

# Bringing Change in the Study of Management through Literature

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**Abstract**—The study of management can be enriched with the help of literary writings like drama, poetry, novels and short stories written by wise minds can be fruitful in extracting and building theories of management. This paper focuses on the play of Shakespeare and the couplets of Indian medieval poet Rahim, who has famous for his aphoristic writings. The paper also considers the philosophical writings of India, which have helped in formulating different theories in different fields. India has been a land of immense cultural virtuosity which is reflected in its normal management practices. This paper explores the role of the Indian epistemology as exemplified in its creative writings and other cultural forms of expression in the study of management sciences. It is our hypothesis that the study of Management, especially in the Indian context, can be further enriched by exposing it to the ethical and cultural values in the curriculum. With the help of literary works and an analysis of the folk wisdom available in the form of epithets and aphorisms, we have concluded that a new theory based on Indian philosophy of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam (the whole world as one family) can be supplemented to the existing scholarship on the management studies which, with its humanitarian approach, will broaden the scope and aim of this area of study.

**Keywords:** Wisdom, Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, Culture, Management Studies

## 1. INTRODUCTION

“Wisdom is like a baobab tree; a single person’s hand cannot embrace it” (Sawhney 2004). Wisdom can be seen as a cognitive process, or a peculiar way of obtaining and processing information; as a virtue, or socially valued pattern of behaviour; and as a good, or personally desirable state or condition (Sternberg 1990). Folk wisdom is present in the proverbs, poetry, songs, stories, rhymes, and religions of all culture (Lopez 2011). Folk wisdom may vary from place to place, but it has a common message. The writers of this creative literature their own perspective to life and they transform it into their writings. The Oxford English Dictionary defines Folk wisdom as a body of knowledge and experience that originates from the beliefs and opinions of ordinary people (Simpson 1989). Folk wisdom is inherently conservative whereas philosophy has to be critically reflective (Curnow 2015).

## 1.1. Wisdom through Indian Folktales

The term folklore was coined in 1846 by the English antiquarian William John Thoms, to take the place of the rather awkward expression popular antiquities. Folklore, on the other hand, limits itself to a study of the unrecorded traditions of the people as they appear in popular fiction, custom and belief, magic and ritual (Krappe 2013). The narratives as a folktale give us an understanding of attitudes towards social groups. The tales are more than a narrated sequence of events, and meanings are generated not only linguistically, but also contextually (Naithani 2006). Stories are a way of understanding the underlying operating principles behind organizational communication and learning. The majority of management literature on stories places emphasis on characterizing stories as vehicle of communication. The communicating power of stories lies in their role as a tool for listening and reflecting. Stories also demystify the way in which in which our mind synthesize information in order to produce new insights and learning (Gargiulo 2014).

## 2. CONCEPT OF VASUDHAIVE KUTUMBAKAM AND THE ORIGIN AS WELL AS TRANSMISSION OF THE SHLOKA THROUGH THE PERIODS OF HINDU HISTORY

“Ayam Bandhurayam Neti Ganana Laghu Chetasam. Udaara Charitaanaam Tu Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam.” Only small men discriminate saying: One is relative; the other is stranger. For those who live magnanimously, the entire world constitutes but a family – Maha Upanishad (Chapter6, Verse72)

This verse is engraved in the entrance hall of the Indian Parliament. A global society has to develop global consciousness for peaceful and harmonious existence. The prevailing global economy has to be endowed with a human touch. The global economic and commercial orientation, with its heavy materialistic and consumerist focus, resulting in pursuit of self- Interest and exploitation fo men, nations, and nature, has to give place to ideal of (Vasudhaive Kutumbakam) where individuals and collective interests complement each other (Shah 2013).

## 2.2. The benefits of this Hindu philosophy and its application in organization Management

1. Building trust among the employees.
2. Decreasing the ratio of conflicts.
3. Developing trust.
4. Strengthens the interpersonal relations.
5. Performance increases
6. Helps in building self-confidence in employees.
7. Motivation increases.
8. Time is managed and projects are completed before time.
9. Collective work helps in attaining Interpersonal goals and organizational goal.
10. Social responsibility can be better pay off.

## 3. THE CONCLUSIONS FROM THE LITERARY WORKS OF SHAKESPEARE RELATED TO MANAGEMENT

We can get the leadership lessons from the plays of Shakespeare. Shakespeare builds the personality of his leaders to convince us how they survive for and carry and carry out leadership not as abstractions, but as individuals. Shakespeare demonstrated 400 years ago the different roles a leader can take and the different skills the leaders need. His plays are a master class of what leaders should and should not do (*Corrigan 1999*). We also find the emotional factor in the plays of Shakespeare, the tragedy he has defined in his plays. There are some qualities that make Shakespeare heroes tragic like the grand scale, the unconditional quality of their desire. It creates humanity inside the human being (*Dutton 2008*). Shakespeare has used the managerial terms in his various plays before the Management studies come as a discipline for the study. The oldest recorded use of word 'manager' is in Shakespeare's "Love's Labour's Lost" dating from 1558 and in 1880 the word 'management' appeared in writings by American engineers (*Hofstede 1993*).

## 4. WISDOM THROUGH COUPLETS OF MEDIEVAL 'SAINT RAHIM' AND THEIR RELEVANCE IN MANAGEMENT

Abdul Rahim Khan-e Khana (1556-1627) is an Indian Sufi poet popularly known as Rahim. He was among one of the nine Navratna's (Nine gems) of Akbar's court. He loved Indian civilization and has also an accomplished poet and an astrologer. He was a generous person and used to give alms to the poor and needy people (*Pande 2010*).

### 4.1. Some couplets of Rahim

जेहि रहीम मन आपनो कीन्हो चारु चकोर | नीसी-बसर लाग्यो रहे,  
कृष्णचंद्रा की ओर ||

1. Strong determination and will power.  
रहिमन कौ का करै, ज्वारी चोर लबार | जो पट रखन हर है, माखन  
चंखन हर ||

2. We should prepare our self before the crisis occurs.  
अमरबेती बिनु मूल की, प्रतिपलट है ताहि | रहिमन ऐसे प्रभुहि ताजी,  
खोजत फिरिए कही ||

3. When we are at right path and honest in our work, we do not have to worry about the success. It will come to us as we move ahead.

रहिमन देख बडेन को, लघु न दीजिये डारि। जहाँ काम आवै सुई, कहा  
करै तलवारि ||

4. Always appreciate all the workers and motivate them to perform well because a company can't move on its own.

बानी ऐसी बोलिये, मन का आपा खोय। औरन को सीतल करै, आपहु  
सीतल होय ||

5. This is very important to have good communication skills and a convincing power in the field of marketing.

तरुवर फल नहिं खात है, सरवर पियहि न पान। कहि रहीम पर काज  
हित, संपति सँचहि सुजान ||

6. It states that a leader should always give credit to his team workers and never feel proud.

बिगरी बात बनै नहीं, लाख करौं किन कोय | रहिमन फाटे दूध को,  
मथे न माखन होय |

7. We should not break relations over smaller issues in life and at work because once we lost something it is really hard to get back.

जो रहीम उत्तम प्रकृति, का करी सकत कुसंग | चन्दन विष व्यापत  
नहीं, लिपटे रहत भुजंग ||

8. Always follow good company in life because it really helpful in making our character. (*Vagdev 2011*).

## 5. IMPORTANCE OF PROVERBS (WORDS OF WISDOM) IN MODERN WORLD

A proverb is an expression which, owing its birth to the people, testifies to its origin in the form and phrase. Some proverbs have both a literal and figurative meaning, either of which makes perfect sense; but more often they have but one of the two. (*Whiting 1932*)

Indian proverbs are the religious and philosophical aphorisms, always attributed to some bhagat, or saint, which so nearly approach the former as to be almost indistinguishable from them. Proverbs and sayings are often capable of more than one application, and in different localities, they are used in different senses (*Fallon 1886*). Proverbs are in fact everywhere, and it is exactly their ubiquity that has led scholars from many disciplines to study them from classical times to the modern age (*Mieder 2004*).

### 5.1. Some proverbs related to Management

1. The performance of the person will largely depend on the purpose of doing the work.
2. The first impression is the last impression. So behave very carefully in your first meeting with the person.
3. Before taking a decision, examine thoroughly the consequences.
4. Even a smallest fellow has some usefulness and utility, do not discard them.
5. Keep your eyes always open for knowledge and new ideas/innovation etc.
6. In a business like in life trade cycle is a regular phenomenon, one will not stay on top forever. Similarly with sincere efforts one can move from bottom to top.
7. Make a choice of the right words.
8. Keep enough patience to get the benefit of your performance.
9. Tactful response protects the prestige of business houses.
10. Positive thinkers are the ultimate winners (*Dadhich 2014*).

### 6. CONCLUSION

Literature is a wonderful source of learning. We read, learn and apply practices advised by intellectual and sensitive minds through their literary works – novels, short stories, poems, and different other forms practiced by them, contain a reservoir of knowledge that can be immensely helpful for different classes of people. Every action of a human being must have its genesis in the form of a thought which is influenced by several factors. With their typical organisation and creativity, literary works often turn out to be transformative to both our thoughts as well as actions. With the help of the above mentioned works, we have concluded that creative writings can be helpful in understanding and analysing the concepts of Management while their role in supplying the solutions to the problems should be significantly considered. Through the study of literary works one can discover a link between its roots in the tradition and culture, and incorporate them for gaining relevant wisdom.

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