

Edification of Conservation Management through Folklore and Vedic Literature

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Abstract. With their great utilitarian function, literary writings can occupy significant space in the vast and an immensely expanding world of Management studies. The Management theories written and practiced today are based on modern scientific studies. The ancient Sanskrit literature has been written thousands of years ago and we can find an ample source of knowledge which is relevant in modern era. For example, masterpiece like *Meghdutam* (375 CE) by ancient Indian scholar and poet Kalidasa has been revered not only by Indian thinkers like Tagore but has also captured admiration worldwide through appreciation of scholars like Goethe and Max Mueller. These kinds of literary texts represent the humanistic approach of people and their art of managing and developing a connection between man and its outside environment, representing the right management approach of people and maintaining the sustainability aspect as well. Primordial literature has its own theories and techniques on managing the environmental resources. It is an indigenous approach to study the environment conservation from ethnic perspective and we defined it as our hypothesis. The findings that we get from the literary works that, these writings have a strong inference in conservation management and green psychology. They enriched the area of management by providing a much broader aspect based on literature.

Keywords: Ethics, Literature, Management, Organization, Psychology, Vedas

Introduction

Environment Ethics' is the critical and systematic study of the moral conclusions and attitudes which guide the behaviour of human beings towards natural surroundings (Stenmark, 2017). Sustainability is the pattern of economic growth in which resources use aims to meet human needs while preserving the environment so that these needs can be met not only in present, but also for generation to come (CTI, 2016). The ethical complication of sustainability includes the problem of collective, as opposed to merely, individual, choices and attitudes, and by implication, responsibility (Brown, 2017). So an organization that participate in environment related green activities to ensure that all procedures, produces and industrial activities adequately address concerns while maintaining a profit come under sustainable business (CTI, 2016). Conservation seek out the appropriate use of natural resources and when we collaborate this with management for managing and protecting the resources, it may be termed as conservation management. A conservation management system is a technique for preserving a species or habitat in a specific form.

Role of Folk Literature in Conservation of Nature

"The ecologization of politics requires us to acknowledge the priority of universal human values and make ecology part of education and instruction from an early age, moulding a new, modern approach to nature, and at the same time, give back to [us] a sense of being part of nature. No moral improvement of society is possible without that." - Mikhail Gorbachev

According to Reddy (2017), 'Masterpiece like *Meghdutam* (375 CE) has been revered not only by Indian thinkers like Tagore but has also captured admiration worldwide through appreciation of scholars like Goethe and Max Mueller. Kalidasa's work is known for its extraordinary dramatic impact and expression. Several of his works have been also hailed as most relevant for ecological studies as the narratives exhibit a moral relationship between

human societies and nature. For example, *Meghadutam* (Cloud Messenger) is significant for exhibiting the interconnectedness between humans and nature as the cloud represents the journey from the lover to the beloved. He was a naturalistic poet and his works are based on the Dharma, Purana, Veda, Philosophy, Astrology, Upanishads etc. which represented his intellectual power. As for instance, in the *Meghadutam*, the poet Kalidasa (4-5 century CE) presents the piece of clouds through which Yaska wish to send his well-being message to his beloved as an animate object. Thus, he placed the natural elements and human beings in the same platform. The poet while processed to describe the route of the cloud in its march from *Ramagiri* to *Alaka* has not forgotten to mention such hills and rivers like *Amrakuta*, *Vindhya*, *Narmada*, *Vetravati*, *Gandhavari*, *Gambhira* etc. Similarly, in the second part of this lyric, Kalidasa describes the city *Alaka* which is the destination of the cloud by the exiled Yaska. Here also Kalidasa describes the beauty of this city with its pleasant sides of nature. All these stand nothing but as the loveliness, high gratitude as well as his concern towards nature. Detailed metaphors of nature to describe beauty, passion, happiness, grief, longing make it an important text for lessons in eco-spirituality and has also been advocated by theorists as a text advocating environmental justice. Thus, these two lyrics set up on the lap of nature where Kalidasa establishes the natural objects in human forms and he makes an emotional relationship between man and environment. Through his two lyrics, Kalidasa captive the heart of the cloud. These all bear as Kalidasa's attractive and aware mind towards his Environmental Awareness.'

Impact of Sustainability Development

The Rio statement on environment and development is a nonbinding set of 27 principles on sustainability development (Lemons, 2013). The Brundtland commission underlined that sustainability is an ethics for our future. In the 1987 report they write: "*We have attempted to demonstrate how human survival and well-being may be dependent on our capacity to successfully transform the principles behind sustainable development into global ethics.*" There are several parts in these ethics. The value dimension of sustainable development may be expressed in terms of justice. Sustainability is about sharing resources of our planet, not only between us and coming generations, but also between us living here and now. It is called intra-generational justice, justice between us here and now. The principle that each human being has the same right to resources is included in the Rio Declaration. A third ethical principle of Sustainability is our obligations towards other life forms of the world, the animals, the plants and the Nature in general. This is called bio-centric ethics or justice. Other life forms may not have duties towards us but we have it towards them. The World Conservation Strategy, published by IUCN (International Union for the Conservation of Nature) in 1980 alarmed us about the rapid loss of biodiversity.

Conservation Management in Vedic Literature

In *Manusmriti* (2nd Century BCE to 3rd Century CE), Manu asserts that trees and plants not only have life but also consciousness. *Mahabharata* (8-9th Century BCE) condemns in unequivocal terms any decisive and disruptive activity of man that tends to promote environment imbalance and advocate holistic approach to life. 'Man' is called upon to develop the '*Daivi Sampta*' which respects all existing beings alike and which advocates the utilization of resources of nature with a sense of Gratitude and humility. According to Maharishi Vyas, control over one's senses and a good and healthy management of one's life is at the root of a good society and a good physical environment. A very rich and clear thinking, and cognition about various aspects of environment can be found in *Gryhsutras* (a Vedic text) which contains the rules considered as guidelines for the priests and the performers to pass through various stages of the rituals satisfactorily. There was an intimate relation and positive approach of Vedic people with and towards natural resources. They regarded the rivers as life bestowing

and themselves pulsating with life. Rives play important role in Vedic sacrifices. Many personages have also been associated with the rivers. The Vedic man looked at the rivers as mothers par excellence (Agarwal, 2003).

In Vedic literature *Vayu* is the bond and the thread which keeps the universe together. *Vayu* is also linked to *Prana* (the life-sustaining breath). It is the germ of the world and the transformer of the seed. Without *Prana*, nothing survives. The word *Akash* denotes space rather than sky or ether as mentioned in some translated Vedic literature. It is not material or physical element. This word has appeared in Upanishads than in Rigveda (Jamieson, 2008). Rain is said to be fulfilling all desires. Waters are considered to be peace bringing factors. Rigveda declares water to be the abode of all medicines. Vedic people extol water with high reverence (Agarwal, 2003).

Agni is considered in Vedas as the spring of our life because it creates life on earth. In later Vedic description, *Agni* is known as Sun and light. In the form of Sun, *Agni* is regarded as the soul, and also as the ruler and preserver of the world (Maitryana Upanishad, Chapter 6, verse 35). The *Prithvi Sukta* maintains that the attributes of the earth such as its firmness, purity, and fertility are for everyone, and that no one group or nation has special authority over them. It also mentions that urban centres should be plans in such a way that the land remains a place of worthwhile living for all, with its natural beauty preserved (Jamieson, 2008).

Research Methodology

For this purpose, we have hypothesize our study that the conservation management was an importance aspect in Vedic structures of societies. We have adopted the deductive approach for this research and analyzed the literary texts to get the knowledge and awareness of Vedic people towards conservation of environmental resources and development. We have analyzed the importance of creative writings in influencing and creating a psychological connection between environment and societal people.

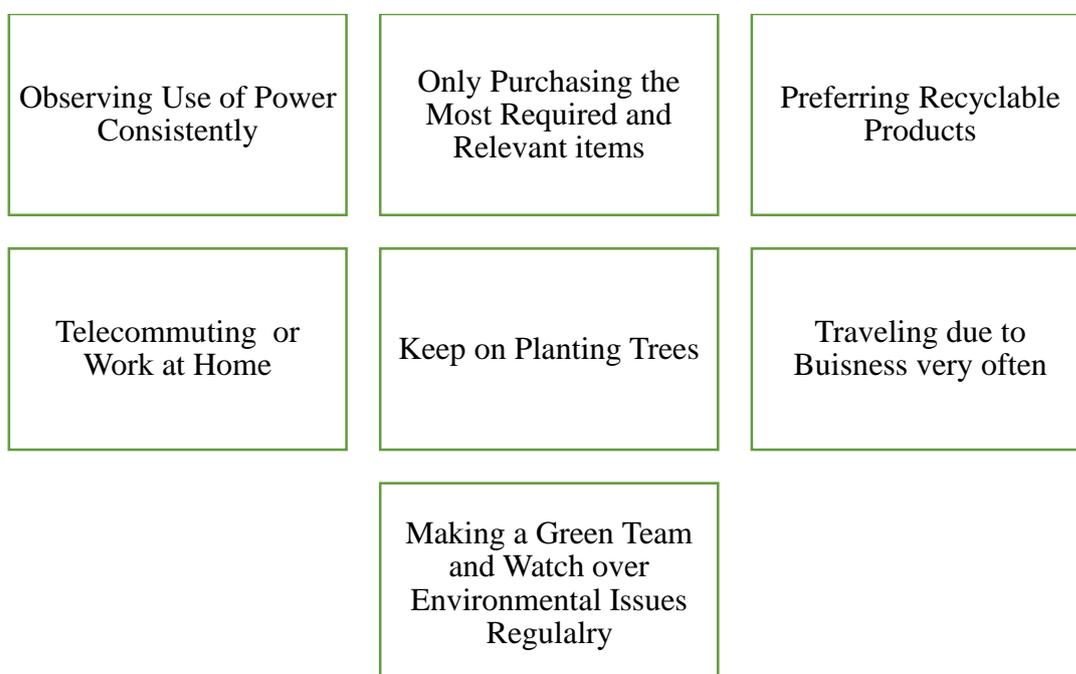


Figure 1. Defining Green Psychology

After scrutinizing, we have found that there is a modern term called *Green Psychology* which exists in Vedic literature and also in modern organization and environment as conservation management. It is helpful in describing organization's vision, generates

sensitivity towards conservation, saving environmental resources by creating a link between organization and conservation management. So the Vedic literary texts can be helpful in changing the attitude of people, understanding the nature and protecting the environmental resources alternatively.

Attitude of Devotion towards Trees

The ancient Indians had a great respect for environment and worshiped different objects/manifestations of nature with utmost devotion and sincerity. They worshiped *Tulsi* (a holy basil plant), *Neem*, *Pipal* or *Ashvattha*, *Bel*, *Vat* (*banyan*), *Sal*, *Banana* trees not only as having religious importance but also of medicinal value. The trees also symbolize the concept of fertility. They also worshipped mountains, land/soil, water, rivers, animals and birds. Animals like cows, bulls, elephants which were worshiped in ancient times, are also being worshiped even today. They worshiped different manifestations of nature as Gods and Goddesses (Patra, 2016).

Conclusion

Conservation management is not only a scientific concept but also a valued term. Most civilizations, both in their advance and decline, reflect how people manage the ecosystems and protecting all the natural resources in their original state. Various beliefs across the world, each in their own way, offer a unique set of moral values and rules to guide human beings in their relationship with the environment. Ancient India was the ideal ecological region for the development of civilization and acknowledged in Vedic literature. So the modern term green psychology can be a new ecological look to these literary writings. According to *Vedas*, *Upanishads* and modern physics, our body is interconnected with inside and outside atmosphere of earth. It helps in understanding the link between organizations and society people as well. We can say that ancient philosophy is based on harmony and development. Hence, the Vedic ethics and folk beliefs have a significant part in enhancing the commitment and accountability towards conservation management, and helpful in improving as well as sustaining the green psychology.

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