

A VEDIC INTEGRATION OF TRANSITIONS IN MANAGEMENT THOUGHT: TOWARDS TRANSCENDENTAL MANAGEMENT *

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Abstract

The concept of 'management' has been changing over a period of time. During ancient times, 'management' was an art and a state craft. With the advent of industrial revolution, 'management' became 'science' and an art was transformed into 'science'. Subsequently, 'management' became a discipline and a profession that could be formally taught to all those who are interested in becoming managers. In this discipline, we find convergence of various other disciplines such as economics, psychology, sociology, ethics etc. The 'core knowledge' of the discipline of management draws heavily from other disciplines and through value addition, integration and synthesis of ideas from various disciplines, a new discipline of 'management' has been created with its own concepts at the levels of thought, discourse and action.

This paper provides a Vedic integration of transitions in management thought from ancient times to modern times by providing a Vedic integration of various intellectual traditions that have influenced the development of management ideas and concepts. Further, the paper provides some integrative models of 'transcendental management' and suggests the need to create an intellectual bridge between the 'Harvard' and 'Haridwar' metaphorically representing the concepts of corporate management and self-management.

The discipline of 'management' has also been influenced by various isms such as capitalism, socialism, feminism, etc. While its roots are largely in capitalism and capitalistic mode of thinking, it could not avoid the influence of other isms such as socialism, feminism, etc. The corporate model with its focus on maximizing returns to the shareholders had its origin in capitalism. However, over the years, the corporate model itself has been undergoing a change. From mere shareholders' organization, it became 'stakeholders organization' wherein it has to address itself to the concerns of various stakeholders such as customers, employees, suppliers, Government, society, etc. In its third stage of evolution, corporates are evolving as 'corporate citizens'. They may further evolve into social institution as their influence on the society increases. They are no more mere business entities but are expected to play their role as social institutions wherein they care for the society and social welfare. These concerns are finding their expression in ideas such as 'corporate governance' and 'corporate social responsibility'. These concerns point to the need of new ideas in management thought.

The intellectual roots of management and social thought can be traced to three major traditions viz.

- 1) Pure Materialist / Economistic Tradition
- 2) Humanist - Materialist Tradition
- 3) Transcendentalist Tradition

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Pure materialist or economic tradition considers human beings as 'economic units' and is rooted in Adam Smith's philosophy of Profit, Competition & Self-interest (PCS), as a primary driving force in the society. Humanist - materialist tradition considers human beings as social beings for whose benefit society exists. Hence, this tradition's thought is rooted in the philosophy of Justice, Rights and Duties (JRD) emphasized by many social thinkers. Transcendentalist tradition considers human beings more than social beings and considers them as a bundle of qualities. Some within this tradition consider human beings as 'divine beings'. Hence, transcendentalist tradition is rooted in the philosophy of Love, Compassion and Devotion (LCD) emphasized in various spiritual traditions. When applied in the context of self-evolution, the three traditions correspond to three steps model of self-development consisting of 'profit, competition and self-interest', 'justice, rights and duties' and 'love, compassion & devotion'. This three steps model also broadly corresponds to capitalism, socialism and spiritualism reflecting their major focus in terms of market, society and self. They also represent the market values, social values and spiritual values.

The three intellectual traditions also define three worldviews viz. transactional, transformational and transcendental. The transactional worldview gives primacy to calculative and acquisitive mindset or mode of thinking. Transformational worldview gives primacy to liberation from domination, exploitation and oppression and 'concern for others' e.g. protection of the poorest and the weakest. The transcendental worldview gives primacy to helping others. Hence, it emphasizes the need for 'helping motivation' in society's mode of thinking. While transactional mode of thinking encourages 'grabbing motivation', transformational mode encourages 'liberation motivation' and transcendental mode encourages helping, giving, caring and sharing motivations.

Three traditions can also be differentiated in terms of their emphasis on three fundamental needs of society viz. need for efficiency, need for equity and need for ethics. Transactional approach to life gives primacy to efficiency, transformational approach emphasizes the need for equity and transcendental approach suggests the need for ethics. It is now being realized that a balance is required between the three needs of efficiency, equity and ethics not only in society but also in organizations.

Towards Vedic Integration of Intellectual Traditions

The above discussed three intellectual traditions can be integrated through Vedic thought. Before, we suggest this integration, we may indicate that with the emergence of the concept of global village, the world is already moving towards an integration of these intellectual traditions. The fight between various 'isms' has given way to a reconciliation, mutual understanding and co-existence of various isms. The integration has been happening through emergence of ideas such as corporate social responsibility, corporate governance, concern for the poorest and the weakest, etc. This indicates that world is moving towards holism wherein a holistic view is taken to integrate the contradictory worldviews. It is no more fashionable to use phrases that denote isms because isms indicate strong ideological positions. In our view, an 'ism' stands for an idea or a 'set of ideas', its spirit and its manifestation (i-ideas, s-spirit, m-manifestation). Hence, we use them to connote ideas that give primacy to a central concept and not to represent an ideology. For example, in capitalism, capital / money gets primacy in human life and 'spirit of capital' is manifested in varying forms through competition, competitive spirit and individualistic orientation. In socialism, society has primacy over the individual and thus, 'social' dimension is given primacy and mutual co-operation and collectivistic orientation are emphasized. In spiritualism, human beings are considered divine-like and 'spirit of divinity' is manifested in varying forms through emphasis on symbiosis nature of nature. Thus, these three isms emphasize three different aspects of life and human existence. There is a need to integrate these three dimensions. Hence, the

concept of holism with its emphasis on 'spirit of holistic' approach to life can be defined through following 'trinity' equations:

Equation 1: Holism = Capitalism + Socialism + Spiritualism

Equation 2: Holism = {Transactional + Transformational + Transcendental} worldviews

Equation 3: Holism = Efficiency + Equity + Ethics

Vedic thought is holistic in nature. Can it help us in integration of various intellectual traditions presented in this paper? In the discussion below we suggest this integration.

In Vedic thought, four 'objects' of life are, Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha. They can be grouped into three categories viz. Dharma, Artha-Kama and Moksha. In social context, dharma implies social - dharma e.g. social dharma of the corporates is their social responsibility. This idea is also captured by the phrase, loksangraha i.e. welfare of the society. Thus, concept of dharma enshrines the 'socialistic thought'. Similarly concept of 'artha and kama' captures the 'capitalistic thought' that emphasizes the wealth creation for pleasure and enjoyment. Further, the concept of Moksha, captures the concept of spiritualism. Thus, the purusharthas of dharma, artha, kama and moksha capture the essence of three intellectual traditions viz. socialism, capitalism and spiritualism. In this thought, the purpose of wealth creation (capitalism) is for benefit of society (socialism / loksangraha) and the process of wealth generation is through ethical means (spiritualism). Thus, key ideas of 'market karmas' (positive actions in the market), 'shubh-labh' (profits based on ethical approach to business), loksangraha (welfare of the people) and 'danam' (social responsibility) are integrated together.

In above indicated Vedic integration, the 'modern thought systems' find a synthesis and a new path is suggested wherein the three intellectual traditions merge into a new blend to create a better social order in consonance with the purusharthas. This new social order can be better expressed through new age phrases presented earlier such as, profit, competition and self-interest (pcs), justice, rights and duties (jrd), love, compassion and devotion (lcd), etc. These are in consonance with key phrases of Indian Management viz. market karma, shubh-labh, loksangraha, social dharma, danam, corporate nirvana (workplace as a joyful place to work), etc. These phrases can provide us a new foundation for a new social order in an age, wherein 'capitalism of the capitalistic' has been replaced by 'capitalism of the middle class' and 'socialism by the State' has been replaced by 'socialism by people'.

The equivalence of the ancient thought with contemporary jargons and phrases is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: The Ancient and The New Age Vedic Connectivity

Ancient Concepts / Vedic Concepts	Equivalent Modern Concept / Ism & Its Key Emphasis	Equivalent New Age Phrase	Worldview
Dharma	Socialism (Society)	Justice, Rights & Duties	Transformational
Artha & Kama	Capitalism (Market)	Profit, Competition & Self-interest Pleasure, Competition & Self-interest	Transactional
Moksha	Spiritualism (Self)	Love, Compassion & Devotion	Transcendental

It may be indicated that the three steps of transactional, transformational and transcendental views of life also broadly correspond to the 'ashramas' approach in Vedic thought. For self-transformations, an individual should transcend the transactional view and move to transformational worldview and finally to transcendental worldview. At times this change is discernible in many individuals who are initially careerist having a transactional worldview as 'final' truth for themselves. They are driven by profit, competition & self-interest (pcs). Because of self-awareness and self-awakening, some become 'activists' in service of society. They are driven by justice, rights and duties (jrd) and enlightened self-interest. Some transcend this stage and become 'spiritualists' and are driven by love, compassion and devotion (lcd) and enlightened collective interest. These three stages of careerist, activist and spiritualist broadly correspond to 'grihastha', 'vanprastha' and 'sanyas' ashram stages presented in Vedic literature. It may be indicated that essence of the 'Vedic Management' lies in a balancing approach i.e. balancing of dharma, artha, kama and moksha. This also implies balancing between capitalism, socialism and spiritualism e.g. market values, social values and spiritual values. In contemporary language, it implies balancing between transactional, transformational and transcendental view of life. Thus, keynote of the our discussion represents an integration of market karma, social dharma and leadership charisma in consonance with transactional, transformational and transcendental tripod for creation of a sacro-civic society.

Towards Models of Transcendental Management

The above observations have implications for management thought, management theory and management practices. Earlier, management thought was largely rooted in efficiency oriented transactional view of life. With the acceptance of the concept of 'human side of management' and 'human dimension in management' in 1960s, it moved in the direction of transformational view reflected in 'modern management' approach to development of organization. In 1980s, concept of 'human values in management' gained acceptance and this later led to the development of 'new age management'. With the acceptance of the need for 'spiritual values in management', the idea of transcendental management is emerging. Thus, we can discern a transition from 'modern management' to 'new age management' to 'transcendental management' thereby leading to a holistic approach to management. It may be indicated that these trends in management thought broadly correspond to three intellectual traditions presented in this paper. Thus, theories, concepts, ideas in 'modern management' were rooted in economistic and transactional approaches. The theories, concepts and ideas in 'new age management' are rooted in humanistic approaches and social concerns leading to need for human values in management. With emphasis on ethics and spiritual values in management, we find acceptance of new theories, new concepts and new management mantras rooted in transcendental view of life and society. In the discussion below, we provide brief discussion on Indian models of transcendental management having roots in Vedic thought that are useful for the corporates and other social institutions in our society.

Model 1: 'AUM' Model

'AUM' stands for 'All Unmanifest and Manifest'. It suggests that human beings have 'all' potential of this cosmos hidden within them. In every 'Kankar' there is 'Shankar' and in every 'Kankari' there is 'Shankari'. While 'Kankar' is manifest, 'Shankar' is unmanifest. The mahavakya, Shivohum - Shivohum captures the essence of 'aum' as defined here. It is up to the individuals to make efforts in such a way that the unmanifest potential is converted into manifest realities. Ordinary people become extra ordinary when they convert their unmanifest potential into manifest form. They are able to achieve their vision and dreams by converting them into reality.

'AUM' also refers to 'Absolute Unmanifest & Manifest' indicating expression of 'Absolute' or Brahm in Unmanifest and Manifest forms. Thus, 'AUM' is indicative of three levels of consciousness. A level is 'Aumkara level' wherein there is feeling of the presence of 'Absolute' that has been defined by various names and forms depending upon space-time and historical contexts. This level also represents the 'anandmaya' level of the five 'koshas'. In fact, 'AUM' includes all the five koshas in its fold viz. annamaya, pranamaya, manonmaya, vijnanamaya and anandmaya. It may also be indicated that 'aum' also includes sat-chit-ananda dimensions of life wherein sat corresponds to manifest, chit to unmanifest and ananda to absolute level of consciousness.

'AUM' model can also be considered as a 3Cs communication model, wherein interpersonal communication can be at three levels viz. communion, conversation and communication. It may be indicated that at communion level, communication is 'anandmaya' creating the feeling that can be expressed in terms of the following lines:

I am happy, you are happy
 Everybody happy,
 Rivers are happy, clouds are happy
 Everybody happy.

Applying the adwaita philosophy and through a stretch of imagination, we can also consider 'AUM' as an integrative mantra for integration of various religious philosophies. Thus, various adwaitic interpretation of 'AUM' could include, 'AUM' as 'Ananta in Unmanifest & Manifest' forms, 'Adam in Unmanifest & Manifest', 'Allah in Unmanifest & Manifest' forms, 'Auro-bindo (Point of light) in Unmanifest & Manifest' forms, 'Ananti in Unmanifest & Manifest', 'Almighty in Unmanifest and manifest' forms, etc. Further, 'AUM' can also represent 'Avatara in Unmanifest and Manifest' forms. Thus, concept of 'AUM' provides us a basis for integration of various thought systems and religions.

Interpretation of 'Aum' as 'Absolute Unmanifest and Manifest' also provides us an integration of the dwaita, vishishta adwaita and adwaita philosophies. While 'A' (Absolute) corresponds to adwaita, U (Unmanifest) corresponds to Vishishta Adwaita and 'M' (Manifest) corresponds to Dwaita. Fig.1 presents this correspondence.

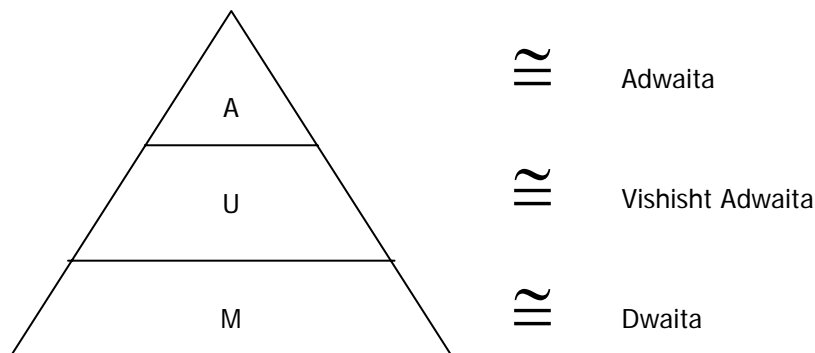


Fig.1: 'AUM' and Its Correspondence with Indian Schools of Thought

We can also achieve 'aum' integration of various religions on the basis of the correspondence of 'aum' with various schools of religious thought. For this, we can develop a graphical presentations wherein one axis of the graph identifies religions in terms of their 'monotheism' or 'polytheism' orientation, a traditional way of classifying religions and the other axis identifies religion in terms of dwaitic or 'adwaitic' orientation. This graph is presented in Fig.2.

This figure indicates that we have following four types of religious thought systems and communities providing conceptual foundations for integration of various religions and communities.

- I) Monotheistic - Adwaitic
- II) Polytheistic - Adwaitic
- III) Polytheistic - Dwaitic
- IV) Monotheistic - Dwaitic

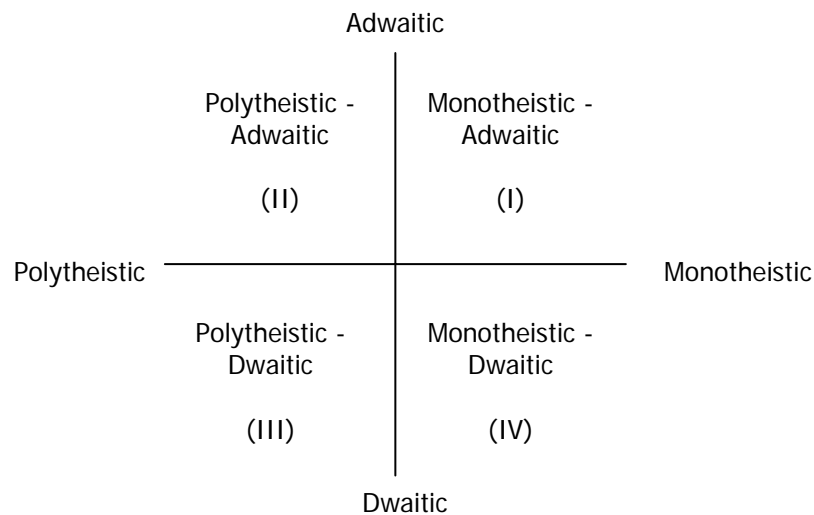


Fig.2: A Framework for Integration of Religious Thought Systems

It may be indicated that Hinduism displays a configuration that has its spread across all the four quadrants and shape of this configuration keeps changing according to needs of the times. For example, 'monotheism and adwaita' philosophy of Vedanta fascinates most people at the intellectual level, while other quadrants appeal to common people. Hence, various configurations co-exist. While at the ideal level Vedanta represented by quadrant - I has its inspirational appeal, at the practical level, other configurations are also strongly embedded in popular imagination. Thus, framework presented in Fig.2 provides us a conceptual foundation for integration of various sects, schools of thoughts and religions to get a holistic perspective of various religious thoughts.

Model 2: HOPE - Higher Order Purpose of Existence

What is the purpose of existence? A transactional view of life considers struggle for existence and 'survival of the fittest' as purpose of existence. The transformational view considers struggle for social values such as justice, rights and duties as purpose of existence. The transcendental view considers struggle for spiritual values such as love, compassion and devotion as purpose of existence. Further, 'struggle for grace of divinity (god)' is also part of transcendental view. Thus, there are four types of struggles for human beings viz. struggle for existence, struggle for human values, struggle for spiritual values and struggle for 'grace of divinity'.

In transcendental management, an organization has to identify its higher order purpose of existence, in addition to its vision and mission. In absence of linkage of vision and mission with higher order purpose, an organization may not contribute towards social objectives. Purpose of existence in the social context is reflected through Negative - Positive Karma (NPK) of human beings. Individuals driven by higher order purpose of existence tend to be

more positive - karma oriented. In contrast, believers in 'survival of the fittest' tend to resort to unethical actions and thereby tend to be negative - karma oriented. Thus, transcendental philosophy of HOPE tends to motivate people towards synergy creation. Even one man or women with well defined Higher Order Purpose of Existence can change the society or shape the history. There are many examples of the same from history of the world. In fact, every age produces a new prophet i.e. individuals who articulate a Higher Order Purpose of Existence, according to the needs of the times and create mega-changes in the society and shape history. This has been the experience of the history and seems to be a law of nature, wherein natural mutation may favour an individual with highly developed mind. This is also reflected in the concept of 'arrival of the best to lead the rest' in contrast to Darwinian concept of 'survival of the fittest to eliminate the rest'.

Model 3: 'VEDA' Model

In 'VEDA' model, the four letters, V, E, D, A stand for Vision, Enlightenment, Devotion and Action. Thus, this model is a model of transcendental leadership and management. Transcendental leaders convert their vision into reality through enlightenment, devotion to the cause and through action or nishkam karma.

It may be indicated that in 'VEDA', four margas find an integration as V (Vision) is indicative of raj-yoga, E (Enlightenment) is indicative of Jnana yoga, D (Devotion) indicates Bhakti yoga and A (Action) indicates Karma yoga. 'VEDA' model also provides a basis for integration of the Dwaita. Vishishta adwaita and Adwaita, wherein 'Vision' (V) connotes the 'Mountain top of Adwaita', Enlightenment (E) corresponds to 'Adwaita', Devotion (D) corresponds to 'Vishishta - adwaita' and Action (A) corresponds to 'Dwaita'.

Model 4: Sin, Win and Yin Model

Sin - Win and Yin model considers self-evolution in terms of three steps. It is said that 'no one is born sinner'. Every one is a born winner but because of variety of reasons one may slide down to sin level. Sin could be classified in terms of 'unintended sin' and 'intended sin'. In intended sin, there is deliberate intention to harm others. In unintended sin, a sin may be caused due to actions of an individual even though the person never intended any harm. Sin also represents the negative karmas that create nenergies (negative - energies). Self-development implies movement from sin to win (from negative karmas to positive karmas) and ultimately to yin state that evokes love, compassion and devotion. Yin state creates Vedantic awakening of oneness of everything i.e. a realization of kin nature of the cosmos, wherein everything is related. The feeling of 'Vasudhaiv Kutumbakam' is rooted in yin view of cosmos.

Model 5: OSHA - OSHE Integration

OSHA represents Oneness, Spiritual, Humanistic and Animalistic levels of existence and OSHE represents, Oneness, Spiritual, Humanistic and Existential levels. Like Shiva - Shakti, an individual is a combination of OSHA and OSHE in double-helix form.

It may be indicated that there are three fundamental models originating from three different regions of the world giving us a similar view of life. Indian concept of 'Ardhanarshwar' presents Shiva - Shakti as an integral unit. Chinese concept of yin-yang presents us a similar perspective. West Asian concept of Adam - Eve also echoes the Purush - Prakriti idea. All the three concepts originating from different space time and historical contexts find their integration in the double-helix of OSHA - OSHE. Thus, OSHA -OSHE represent their latest version in a 'scientific' language reflecting the concept of androgyny.

It may be indicated that 'OSHA' and 'OSHE' have roots in 'Om Shakti' and 'Om Shanti' respectively. Thus, they connote Shakti (Power) and Shanti (Peace), two essential requirements for putting 'holism' into practice. Together they represent the philosophical foundation for Transcendental Management, as our ultimate objective is to achieve prosperity through positive use of power and through peaceful means. They also represent the concept of the androgynous manager.

Model 6: Real Awakening of Mind (RAM)

'Let thousand(s) kites fly' is a metaphor for explosive and charismatic creativity. This happens when an individual reaches the 'RAM' (Real Awakening of Mind) level that has been variously described as bloom of the thousand lotus flowers, opening of the inner eye, state of supra-consciousness, etc. At this level, an individual develops an immense capacity for Random Access Memory (RAM) of the universe. There are many real life examples such as Ramanuja, the well known mathematician, 'who knew infinity'. It is coincidental that in his name, there is 'RAM'. There are other examples of individuals with such a 'beautiful mind', as a gift of nature. However, the same can also be developed through meditation. For example, many Himalayan Rishis through meditation developed their mind to levels where they could easily access the memory of the universe through random wandering of their mind. Thus, they could achieve the 'RAM' level through personal efforts creating conditions for 'self-mutation' or changing their neural network. This process can be compared to a robot repairing its own damaged random access memory. When such a capacity is endowed by nature, a person may be born in such a place and time, that there is maximum field effect of the energies emanating from the specific star constellations in the cosmos. Thus there could be a possibility of 'astrological impact' on an individual. Further biological factors or mutation may also favour an individual by endowing an efficient neural network to him / her. However, this capacity can also be developed through some sustained effort. It may be indicated people with high creativity are close to 'RAM' level. They may achieve this level through 'mutation' (biological factor), through 'meditation' (self-effort) or through 'music of stars' (field effect of constellation of stars). If these three factors converge in case of an individual such a person displays 'charismatic creativity'.

It may be indicated that there are four levels of mind's evolution viz. Division, D-Vision, Direct-Vision (Direct Perception or Darshan) and Divine Vision. At Division level, mind operates in its 'scientific' mode wherein it looks for solutions by dividing the problems into sub-problems. In D-vision approach, mind operates in its 'holistic' mode, and looks at problems just like viewing the rainbow. In Direct-vision, mind operates at 'Darshan' mode as it gets the direct-perception of solutions to the problems. At Divine-vision level, mind operates at 'cosmic' or 'infinity' mode. This level represents the 'Real Awakening of Mind' (RAM), hence can be referred to as 'RAM vision'. Generally speaking, Division approach is equivalent to Dwaita, D-Vision is equivalent to Vishishta-adwaita, Direct vision is equivalent to Adwaita and Divine vision is equivalent to the 'mountain top of Adwaita'.

Implications for Management Theory & Practice: Towards Holistic and Transcendental Management & Leadership (HTML)

The above discussed concepts and models have important relevance for management theory and practice. There are three fundamental styles of management viz. Theory X, Theory Y and Theory Z. Theory X stands for authoritarian style, Theory Y for democratic or participative style and Theory Z for team work. When combined together, we get the Theory K, wherein an organization is considered a 'Kutumb' or community. Theory K can be formulated as, $K = X^a Y^b Z^c$, wherein a, b, c denote the intensities with which theories X, Y and Z are used.

The 3T approach provides us Transactional (T1), Transformational (T2) and Transcendental (T3) views of life. It represents the conceptual foundations for three styles of management viz. Transactional (T1), Transformational (T2) and Transcendental (T3). A combination approach of these three could be referred to as Theory T (Total view of life), that can be formulated as $T = T1^a T2^b T3^c$, wherein a, b, c refer to intensities with which theories T1, T2 and T3 are used. When we combine Theory K and Theory T, we arrive at KT leadership grid presented in Fig.3.

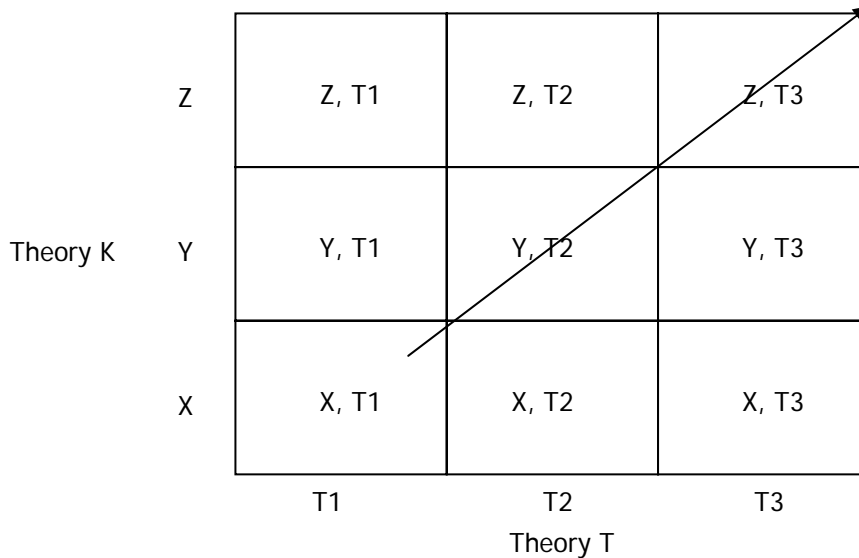


Fig.3: KT Leadership Grid

KT leadership grid suggests nine types of management styles. It may be noted that theory X can be used in three different modes viz. transactional, transformational and transcendental. In its transformational mode, it may refer to 'benevolent authoritarianism'. In its transcendental form, it represents divine-like use of power and authority. Similarly theories Y and Z could also be used on their three different modes viz. transactional, transformational and transcendental. In this matrix, (Z, T3) is considered as an 'ideal' style and it represents the core idea of transcendental management. The arrow in the diagram indicates the need to shift from (X, T1) to (Z, T3) management style. Various models of transcendental management presented earlier are essentially rooted in (Z, T3) approach to life and organizational management. They represent the models of Holistic & Transcendental Management & Leadership (HTML). Corporate managers practising such a style are 'Corporate Rishis'.

**Concluding Comment:
From Harvard to Haridwar**

Harvard symbolizes the corporate management primarily in its market or transactional view of the world. In contrast, Haridwar symbolizes the self-evolution and transcendental view of existence. For a holistic approach there is a need to create a bridge between the two. This would lead to creation of a better world as both material and spiritual dimensions of life are integrated together. Accordingly, corporate world today needs 'Corporate Rishis' who can re-see the reality in a new perspective to improve the material and spiritual conditions of humanity. This is also the essence of Vedic integration of modern management, new age management and transcendental management in the form of 'Vedic Management'. It implies that time has come now to give due consideration to holistic and transcendental concepts in management and leadership. Thus, market karma, social dharma and leadership charisma

representing an integration of transactional, transformational and transcendental views of life, should constitute the tripod of new management thought. This would ensure that corporates and other social institutions contribute to the development of the people and society to convert the vision of 'sacro-civic society' into a reality wherein autonomy, harmony and symphony prevail in social relationships. This would also ensure proper balancing between prosperity, equity and spirituality as envisaged in the Vedic-vision given by the Vedic seers.

Note

This paper primarily extends the ideas presented in earlier writings of the author.

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