for various reasons.

Firstly, he has to act invariably in the long-term interest of the organisation he serves. The temptations to take a short-term view of what is good for the organisation are many and strong. Such actions that are in the long-term interest are generally not perceived to be so by many stakeholders. Convincing them within reasonable limits of transparency and democracy is a task that strains all aspects of self-control by the CEO. Secondly, he has to strongly resist the temptations to act in that kind of self-interest, which is not necessarily in the best interest of the organisation. Even within the framework of ethically sound management, the CEO can indulge in the acts of omissions and commissions. These promote his self-interest at the expense of the enterprise. These actions may be in terms of earning money or privileges, or in terms of retaining or acquiring power, prestige etc. Thirdly, the CEO has to ensure that he does not succumb to undue pressure from peers, juniors (employee unions), and seniors (board members, political heavy weights) towards taking decisions detrimental to the long-term interests of the organisation. Fourthly, the temptation to do well for the organization at the cost of the society or the nation in general, and to the detriment of the vulnerable stakeholders in particular, is one of

the most difficult to avoid. Such measures, especially those that are at the cost of the society, often get approved by those concerned with such decisions in an enterprise, especially if these are not patently. Lastly, in the tug of war between forces for and against the interest of the organisation, situations can arise where the CEO cannot accept a decision forced upon him against his firm conviction. The only professional alternative is to quit. One must be prepared to face the consequences. Such preparedness comes only through total self-control. One in whom there is truthfulness and virtue, inoffensiveness, restraint, and self-mastery, who is free from defilements and wise, he is truly called an elder (Manager).

Reference of Managerial Skills in Arthashastra of Chanakya:

Kautilya Chanakya, also known as Vishnugupta and Kautilya. He was the leadership guru par excellence, who lived in 3rd century BC. His book, Kautilya's Arthashastra has 6000 sutras which have been classified into 15 books, 150 chapters and 180 topics by Chanakya himself. He has explained about the King, the Minister, the Country, the Fortified City, the Treasury, the Army and the Ally are the constituent elements of the State. A strong foundation is the key to any successful business. Your vision, your commitment, your purpose - all form the basis for an organization. They are the all important pillars, the most essential part of any building. In his ground breaking

1. Swami or Leader: all great organizations have great leaders. The leader is the visionary, the captain, the man who guides the organization. In today's corporate world we call him the director, CEO, etc. Without him we will lose direction.
2. Amatya or Manager: is the person who runs the show - the second-in-command of an organization. He is also the person whom you can depend upon in the absence of the leader. He is the man who is always in action. An extra ordinary leader and an efficient manager together bring into existence a remarkable organization.
3. Janapada or you market: No business can exist without its market capitalization. It is the area of 'your operation'. The place from where you get your revenue and cash flow. You basically dominate this territory and would like to keep your monopoly in this segment.
4. Durg or head office: Need a control tower - a place from where all planning and strategies are made. It's from here that your central administrative work is done. It's the nucleus and the center of any organization.
5. Kosha or Finance: Finance is an extremely important resource. It is the backbone of any business. A strong and well-managed treasury is the heart of any organization. Your treasury is also your financial hub.
6. Dandu or team: When we go to war, we need a well-equipped and trained army. The army consists of your team members. Those who are ready to fight for the organization. The salesmen, the accountant, the driver, the peon - all of them add to your team.
7. Mitra (Friend/Consultant): In life you should have a friend who is just like you. Being, in the same boat, he can identify with you and stay close. He is the one whom you can depend upon when problems arise. After all, a friend in need is a friend in deed.

Modern Management in the Context of Bhagabat Geeta:

Bhagavad Gita a book of 700 verses is the most widely read Hindu religious text. It was possibly composed around 500-300 bc and it took its present form around 300 ad. It is a part of the wider epic Mahabharata. The context is that at a war – the Mahabharata. Arjuna, the warrior, refuses to fight the righteous war, on the plea that it would result in numerous death including those at elders, revered ones and relatives and hence it is even better to sacrifice legitimate claims and avoid the sin.

Management is a process that involves integrating and coordinating the work of others so that the goals of an organization are achieved efficiently and effectively. Management is an interdisciplinary field with contributions from various fields such as psychology, social psychology, sociology, anthropology, political science, economics and finance .modern management theory has changed the way of managers look at their jobs. Advancements in management theory and practice have enabled managers and managerial systems to evolve. In this lesson, we will look at modern management theories.

Conclusions:

This paper merely provides a sample of what one can indeed look for in the ancient Indian texts associated to the concept of Management. A vast repository of knowledge contained in these texts can provide valuable insights to several of the problems that we face today in our society. The choice is ours to make use of this. In our anxiety to cull out management thoughts from the literature we must not lose sight of the fact that these texts are meant for a much larger purpose of shaping the thinking of the society on multiple aspects such as spirituality, religious practices, inculcating high thinking and setting aspirations for lofty goals of moksha. With such an overall understanding, we will gain more even when we cull out some useful perspectives in the domain of management.

From the above discussions we conclude that, much of modern management principles existing today can be derived from the body of knowledge of the ancient Indian scriptures. Through the wisdoms of Kautilya's Arthashastra we can not only promote a more ethical and responsible leadership on an individual or institutional level but also move towards the direction of restoring harmony among the Organisations towards establishing a sustainable business through spiritual congruence.

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