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Editorial

We are happy to place in the hands of our learned readers and well wishers this year's first issue of Nitte Management Review (NMR).

The present issue consists of scholarly articles on diverse issues in management.

The first article authored by M. V. Nadkarni illustrates the role of Bhagavad Gita as an inspiration to enterprise and guidance to Business Management. The author discusses values of equipoise and detachment (karma yoga), acceptance of social responsibility for people's welfare (loka-hita/ loka-sangraha) and emphasis on one's right restricted only to the remnant remaining after first satisfying the "needs" of nature. This implies the avoidance of the reckless exploitation of nature and humanity's sacred responsibility towards it (Yajna).

The present issue also provides articles in the functional areas of management.

The article by P. Srikanth and M. N. Durga Prasad reports the relationship between earnings management and dividend policy. The authors find empirical evidence that the discretionary accruals influence the dividend payout. This article adds up to the ongoing earning-quality discussions and demonstrates how dividend payout could be a signal to earnings management.

The next article by N. Venkatesh, S. Chikaswamy and L. D'Souza highlights the important implication which is often sidelined with the implementation of Six Sigma. The article contributes to the literature on efforts made to examine the implications of Six Sigma on the overall welfare of the employees.

The last article by V. N. Bhat examines the literature on motives for corporate issuance of convertible bonds, post-issue performance, extinguishment and financial reporting and concludes that there is greater scope of research on these topics in the context of emerging markets.

The book titled The Essence of Management Theories Simplified authored by Rangalal Bandyopadhyay and Rekha Bandyopadhyay is reviewed by N. K Thingalaya.

There is also a review article by G. V. Joshi. He has reviewed the book Building a Better India.

This issue calls for paper to be published in the next issue of NMR which will be a special issue on Business Ethics and Corporate Governance.

We believe and hope that NMR will continue to march towards its goal of continuous improvement and excellence with the support and cooperation of learned writers, researchers and readers.

Thank you

K Sankaran

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Reimagining and Refashioning Integral Management

Tushar Nath Mohapatra[*]

Abstract

The function of Management in the present complex world cannot be over-emphasized. The role of ethics in Management, especially in the Indian context, is even more profound. Despite a vast amount of work in this area, repetition and exaggeration have become commonplace, so much so that certain concepts without validity have taken root. This paper ventures to provide an alternative understanding of human psychology drawn from the philosophical insights of Sri Aurobindo, with significant implications for Management education and practice. While surveying the history of ideas in modern civilization, Sri Aurobindo's ontological formulations appear to have an edge, which unfortunately have not received much attention. Moreover, there is perceptible resistance from various interest groups and dominant philosophies, especially in the context of the prevailing political situation. This paper uses select concepts from Sri Aurobindo's philosophy to point out how radically our thinking should change. His stress on personal development through Yoga and integral education constitutes a task in the domain of self-management. Accommodating these facets into management education as well as practice is a challenge that needs to be taken up by interested individuals and institutions in right earnest.

Keywords: Sri Aurobindo, Integral Management, Evolution, Self Growth, Ethics, Indian Values, Yoga, Veda, History of Ideas, Consciousness, Philosophy, Futurology

INTRODUCTION

Nigel Nicholson, professor at London Business School and the author of *The "I" of Leadership: Strategies for Seeing, Being and Doing*, wrote an article in *Harvard Business Review* in which he examined implications of individual differences vis-à-vis Leadership.

'As noted at the outset of this article, evolutionary psychology does not dispute individual differences. Indeed, an increasingly robust body

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of studies on twins conducted by behavioral geneticists indicates that people are born with set predispositions that harden as they age into adulthood. Genes for detachment and novelty avoidance have been found, for instance, which together appear to amount to shyness. It used to be assumed that shyness was induced entirely by environment — if a shy person just tried hard enough, he or she could become the life of the party. The same was said for people who were highly emotional — they could be coaxed out of such feelings. But again, research is suggesting that character traits such as shyness and emotional sensitivity are inborn.

That personality is inborn is not news to any parent with more than one child. You provide a stable home environment for your brood — the same food, the same schools, the same basic experiences on a day-to-day basis. And yet the first child is introverted and grows up to be an R&D scientist. The second, who never stopped chattering as a child, grows up to become a flamboyant sales executive. And still a third child is as even-keeled as can be and pursues a career as a school-teacher. Evolutionary psychology would tell us that each one of these individuals was living out his biogenetic destiny.

All three of these children are hardwired for certain dispositions. For instance, each falls somewhere along the continuum of risk aversion described earlier. But each one's level of aversion to risk differs. The point is, along with each person's fundamental brain circuitry, people also come with inborn personalities. Some people are more dominant than others. Some are more optimistic. Some like math better than poetry. People can compensate for these underlying dispositions with training and other forms of education, but there is little point in trying to change deep-rooted inclinations.

Now, the question is what exactly ensures this predetermination of character traits? Science has no definite answers yet, and hence, we perforce turn to Philosophy. Interestingly, the gap between Science and Philosophy is declining. Evolutionary Cosmology has gained widespread acceptance as people are willing to believe the story of the universe as unveiled by Science. Biotechnology, biolinguistics and

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bioethics provide ample space for interdisciplinary explorations and reciprocal ramifications.

Friends, as we sit in this hall, we all know that our planet is moving in its orbit at a great speed, and the galaxies too are rushing away from each other. There is movement all around as well as within our bodies. We can view this movement as Evolution underlying all that we know or are attempting to understand. Evolution, as a scientific concept, is an established phenomenon but its aim and objective have not received enough attention. Sri Aurobindo was writing on this topic 100 years back and the cosmological framework he has provided is worth knowing for people from every profession and pursuit.

During the last two decades, the talk of integrating or applying Indian values in Management has gained momentum. Many success stories are also there. But, it should be remembered that the notion that just by adopting ethics, success would ensue may not be true. Why? The reasons are Evolutionary in nature. Evolution is irreverent towards rules and customs. It can use any unconventional route to achieve aims.

INFLUENCE

The 20th century was a period of great intellectual fermentation, which saw top thinkers endeavouring to understand life and the world through various lenses. The major streams can be enumerated as follows:
- Phenomenology — Existentialism — Structuralism
- Semiology — Hermeneutics — Deconstruction
- Poststructuralism — Postmodernism — Postsecularism
- Critical Theory — Critical Realism — Speculative Realism
- Evolutionary Psychology — Neuropsychology — Consciousness Studies
- New Age — Integralism — Environmental Ethics, etc.[ii]

As such, communication modes and content have exploded and pose fresh challenges, especially in the virtual space. That choices have multiplied is considered as an upside, but being buried under options is no happy situation either. Further, being able to edit content runs the risk of being insulated and under-informed. This leads to lack of development of adequate sensibilities and life skills. Such screen-based worl-

dview may be creating a more distorted ontological framework than what thinkers from (Hegel, 2008 to Nagel (2012) have systematised or poets from Dante to Sri Aurobindo have seen.[iii]

A basic philosophical background, therefore, should be considered integral to Management. Apart from learning logic and understanding fallacies, how pure thought structure has been harnessed by sages — from Aristotle to Zizek or Spinoza to Deleuze — forms a wonderful saga of human achievement. Although each thesis is contested by subsequent students, they provide rare opportunity for young learners for mental gymnastics and consequent suppleness in thinking. Similarly, Cultural Studies is another wide field to make managers sensitive in the social and artistic arena, to enable them to appreciate heterogeneity as well as common universal undercurrents. Harbouring a sympathetic attitude towards fellow human beings as emphasised by Levinas or Habermas should also be a priority, as it becomes ever relevant in our complex worlds fraught by strife.[v]

No doubt, all these movements have employed rare intellectual power to probe issues and see connections but have ultimately been proved to be partial or parochial. *Beyond Physicalism* is a recent book that looks at the past attempts from a scientific angle. It also suggests looking beyond what Sri Aurobindo characterises as the 'illusion of the obvious'. *The Singularity & Socialism* is another book that attempts to reconcile the capitalist and socialist worldviews.[vi] An advantage of our time is that many fierce ideological battles of the past have subsided and people are eager to discover wherever harmonising situations emerge.

In this context, the contributions of Sri Aurobindo stand out. His is a prominent voice responding to Marx, Darwin, Nietzsche and Freud. Besides, his Evolutionary Philosophy bears resonance with that of Schelling, Bergson, Alexander, Whitehead and Teilhard de Chardin. He introduced Integral Yoga from which the term 'integral' has since been borrowed for applying to diverse fields.[vii]

The word 'integral' has plurality implicit in it and hence is liable to be interpreted as a strong antidote to diversity. This reversal, though perceived to be politically incorrect, is, in fact, a quest for harmony

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through democratic negotiation and adversity negation. Integral, in the context of Management — in contradistinction to Philosophy, Psychology, or Sociology — is not anchored to any prefixed schema but would rather be open to continuous refashioning through live situations or lived reality. Management, of course, is never value neutral as a positive outcome is ordinarily expected. However that should be seen as a strength and a spur for the overall integral spirit. This overriding aspect needs to be understood properly from a larger ontological viewpoint.

Management, from the minimalist point of view of its problem-solving function, has something profound to learn from Sri Aurobindo when he affirms, 'all problems of existence are essentially problems of harmony.'[viii] (Cf. concept of entropy which points that nature tends from order to disorder in isolated systems.) A purpose and path are presupposed in the form of Evolution proceeding towards Harmony. This leads to the logic that all worldly attempts need to be tethered to this greater purpose. In other words, everyone must persuade themselves to feel and act in consonance with this larger motive in view.

This brings one to another famous statement by Sri Aurobindo, 'All life is Yoga' where Yoga would basically refer to any volitional effort to mould oneself.[ix] So, Evolution towards Harmony well fits into the Yoga scheme as part of self-management. This transition from the problems of existence to an individual's action and motivation might seem too wide, but an ontological understanding would reconcile it easily. There is no methodological anomaly involved in this since it is agreed how a map facilitates any journey.

The metaphor of the map, however, needs to be clarified a bit further. The map may not have any intrinsic value; knowledge, on the contrary, is a catalyst and stimulates transformation in alignment with Evolution. Knowledge (information or intellectual recognition) thus turns the vehicle of Yoga despite a person's passivity. One is led literally pulled by knowledge, and hence the need for caution as to the source and veracity of knowledge. Sri Aurobindo would recommend the Veda as the safest primordial fount of knowledge. One may or not agree with him but there is no harm in being acquainted with what he says.

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Most of us know about the word, *indriya* or Senses but are not very sure about Indra. In Sri Aurobindo's interpretation, Indra is the master of the five *indriyas*, which essentially means that Mind lords over the Senses. So the meaning of Indra is mind or intellect, which has several layers or levels. One such level in the higher regions is Varuna, and the task of an individual is to progress from the Indra to the Varuna state. This process is Evolution, the method being Yoga. Apart from this, it is also instructive to understand Varuna from the perspective of leadership and core competence.

Knowledge, Power, Harmony and Work are in fact the four functional powers for running a society that inspired the *varna* system. Varuna, in a broad sense, represents Knowledge. The other powers are Aryaman, Mitra and Bhaga. Sri Aurobindo brings out their deeper connotations so that it becomes easier to understand their relevance to our tasks and ambitions. In this connection, the first thing to understand is that our actions are never isolated, but coeval with various other evolutionary forces. From a simple rational view, this might sound weird but that is exactly where Integral Management differs from the conventional version.

ASSIMILATION

The writings of Sri Aurobindo and her spiritual collaborator, The Mother including their conversations and correspondences run into 100 volumes.[x] Major exegetical works by disciples that are absolutely necessary to be conversant with also span an equal number. So, it is actually difficult to be conversant about his philosophy even at the basic level. But, understanding his views about the individual and his possibilities is important from the point of view of Management. This involves a radical change in attitude as well as priorities, which can be understood as follows.

• An individual is a combination of two persons: one inner and the other outer. The inner person is aware of the true goal of life, which the outer person executes. The inner person has also some preferences and it arranges the outer situation accordingly to derive desired experiences. These experiences need not be moral or pleasant always; the inner person exercises its liberty to decide the mix de-

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pending upon circumstances and contingencies. This is a very broad sketch with enormous complexity in the details.

- In a collective situation, this amounts to the inner persons of all deciding to be sharing different responsibilities to gain respective experiences. Skills and hierarchies valued at the outer level are not the same for which the inner person has consented to be in the team. The inner person has a neutral attitude as to whether it is the master or the slave but is particular about the educative and aesthetic aspect of each type of experience.

- In this scheme of things, all the inner persons would seem almost similar as well as equal but their outer beings are deliberately pro-grammed for limited capabilities and possibilities having manoeu-vring facilities within a narrow range. Here it is important to note that such configurations are genetically ensured through birth in respective families. So, heredity and environment are both mar-shalled to conform to the inner person's script.

- Despite appearing to be so, the inner person's permutations are not arbitrary but are aligned to a greater purpose. Each individual is a participant in the cosmic Evolution and his inner person's trajectory is geared towards it. The inner person tries its best to carry out its intention through the outer person but faces difficulties. This entails constant friction and reformulation of goals and means.

- The outer person comprises three different parts: body, life and mind. They are endowed with different traits and capacities. They are also in conflict with each other perpetually. So, there is imper-fect communication and faulty execution of the inner being's wish-es. This is the reason why there is so much of error and failure in human undertakings. But, it may be reiterated that many a time, failure and suffering are also intended by the inner being.

- Thus, people's actions are mostly dictated by agendas that seem to be predetermined. This sounds fatalistic without any freedom for the individuals. But that is not wholly true. Always, there are a host of possibilities of which a few become actualities. The power of aspiration in man alters the course of events to some extent, if not fully. Mind, being more powerful than life and body, is capable of reformulating the future within the overall Evolutionary frame.

Having sketched a very simplified picture of how the world moves,[xi] let us consider its implications for Management in general.

- Everything can be managed: that is perhaps the most ambitious objective of Management and hence the concept of Zero defects, etc. But the Integral approach doesn't subscribe to such optimism. Sri Aurobindo has outlined three principles of Education, the first of which is 'nothing can be taught'.[xii] In the same vein, it can be asserted that nothing can be managed. However, this is not pessimistic, but rather surrendering or aligning the human endeavour to the forces of Evolution in constructive spirit.

- When it comes to judging individuals and their strengths and weaknesses, one derives a more sympathetic attitude from the Integral approach. For, as we now know, the outer person is constrained by the stipulations imposed by the inner being. So blaming or punishing someone is useless as (s)he is unable to come out of the way (s)he is wired or required to function. Both genetic as well as circumstantial sedimentation in a person is hard to remove or remedy.

- Planning the future and dreaming about projects is normal to Management where commercial viability becomes the litmus test. But the Evolutionary relevance is a much more valid criterion under the Integral approach. Here it is vital to mention that no one has the ability or clarity as to what actually helps the Evolution but a general sense of goodwill and benevolence underpinning our wants and ambitions can be considered salutary.

- These kind of insights by themselves are not passports to success or fast growth. Individual persons will surely respond to their various situations to the best of their capability but a broad orientation in Integral approach arms them with crucial cautions and anchors so that they don't flow with emotion, enthusiasm or passion.

- Ethics is the foundation and the aim and not merely the means. One's sense of good, reminds Sri Aurobindo, should guide action both at the individual as well as the collective level. In the practical field, one may not find it beneficial at times but its transforming effect bears the potential of changing the course of events. In fact, there must not be any utilitarian calculations about the benefits being derived from adhering to ethics. In this sense, ethics and perfection should be considered as synonymous.

- However, ethics need not be perceived as bondage. Since everyone will follow their own nature, they will be exercising the freedom of transcending ethical rules if and when the occasion demands. This, *inter alia*, takes care of ethical dilemmas and inhibitions when act-

ing under orders from superiors. Reliance on ethics and the greater goal are sure formulas for future routes being streamlined.

INTEGRATION

I can understand that when I introduced the Veda or Varuna in this paper, many may have been alarmed because of its association with a particular religion.[xiii] I share the broad consensus that religion should be kept outside of all secular domains in general and Management in particular. It is interesting to note that politics and economics, etc. most often follow the crowd, like religion, whereas Management has no such compulsion. So it is the bounden duty of Management, both in its role in education as well as practice, to distill wisdom from whatever source and preserve it for the benefit of future generations. That particular Knowledge may lack popular acceptance during its day or seem impractical but Management has the wherewithal to nurture such embryonic evolutionary treasures.

Thus, we arrive at a serious predicament. While Management would be discerning in sourcing wisdom from tradition, at the same time, it must not be a slave to mythology or popular culture. The current political situation in India presents a precarious situation. Most people are willing to surrender their critical faculty to the dominant religious sentiment aligned to the ruling party. They cannot be blamed as they find a complex narrative stretching over thousands of years providing legitimacy to matters involving their day-to-day lives as well as future aspirations. This sort of herd dynamics, however, is a challenge for Management and it must explore firm anchorage.

The role of the West, in this context, is a mixed one. Pushing the envelope in all fields of human knowledge has been phenomenal in its case, but when it comes to understanding the human situation, it has been parochial and provincial. India, in general, is outside its radar. Further, as the title of a famous book says it aptly, *We have never been modern*. It means that although western studies exhibit austere scholarship, they hide somewhere in their text or subtext, a bias towards Christianity or an implicit acceptance of biblical cosmology. Thus, their inferences remain constrained to that extent. Again, we cannot blame the West since its university system and curricula are built around such focus

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areas. But, we in India have the advantage of conducting comparative studies, in the real sense of the term, and bring out the results based on merit. Management, here, has a crucial role to play.

Coming back to the dilemma as regards sources of wisdom vis-à-vis religion, one thing needs to be remembered clearly. Hindutva, as it is being disseminated today, is basically a political ideology. Its intention is clear: to create an ecosystem where people suspend their disbelief and follow the tradition, thus blurring the borders between science, politics and religion. But then the question is whether the answers to all concerns of the future are available in the tradition and its texts. At this point, it is very difficult to find a safe choice, but fortunately, we have Sri Aurobindo in India. It is in order here, therefore to glance at some salient points about him.

- Aurobindo inaugurated an enduring foundation for East–West synthesis as precursor to the Life Divine upon earth.
- The most important thing to learn from Sri Aurobindo is a firm teleological account of history, especially of India, tethered to Evolution.
- Hegel's vitalistic supremacy of State and Nietzsche's aggressive Overman were both duly moderated by the Nation-Soul and Superman of Sri Aurobindo.
- Sri Aurobindo produced a couple of landmark scientific/philosophical principles:
- (1) Logic of the Infinite[xiv] and (2) the Supra-physical being beyond empirical probe, which are currently percolating into Consciousness studies.
- The philosophical aspect of Sri Aurobindo is such that comparisons are a must, but the same is not true of his Yoga Psychology.
- Sri Aurobindo inflicts a terrible blow to the materialist theories of Darwin, Marx, and Freud.

Scholarship in India as such can be seen as broadly falling under three streams: 1. Marxist, 2. Nehruvian, and 3. Hindutva. These schools have their set agendas and procedures due to which truth is always at a discount. Management has the responsibility not to be wedded to any particular ideology and search for the right clues with ruthless independence. Sri Aurobindo makes this task easy. He, in his ontological formulations, bypasses the aforesaid streams to present an overarching

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system that is in consonance with science. His invoking of the Vedic symbolism further imbues it with pregnant possibilities of a sublime human destiny. Thus, in the scheme of Sri Aurobindo, life and religion merge, which he terms as Integral Yoga.

This may be a huge lesson for Management. While it is legitimate to keep religion and secular activities separate, Sri Aurobindo announces that such a strict bifurcation is impossible since no action is separate from cosmic action and evolution. Being aware of the ongoing action of Evolution and its intention all the while remoulds the very motive and tenor of any individual action and more so that of a leader. This transforming alchemy, difficult to decipher through traditional tenets of Management or manipulation, underscores the Emergence aspect of cosmic fermentation. To be awake to such trysts is a tremendous challenge for Management education and theorisation.

Having thus argued that Management has no option than to adopt Sri Aurobindo, the question of how to approach him arises. This is a sub-ject in itself and for the purpose of this short paper, I may indicate a few points briefly. It is true that one may not be able to read all his works but it is not wise to avoid them if found difficult. Another complaint may be lack of relevance to one's work. However, reading the works of Sri Aurobindo leads to personal growth and intellectual culture, which ultimately prove as rewarding as other professional subjects. Besides, a certain poetic ability as well as a knack for theorising is normal to be expected from such endeavours.

A word of caution as regards Indian tradition. A lot of literature has come into existence during the last two decades involving the rele-vance of Indian wisdom to Management. Despite good intentions, this can be deceptive. I'm not making any specific mention, but in general, an attitude of scepticism and critical judgement is preferable. Indol-ogy or Sanskrit are not innocent fields of study. One is likely to be misguided unless acquainted with Sri Aurobindo's interpretations. The Mother & Sri Aurobindo suggest not delving deep into the so-called Indian Philosophy, which is heavily influenced by the Buddhist dis-course. The Vedic nisus, as represented by the thought and action of The Mother & Sri Aurobindo in the present age, is antithetical to the nihilism of Buddhism.

When The Mother & Sri Aurobindo decided to work together in 1914, a great East–West synthesis was forged which was to blossom as The Life Divine. The Knowledge system that The Mother & Sri Aurobindo have honed is unique and unprecedented. If mixed with other teachings, it becomes ineffective. In their inimitable way, they sought to integrate religion with ordinary life by invoking psychological aspects instead of rituals or other physical methods. All individuals have their own unique way and how they would acquire knowledge cannot be predicted. So they did not prescribe any fixed method of Yoga. Further, Sri Aurobindo presents us the epic *Savitri* that helps one climb the ladder of Consciousness that sows seeds of Harmony.[xv]

There is no gainsaying that the world has undergone enormous changes since Sri Aurobindo wrote his last lines in 1950. So, when some perceptive critics disagree with some of his theoretical formulations, they need not be dismissed as superficial speculations. Rather a much more significant opportunity arises for re-examining the whole gamut of issues so as to find perspective. These sorts of methodological innovations are necessary while dealing with the varied terrain of Sri Aurobindo's oeuvre. How to evaluate the two sides of the argument and derive the best advantage from such an engagement should be the sole focus for refashioning integral management.

Whether one likes it or not, the world has been living in a state of uncertainty for the last 200 years, especially since the days of Feuerbach. Many philosophical as well as scientific currents have emerged and disappeared, adding a sense of instability and suspicion. Against such a backdrop, it is worthwhile to be grateful to Sri Aurobindo at least for one reason. His writings provide a firm and vast ground in serving as a point of departure for diverse fields of intellectual exploration.

Sri Aurobindo's writing imparts a global touch, or more accurately, a universal context. At once one is lifted from one's narrow confines to the countless concerns of the whole humanity; its past, present, and the future. Thus, an interdisciplinary approach to probe them becomes imperative. This has remarkable advantage in view of the ongoing globalization and communications revolution facilitated by information

technology. Science plumbing the depths of consciousness via neuro-psychology is also an emerging field.[xvi]

That Sri Aurobindo is a meeting point for the East and the West is common knowledge.[xvii] Despite certain well-meaning criticisms, his insights are unique and invaluable. Besides, his knowledge of both the West and the East from the vantage point of an insider is of immense value. Thus, his penetrating insights on men and events offer consider-able scope for judging implications for the future of the world.

The foregoing is ample proof of an alternative vision for the future of Management. The emphasis on Sri Aurobindo might surprise some. But, it has been an attempt to drive home the primacy of his thought and prophetic vision. This can be realised by any careful reader of his works with a critical eye and sympathetic view. At this point it is important to note that the notion of nationalism itself is undergoing a metamorphosis in India at present. Certain civilisational values having universal appeal are being questioned and undermined under politi-cal patronage. Sri Aurobindo indeed anticipated such vicissitudes of history.[xviii] Safeguarding these endangered values constitutes a priority and hence should drive our intellectual discourses. To summarise, Sri Aurobindo is useful to Management education and practice in a num-ber of ways.

- Sri Aurobindo obviates the hesitation of Management of dealing with religion by turning it into Yoga, a process of psychological exploration and enrichment, thus avoiding rituals and superstitions.
- By invoking the Veda, he affords a solid background of the Indian tradition but without the ceremonial paraphernalia. This becomes easy to handle for Management, with accentuated profundity.
- In theorising on Evolution and endowing it its true significance, Sri Aurobindo takes Science by the horn. Thus, the trajectory from Veda to Evolution becomes an invaluable vestibule for Manage-ment to explore further.
- Sri Aurobindo brings in the fair perspective by discrediting the Marxist antipathy towards religion. Management benefits a great deal by eschewing a narrow and rigid conception of religion and the nagging concern of avoiding it.
- Sri Aurobindo deals with the West with aplomb, borrows what is best and points out where it lacks. He does it without any inferior-

ity or victim's mentality, making postcolonial sentiments outdated. This is in sync with an egalitarian cosmopolitan outlook.[xix]

- He goes a step further than western analysis as he has the advantage of Indian wisdom drawn from the strength of its texts and thought. So, Management may find him of more use than the western offerings.

- Sri Aurobindo also provides a much safer route than that promised by Buddhism and other branches of Indian Philosophy in terms of principles, ideals and goals. Management may learn not to be too impressed by the popularity and sophistication of the latter, and rather cultivate a rational, critical approach.

- Sri Aurobindo is the most credible authority and bypasses his other famous contemporaries. Management could perhaps avoid invoking three or four names simultaneously, challenge the bane of superficial engagement, and attempt to effectively concentrate on Sri Aurobindo.

- Sri Aurobindo, most importantly, is a stout antidote against Hindutva. By proposing a symbolic approach to religion, he advocates the emergence of a liberal and global fraternity. The philosophical underpinning of this aspect should be internalised by Management.

Notes:

i. For ideas on leadership, see Richard A. Davis, *The Intangibles of Leadership: The 10 Qualities of Superior Executive Performance* (Toronto: J. Wiley & Sons Canada, 2010). Further crtical examination of ethical issues may be found in Lawrence E. Harrison and Samuel P. Huntington (eds), *Culture Matters: How Values Shape Human Progress* (New York: Basic Books, 2000); S. K. Maitra, 'Outlines of an Emergent Theory of Values', in S. Radhakrishnan and John H. Muirhead (eds), *Contemporary Indian Philosophy* (London: G. Allen & Unwin, 1952); Rajendra Prasad (ed.), *Ends and Means in Private and Public Life* (Shimla: Indian Institute of Advanced Study and Indus Pub. Co., New Delhi, 1989); and Jyotirmaya Sharma and A. Raghuramaraju (eds), *Grounding Morality: Freedom, Knowledge, and the Plurality of Cultures* (New Delhi: Routledge, 2010).

ii. Related exploration of these histories may be found in Georges Vrekhem, *Patterns of the Present* (New Delhi: Rupa & Co, 2002); Richard Hartz, *The Clasp of Civilizations: Globalization and Religion in a Multicultural World* (Los Angeles, CA: Nalanda International and New Delhi: D.K. Printworld, 2015); Rod Hemsell, *The Philosophy of Religion* (Auroville,

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Pondicherry: Auro e-Books, 2014); and J. N. Mohanty, *The Self and Its Other: Philosophical Essays* (New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2000).

iii. Prema Nandakumar, *Dante and Sri Aurobindo: A Comparative Study of* The Divine Comedy *and* Savitri (Madras: Affiliated East-West Press, 1981); and K. D. Sethna, *Classical and Romantic: An Approach Through Sri Aurobindo* (Pondicherry: Sri Aurobindo Ashram, 1997). For an insightful study of the journey of poetry, see Meena Alexander, *The Poetic Self: Towards a Phenomenology of Romanticism* (Atlantic Highlands, N.J: Humanities Press, 1980). A perceptive account of literary studies may be traced in Prafulla C. Kar, Kailash C. Baral and Sura P. Rath (eds), *Theory and Praxis* (Delhi: Pencraft International, 2003).

iv. Some foundational ideas are covered in Terry Eagleton, *The Ideology of the Aesthetic* (Cambridge, Mass: Blackwell, 1990); Zygmunt Bauman, *Hermeneutics and Social Science* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1978); Paul de Man, *Blindness & Insight: Essays in the Rhetoric of Contemporary Criticism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1971); and Paul Ricoeur, *The Conflict of Interpretations* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1974).

v. See Ananta K. Giri, *Knowledge and Human Liberation: Towards Planetary Realizations* (London: Anthem Press, 2014). Also, Leela Gandhi, *The Common Cause: Postcolonial Ethics and the Practice of Democracy, 1900–1955* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014); Mark Lilla, *The Stillborn God: Religion, Politics, and the Modern West* (New York: Knopf, 2007); Nicholas Wolterstorff, *Justice: Rights and Wrongs* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008). Also, Aakash Singh Rathore and Alex Cistelecan (eds), *Wronging Rights? Philosophical Challenges for Human Rights* (New Delhi: Routledge, 2011); Samuel Moyn, *Christian Human Rights* (Philadelphia, Pennsylvania: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015); Robert N. Bellah, *Religion in Human Evolution: From the Paleolithic to the Axial Age* (Cambridge, Mass: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2011); and R. Sundara Rajan, *The Humanization of Transcendental Philosophy* (New Delhi: Tulika, 1997).

vi. C. J. Townsend, *The Singularity & Socialism: Marx, Mises, Complexity Theory, Techno-Optimism and the Way to the Age of Abundance* (Rancho Cordova, CA: Createspace Independent Publishing, 2015). Also, David Harvey, *Justice, Nature, and the Geography of Difference* (Cambridge, Mass: Blackwell Publishers, 1996) and Paul Mason, *Postcapitalism: A Guide to Our Future* (London: Allen Lane, Penguin Books, 2015).

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Governance by Consciousness

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Abstract

Corporate Governance has become one of the buzz-words in corporate and management circles. The corporate world as a whole is in the process of acquiring a moral conscience. The new and emerging concepts in management like corporate governance, business ethics and corporate social responsibility are some of the expressions through which this emerging ethical instinct in the corporate world is trying to express or embody itself in the corporate life. However effective implementation of an ethical ideal or concept requires two factors: creating an ethical consciousness and promoting ethical conduct and behaviour. But for the outer conduct and behaviour to be authentic, sincere and effective, it has to be a spontaneous expression of a corresponding inner state of consciousness. This article examines the concept and practice of corporate governance in an integral, holistic and consciousness perspective. By the word "integral" we mean both the inner and outer dimensions of the phenomenon under study. By the word "holistic" we mean what is now called as "systemic" perspective which views corporate governance as a subset and in the context of the larger corporate environment. By the word "consciousness-perspective" we mean an emphasis on the inner change of consciousness, but without ignoring the need for its outer expression in the collective life.

TOWARDS SELF-GOVERNANCE

In our integral perspective, the ideal of corporate governance is to create a corporate consciousness which leads to self-governance. But a corporate manager or a government administrator may say "O, I am tired of such philosophical sermons and rhetoric, tell me how to do it". This is a legitimate demand of the pragmatic mind provided it is not a demand for immediate results. For implementing or implanting

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ideas with ethical overtones requires a long persistent and sincere inner and outer discipline. However, the idealists must respect the legitimate demands of the pragmatic mind and must indicate a plan of implementation.

Conversion of an ideal or a concept into reality requires three tasks. The first is to have a clear perception of the ideal, which means to have a clear vision of what would be the condition of the corporate world when the ideal is fully actualized. Second is an equally clear perception of the actual facts and the present evolutionary condition of the corporate world, or in other words the gap between the ideal and the reality. The third is a plan of action by which individually and collectively we can advance consciously towards the ideal.

The ideal of corporate governance is to create a corporate consciousness and environment in which those who display genuine ethical, social and ecological responsibility, not merely in Director's speech or annual reports but in concrete actions, prosper, progress and become leaders and decision-makers of the corporate world. Conversely those who are obstinately unethical are either weeded out or feel the consequences of their action. And others who are hovering between the two are given the opportunity and feel the pressure to take a decisive step in the ethical path. In other words, a corporate environment governed by the law of ethical Darwinism by which ethically fittest survive and prosper, the ethically ambivalent are reformed and the ethically unfit or delinquent become extinct. By the term "ethically fittest" we mean those who have fully internalized the ethical consciousness and do not need the threat of law to be ethical. A biographer of JRD Tata relates an interesting and illustrative episode. Tata was questioning an executive who was trying to save tax returns to government. The executive justified his action by saying it is not illegal. But JRD asked "Not illegal, yes, But is it right?" We can see here the difference in the mind-set between the legally ethical and the intrinsically ethical.

THE EMERGING CORPORATE SCENARIO

The second task is to have a clear perception of the present facts and condition of he corporate world. The new and emerging ethical

tendencies like business ethics, corporate social responsibility and environmental sustainability have to be encouraged, strengthened and given a deeper, broader and a more intrinsic orientation. But at present most of these ethical impulses are not intrinsic but the result of external circumstances and environmental pressures like customer demand, social or green activism.

To be pragmatic is legitimate in business. But to take the next higher step in evolution the corporate world has to move up towards a higher level of pragmatism based on the Indian concept of Dharma. In this Indian perception when all the movements and activities of our inner and outer being, individually and collectively, is in harmony with the laws of universal Nature, then it leads to inner moral and spiritual development as well as outer material, economic and social efficiency, prosperity and progress. This is because when we are in total attunement with the laws of Nature we are in tune with the creative energies and rhythms of Nature, which is bound to bring its material results. The modern science of ecology reveals the dharma of the physical dimensions of universal Nature. The ethical and spiritual values discovered by the ancient spiritual traditions of the world reveals the ecology of the moral, psychological and spiritual dimensions of Nature. The principle and practices of Corporate Governance must be based on an enlightened understanding of the integral ecology of Nature in all the dimensions-physical, moral, psychological and spiritual.

And the inner source of ethics is spirituality. The ethical motive or impulse becomes fully, entirely and perfectly conscious, enlightened intrinsic and spontaneous only in the spiritual consciousness. So ultimately ethics must blossom towards spirituality. Here comes the importance of some of a new trend in business and management, which augurs well for the higher evolution of business. It is the recognition of spirituality and the potentiality of spirituality for enhancing the quality of corporate life. For example, Academy of Management in US, a leading and prestigious association of management scholars in America has formed a "Spiritual Group" and launched a magazine called **Journal of Management, Spirituality and Religion**, focusing on the emerging spiritual aspiration in business. The prestigious Harvard Business

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School organized a conference on Leadership, Values and Spirituality in the spring of 2002. Similarly Indian Institute of Management, Calcutta has formed an institution, Management Centre of Human Value, based on the spiritual teachings of Sri Aurobindo, Swami Vivekananda and Rabindranath Tagore. The concept of spirituality at work is now openly and extensively discussed in management literature. Two management researchers from Cohenhegan Business School, Denmark, Pruzan & Mikkelsen (2007) have edited an interesting book "Leading with Wisdom: Spiritual based Leadership in Business" which is compilation of the views and experiences of 31 top corporate leaders from 15 countries who have based their leadership on spiritual and ethical values.

The true meaning of spirituality might not have been fully understood or grasped in most of these new trends of thought in business. What is called as "Spirituality" in many of these movement falls within the domain of mental and ethical aspirations. However, higher mental and ethical motives and aspirations are an indispensable preparation for spiritual development. So, the spiritual groups and institutions all over the world have to actively support, encourage and enlighten these higher evolutionary trends in business by bringing greater clarity and depth to the meaning and significance of spirituality. And every individual or group in the corporate world with a moral or spiritual aspiration and who are in the decision-making positions have to carefully watch and study these higher trends in business.

We have discussed so far only the positive trends in the corporate world. There are also many negative trends like for example the numerous scams and frauds of the Enron-kind. Here comes the role of justice and law. We must keep in mind that individuals and groups are at various levels of inner development. Not all of us, individually or collectively, are at the higher stages of ethical and spiritual development where the ethical consciousness has become intrinsic to our nature. Most of us need an external compulsion to remain ethical and the yoke of law to goad us towards our ethical awakening. This need of Law acquires a special significance in the domain of ecological and environmental responsibility. Though the progressive sections of the corporate world

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are becoming increasingly conscious of their ecological responsibility, still large sections of the corporate world, like for example leather industries, are still insensitive to their environmental dharmas. So in our present critical and precarious ecological condition of our planet, factors related to the ecological well-being of earth have to be strictly enforced under the yoke of Law and all violators have to be firmly dealt with.

We have traversed from the ideal to facts. Let us now examine how to progress from the present facts to the ideal or in other word, to use a management jargon, the strategic plan. In our consciousness perspective the plan of implementation would be based on two strategic endeavour: first is to create the ethical consciousness through Education and the second is to build an outer environment favourable to this consciousness and its self-expression in the outer life.

SHAPING THE SELF-GOVERNING CONSCIOUSNESS

Education is the path to a lasting inner change. However mere mental or information-oriented education of the kind given in most of the present systems of education can only bring about a superficial change. At the best, it can bring about a change in intellectual orientation or attitude, which is helpful, but not enough for a lasting inner change. This deeper change can be achieved only by a psychological process and discipline. The main psychological factors which have to be developed and internalized to create an enduring ethical consciousness in the individual and the community are as follows:
- Self-knowledge, self-control and self-mastery.
- Calm, peace and tranquility
- Ethical, emotional and aesthetic intelligence, which has an intuitive sensitivity to higher values like truth, beauty, goodness, harmony, unity.
- Faculties and qualities of Will and the Vital force like firmness, persistence, strength, courage, enthusiasm, energy, which are essential for manifesting these values in work, life and action.
- Kindness, compassion and generosity.
- Integrity, which means in a psychological perspective harmonious integration of thought, feeling, will and action around a higher ideal.

In other words, calm, clarity and understanding in the mind, kindness, compassion and generosity in the heart, firmness, strength and self-mastery in the will, courage, energy and force in the vitality, aspiration for truth, beauty, and goodness in the soul, and an integrated personality, these are the contours of a fully developed self-governing consciousness, what is called as "Strength of Character."

These traits of character described above have to be internalized through a systematic inner discipline. The first step is to have a clearly perceived self-transcending ideal in the moral, aesthetic or spiritual domain around which the whole being can be integrated. The other aspect of the discipline is a dual process of Aspiration-Rejection. Aspiration means a constant and persistent focusing of all the energies of our consciousness, thought, feeling and will on the ideal. The other aspect of aspiration is a conscious and deliberate cultivation of thoughts, emotions, qualities and virtues and capacities which are in harmony with the ideal or which builds the strength of character. The third aspect of the discipline is rejection, a catharsis, throwing off of all thoughts, feelings, and impulses which are contrary or hostile to the ideal or which pushes us towards unethical action like for example greed, selfishness or vengefulness. We have included calm and self-knowledge as part of the discipline, because someone who is calm and peaceful with an alert and vigilant self –awareness of his thoughts, feelings, impulses and motives is less likely to fall into unethical behaviour than the one who is agitated, restless and unconscious.

However this is only one of the paths. There are also other paths. For example there are paths which doesn't require an ideal. In this path, we simply observe with a vigilant, alert, and detached inner sensitivity our inner movements and try to feel concretely their inner consequences, like for example what are the thought, feeling, sensations or impulse which bring light, peace, joy, harmony, understanding or compassion and conversely the other movements which darken the mind and leads to the opposite. When this discipline is pursued in the right way, it leads to a spontaneous catharsis of negative movement and an equally spontaneous flowering of positive virtues.

This is the psychological discipline for building a balanced, self-governing consciousness which has to become an integral part of the corporate education and training programmes for the management student, practicing executive, corporate leaders and also other workers in the lower levels of the corporate hierarchy.

CREATING THE RIGHT ENVIRONMENT

The consciousness approach, which we are discussing cannot be exclusively internal because the outer environment has an influences and impact on the consciousness. We have to create an outer environment favourable to the growth of the self-governing consciousness and felicitates its self-expression in the outer life. The outer environment includes the material, organizational, social and political environment made of buildings and space, laws and rules, policies, procedures, incentive and practices and many other factors related to the management of the outer life.

The material environment should evoke gentle, pleasant, harmonious sensations in people, which is conducive to ethical and aesthetic development. In the organizational level, there must be active encouragement to ethical, aesthetic or spiritual innovation and excellence. The present motivational strategies in the corporate world encourage only techno-economic innovation and excellence. But for the higher evolution of the corporate world, there must be equal encouragement to what we may call as "value-innovation and excellence" in the mental, ethical, aesthetic and spiritual domain or in other words, there must be something like quality circles for promoting higher values. Workers and employees must be encouraged to offer suggestions on how to make the collective organism more true, beautiful, harmonious, compassionate, creative, progressive. In this task, the house-magazine and the intranet of the organization can be of great help in disseminating higher values in the organization through dialogue, discussion and creative participation. For example, the house-journal of the organization may publish articles, which help in widening the intellectual, ethical and spiritual horizons of the mind. Similarly professional magazines, apart from technical and specialized knowledge related to the specific professional discipline, should also

contain a few articles, which help in the mental, moral and spiritual growth of people or the professional activity. For a professional is first of all an evolving human being, and only secondarily an engineer, accountant or a manager.

At the governmental level, there must be more incentives for organizations, which display genuine ethical, social and ecological responsibility. The government has to create a political environment in which organizations, which are governed by higher values acquire a competitive edge over those which are unethical, insensitive, irresponsible.

SELF-TRANSFORMING LEADERSHIP

Governance is the function of leadership. Most of the modern management thinking on leadership is about outer governance or "organizational transformation". But as the Indian thought repeatedly emphasized self-government, Swarajya is the foundation for governing the outer world, Samrajya. Similarly self-transformation is the basis for outer transformation. Someone who cannot govern himself cannot govern others. And someone who is governing himself with higher values can evoke, inspire and induce a similar aspiration and effort in others.

This principle applies equally to organizational change and transformation. Whatever difficulty faced by a leader in her outer life is a reflection of the difficulty within her. If she is able to discover and mend the inner source of the difficulty within her then the outer difficulty sooner, or later tends to resolve itself. As the Mother of Sri Aurobindo Ashram points out: "whatever the external circumstances, they are without exception, the objective projection of what is inside yourself. When in your work you find something giving trouble outside, look within and you will find in yourself the corresponding difficulty. Change yourself and the circumstance will change" (Mother, 2003).

In the same manner, whatever change the leader wants to bring out in his organization, if he is able to achieve this change within him or makes a sincere effort towards it, then it becomes easier to enforce the change in the organization. Interestingly this concept of self-

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transforming leadership is beginning to be recongnised in modern management.

SELF-GOVERNANCE: GUIDELINES FOR SELF-ASSESSMENT

Let us now examine how a leader can self-examine his capacity of self-governance.

The traditional method of self-assessment used in modern research methodology is "Questionnaire". The first question we have to ask is what the purpose of the questionnaire is? If it is to assess the degree of self-governance achieved by an individual, then the traditional method of questionnaire with Yes/No answers, is not only ineffective but can also be misleading. For a psychological and subjective phenomenon like self-governance, the right approach would be to provide some broad guidelines or signpost for self-assessment.

Effective self-governance requires three factors: first is consciousness, alertness, vigilance, awareness; second is inner detachment or stepping back; third is firmness and sincerity in the Will. Every individual can assess his "self-government index" in terms of these three factors.

Lack of consciousness and alertness in the mind is one of the major factors behind loss of control. An external stimuli like a temptation or an insult, produces an inner reaction like anger. If we are not sufficiently conscious and alert there is no gap for reflection between inner reaction and outer behaviour. The inner reaction is instantly converted into behaviour. On the other hand, if we are conscious and alert, and able to become aware of the inner reaction the moment it raises, then it provides the needed gap for reflection and ask the question: "Is this the right reaction? What will be the consequences if I act out over this impulse?" In fact, the very awareness of the inner reaction, if it is sufficiently clear, full, detached, will dissolve the reaction or give the insight for right action. So the first question is "How conscious and alert am I of my inner reactions?"

Our human mind has the ability to stand back and watch its own movements as a detached witness. This is one of the main levers for effective self-governance. If the first step towards self-government is

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to become aware, the second step is to step back from the reaction or what we are aware of and disidentify from it, telling, "This movement is happening in me. But I am not in it." So the next question is "How much or to what extent I am able to step back and detach myself from my inner reactions and movement."

However if the inner reactions or negativities or outer temptations are overwhelming or strong and obstinate with the force of past habits, consciousness and detachment are not enough. Here comes the importance of Will. There must be firm and sincere will for self-governance. Firmness means strength and determination in the resolve and also persistence and endurance in the effort, not to become discouraged or despondent by repeated failures, difficulty or struggle. Sincerity has two facets. The first one is to constantly strive for harmony between our thought, feeling, will and actions and organize them harmoniously around our highest ideal. The second is to resolutely reject all that is contrary to this harmony or our ideals, especially not to justify or rationalize negative attitudes or feelings or weaknesses or temptations. So the third question is "How much firm and sincere am I in my will."

BUILDING A SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY

There is one more important function of self-governing leadership. It is to create a self-governing and sustainable community. The concept of sustainability has now been accepted by all progressive thinkers in environment and development studies. However, if we may redefine sustainable development as the path which leads to the safe evolution of humanity towards its highest destiny, then sustainability cannot be confined to the ecology of physical Nature or green issues. There is something like social, psychological and spiritual sustainability.

Is there a standard of principles, like the gold standard in economics, which can help us in choosing or shaping the values which can steer the sustainable evolution of the human society or a community towards its highest destiny? There are certain principles discovered by the higher mind or the collective wisdom of humanity in its progressive evolution. It is a quaternary: Liberty, Equality, Fraternity and Progress.

These values are neither Eastern nor Western, modern or ancient. They are in their essence, as Sri Aurobindo points out "the eternal attributes of the Spirit" in man which means intrinsic qualities of the human soul (Aurobindo, 1972). However they have an inner as well as an outer dimension. The modern secular mind of the west has understood these principles in its outer economic, social and political significance. On the other hand the spiritual mind of the East laid a much greater emphasis on their inner significance. For a sustainable evolution of the community, we need a social synthesis which embraces both the inner and outer dimensions of this quaternary of value, but with an emphasis on the inner awakening of these values in the consciousness of people.

However we should not get trapped in the either-or syndrome of the human mind. The inner awakening and outer actualization of these quaternary of values are not mutually exclusive. The path towards inner awakening requires education and inner discipline based on the principles of Yoga. The external actualization requires proper organization of the outer life. Both can be pursued simultaneously in a synergic manner through a triune process. The first and the most important task is to understand the deeper and inner significance of these values and create an inner awakening in the minds and hearts of people. The second, as this inner realization proceeds, allow it to express itself freely in the outer life from within outwards. The third is to create an outer organization and environment which felicitates this inner awakening and its outer expression. Let us now explore how to implement these values in the corporate life.

UNLEASHING LIBERTY

The first important requirement here is empowering people which means liberating and energizing people with minimum rules and maximum freedom-what the management guru Tom Peters called as "Liberation Management" (Peters, 1992). This will require creation of an organizational culture in which each individual is given sufficient freedom and opportunity to think, initiate, decide, organize, achieve, learn and progress towards his (or her) highest potentials and express his potentialities in his work-life. But this outer liberty is not enough.

For the future evolution of the corporate world this outer liberty has to be reinforced by an inner liberty from greed, violence, lust, selfishness and other negativities in emotions, and attachment to false, one-sided, partial and outdated dogmas, beliefs, ideas and ideals in thought. This inner freedom is not merely a matter morality or idealism. It has pragmatic consequences for the corporate world. This inner liberty will open our heart and mind to deeper sources of innovation, creativity and sensitivity to higher values and felicitates the flowering of emotional and intuitive intelligence.

CREATING EQUITY

True equity involves awakening each individual in the organization to the equal dignity or divinity of the human essence, irrespective of the position and status in the social hierarchy or variation in capacities and other external factors. Next we need to Promote Distributive Justice, which means equitable distribution of wealth, power, knowledge, information, culture and the fruits of development in the community. We must note here equitable does not mean equal. Perfect equality of distribution is neither possible nor desirable in the economic, social and political life. There can be equal access to resources and opportunities like knowledge, information, education or training and other opportunities for growth and learning. But the reward system has to be based on capacity and contribution. Further there is need to Create an equitable reward system, which means each individual gets the reward he (or she) deserves according to his capacities, creativity or the nature and quality of his contribution to the organizational goals or to the well-being and progress of the group.

Levels of hierarchy have to be reduced. This will enable free flow of information and interaction between various levels of the organization. This would also involve sharing of wealth and profits in such a way that there is no large disparity between the higher and lower income groups in the organization. This feeling and effort towards equity should extend beyond the organizational community to the larger economic and social environment, which means, there must be a conscious effort

towards creating an equitable and inclusive social order in the world around.

FORGING FRATERNITY

There also a need to create a sense of inner and outer unity and solidarity among people-between management and employees, among employees, and with other stakeholders like customers, supplies and the community and finally with humanity and nature. Professional teamwork, pragmatic interdependence, shared values and ideals can create a certain amount of outer fraternity. But for a more enduring unity, we have to create an inner fraternity based on a deeper emotional and psychological solidarity among people. To achieve this, groups like customer, suppliers or employees should not be considered as abstract or professional categories with whom we enter into an impersonal or contractual relation. They have to be viewed as living human beings with inner and outer needs and aspiration and with whom we enter into an intimate personal relation.

So do we with Nature. Man is part of Nature not only physically but also psychologically and spiritually. So Nature has to be viewed not merely as a physical and biological organism but a living conscious Being or a Universal Force of the Spirit, with a physical, psychological and spiritual dimension. The integral aim of ecology is attunement of human consciousness and life with universal Nature in all the dimensions of our being-material, psychological and spiritual.

PROMOTING THE PROGRESSIVE EVOLUTION OF THE INDIVIDUAL AND THE ORGANISATION

We should be responsible for creating a system of Education and Motivation, which leads to the progressive evolution of the individual and the organization from the physical, vital and the mental to the spiritual dimensions of consciousness. Each individual has to be awakened to the highest spiritual goals and aims of life. But for practical motivation each individual has to be taken as he/she is in his/her present condition and helped to take the next higher step in evolution and a step towards his spiritual destiny, like for example from physical to vital, from vital to mental and from mental to the spiritual. Making

a conscious effort to constantly enhance the capacities, creativity and contribution of employees through continuous education, a training and co creation or partnership.

The organization as a whole has to be steered toward higher and higher levels of growth by reorienting the goals of the organization towards deeper, higher and more inclusive vision, values and ideals. For example, stakeholder value is a more inclusive ideal than shareholder value; creativity, innovation and knowledge-management is a deeper and higher ideal than efficiency and productivity; ecological and social responsibility is a higher ideal than profit-maximization for the company; similarly, employee wellbeing is a greater ideal than skill-development.

In this paradigm of corporate governance, full, harmonious and integral development of the human potential in the organization at all the levels of human consciousness-physical, vital, mental, moral, aesthetic and spiritual-and its harmonious and integral self-expression in the outer life is the aim of organizational development.

VALUES OF CORPORATE DHARMA

As a conclusive summary we are listing values, principles and guidelines which can help in manifesting the highest potentials of business.
• Creating wealth for the society through efficient, economic and productive utilization of resources
• Producing high quality products and services at minimum cost
• Delighting the customer
• Enhancing the quality of the larger economic, ecological and social environment through creative giving or sharing of wealth, knowledge, skill, expertise and resources with the community
• Employee development not only in terms of skill, knowledge and creativity but also in terms of material, mental, moral and spiritual well-being of the employees
• Truth, honesty and transparency in all dealings
• Mutual trust and goodwill among the members of the organizational community

- Fairness and justice in dealing with employee grievances
- Patience, understanding and compassion in dealing with ethical, professional and personal problems among employees
- Creating mutually beneficial win-win situation in all transactions
- Creativity, innovation and continuous improvement in every activity of the corporate life and progressive perfection in work
- Beauty and harmony in the equipment and organization of the material and economic life of the company
- Progressive growth of liberty, equity and fraternity in the social and political life of the organization
- Promoting self-knowledge, self-management, compassion and service as primary leadership qualities
- Cultivating inner Peace and providing reasonable outer Security, acting as anchors of stability in a sea of change
- Providing sufficient rest, relaxation, leisure and inner and outer space to people for reflection, renewal and growth

For every area of activity for an individual in the organization whether finance, marketing or manufacturing etc., there should be some clearly defined professional, ethical, aesthetic and spiritual standards or ideals of perfection towards which the person has to progress continually with a constant uplifting aspiration and effort.

The organization should facilitate triune integration (described earlier) of the body, mind, heart, will and action of the individual around a dharmic ideal or the spiritual core of the individual being. Integration is required at various levels; of the personal and professional life of the employee and of the material, techno-economic, social, political and cultural life of the organization around its mission, vision and values. All these in turn derived from dharma.

Such an organizational environment should have an effective system of education, discipline and communication for internalizing the appropriate values in the consciousness of people. Correspondingly, there is a need to create a system of measurement, monitoring and implementation for materializing them in the outer life. And finally when all these values and principles are progressively actualized in the

corporate life, profit and shareholder values follow as a spontaneous and inevitable result.

Note

Some portions of the article are reproduced from the author's own blog available at www.integralmusings.aurosociety.org/.

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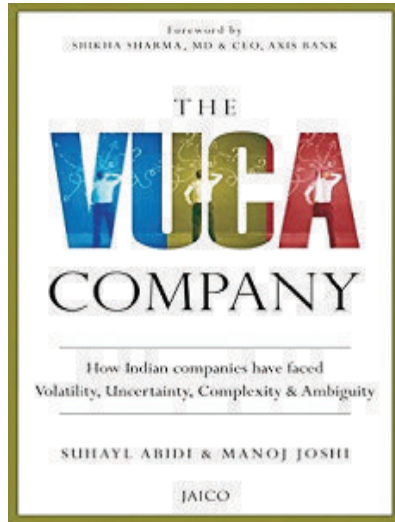
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Book Review

The VUCA Company

Issac K. Varghese*

THE VUCA COMPANY

Suhayl Abidi and Dr. Manoj Joshi.
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283 + 350.

Globalization has enabled companies to treat world as its market place.
While companies get access to markets across the globe, they are also
susceptible to competition from global companies. Global markets
have become interconnected; however they are prone to unpredict-
ability. A rapidly changing chaotic environment has become a norm
rather than an exception. 'The only Thing that is Constant is Change'
(Heraclitus). Turbulence is, therefore, expected when varying cultures,

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ideologies trade with each other. This turbulence can be explained by the new word or coinage-VUCA (Volatitly, Uncertainty, Complexity & Ambiguity). Indian companies doing trade have also faced VUCA. In this book under review the authors explain this acronym' VUCA' with relevant examples and are able to well connect with their audience. The authors' attempt in this book is to identify behavioral aspects of failures, where systems or structures have played a substantial role.

This book is divided into six chapters. Authors begin with an 'Introduction' in which they talk about VUCA, and the reasons for setting out on writing 'another'book on corporate failures. The second chapter titled 'VUCA was always there' takes us through various instances in history to show the readers that VUCA has been existing though the term had not yet been coined. The third chapter is on 'Indian Cases in VUCA failure. The detailed research on 12 cases of Indian corporate failures forms the body of this chapter. The next chapter is aptly a discussion on 'Why firms fail'. The penultimate chapter is used to educate readers about the fact that 'Failure of performance is Failure of Learning'. The book concludes by enlisting the 'Learnings in the VUCA Company'.

Usage of relevant lessons in history has helped authors in setting the context very well. For instance, the reasons for the end of the Persian Empire, foundation of the Mogul Empire by Babur after initial failures, East India Company's glorious rise and its decline, disruptive technologies and their role in making or breaking business houses, liberalization in 1990s etc. set the stage for discussion of cases in the Indian context.

The common usage of the term 'VUCA' began in the 1990s and it is derived from military vocabulary. Launching of economic reforms since 1991 boosted the Indian economy. Many sectors witnessed rapid growth. The flow of global funds also helped many Indian companies. But it also resulted in some cases uncontrolled growth and expansions in unrelated areas (e.g. Sree Renuka Sugars). Those of the companies which have not been engineered to sustain rapid growth rate started to face problems. Their woes were subsequently compounded by global recession. The book examines in depth 12 cases in which promising companies faced losses in subsequent years.

Authors have used these cases to identify two major reasons for such failures- Human or Behavioral Causes and Systemic or Organizational Causes. For example the case of Vijay Mallya who kept referring to an 'illusionary investor' or the courage shown by Jain Irrigation in apologizing to its shareholders for misjudgments helps the readers in learning about various methods of managing turbulent times. Authors attribute the human or behavioral causes of failures to hubris, lack of awareness, missing early signals of trouble and problem of rationalizing. Uncontrolled or speedy growth, synergy failures, resource management failures, dynamic capability acquisition failures have been appropriately considered by the authors as Systemic or Organizational Causes.

These cases of failures have been used in this book to highlight dysfunctional learning environment. It endears itself to its readers by enlisting the learnings from such failures. Adaptability is the key to success in an environment marked by constant flux. Learning can come from past experiences, from the present intelligence available to companies and also from future by means of experimentation. VUCA Environment is here to stay and will only increase in intensity. To survive in this new normal, organizations must do things differently. 'Failure is not a catastrophe but lack of learning from failure is'. The book has no doubt succeeded in explaining reasons of failures in the cases which have been included. Learnings from these failures have helped the authors of the book to rechristen definition of VUCA acronym to Vision, Understanding, Clarity and Agility.

Nitte National Conference
Market, State and Society in Emerging India
December 29 - 30, 2013

A National Conference was held at JKSHIM, Nitte on December 29-30, 2013 on the theme **Market, State and Society in Emerging India**. The Conference had interdisciplinary dimensions combining Management Science, Economics, Commerce, History, Political Science, Ethics and Sociology. Inaugurating the Conference on December 29, Prof. Vinod Vyasulu, Founder Director, Centre for Budget and Policy Studies, Bangalore and Advisor at Centre for Information Technology and Public Policy, Bangalore said that "Globlisation brings in immense pressure on societies and states. It makes our problems wicked. How we navigate these complex forces will determine where we go". Pointing out that corruption leads to huge range of ills, he argued that the State should not abdicate its responsibility to govern properly and regulate the market forces effectively.

Prof. Vinod Vyasulu addressing

Sri N. Vinaya Hegde, Chancellor, Nitte University in his presidential address made a strong case for quality higher education in India. The State or the Government should shoulder the responsibility of supporting higher education for raising the rate of economic growth and also for ensuring inclusive growth.

Mr. Vishal Hegde, the Trustee of Nitte Education Trust was a guest of honor in the valedictory session of the Conference held on December 30, 2013. Bringing out the significance of both the state and the market in India, he pointed out the need for active and socially oriented administrative machinery.

Mr. Vishal Hegde speaking

Mr. Jagadeesh Kini, an industrialist from Bangalore, delivered valedictory address. In his opinion, the State or the Government is not able to play its role effectively in emerging India because corruption is wide spread. He gave a call to the younger generation to save democracy and to pave the way for a strong economy which can face the challenges of globalization successfully.

Mr. Jagadeesh Kini observing

Dr. N. K. Thingalaya, Chairman, Academic Council, JKSHIM in his presidential address delivered at the valedictory session pointed out the limitations and failures of the market and the state with instances and evidences.

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