

**MANAGEMENT THOUGHT, SOCIAL DISCOURSE AND
MANAGEMENT EDUCATION: TOWARDS DEVELOPING HOLISTIC PROFESSIONALS ***

Subhash Sharma

During recent years there has been a transition from language of 'isms' to the language of values. The new language of values finds its expression in three paradigms of development viz. economic development, sustainable development and holistic development. These three paradigms are linked with 'Total Values Chain' concept wherein market values, social values and spiritual values constitute three important components of the values chain. Market values are represented by profit, competition and self-interest (pcs) worldview of life. Management thought is largely rooted in this worldview. These values also constitute the foundational premise of management education. Social values are represented by justice, rights and duties (jrd) and these values constitute an important element of social discourse. Spiritual values are represented by love, compassion and devotion (lcd) and these values also capture the essence of humanistic values in a society. These three sets of values viz. market values, social values and spiritual values influence the individuals, society and its institutions in varying ways. This model of values could also be referred to as 'Tripod model' of values. While market values emphasize efficiency, social values emphasize equity, the spiritual values emphasize ethics. Since, management thought and thereby management education is largely rooted in market values approach to life, it leads to creation of professionals with a narrow vision of the world based on 'consumeristic' worldview. While it emphasizes 'core competence' (Prahlad, 1992), it does not care much about the 'character competence of the corporation' (Sharma, 2002). Thus, there is a need to expand the horizons of management thought and management education by including social discourse as an important element of the thought process. This implies the need for developing holistic professionals embedded in a new vision of a new harmony through a new blending and balancing between utilitarian, egalitarian and ethicitarian worldviews of life, society and its organizations. In the following discussion, we present certain frameworks that help us in articulating the new social discourse and its implications for management thought.

Frameworks for Social Discourse

To consider linkages between management thought and social discourse, we need to have foundational frameworks that can help us in establishing the linkages. We refer to these frameworks as WWED frameworks as they were initially suggested by this author in his book *Management in New Age: Western Windows Eastern Doors* (WWED) and have been subsequently extended and expanded. These frameworks are rooted in an "integrative approach" wherein seemingly contradictory viewpoints lead to a new reconciliation and a new worldview. We will explore the implications of these frameworks for a 'new corporate model' and thereby for management education.

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WWED Framework - I Holistic View of Growth, Development & Progress (GDP)

It was earlier indicated that there are three paradigm of development viz. economic development, sustainable development and holistic development. While economic development paradigm is rooted in the pcs worldview, the sustainable development paradigm includes environmental and equity considerations in its fold. The holistic development paradigm takes us a step further by including the spiritual dimension of life as an important aspect. In the holistic view of development, the 3Es of efficiency, equity and ethics are integrated together under the overarching construct of transcendental concerns of spirituality and related issues such as environment, women's equality, psycho-spiritual advancement, etc. This WWED holistic development framework for creating a 'sacro-civic' society is presented in Fig.1.

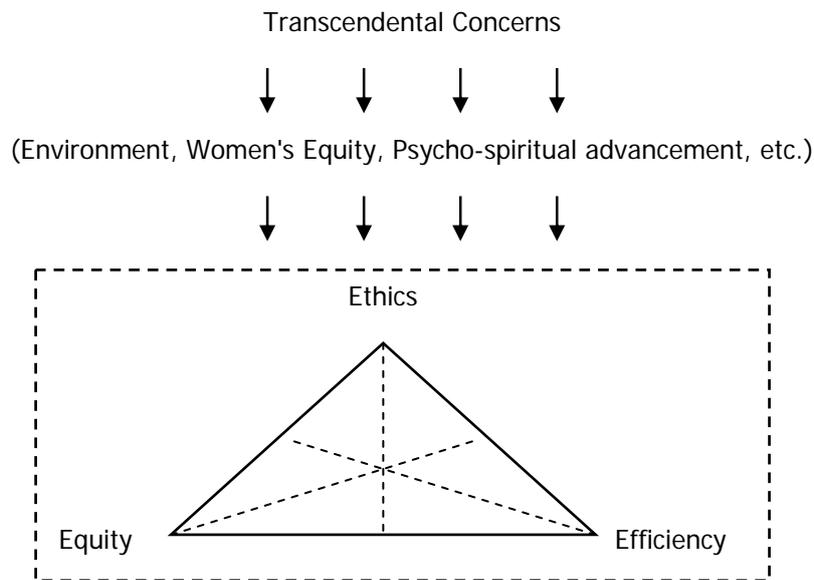


Fig.1: Holistic Development Framework (WWED, 1996, p.91)

While capitalistic vision was rooted entirely in the efficiency model and socialistic vision in equity model, the holistic vision takes us beyond these two visions through the synergy model wherein aim is to achieve synergy between efficiency, equity and ethics. This framework provides us a basis for deriving, 'principles of holistic management'. It also provides a philosophical integration of three prominent social thinkers viz. Adam Smith, who stands for efficiency model, Marx who stands for equity model and Gandhi who stands for ethics model of society and its institutions.

The framework presented in Fig.1 can also be metaphorically represented through the idea of 'Three Wisemen Walking on an Indian Road'. The three wisemen are internationally acknowledged social thinkers with profound influence on society. The first wiseman walking on the right side of the road was Adam Smith with his followers viz. corporate managers in suit and ties representing the managerial class. The second wiseman walking on the left side of the road was Karl Marx with a long line of factory workers following him. The third wiseman was Mahatma Gandhi walking in the middle of the road and leading the other two and also leading the activists from NGOs, workers from the unorganized sectors, co-operative movement leaders, etc. People on the right side of the road were chanting mantras of globalization, profit, competition, self-interest (pcs), and pco (profit, competition & opportunities), survival of the fittest, etc. People on the left side of the road were chanting mantras of equity, empowerment, entitlement, co-operation, wealth sharing, justice, rights &

duties (jrd), etc. Rest of the people were chanting mantras of ethics, harmony, good governance, dharma, social responsibility and love, compassion & devotion (lcd), etc. Since, this was an Indian road the three wise-men were being led by the Indian spiritual MBA (Mahavira, Buddha & Aurobindo), to provide a touch of transcendental concerns for day to day existence. While watching this metaphorical procession, this author realized the importance and relevance of the same for holistic development of individuals, organizations, societies and nations and felt that management education could draw some lessons from the same.

WWED Framework - II Towards Eco-Sattavik Worldview

In the contemporary scientific discourse, metaphorically represented by 'Western Windows' there are broadly three types of worldviews or windows, namely the mechanistic, the quantum and the ecological or cosmic. In the first, human beings have to fit into the larger scene of the universe, which is seen as clockwork. The quantum view alters our understanding of human beings and views them as a 'participator', rather than a mere cog in the wheel. The ecological, eco or cosmic view makes us aware about our responsibilities towards the environment and other living beings. In Indian psycho-philosophy metaphorically represented by 'Eastern Doors', nature / matter displays three properties or gunas viz. Tamasik, Rajasik and Sattavik broadly representing three types of energies viz. Negergy or Negative energy or Tamasik energy, Kinetic energy or Rajasik energy and Synergy or Sattavik energy. These energies represent the three 'Eastern Doors'. Fig.2 juxtaposes the mechanistic, quantum and ecological / cosmic world views with the tamasik, rajasik and sattavik properties of matter and suggests a need to move towards eco-sattavik philosophy of life, society and its institutions.

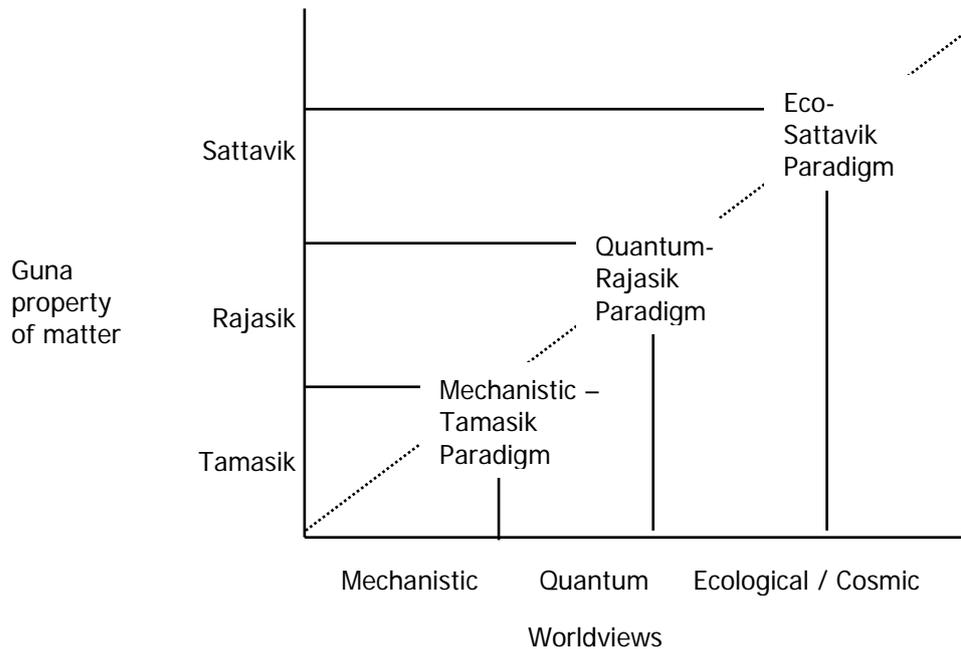


Fig.2: Towards Eco-Sattavik Paradigm (WWED, 1996, p.119)

Mechanistic-tamasik worldview is essentially a transactional approach to life rooted in economic perspective reflected through profit, competition & self-interest (pcs) approach. Rajasik-quantum worldview represents transformational approach rooted in humanist – perspective reflected through justice, rights & duties (jrd) approach representing 'secular humanism'. Eco-sattavik worldview represents transcendental approach to life rooted in

'spiritual humanism' and 'cosmic humanism' and is based on love, compassion & devotion (Icd) towards every living and non-living entity. The framework suggests that there is a need to create paradigm shift from mechanistic-tamasik or economic-transactional view of the world to quantum-rajasic or humanistic-transformational and ultimately to eco-sattavik or spiritualistic-transcendental perspective. In fact, a transition from mechanistic-tamasik worldview has been taking place and this transition is also reflected in terms of new phrases and jargons in social sciences in general and management in particular. For example, leadership literature now extensively talks about transformational leadership and equity. The concept of 'Profit, People & Planet' in the corporate context has led to the concept of 'triple bottom line'. Earlier, corporates never asked the question, 'Who is your neighbour'. Hence, they polluted the neighbourhood to enhance their bottom-lines. Now they are concerned with people as well as environment. This is a pointer to movement towards eco-sattavik worldview. Happiness, peace, prosperity are the new catch phrases to guide the society and its institutions. They represent transcendental worldview.

WWED Framework - III The Discourse Dynamics in Society

There are following four fundamental concepts that determine social discourse in a society:

- 1) Survival of the Fittest (Darwin)
- 2) Survival of the Weakest (Mahatma Gandhi)
- 3) Survival of the Uniquist (With origin in USP concept)
- 4) Arrival of the Best (Lord Krishna)

'Survival of the fittest' has been a dominant idea since the days of Darwin. It is rooted in the conflict model of nature and struggle for survival. Though Kautilya also talked about the 'law of the fishes', wherein 'big fish eats the small fish', he suggested that in a civilized society, it is the duty of the King / leader to provide protection to the small fish. Thus, originated the concept of the 'survival of the weakest', which later was well articulated by Gandhi in his famous Talisman. We also hear the echoes of the idea of 'survival of the weakest' in biblical quote 'meek shall inherit the earth'. However, Kautilya suggested positive action on the part of the king to protect the weakest. It may be indicated that Kautilyan & Gandhian thoughts lead us to the idea of, "Duty of the fittest" to ensure, survival of the weakest. In addition to the concepts of survival of the fittest and survival of the weakest, we also have the concept of 'survival of the uniqueness', which emphasizes the uniqueness and creativity dimensions of human beings. This concept has its roots in the marketing concept of USP (Unique Selling Proposition) as well as the strategic management concept of USP (Unique Strategic Positioning). Further, from Gita, we have the concept of the 'arrival of the best to lead the rest' derived from a well known sloka, *yada yada hi dharmasya....*

In every society, there are four types of ideas simultaneously circulating among the 'chattering classes'. While one set of intellectuals talk in terms of 'survival of the fittest' reflecting the pcs (profit, competition & self-interest) approach, others talk in terms of 'survival of the weakest' reflecting the jrd (justice, rights & duties) approach. The third set of intellectuals talk in terms of 'survival of the uniqueness', reflecting creative and innovative worldview for the development and progress of humanity. The fourth set of intellectuals talk in terms of 'arrival of the best' emphasizing the ethical and spiritual perspective reflecting the Icd (love, compassion & devotion) approach. There is a continuing interaction among these four discourses leading to a debate that is sometime tilted in favour of one side or the other. For a new social vision, a balanced approach is need. Fig.3 represents the cognitive space that four ideas strive to occupy in the discourse dynamics and a balanced view of this dynamics.

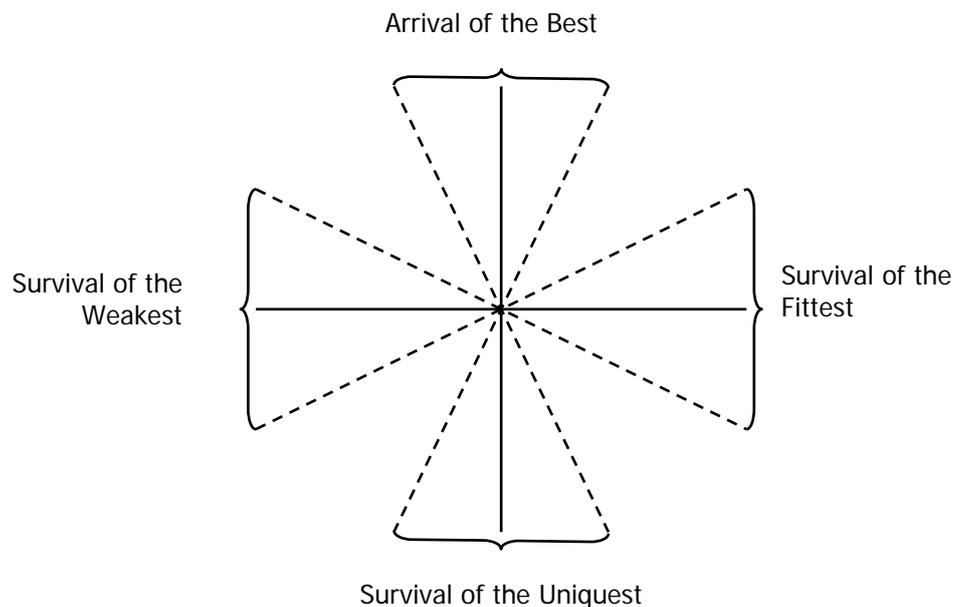


Fig.3: Discourse Dynamics in The Society (WWED, 1996, p.216)

**Implications for Management Thought:
Need for A New Corporate Model**

WWED frameworks presented above help us in understanding the evolving role of corporates. Corporates have undergone an evolutionary process in four stages. The traditional corporate model rooted in the capitalistic vision was centred around the key concepts of competition, efficiency and profit. Its primary objective was to maximize the wealth of the shareholders by maximizing profits. Subsequently the model evolved into multiple stakeholder model as it was recognized that there are many stakeholders besides shareholders. These included employees, customers, suppliers, Government and society at large. This was their second stage of evolution. In their third stage of evolution, the corporates have been conceptualized as corporate citizens. Hence, the expectation of ethics and environment concerns has gained importance. Corporates are expected to follow the 'principles of ethical business' and not merely 'principles of business'. In their fourth stage of evolution, corporates have become 'social institutions' with a dominant influence on society. Hence, the expectations have further gone up and corporates are expected to achieve synergy between efficiency, equity and ethics. While stage I model was largely an efficiency model. In stage II model equity concerns were incorporated and in stage III model, ethics were also considered important for conduct of business. Now in their stage IV evolution, as social institutions, corporates are expected to achieve an appropriate balance between efficiency, equity and ethics and also be concerned with transcendental values of environment, women's equity, psycho-spiritual advancement, etc. This is the new age model of corporates wherein corporates are viewed as social institutions and not merely business entities.

In consonance with the social discourse framework, corporates have to deal with all the four elements of social discourse. These elements have their corporate equivalence in terms of competition ("survival of the fittest"), corporate social responsibility ("duty of the fittest"), innovation & creativity ("survival of the unquest") and leadership & corporate governance ("arrival of the best"). Thus, corporates as institutions need to combine all the four elements of social discourse. This is the essence of the new corporate model. Such ideal corporates would lead the society in the direction of eco-sattavik approach to development through

'Holistic Corporate Management'. In essence, corporates need to evolve from their Darwinian mindset to a holistic mindset wherein they are not merely engines of economic growth but also socially relevant institutions.

Towards a New Holistic Vision: 3H Vision of the Global and The Local Villages

The WWED framework presented in this paper lead us towards a holistic vision by taking an integrative view about individuals, society and corporate management. The ultimate aim of any development process is to create 'harmonic society' and happiness for individuals. Further, the institutions and corporates should contribute towards this aim. Hence, holistic vision can be presented in the form of a 3H framework as indicated below:

H1	:	Happy Individual
H2	:	Holistic Corporate Management
H3	:	Harmonic Society

In the capitalistic view, human beings are treated as 'resources'. In this view, corporates are Darwinian in nature and the society is a 'civic society'. The holistic vision takes us beyond these ideas and provides an expanded view about the individuals, organizations and society. In the holistic vision, individuals are viewed in terms of a 'set of qualities and values'. Organizations are not merely Darwinian following the law of the 'survival of the fittest to eliminate the rest' but are 'New Age' in nature following the law of the 'arrival of the best to lead the rest'. Further, society is not merely a civic society but a 'sacro-civic society' wherein presence of transcendental values provides it a soft touch, which is missing in most societies of the contemporary world.

This holistic vision rooted in the integration of three paradigms of development wherein market values (pcs), social values (jrd) and spiritual values (lcd) are viewed as essential components for creating prosperity, happiness and peace, provides us a new foundational premise for new age management thought and social discourse. To some extent, this is being realized by the corporates as reflected by the emerging concepts of corporate social responsibility and corporate governance.

Implications for Management Education: Developing Corporate Rishis

Management education in general has been rooted in the narrow vision of corporates as economic entities. However, corporates have much larger role to play and have emerged as social institutions. They have even reduced the importance of State. In view of the same, it is expected that corporate leaders should expand their vision beyond the bottom line. In essence, they should become 'Corporate Rishis', wherein they have the leadership capabilities to re-see the world in new perspectives and thereby make it a better place to live. Thus, they should become, 'Holistic Professionals'. To implement this idea, management education should focus on developing 'corporate rishis' of future by expanding their curriculum design beyond the narrowly focussed technical subjects. In essence, social sensitivity and social concerns and issues should become an integral part of the management education.

It may be indicated that the Indian word 'Udyog' sums up the integrative approach to business and role of corporates as social institutions, because there is 'yog' in 'Udyog'. In fact, to be successful in 'Udyog', one requires an approach of 'total concentration and perfection' i.e. a yoga approach. Thus, philosophy of yog is not merely for 'Transcendental Meditation' (yoga) and 'Transcendental Medication' (Ayurveda), but also for a 'Transcendental Management' (Udyoga) because it implies an approach of harmony and balancing. In fact, 'Udyoga' can as well as

considered as a new yoga in the field of management and a foundational concept for developing corporate rishis. Today, Indian management institutions have a great opportunity to produce 'Corporate Rishis' through 'Udyoga philosophy' and thereby assume a leadership role in the field of global management education. If a concerted effort is put in this direction, India would be not only known for its 'knowledge workers' but also for its 'Corporate Rishis'. Perhaps time for developing holistic professionals has already arrived.

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