

Relevance of Purusharthas in Understanding Values and Motivations of Professionals

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Abstract

Empirical studies and research shows a strong connection between personality traits, value structures, motivational patterns and behavior exhibit. In the present article, we have considered Purusharthas as values representing Indian way of life. In addition to this, method of tool development based on Purushartha philosophy has been explained in order to understand how Purushartha orientations were analysed and interpreted among three vocations (Teachers, Doctors and Business professionals) who participated in the Research activity as respondents.

Introduction

In today's world, diverse cultural influences seemed to have merged in Indian life as well as work organizations. Needs and aspirations of Indians are developing corresponding to Western value structure which has no doubt increased the quality of life with respect to technology and comfort but at the same time these values have paved way to birth of several individual and professional conflicting life and work situations.

In psychological studies, personality is considered as a set of dynamic self-regulatory system that emerges and operates over the life course in the service of personal adaptation affecting our cognitive, affective and motivational life process (Caprara and Cervone, 2000; Mischel and Shoda 2008). Similarly, values universally are defined as beliefs or concepts referring to desirable states of behavior which transcend specific situations and guide selection or evaluation of behavior and events and are ordered by subjective and relative importance. Moreover, personality and value formations are guided by Cultural factors.

Empirical studies and research also shows a strong connection between personality traits, value structures, motivational patterns and behavior exhibit. In the present article, we have considered Purusharthas as values representing Indian way of life. In addition to this, method of tool development based on Purushartha philosophy has been explained in order to understand how Purushartha orientations were analysed and interpreted among three vocations (Teachers, Doctors and Business professionals) who participated in the Research

activity as respondents.

Purusharthas

Purusharthas posit fourfold human objectives reflecting the Indian ethos of proper synthesis of material and spiritual values and realizing the ultimate truth practically (Singh, 2013).

Indian way of life and value structure is strongly guided by Purushartha foundation. Directly or indirectly and knowingly or unknowingly, Purushartha philosophy has a strong impact on ancient and modern Indian thoughts in all spheres of life and development. From Indian perspective Purushartha orientation can be considered both as a value as well as motivational thought. Purushartha, a major contribution of Indian treatise suggest a practical representation of motivation and value formational thought.

Purushartha orientation finds its basis in Dharmashastras. Purusharthas can be defined as a set of prescriptions and ideals which direct the individual to act in a particular way. In terms of motivational language, Purusharthas comprise of all human aims and are found in Canon of human motives-economic prosperity, satisfaction of basic sexual impulses, desire to live in a society governed by ethics, desire to know one self, and liberation from desires to be free from wants of wealth and power. Each of the four canonical Purusharthas are always subjected to a process of examination and elaboration which produces very important concepts in Indian life and thought.

The four Purusharthas can be broadly divided into two-tier value systems namely Abhyudhaya consisting of Dharma, Artha and Kama on one side; Nishreyas- Moksha on other side. Theory of Purusharthas (Purpose of Existence) forms the ground of Indian thought, contributing for the dynamic unity of pursuits of Artha (wealth), Kama (desire), Dharma (ethics), Moksha (liberation from ones wants).

Srimad Bhagavatam (verse 1.2.9) says:

*“Dharmasya hi apavarsya na arthaha yopakalpyathe-
Na arthasya Dharmokanthasya kamo labhaya hi smruthaha”*

Which means:

All human endeavours are certainly meant for ultimate liberation. They should never be performed for material gain. Furthermore, according to sages, one who is engaged in the ultimate occupational service should never use material gain to cultivate sense gratification.

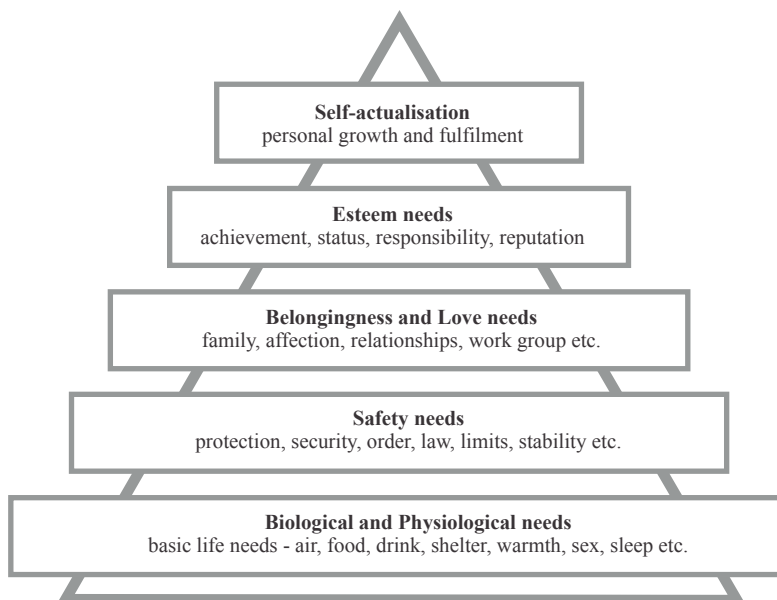
About the Study

Present research study aimed to study Purusharthas both as value and motivational representations of Indian thought. Study also considered Motivational Quiz a tool designed on the basis of Abraham Maslow's Self actualization principle as a parallel to Purushartha thought. Present research study compared the orientations of respondents on Purushartha Scale along with orientations of motivation depending on their responses to Motivational Quiz.

Motivational Quiz is a tool evolved and tested by Bangalore University, Psychology Department. The tool consists of 44 items belonging to Maslowian theory of Self-Actualisation. Maslow propounded about 5 layers and final layer indicates Self-Actualisation which is supreme Value conceived by Maslow. To achieve the fifth layer one has to traverse through layer A- needs of basic existence, layer B- needs required to fulfil ones feeling of security and safety, Layer C- needs required to fulfill ones feeling of love and belonging to a particular group, Layer D- needs required to fulfill ones feeling of Esteem and respect, Layer E- needs to fulfill ones feeling of Self-actualisation.

Maslowian hierarchy of needs are portrayed in the form of pyramid; with the largest and most fundamental levels at the bottom and need for self-actualisation at the top.

Figure 1. Maslowian Hierarchy of Needs



In order to study the Purushartha Orientation among service and non-service professionals, a Purushartha tool was evolved in four phases with revisions.

The objective behind development of a Purushartha tool was to

1. Study the differences in Orientation if existing between the Purusharthas among service sectors (teachers and doctors in the study) and Business professionals
2. Study if there are similarities in Motivational (Western model) and Purushartha Orientations (Indian model) among human service and business professionals

Assessment of Purushartha Orientation using Purushartha Scale

Purushartha Orientation was measured using a tool developed by the authors. Initially, the tool development was based on items extracted from Scriptures, Chankaya Neethi, Kama Sutra and various books pertaining to Upanishads. The statements selected were modified to modern day thinking and lifestyle within the classical framework of Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha Orientations.

To make respondents clear about their pattern of responses, Operational definitions of four dimensions were stated thus;

- Dharma is that concept which specifies human action as a unseen result of do's and dont's, religion and ethics, pleasure and painful experiences.
- Artha is a value or a pursuit shared with other living beings; it also stands for all sorts of securities of life-Wealth, Power, Influence and Fame.
- Kama stands for many forms of sensual pleasures; for non-humans Kama is monitored by instinct. For human beings Kama is controlled by instincts, personal values and societal obligations.
- Moksha is a higher pursuit for higher freedom; higher thought, happiness, when “ things have properly fallen into place”, it is also a mental condition where one need not struggle to alter any circumstance to one's choice.

18 items belonging to four Purushartha dimensions were prepared.

Purusharthas in this phase of tool development was considered both as a motivational aspect and also a Value. The dimension of Dharma was measured using 5 items; Artha 5 items, Kama 4 items and Moksha 4 items respectively. Along with Purushartha tool developed by the authors, Moti-quiz was also administered to Teachers, Doctors and Business Professionals. Co-relational studies were done among the four dimensions of Purusharthas.

Results

Results show that Dharma and Artha have negative significant co-relation; Dharma also has significant negative co-relation with Kama; Dharma also shares significant negative co-relation with Moksha.

Corelation results are shown in the table below:

Table 1. Correlation Results

Dimensions	Dharma	Artha	Kama	Moksha
Dharma	1	-.288**	-.165**	-.293**
Artha	-.288**	1.00	.475**	-.297**
Kama	-.165**	.475**	1	-.400**
Moksha	-.293**	-.297**	-.400**	1

For the present study Mann-Whitney test was used to compare value orientations, personality dimensions between human service and business professionals respectively. The following table shows differences in Purushartha/Value Orientations among human service and business professions:

Table 2: Mean Rank of Business and Service Professionals

Values	Business Pro Mean Rank	Service Mean Rank	Sig (2 Tailed)
DHARMA	130.38	122.03	.368
ARTHA	107.61	138.24	.001
KAMA	119.74	129.60	.288
MOKSHA	111.36	135.58	.009

At the outset, observing the mean ranks of business and service professionals, table above depicts significant differences between the two groups (business and service professionals) in understanding and formulating values in their vocation. All the four Purusharthas seem to create impact on vocational life among the participants. While Artha and Kama values, have been given high importance by business professionals, it is observed Dharma has been

ranked high by service sector professionals. Interestingly, Moksha has been given very high prominence by business professionals when compared to service sector professionals.

In the present study, it was expected that teachers and doctors would rate the values of Dharma and Moksha high, whereas business professionals would consider Artha and Kama to be important. From the motivational aspect, it was anticipated that doctors and teachers would aspire to pursue Dharma and Moksha goals, as against business professionals who would want to pursue Artha and Kama goals.

Table 3 : Purushartha Orientation of Service and Non-service sectors

	DHARMA	ARTHA	KAMA	MOKSHA
BUSINESS	43.38	42.52	42.52	34.11
DOCTORS	42.93	52.16	42.03	28.86
TEACHERS	41.27	53.29	44.90	45.16

(Higher the rank assigned, lesser is the value)

Table 3 shows that business professionals and doctors both arrange their value sequence in terms of importance in the following way: 1. Moksha, 2. Kama, 3. Dharma, 4. Artha whereas teachers value sequence in terms of importance is: 1. Dharma, 2. Kama, 3. Moksha, 4. Artha.

The tool is constructed on the principle that higher the rank assigned, lesser is the value given to that particular purushartha. The mean rank assigned by business professionals to Dharma is 43.38 whereas it is 42.93 by doctors and 41.27 by teachers. Teachers have ranked Dharma high when compared to doctors and business professionals. Taking into account the nature of vocation of teachers, and considering the cultural responsibility which they are expected to transmit to the future generation, findings of the present study support the general expectation that teachers value Dharma on a higher note when compared to doctors and business professionals. Further, results also indicate the fact that there is not much difference found in Dharma Orientation among doctors and business professionals though doctors are considered a part of human service professional group. Dharma orientation is almost similar among business and doctor professionals.

Artha is an aim that individuals pursue to bring about material well-being and artha-oriented activities are mainly centred on wealth acquisition. Goals pertaining to Artha domain are viewed as material goods which aid one's survival. The mean rank assigned by business professionals to Artha is 48.70, doctors have ranked Artha 52.16 and teachers have ranked 53.29 to Artha respectively. As expected earlier, mean rank assigned to Artha by business

professional is high when compared to doctors and teachers. Doctors have assigned a value of 52.16 to Artha when compared to 53.29 by teachers.

The aim of pursuing the purushartha of Kama is to intensify the objective of enjoyment and develop the instrument of power. Kama is a set of fulfilling basic need hierarchy with the motive of improving one's physical well-being. Mean ranks assigned by business professionals towards Kama is 42.52, doctors 42.03 and teachers 44.90 respectively. Business professionals and doctors indicate a similar orientation to Kama.

Cultural system inculcates values which aid vocational decisions significant to the individuals. Present finding show that business professionals give a moderate importance towards enjoyment of physical objects indicating the fact that Indian value system propagates the enjoyment of Kama that is sanctioned by dharma. The mean rank assigned by teachers towards the value of Kama is slightly less at 44.90.

Moksha is the final and ultimate value or aim which stresses on the attainment of spiritual values and freedom from bondages. The present study explains through the mean rank how the three professional groups have valued Moksha from the frame work of their respective vocational settings. Business professionals have assigned a value of 34.11 as against 28.86 by doctors and 45.16 by teachers. Doctors in particular have assigned higher rank to moksha when compared to business professionals. Findings of the present study also support the view that nature of one's vocation is highly influential in the development of secular values of liberation (Moksha), Moksha values in present day context mean coming out of selfish motives and working for societal welfare. Fact that doctors, as a part of their profession, work with patients and experience upheavals of different dimensions of life and death on a regular basis could be one of the major reasons they give prominence to moksha.

Observing the sequence order of values given by the three professions, it is clear that the influence of cultural up-bringing has a strong impact on value structure of individuals belonging to any vocation. Keeping into consideration the nature of Purushartha Orientation and their direct as well as indirect influences on Indian psyche, it is understandable that even business professionals assign prominent place to moksha. Despite Western influences on education, living and social life, it is seen Purushartha Orientation still has a remarkable influence on the practice of their chosen vocation.

Several earlier researches on applicability of Maslowian model to teaching and education stress on recognition of teacher needs by creating an environment of benefit. Most of the studies relating to Maslowian model and their impact on teaching and education emphasize on development of Total Quality Management in teaching and learning activities. All programmes designed in an educational set-up has to satisfy the need patterns of pupils

(recipients).

Application of Maslowian model to the field of medicine calls for moral and ethical orientation of medical staff to attend and manage several health needs of clients. Retracing back to the present study and findings, following table shows the motivational patterns of the frequencies of overall sample in all five layers of Maslow's model.

Table 4. Frequencies and percentages of preferences given by the sample across motivational needs (N=250)

LAYERS	A	B	C	D	E
Total Number Of Frequencies	190	474	313	638	839
Mean Frequencies	1.51	3.77	2.49	5.08	6.68
Percentage Of Frequencies	0.77%	19.31%	12.75%	25.99	34.18

The results show that for Layer A (Basic needs), frequencies amount to just one percent. Looking from the dimension of values, the frequency percentage indicates that respondents do not expect the fulfilment of basic needs like food, shelter and other basic accessories required from their vocation.

21% of participants from the present study expect security and safety from their vocation and value their vocation for the security and safety it provides. From the organisational view point, Concept of security at job has also undergone a drastic change over the years since today security at job could also mean responsible roles, reinforcement as a result of good performance and coverage of health and other benefits.

About 13 % of respondent's value belongingness need and need for affiliation as a part of fulfilment of their vocation. As Compared to the percentage of security needs, belongingness % is relatively low. Attitude of co-workers, organisational climate, expectations from job roles, family background and gender differences could be some of the major reasons which influence the fulfilment of belongingness need. Changes in these aspects of life among the professionals could be the reason.

28% of respondent's value self-esteem needs to be fulfilled from their vocations. Developing an identity and esteem on account of one's vocation is a common factor seen in all cultures. Researches also supports the notion that one's vocation can weave a strong influence on an individual's perception of how others value and respect him/her on account of their vocation. Developing a good self-esteem can bring in lot of positive goal formation, strong value structure and better performance in the organisation.

37% of respondents value Self-actualisation as an important goal from their vocations. Self- actualisation is feeling good and potent about one's abilities (Steve & Sophia, 2010).

Striving to reach towards self-actualisation becomes a focus for the individual employee when family and organisation both join hands together to enable the individual to make maximum contribution for the society at large. Working towards self-actualised attitudes and actions has become important modules in training programmes of different organisations all over the globe. Present day job situations are structured and formatted in such a fashion so as to make self-actualisation as a goal oriented need and reaching the same gives individual employee absolute job satisfaction and intrinsic benefits.

A comparison among the three professions shows noticeable differences in their responses to different layers of Maslowian model.

Table 5. percentage of frequencies allotted by three professions

PROFFESIONS	LAYER A	LAYER B	LAYER C	LAYER D	LAYER E
BUSINESS	10%	18%	15%	25%	32%
DOCTORS	7%	20%	11%	25%	37%
TEACHERS	6%	20%	11%	28%	35%

In all the three categories of professionals, maximum % of professionals view self-actualisation as their prime goal to be achieved through their vocation followed by esteemed needs to be fulfilled through vocation.

Present research findings related to Purushartha responses and Moti-quiz frequencies clearly indicate that value of Moksha has been highly graded followed by Dharma, Kama and Artha respectively (both by service and non-service professionals). Similarly from the Western perspective the value equivalent to purushartha is measured in terms of frequencies of preference among five motivational dimensions as proposed by Maslow.

Comparison of responses on the two questionnaires namely Purushartha scale and Motiquiz reveal the similarity in the responses.

Implications of the Study

This study aimed at understanding the value orientations of professionals using ancient Indian concept of Purushartha and highly acceptable model of motivation given by Maslow. Moksha which is considered as the ultimate aim of humans in the Purushartha concept has been found to be the most desirable value to be achieved by the professionals through their vocation and self-actualisation as the main motivation. The results could act as a guide for organizations in developing organizational systems and HR policies to ensure maximum output from the employees. Moreover, the tool developed using the Purushartha concept to understand value orientations of professionals could be used in assessing the value

orientation and motivations of people in the organizational context for making and implementing policies and systems for the betterment of employees and organizations. Re-orienting the employees in terms of their priorities and needs can lead to far reaching and long lasting merits ensuring development in productivity, marketing and profitability.

Present study encourages adopting suitable mixture of Indian and Western principles in respect to organisational assessment, training and awareness of managing ones' motives to achieve individual and organizational growth.

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