

CHAPTER-6

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EPILOGUE

The study was conducted with a view to unravel the practical philosophical foundations of work as also to ferret out the 'meaning' assigned to the 'work' by corporate executives. The detailed analysis is contained in the previous chapters. In this chapter an attempt is made to encapsulate various findings and their implications followed by policy ramifications for strategic choices to be made in the context of organisation change and leadership concerns. The universe is a creation of all pervasive entity called Brahman. The human life is considered to be the best amongst all of species as it alone offers an opportunity to 'jeeva' to get freedom from the painful cycle of transmigration (birth and re-birth to achieve salvation) and unite with its source- the 'Brahman' through righteous action or 'work'.

Each one of us is bestowed with faculties and freedom to exercise 'choice' of action. The sacrifice (effort) done to bring out latent or manifest qualities of matter (animate and inanimate) is called 'work'. Thus through the medium of action one could achieve the goal on physical or meta-physical plane and action 'alone' is responsible for man's success or failure. Work thus is the synonym of life and achievement or failures.

The material nature of human beings comprises of three gunas (modes) – satva, rajas and tamas. All material beings manifest three modes of goodness, passion and ignorance. These qualities are part of body, mind and intellect which are the means to guide and undertake action. Depending on the preponderance of a particular guna, the action or work by the individual gets influenced by such pre-dominant mental disposition. Any modification or change in the direction is also possible only through conscious efforts and focus on action or work. Even salvation would need performance of actions with chastened mind and effort.

Degeneration of human values and selfish pursuits co-exist with altruism and craving for universal peace and co-existence. Social strife, disparity in possession and distribution of wealth, inequitable consumption of material resources and increasing disregard towards nature and natural resources also exist. They also find their echo in responsiveness of corporates who manifests signs of frustration and even desperation

while dealing with issues like attraction and retention of talent, building competence, capacity and climate in the organisations, undertake succession planning, evolving and practising business processes to facilitate survival and growth. The demise of several corporate giants (who at times thought they were to be there forever) at global levels on account of their 'greed', testifies the importance of values in thinking and action of the leadership.

Corporate life is thus no exception as they are also extension of a larger context-society-in many respects. The business organisations are created by human beings and operated by them as well. The thinking and action of leadership and employees of the organisations impacts their performance and sustainability. The diversity in thinking and action (being the innate nature) of human beings, is responsible for differential performance. This is true not only for businesses but for all walks of life. It is for this reason that the empirical study of business executives of large Indian corporates was undertaken to find out patterns, if any, that exist, while each executive assigns meaning to 'work' in accordance with his individual pre-dispositions. The impact or correlations with age, gender, hierarchy and sector (public vs. private) with the 'meanings' were also worked out.

The empirical study has shown the following critical manifestations of thinking of executives in corporate sector.

Some of the important inferences are captured hereunder:

The executives perceive 'work' as medium to attain Sammriddhi, Sukh and Shaanti. These are manifested through several variables such as managing time for a variety of things, fulfilment of ones' dream in life, getting people together, living peaceful life, making contribution to society, remaining mentally and physically agile, gaining materialistic benefits in life and working in teams.

Public sector executives more strongly believe as compared to private sector executives that work signifies managing time and variety of things to be attended, fulfilment of life-dreams and developing togetherness at work place.

- **Male** executives have given **higher** weightage to 'managing time for variety of things' and 'fulfillment of dreams in life' through 'work', as compared to **female** executives.

- **Older executives-** as compared to younger executives- have laid **greater emphasis** on managing time for a variety of things, fulfillment of dreams in life through work and believe that it brings people together.
- Public sector executives have shown **higher degree of agreement** as compared to Private sector executives that work helps in keeping mentally and physically agile and provides the way to contribute to society.
- ***Craving for 'peace' in life emerges as an unequivocal need of executives of all hues.***
- **Male** executives perceive **more strongly** that work provides the way to contribute to society, as compared to **female** executives.
- Old, high-experienced and senior executives show **higher** degree of agreement on work 'providing way to contribute to society' as compared to young, experienced and junior executives. Gap in thinking of different generations is captured here.
- There is a **significant difference** in perception of public sector executives (as compared to private sector executives) who lay greater emphasis on the aspect of work helps in maintaining physical and mental agility.
- ***Health is a variable equally emphasized by executives of all ages and strata.***
- Executives from both the sectors-public and private- equally consider **gaining materialistic benefits in life as important while defining 'work'**.
- **Female executives** feel more strongly as compared to male executives that work helps in gaining **materialistic benefits** in life.
- Executives from younger, experienced (and not highly experienced) and junior management group subscribe to 'work' helping in gaining materialistic benefits in life with **greater degree of endorsement** as compared to older, highly experienced and senior management executives.
- Opportunity to work with others in a team is **more** emphasized by public sector executives as compared to private sector executives.
- ***All executives equally perceive that work provides an opportunity to work in teams.***
- Growth with peace in life sums up the motto of Indian Public sector executive.
- The material benefits are considered more important than considering work as worship.

- All executives give preference to opportunity to leading a peaceful life over gaining materialistic benefits in life.
- Work as a medium of making a contribution to society carries higher weight than gaining materialistic benefits.
- Even learning (continuous improvement) scores over materialistic pursuits.
- Work as for 'material benefits' and as 'worship' stand on the same plane.
- Work is perceived to be more significant for gaining materialistic benefits than for power and authority.
- Work is preferred for gaining knowledge and competencies than for social interaction and developing new friends or becoming a committed and devoted person.
- Work is perceived to be giving real joy, bringing out creativity, is energizing life rather than making it monotonous and boring.
- Work as a means of getting opportunity to work with others, building and working in team gains primacy over competition and challenge.
- Work is perceived to bring people together more than making people more competitive and challenge seeking.
- **Public Sector Executives:**
 - Male executives more strongly (as compared to female executives) perceive that work provides the way to contribute to society.
 - Male executives more strongly perceive that work helps in managing time for variety of things.
 - Male executives more strongly think that work helps in fulfilling their dreams in life.
 - Interestingly female executives more strongly perceive that work helps in gaining the materialistic benefits in life.
 - The material benefits are considered more important than considering work as worship.

Private Sector Executives:

- *Longing for Peaceful existence and opportunity to fulfill 'altruistic' pursuits is need expressed by all executives.*
- Private sector executives believe that work makes weak people susceptible for exploitation.

- There is no difference in perception while considering work for material benefits or work as worship.
- Private sector executives more strongly perceive that work makes life more monotonous and boring.
- Private sector executives more strongly perceive that work gives more power and authority to influence others.
- Private sector executives more strongly perceive that work creates stress in life.
- Private sector executives more strongly perceive that work disturbs mental peace in life.

Male vs. Female/ Young vs. old/Experience vs. Higher Experienced/Junior vs. Senior Executives:

- Female executives give greater emphasis on material benefits over considering work as worship.
- Female executives more strongly believe that work helps in gaining the materialistic benefits in the life.
- Female executives more strongly believe that work gives power and authority to influence others.
- Younger executives more strongly believe that work helps in achieving the social recognition.
- Younger executives more strongly believe that work makes life more monotonous and boring.
- Younger executives more strongly believe that work gives power and authority to influence others.
- Younger executives more strongly believe that work creates jealousy and hatred among people.
- Younger executives more strongly believe that work creates stress in life.
- Younger executives more strongly believe that work disturbs mental peace in life.
- Executives with lesser experience more strongly believe that work helps in gaining the materialistic benefits in life.
- Executives with lesser experience more strongly believe that work makes life more monotonous and boring.

- Executives with lesser experience more strongly believe that work gives power and authority to influence others.
- Executives with lesser experience more strongly believe that work creates jealousy and hatred among people.
- Executives with lesser experience more strongly believe that work creates stress in life.
- Executives with lesser experience more strongly believe that work disturbs mental peace in life.
- Junior executives more strongly believe that work helps in gaining the materialistic benefits in life.
- Junior executives more strongly believe that work makes life more monotonous and boring.
- Junior executives more strongly believe that work gives power and authority to influence others.
- Junior executives more strongly believe that work creates jealousy and hatred among people.
- Junior executives more strongly believe that work creates stress in life.
- Junior executives more strongly believe that work disturbs mental peace in life.
- Based on above analysis, corporates need to re-model their HR strategies. Some of the suggestions which could be made are based on contemporary context and may address a few areas as follows:
 - HR policies, system and processes including rewards and recognition of the organisation should attempt to strike a balance between samriddhi, sukh and shaanti for its people.
 - For younger executives the policies should aim at providing better monetary compensation. For mid career executives the compensation should be a combination of monetary benefits along with facilitation processes like schooling of children, health care of parents, career choices for spouse, better living conditions including housing and slightly long term benefits enhancing savings. For senior executives the job profile which provides stability in life and living but offers challenges at work place and a career growth prospect should be part of HR development processes.

- Female executives, at current levels, in India are not showing any signs of being careerist and as such their compensations and benefits should primarily focus on monetary gains.
- Typical western models of handling employee motivations only through extrinsic motivators is not likely to be effective in Indian conditions on account of the need profile of Indian executives being significantly different.

6.1 POSSIBLE ORGANISATIONAL CHOICES

6.1.1 Recruitment strategy and methodology needs to take into account that competencies that are required to be tested at the time of selection of a candidate are not only related only to knowledge and cognitive abilities but more importantly, the psychological pre-disposition of individuals and the predominant inclination and balance between Sattva, Rajas and Tamas needs to be deciphered. As we have seen , knowledge is a tool and could produce results in accordance with the application and intent of user.

Private sectors are no exception. In fact, whatever happens in public sector publicly, happens in private sector privately. Whatever happens nationally happens globally. Thus the need to rely upon universal and eternal ways of life and living would make organisations sustain for longer period than ‘knee-jerk’ responses to changing situations.

The recruitment paradigms, policies and methodology need to be looked at in the context of outcome of the empirical data in current context.

6.1.2 In the field of training and development of younger executives, there appears to be a need to sensitize them with larger issues of life and its purpose. In mindless pursuit of materialistic gains, this appears to have given way and possibly led to reduced commitment to work and organisations that organisations are currently discussing about.

6.1.3 Performance management policies need complete restructuring where numbers and money as surrogate measure of work are dispensed with. Pure subjectivity is better than impure objectivity. Instead organisations need to undertake responsibility of providing policies and practices on principles of ‘dharma’ that provides opportunity of holistic development of individuals as that alone holds the potential of building sustainability for the organisations. Career progression, job rotation, transfers and relocation and a host of employee engagement issues need to be

formulated and more importantly practised on the principle of maximising universal good and facilitate organisational integration. It is easy to say but difficult to do.

6.1.4 **The leadership** holds the key to success. Without exception only those must be elevated to position of leadership who manifest qualities of sacrifice, have commitment to uphold the spirit of 'dharma', are continuous learners and always considering the good of organisation and its people. Such leadership which could always pursue higher goals and show to its people a higher purpose to strive for in life, could transform organisation and society. In a sense what organisations need are 'Rajarshi's (those who combine the qualities of a 'Raja'-king- and a 'Rishi' (enlightened saint)¹²⁴.

6.2 FURTHER RESEARCH SCOPE

- Value addition possibilities exist if this study gets repeated after a gap of a decade which may help in a longitudinal study..
- Supplementing this study by similar samples drawn from a variety of enterprises and business sectors –small, medium and large enterprises and multinational corporations operating in India-would further build levels of confidence on generalization.
- This research model could be used for other work-domains such as students, house-wives, teachers, workmen, civil servants, professionals like advocates, doctors and the like practically from all walks of life.
- The study could also be replicated for inter-unit comparison and assessment of executive ease or disease prevailing in individual organization. This would help in building appropriate strategies in the field of HR.

6.3 India has the potential to deliver. We need to choose and tread the path of 'Karma' enjoined by 'Dharma'.

Dhaaranaat dharmah ityaahuh; Dharmo dhaarayate prajah.
Yah syaat dhaarana samyuktah; sa dharmah iti nishchayah¹²⁵.

(Dharma is so called because it holds the people together in a society, it integrates a man with a man; that value which has this integrating capacity, that is determined as Dharma-by the wise).

The study affirms.