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# Social Development: Inside-out approach in Indian ancient wisdom (Learning for Business Organizations)

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## ABSTRACT

Human development is one of the fundamental quests of all branches of social sciences. Economics and management are not exceptions to this. In the evolution of business management thoughts, attention has moved upward from profit maximization to value maximization. Focus has also shifted from shareholder returns to customer satisfaction. Moving ahead in this direction, now business community and academia are equivocal about society as a whole to be of concern to corporate world. One of the inherent assumptions behind this societal perspective is that human development involves both individual development and social development. Present study is aimed to establish the linkage between individual development and social development in the domain of business management. Along with shareholders and customers, employees, government and society have been considered as stakeholder to the business organizations. Systems approach in management has brought this stakeholders perspective prominent in this field. As a result corporate social responsibilities have gained attention and prominence in literature of economics and management. Social development is integral part of corporate social responsibility. In Indian psycho-philosophic literature 'Loksangrah' as a philosophical construct falls parallel to the notion of social development and sharing of wealth. It is discussed as a main conceptual anchor in the present study. This study is also aimed to find out the world view maintained in Indian scripture and it is hypothesized that world view is an antecedent of human life preferences and human action. As a conclusion author links individual 'world view' and 'self concept' for practicing the 'loksangrah' i.e. social development by the business organizations.

In the field of management amongst academicians and practitioners there is a growing concern towards systems approach. Systems approach is distinct from traditional hypothetico-deductive based view, the main theme in analytical approach of research. Analytical approach is largely based on concept of *ceteris paribus*; the study of interplay of certain variable/s taking all other variables as constant. In this approach objectivity is a prerequisite of reality.

In the later years of nineteenth century with due emphasis on objectivity of reality, Frenchman Emile Durkhiem (1858-1917) studied social science as social facts and collective representation. This

became the most immediate source of development of functionalism which later expressed itself as system approach. Systems approach accepts, acknowledge and consider the dynamic interplay of variables. This understanding forms the basis of cybernetic model in

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many fields, including management. On the basis of feed-back response perspective closed and open systems are identified and studied. Business theorists are usually interested in open system which makes the positive feedback possible. Such systems have the ability to amplify to grow (or shrink) and that has the ability to learn. Mayurman (1963) called these, the second cybernetics.

Dauman and Hargreaves (1975) identified seven key factors or social trends that were important to business system. These factors include increasing rate of change, the technological era, new form of government, attitude towards work and leisure, environmental awareness, quality of life and shrinking world. These factors not only increase the interdependence among various parts of a business but also interdependence between industry and rest of the society. Systematic study of the effects of environmental variables on the organizational functioning has taken precedence in management research after application of cybernetic models in this field. As a result stakeholder perspective got prominence in study and practice of organizational functional excellence. Norton and Kaplan operationalized this view in their balanced scorecard approaches ([http://www.bambooweb.com/articles/b/a/Balanced\\_Scorecard.htm](http://www.bambooweb.com/articles/b/a/Balanced_Scorecard.htm)). In this model they talked about internal and external customer satisfaction. They proposed the role of business towards state, society at large and environment for achievement of corporate functional excellence.

Corporate are advised to gain social legitimacy by taking proactive steps for social cause by becoming force of good (Ghosal 2004). In the strategic philanthropic approach business organizations are advised to take up such projects which can serve the purpose of society and fulfill the need of the company at same time (Porter and Kramer 2002). Corporate social responsibility has largely been considered as a social obligation for business success. The International Organization for Standardization, known as ISO, strategic advisory group on CSR describes it as "a balanced approach for organizations to address economic, social and environmental issue in a way which help human, community and environment. Black and Hartel describes five capabilities of socially responsible companies namely social responsiveness, Public relations, firm's orientation towards its social

environment They are stakeholder engagement, value-attuned public relations, dialogue, ethical business behaviour and accountability. Simmons (2004) in his article proposes the philosophy, centers on the concept of "the responsible organization" with a stakeholder systems model of corporate governance offered as the means of Operationalizing socially responsible corporate governance.

Schwartz and Carroll propose the three domain approach of corporate social responsibility and accept philanthropy as inevitable part of corporate social responsibility. Philanthropy as a school of thought was established by Dessau in eighteenth century (Encyclopedia Britanica, 9; 365). John Bernhard took this concept in education to inculcate humanitarian worldview amongst students.

Most of the literature on social responsibility of corporations covers behavioral and attitudinal aspects of individual in the form of collective efforts of them in business organizations. Whereas Indian ancient wisdom provide a holistic vision of social development in the form of *Loksangrah*. It is not on behavioral plane but find its essence from very core of human existence. This is based on the Vedic conception of unity of existence and inseparability of existence at the level of supreme consciousness. This study is aimed to trace out such links of inherent world view in Indian scripture and social development.

Onion model of individual self suggests the two other layers beyond behavioral and attitudinal layers namely believes and values. Believes include basic assumption about the world and how it actually works. Values are basic assumption about which ideals are desirables or worth striving for. Values represent preferences for ultimate end state. On the basis of above references one can conclude that values are what people actually hold whether consciously or otherwise. Resonance effect of congruent positive values of individuals make the foundation of organizational values and insure the sustenance of such culture which incorporate the desired positive values.

Values are likely to be represented in organizational policies and procedures. Responsibility towards society is also result of certain values the members of an organization hold. There is need of

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taking issue of corporate social responsibility issue beyond the outer layers (pertaining to behavior and attitude) to understand the link of this issue with inner self of individual.

Indian psychological and philosophical view of self provides an antecedent to the notion of Loksangrah. This can be further extended to understand corporate social responsibility as a phenomenon grounded in self concept and world view of organizational members.

Indian vedantic scripture emphatically express the oneness of existence. Notion of separation amongst different forms of existence is attributed to avidya or maya (ignorance and illusion). To clearly understand the mode of group or organizational operation and to predict its values and behavior it is imperative to delve into 'worldview' of its members (Colins and Chippendale, 1995). Let us examine the worldview present in Indian scripture.

Bhagwad Gita the most respectable spiritual guide of our culture describe different pathways of spiritual pursuit (sadhna) like Bhakti yoga, Sankhya yoga, Karm yoga, Karma sanyas yoga, Gyan yoga etc. in its different chapters. Author with his limited intellect and conscience has attempted to find out the world view presented in three seemingly distinct pathways of sadhna namely Bhakti yoga , Jana yoga and Karma yoga.

*etad yonini bhutani sarvanity upadharaya  
aham krtsnas ya jagatah prabhavah parlays  
tatha.* (Chapter 7; verse 6)

Lord Krishna says to Arjuna that everything living is manifested by my energies and I am the creator, the sustainer and the destroyer of the entire world. This verse is of Gyan yoga and explicitly directs towards one unifying force behind existence.

In karma yoga Lord Krishna says:  
*Mayi sarvani karmani samyasyadhyatma-cetasa  
Nirasir nirmamo bhutva yadhyasa vigatajvarh.*  
(Chapter3; verse 30)

Lord Krishna here directs the Karma yogi to be firmly established in knowledge of self being without any desire for gain, to be free from proprietorship

and to discharge his worldly duty without grief. In this verse he expresses to karma yogi the need to surrender all his activities completely to almighty.

In Purushottam yoga Lord Krishna says:

*Mamaivansho jeev loke jeevbhutih sanatanah  
Manah shashsthani indriyani prikrishtanik*  
(Chapter 15;verse 7)

In this verse lords Krishna says that all living being are expression of my divinity.

With above references one can conclude that in seemingly diverse pathways of jana , karma and bhakti the inherent world view is which denotes the unitary existence and oneness of the world view.

Upanishad also expresses the oneness of worldview in different note and says:

*Yasmin sarvanibhutani atmaivabhut vijanatah.  
Tatra ko mohah,kah shokah ekatvam  
anupashyate.* (Ishopnishad verse 7)

One who has experienced the living being in his own soul for him there is no painstaking attachment to world and no curse to bear. This verse also directs the human being towards importance of the experience of unitary consciousness. *Sarvam khaluedam bramha* is also a different expression of same truth.

With above references one can conclude that Indian scripture provide unitary worldview from many seemingly different pathways of sadhana. These notions are parallel to what Schrödinger says that consciousness is of what plural doesn't know. Such world view can be an extension from symbiotic system and global transformation worldview proposed by Colins and Chippendale (1995).

**P1: Indian scripture suggests the unitary worldview on the basis of spiritual awareness which is here proposed to be extension of the seven worldviews suggested by Colins and Chippendale (1995).**

Such an evolved world view prepares a human being for not to seize his concern at level of family, cast, religion or even nation but makes him

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conscious towards whole existence. And this understanding makes the foundation of Loksangrah, the welfare of people around in Indian psychohistory. In light of this discussion author proposes that:

**P2: Loksangrah in Indian tradition is not discrete activity or some time bound programme but it is a deep spiritual philosophy.**

Individual can attain such level of consciousness when he is able to let go his ego bounded with in his limited identity. Most of the spiritual practices are essentially instrumental to overcome this ego. Description of such practices making them operational in the organizational perspective is an important area of research but out of the purview of this paper. But this discussion can provide a wider perspective of systems thinking. Taking systems approach and Indian psycho philosophical worldview together author proposes that:

**P3: Individual transformation is a prerequisite to inculcate systems perspective amongst members of organization.**

In operational terms we can express that if we want employees to adopt systems perspective at work place where he spent more than one third of his available time this can't be a duty bound and time bound proposition. Holistic change is required in the individual for this. Growing concern towards spiritual aspect of life at work place is a sign towards growing concern to address this issue. Hand book of spirituality at work place defines spirituality as feeling of interconnectedness with the existence and it endorse the world view presented in Indian scripture.

If business organizations claim to be more effective in worldly processes then they can't wait much longer to see the effect of spiritual aspect of life on their overall performance. Further implication is likely to be in the form of addressing this issue as an approach of people development based on the self concept evolved from unitary world view. Now days many business organization like HP, Motorola etc. have adopted certain spiritual practices. But in most of cases these are more a curative measure to cope with increasing stress level etc., instead of a real concern for individual transformation at higher spiritual plain. Loksangrah at organizational level in above stated

sense can be accomplished on the foundation of people development. In light of this discussion author proposes that:

**P4: Business organization can perform Loksangrah at Two levels; first one at internal level where people development issues should be dealt with holistic view and another one is loksangrah at societal level.**

People development issue should be addressed in holistic perspective. Loksangrah at organizational level should not be taken as synonymous with philanthropy but should be addressed at the level of organizational development and people development. Both are complementary in nature. Organizations are a landmark in human evolution. By addressing Loksangrah at both the fronts' organization can be a platform for transformation of human consciousness at higher plains.

**P5: For Operationalizing the concern of organization for Loksangrah at both the above mentioned levels following model is proposed:**

Model proposes the three levels of self to be worked upon for development

- 1) First level is of analytical and emotional mind
- 2) Second level of self is believes and values
- 3) Inner most level is Spiritual level

For development of different levels of self different tools are to be used. These levels of self can be taken as different planes for improvement? These levels should not to taken as some hierarchical nature in which any levels is more or less important but all three levels are present in individual and development at all level is important. This holistic development is main submission of the author. Most of the organizational development activities touch outer layers which are at analytical and emotional level and hardly percolate down at the inner levels of individual self.

- 1) **Plane of improvement** : This is the level where individual behavior and attitude are evident. At this level behavioral training and exercises of attitudinal change shows the result.

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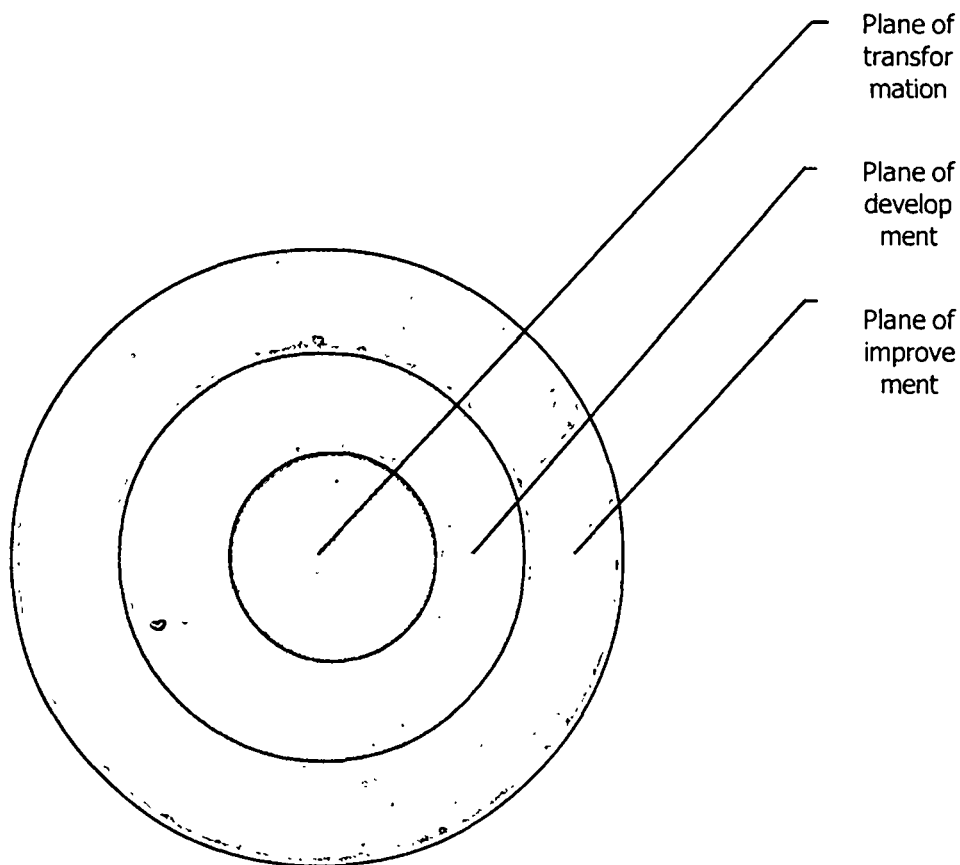
2) **Plane of development** : This is the level which is related to individual believes and values. High involvement developmental training programme which can enable employee to visualize big picture are the main instruments to be used for development at this level.

3) **Plane of transformation** : Spiritual level of individual self which ultimately translates into level of consciousness on which individual operates is the level of transformation. Ken Wilber described six levels of consciousness. Every such level directly related to spiritual well being of the individual. Plane of

transformation is activated when individual worldview shifts towards unitary existence view described in former part of study.

These are the planes of 'self' which corresponds to different levels of consciousness. Different individuals have different prominent levels of consciousness. According to this level of subjective being of individual his or her basic assumptions about life as a whole is formulated. According to these different planes of operations individual hold different life preferences and worldviews. These are most significant antecedents to human action.

**Figure 1: Representation of individual self**



<b>Level of Self</b>	<b>Ingredients</b>	<b>Prominent world view</b>	<b>Operations level</b>	<b>Requirement for individual involvement</b>	<b>Sustenance</b>
<b>Plane of improvement</b>	Analytical and emotional self	Primitive world view	Behavioral and attitudinal	High	Immediate
<b>Plane of Development</b>	Values and believes	Collaborative and Symbiotic	Life preference	Higher	Mid term
<b>Plane of Transformation</b>	Spiritual level	Global transformation and Unitary existence	Consciousness	Highest	Longest

Table 1: Comparative account of different planes of self

Effect of the developmental effort at one level permeates to another levels and such happens to be bidirectional in nature. But conscious effort is desired for the development of each level to prepare holistic personality which can establish an organization which is collectively conscious towards all its stakeholders' namely internal and external customers, society and state at large and environment. With the individuals of fragmented personality holistic results should not be expected. For holistic result corporate needs individuals with holistic personality.

With development at these entire three levels one can expect that a true concern towards different stakeholders is expected to emerge amongst

members of organization. This concern is not out of some external prescription or some legal requisite but a natural outcome of evolved consciousness. This makes the grounding for loksangrah.

In the Indian psycho-philosophic perspective loksangrah in business organization can perform at two levels; one at internal level where by taking up task individual development at above stated planes can become a medium of individual transformation. If organizations address this issue effectively then loksangrah at outer level becomes very natural to perform where organizations put forth their effort for social cause.

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