Spiritual Leadership and its Contribution to Soft Dimensions of Total Quality Management – Relevance to Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in India

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Abstract

Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) have been the backbone of Indian economy. This is because of their employment potential at low capital cost and also the ability to respond faster to unexpected development in the field of activity. In India, MSMEs contribute nearly 8% of the country’s GDP, 45% of the manufacturing output and 40% of the exports. But, over the past few years their share in GDP, manufacturing output and exports has been slowly declining. Among the various reasons for this downtrend, process inefficiencies have been identified as a major cause of concern and there is a felt need to improve on the same. The philosophy of Total Quality Management (TQM) which governs the process management and control has evolved gradually since evolution. Some of these Quality philosophies like Kaizen, Confucianism and Tao etc. based Spirituality practiced at workplace have come to stay in present day business scenarios. Spirituality contained in texts of Ancient Indian Wisdom has been adopted in various management practices across the globe and out of those the Bhagavad Gita has been a storehouse of sustainable solutions to many organizational challenges over the years. In context, Spirituality contained in the eighteen chapters of the Bhagavad Gita has many insights which could contribute to the dimensions of TQM. Leadership has been a driving dimension for TQM and has been fundamental for the other soft and hard dimensions. This research paper would capture the effect of spiritual leadership based on Bhagavad Gita and its contribution to the soft dimensions of TQM. The conceptual framework is drawn from three streams of literature: Bhagavad Gita, Workplace Spirituality and TQM. Also, this paper would contribute to the existing knowledge base by adding the concepts of Workplace Spirituality from the Bhagavad Gita to TQM literature.

Whatever action is performed by an exalted soul, common men follow and whatever standards he sets by exemplary acts, all the world pursues.
— The Bhagavad Gita (BG III,21)

1. Introduction

Since evolution, there has been a synergetic relationship between man and work performed. Ancient civilizations have developed through large scale systematic organization of work as a result of which social classes emerged and specializations branched out1.

The late 19th century saw the advent of scientific revolution which focused on improving work efficiency. This resulted in increased labour productivity. Organized work teams came together to achieve synergies and deliver better value propositions to the stakeholders. In context, today, industry houses engaged in manufacturing and services are always driven by the goal of creating customer ecstasy on a sustained basis. To propel this goal, the organizations are expected to constantly improve on their offerings by resorting to Business Process Reengineering and Benchmarking.
Also, today’s competitive environment ushered in by globalization, deregulation and digitalization poses a big challenge for the organizations both in terms of sustaining in business and growth. The onus is on every organization to ceaselessly strive to improve performance with an eye on contributing towards the improvement of the triple bottom line viz. Planet, People and the Profit of the organization.

Quality up-gradation driven by the commitment of leadership is extremely critical for enhancing competitiveness of any manufacturing or service organization. Quality gurus like Deming, Juran etc. state that management leadership is an important factor in Total Quality Management (TQM) implementation.

To aid the above shift, workplace spirituality and the philosophy of TQM have emerged as two major fields of research in the 20th and 21st centuries. "Megatrends 2010" argues persuasively that spirituality is going to be the defining trend of the 21st century. As the interest in workplace spirituality and its relevance to leadership is growing, this paper attempts to understand Spiritual leadership and its contribution to TQM in the context of MSMEs in India.

In context, the Government of India has proposed certain initiatives from 2014 to 2016 with the sole objective of bolstering societal and economical growth like Make in India, Digital India and Start up India. The objective or the vision of these initiatives is to have an empowered society and a knowledge economy. The leadership of MSMEs needs to adapt to take advantage of these initiatives.

2. Micro Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) - Present Scenario

India has been progressing with an optimistic expectation to emerge as one of the leading economies in the world over the next decade in the light of a positive political and economic scenario. The Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) segment is expected to play a significant role in the emergence of the Indian economy.

In light of the same, the number of MSMEs in India has seen exponential growth over the last decade. There are approximately 46 million enterprises in the MSME sector across various industries. They employ 106 million people which form approximately 21% of the workforce in India.

Even though the contribution of the MSME sector to India’s GDP stands at approximately 8%, it is growing at a rate higher than the projected GDP growth rate. Technological adoptions have been catalyzing this growth. A recent analysis conducted by Ernst and Young (EY) says that MSMEs are expected to play a leading role in adoption of Social, Mobile, Analytics and Cloud (SMAC) in India. India’s MSME sector’s contribution to the country’s GDP is expected to increase to 22% in 2020.

There are approximately 46 million enterprises in the MSME sector across various industries. They employ 106 million people which form approximately 21% of the workforce in India.
The result is that, it not only increases the employment opportunities for the workforce of the country but also improves the acceptability of the products across international markets.

2.1 Challenges faced by Indian MSMEs

MSMEs in India are facing certain challenges for growth. These challenges are both external and internal. A survey done by FirstBiz-Greyhound Knowledge Group across 540 MSMEs lists out 6 main external challenges.

- Dearth of easy finance and credit instruments.
- Limiting regulatory policies.
- Unavailability of modern, affordable technology.
- Lack of basic infrastructure facilities.
- Absence of exclusive marketing platforms and distribution networks.
- Inflexible labor laws and availability of affordable skilled labor.

(Source: FirstBiz-Greyhound Knowledge Group SME Survey 2014-n = 540)\(^\text{10}\).

Also there are internal operational level challenges. These could be classified under five major heads.

- Technological obsolescence: Keeping pace with new technology has been the most critical challenge faced by the MSMEs.
- Supply chain inefficiencies.
- Process inefficiencies.
- Sub-optimal scale of operations.
- Access to quality manpower (inefficient labor markets, missing talent pool etc.).

(Source: Shifting the Paradigm: Mapping the inclusive innovation ecosystem for MSMEs)\(^\text{11}\).

Many organizations in the MSME segment of India are succumbing to the pressures posed by the above said challenges. 79 MSMEs are turning financially unviable and approaching Bureau of Industrial and Financial Reconstruction (BIFR) every day. This translates to three units falling sick every hour, according to data compiled by the Micro Small and Medium Enterprises - Development Institute (MSME-DI). This has happened because of turbulence in the business environment and saturation in market segments. This trend needs to be reversed and MSMEs need to strategise and create markets to serve, develop and upgrade themselves for bettering the quality of life of the society at large.

The internal operational level challenges could be addressed by efficient quality management practices in the organization.

3. Quality Management

The history of quality is as old as civilization. Since then there has been a metamorphosis in the way quality is managed. The contributions of Walter Shewhart (1930s), W. Edwards Deming (1950s), Joseph M. Juran, Armand V. Feigenbaum, Philip B. Crosby, Kaoru Ishikawa (1960s) and Masaaki Imai (1980s) transformed quality from inspection to management of the process culminating in the development of philosophy of Total Quality Management (TQM).

Hence Total Quality Management evolved through four stages\(^\text{12}\).

3.1 Quality and Total Quality Management

But what is quality? To this question, practitioners in the field of Quality Management have perceived and defined quality under two generic heads viz. conformance to specification and customer delight.

According to Oxford dictionary for the business world, quality is defined as the degree of excellence. Broh R. A. defines quality as the degree of excellence at an acceptable price and the control of variability at an acceptable cost\(^\text{13}\).

Philip B. Crosby defines quality as conformance to requirements. Joseph. M. Juran opines that quality is fitness for use. Taguchi says that quality is loss avoidance. The Project Management Body of Knowledge (PMBOK) defines quality as "the degree to which a set of inherent
characteristics fulfil requirements\textsuperscript{14}. In other words, quality is the ability of a product or service to consistently meet or exceed customer expectations. The American National Standards Institute (ANSI) and the American Society for Quality (ASQ) define quality as the totality of features and characteristics of a product or service that bears on its ability to satisfy stated or implied needs\textsuperscript{15}.

Any product or service, if it has to be competitive, should surpass the expectation of the customer. Quality can be quantified as P/E where P is the performance and E is the expectation. When the ratio is greater than 1.0, the product or offering is perceived as good.

The determination of P and E is based on perceptions where the organization determines performance and the customer determine expectation\textsuperscript{16}.

Hence, quality should not be focussed solely on the goods and services that an organization produces or provides. It should also be embedded in the management practices of the organization, in other words, quality should be the underlying value on which the organization is managed.

TQM is a broad-based approach used by world class companies to achieve organizational excellence\textsuperscript{17}. In fact, it is a widely accepted philosophy for sustained quality improvement in organizations today\textsuperscript{18}.

It is defined as the ability to deliver excellent products to stakeholders\textsuperscript{19} and has been developed as a result of intense global competition\textsuperscript{20}. It is a management philosophy that helps manage an organization to improve the effectiveness and performance to achieve world class status for the past two decades\textsuperscript{21}. Joseph M. Juran says, TQM is the system of activities directed at achieving delighted customers, empowered employees, higher revenues and reduced costs\textsuperscript{22}.

In empirical research, scholars use the term TQM practices instead of TQM philosophy or concept because the TQM practices can be measured\textsuperscript{23}.

Research has shown that the practice of TQM is constructed on 14 dimensions. These 14 dimensions are divided into six primary and eight supportive dimensions. These dimensions are applicable and critical to all types of institutions intending to create a TQM environment\textsuperscript{24}.

The six primary dimensions that drive the TQM transformation are: 1. Leadership or Top Management Commitment, 2. Strategic Planning, 3. Empowerment, 4. Teamwork, 5. Continuous Improvement and 6. Customer and Employee satisfaction.

The eight supportive dimensions, namely 1. Communication, 2. Training, 3. Change Management, 4. Culture Forming, 5. Support Structures, Systems and Resources, 6. Systems Thinking, 7. Self-Assessment and 8. Processes. Further these dimensions are divided into soft and hard dimensions. Soft dimensions are interpreted as values or attitudes required to practice the TQM philosophy while hard dimensions relate to the visible mechanisms or structures are laid out to enable the same.

Soft dimensions generally deal with human resource management and concentrates on behavioural side including training for employees, management leadership, teamwork, supplier relationship and management, creating value to customers and achieving customer satisfaction\textsuperscript{25}.

Hard factors provide tools and techniques such as process flow diagrams, tables so that the employees can share the information to the all the members of the organization\textsuperscript{26}.

| S.No. | Dimension                                      | Hard/ Soft |
|-------|-----------------------------------------------|------------|
| I     | Primary Dimension                             |            |
| 1.    | Leadership and top management commitment      | Soft       |
| 2.    | Strategic planning                            | Hard       |
| 3.    | Empowerment                                   | Soft       |
| 4.    | Teamwork                                      | Soft       |
| 5.    | Continuous improvement                        | Soft       |
| 6.    | Customer and employee satisfaction            | Soft       |
| II    | Secondary Dimension                           |            |
| 7.    | Communication                                 | Soft       |
| 8.    | Training                                      | Soft/Hard  |
| 9.    | Culture forming                               | Soft       |
| 10.   | Change management                             | Soft       |
| 11.   | Supportive structures, systems and resources  | Hard       |
| 12.   | Systems thinking                              | Soft       |
| 13.   | Self assessment                               | Soft/Hard  |
| 14.   | Processes                                     | Soft/Hard  |

Source: Jacobus Johannes Oschman (2004).

A number of researchers urge that for TQM to be fully successful, it requires a wide-ranging adoption of “softer” approaches\textsuperscript{27} whose dimensions comprise, in essence, elements of human resources management\textsuperscript{28}.
Leadership and top management commitment is the key to adopt these softer dimensions of TQM in an organization.

3.2 Leadership and Top Management Commitment

As discussed in the previous section and in Section 1, management leadership is an important factor in TQM implementation. This is because it forms the foundation for improving the organizational performance by influencing other TQM practices. Quality improvement in an organization requires shifting the thought processes in the organization. This paradigm shift is enabled by effective leadership.

Now, the leadership styles could be Transactional, Transformational, Transcendental or Spiritual. Out of these, Fry states that spiritual leadership is necessary for the transformation and sustained success of an organization.

Fry and Slocum further say that a challenge facing organizations today is the need to develop new business models based on spiritual leadership that accentuate employee well-being, sustainability and social responsibility without sacrificing performance.

This calls for a deeper understanding of the infinite potential and knowledge naturally present in every employee in the organization which takes us to the presence of the spirit or soul inside every creation.

4. Spirituality at Workplace and Spiritual Leadership

The dawn of the 20th century has ushered the emergence of an exponentially accelerating force for global, societal and organizational change. The development in technology and telecommunication has driven this change. Territorial barriers have collapsed and the world has shrunk to become a global village. There is a need to shift the paradigms of performance to stay competitive in the midst of acute competition. This calls for sustained individual development and connectedness with each of the organizational members’ development. Also the development should happen collectively as an organization.

Spirituality practiced at workplace has positively impacted both individual and organizational development. The Upanishads (Sacred texts of India) declare that spirituality is the goal of all existence. In the recent years there has been a major enquiry into the subject of spirituality and its relevance to work environments. But, what is spirituality?

4.1 Spirituality Definitions and Dimensions

The Oxford dictionary 2nd edition defines Spirituality as the quality or condition of being spiritual. Here spiritual is referred to affecting or concerning the Spirit or higher moral qualities. Spirit is defined as the breath of life or the soul of a person.

Spirit is characterized by unlimited knowledge and unending ecstasy within every individual. Spirituality is the process of realizing this infinity inside us and connecting it with the infinity inside others thereby adding value to the environment we live and operate. Sri Aurobindo says that spirituality is indeed the master-key of the Indian mind. The sense of the infinite is native to it. J. J. de Klerk conceptualized individual spirituality as seeing a meaning in life. Richard McKnight defines spirituality as the animating life force that inspires an individual towards purpose that is beyond his self and that gives a life its meaning and direction.

Gibbons opines that spirituality involves a sense of wholeness, connectedness at work and experiencing deeper values. Almost all academic definitions acknowledge this view.

Dr. Fahri Karakas defines spirituality as the journey to find a sustainable, authentic, meaningful, holistic and profound understanding of the existential self and its relationship/interconnectedness with the sacred and the transcendent. B. Mahadevan describes spirituality as an individual's (Jiva) search for a deep meaning of life interconnecting it to the Universe (Jagat) and to God (Ishwara). The purpose to connect with the inner self is to link to a source beyond ourselves.

Hence we could infer that spirituality is a journey during which we move towards exploring the divinity and infinite potential existing within each one of us, realise and connect with the same externally and thereby tend towards a state of continuous ecstasy and contentment in life. The practice of the above would be a major tool for MSME development.

4.2 Spirituality at Workplace

Pierre Teilhard de Chardin (1881-1955) wrote, “We are not human beings having a spiritual experience. We are spiritual beings having a human experience” (quoted...
in Bowling 2001, 369). Because we are spiritual beings, every work we do has a spiritual dimension.

Now, when we relate this spirituality to work it yields multiple results. Work would become beyond one's sense of self and would not be centred at self-serving principles. Thus, work becomes a vocation and gives a person a transcendent meaning to work. The practice of spirituality at work would:

- Enhance employee well-being and quality of life;
- Provide employees a sense of purpose and meaning at work;
- Give employees a sense of interconnectedness and community.

Also, John Milliman et al. summarized three core dimensions of spirituality at the individual level, team level and the organizational level.

At the individual level an employee enjoys the work. He is energised by work and the work gives him a meaning and purpose. Work is done as a calling. At the team level, employees develop a sense of connection for the community, support each other and work for a common goal. At the organizational level, spirituality helps employees to align individual goals with the organizational goals. It helps the employees to identify themselves with the organizational missions and values and develop a feeling that the organization cares for its employees. To bring in this spirituality into workplace it is extremely imperative that the leadership should be inspired or 'be in spirit'.

4.2.1 Spiritual Leadership

Research has shown that there has been a consistency between spiritual values, practices and leadership effectiveness. Workplace spirituality forms one of the main foundations for spiritual leadership. Reave L. says that values like integrity, honesty and humility have an effect on leadership success. Spiritual leadership comprises of the values, attitudes and behaviours that are necessary to intrinsically motivate one's self and others so that they have a sense of spiritual survival through calling and citizenship. Spiritual leadership taps into the fundamental needs of both leader and follower for spiritual survival so that they become more organizationally committed and productive. Spiritual leadership is necessary for the transformation and continued success of a developing organization. Spiritual leadership requires creating a vision wherein organization members experience a sense of calling. Further these members feel that their life has a meaning which also makes a difference in the life of other stakeholders of the organization.

Spiritual leadership is also responsible for establishing a social/organizational culture based on altruistic love whereby leaders and followers have genuine care, concern and appreciation for both self and others. This produces a sense of membership and feeling of being understood and appreciated. This means that spiritual leadership emerges from the interaction of altruistic love, vision and faith in organizational members. The focus of spiritual leadership is to ensure that all group members meet spiritual needs and enhance organizational commitment and performance and emphasises less on leader centric approach. This would mean that every person exercising a positive influence which enhances the group's calling, membership and performance will be considered as a leader. Spiritual leadership is both a cause and effect as group members interact and various formal and informal leaders in the group emerge.

Texts on ancient wisdom give various insights to lead a spiritual life, adapt the same to working environments and make the environment an enriching and evolving experience.

This paper would examine the leadership based on the rich spirituality content contained in the Bhagavad Gita and its contribution to improving the soft dimensions of TQM which would aid MSMEs in India.

5. The Bhagavad Gita

Bhagavad Gita or simply Gita is a text contained in the Bhishma Parva (Chapters 25 to 42) of the Mahabharata, one of the many great Indian epics containing Spirituality. Bhagavad Gita is filled with strong moral advice and leadership lessons can be drawn from the text. It offers a synthesis of many existing Vedic teachings within an overall framework of belief in God. It contains within it, the distilled essence of the Upanishads, which encourages us to manifest total excellence in all that we do and in all our relationships by discovering the latent divinity within us.

The influence of the Gita extends well beyond India and the Hindu religion. The reach of the Gita is worldwide and the concept would apply to everyone across the globe. Recently, seven regiments of the British Army were given a talk on the Gita for development in the sense of duty, sustainability of the world, practical methods to
attain self-mastery, control the mind, how we can discriminate between right and wrong and meditation and battle strategies from the Mahabharata.

The Gita embodies the supreme spiritual mystery and secret. It contains the essence of the roots to Indian spiritual knowledge bank known as the Vedas. Sri Aurobindo says “The philosophical system of the Gita and its arrangement of truth is not the only part of its teaching which is the most vital, profound and eternally durable”.

Most of the material in the Gita, the principal ideas and the suggestions are woven in complex harmony. These are eternally valuable and valid not only because they form merely the luminous ideas or striking speculations of a philosophic intellect, but rather they verily form the enduring truths of spiritual experience. Also it gives facts of our highest psychological possibilities which could be verified. This makes the Gita a must read which nobody can afford to neglect.

Sri Aurobindo further says that the teaching of the Gita must therefore be regarded not merely in the light of a general spiritual philosophy or ethical doctrine, but as bearing upon a practical crisis in the application of ethics and spirituality to human life.

Bhagavad Gita is a Yoga Shastra which means it can be verified practically by all. Hence it becomes easy to apply the same to all walks of life.

6. Spiritual Leadership contained in the Bhagavad Gita

One of the major focuses in the Bhagavad Gita is Leadership. There are several references to the quality of leadership. In (2012) brings out three fundamentals of a leader based on the Bhagavad Gita.

- Strong need to lead by example.
- Importance of developing a high degree of equanimity.
- Understanding the principle of mutual dependence.

Debashis Chatterjee classified the eighteen chapters of the Bhagavad Gita as 18 Leadership Sutras. The classification is as under:

- Chapter 1: Leaders embrace discontinuity and death.
- Chapter 2: Leaders create alternate reality.
- Chapter 3: Leaders enter the timeless cycle of action.
- Chapter 4: Leaders pursue purpose as the source of supreme power.

Chapter 5: Leadership is the art of undoing.
Chapter 6: Leaders are masters of their minds.
Chapter 7: Leaders are integrators.
Chapter 8: Decoding the meaning of life.
Chapter 9: Timeless leaders live in self organizing universe.
Chapter 10: Leadership is an adventure of consciousness.
Chapter 11: Timeless leaders have integral vision.
Chapter 12: Love is leader’s essence, love is leaders presence.
Chapter 13: Leaders command their field with the eye of wisdom.
Chapter 14: Leaders harness the dynamic forces of nature.
Chapter 15: Timeless leaders discover their invisible source.
Chapter 16: Leaders negotiate the crossroads- the divine and the devilish.
Chapter 17: Leaders follow their faith - The journey of self giving.
Chapter 18: Leadership in transcendence - The unity of two wills.

This implies that the entire Bhagavad Gita throws light on building leadership qualities during the journey of life. It is also observed that the Bhagavad Gita gives inputs for spiritual leadership at all the levels of workplace spirituality i.e. at the individual level, team level and the organizational level.

6.1 Self Development: Spiritual Leadership at the Individual Level

The content in the Bhagavad Gita urges and first calls each human being towards self-leadership before leading others. This is done by removing the intrapersonal conflict which eliminates negative culture and enhances positive culture in the organization. At the Individual level it urges the leader to shed petty weakness of the heart and rise to the call of duty (BGII, 2-3). (*The Numbers in the brackets indicates the Chapters and the Verses in the Bhagavad Gita (BG). The Roman digits indicate Chapters and the numerals indicate the verses. This nomenclature would be followed throughout the paper hereafter). It advises on the need to manage change (BG II, 13) and develop Self Awareness (BG II, 11-53). Further the Bhagavad Gita urges a leader to develop and exhibit Sense and mind Control. (BG II, 55-58), carry out actions
backed by Spiritual Intelligence (Belief in the existence of the Soul) (BG II, 50), show high levels of Self-Abnegation (surrender of doer ship) (BG IV, 23), exhibit absence of desire for rewards (BG II, 47), develop equanimity and calmness in Mind (BG IV, 20-22) and have dedication on conferred work (Swadharma) (BG III, 35).

6.2 Participating and Contributing: Spiritual Leadership at the Team Level

Successful implementation of TQM requires effective change in an organization's culture. It is the responsibility of the leadership to drive continuous improvement, aid open communication and cooperation between employees and other stakeholders throughout the value chain.

The involvement of employees is an important factor for organizational development. The leadership should create the right environment to enable open communication that inspires the employees to work harder. Involving employees requires communicating a clear strategy for improving quality to them and this function can be enhanced by instituting quality-based incentive and compensation procedures. This aids interconnection among all stakeholders in the team.

The Bhagavad Gita (BG XVIII, 30) states that it is the leader's responsibility to communicate to the employees the right way of performing work. Every employee should be made to understand as to what is to be done, what not to be done, what is to be feared, what not to be feared, what is binding and what is liberating. A leader should possess adequate knowledge to drive the above.

Further, a leader should connect with the employees in such a way that he shakes off fear in the employees. It is stated in the Bhagavad Gita (BG XVIII, 32) that the connection between the leader and his followers should be free from discontent, hierocracy, duplicity, adultery, lying, oppressing others and prohibited activities. Hence, leadership in an organization should drive interconnectedness (BG II, 30), seek welfare of all. (BG III, 11 III, 20), share outcomes with others in the team. (BG III, 12-13 VII, 7) thereby making work as a sacrifice. Leadership commits to upliftment of his team and organizational excellence in four ways. 1. Idealized Influence, 2. Inspirational Motivation, 3. Intellectual Stimulation and 4. Individualized consideration.

6.2.1 Idealized Influence

When a leader is viewed as articulating an attainable goal or vision, followers identify and relate to the leader’s behaviors with complete trust. Such leaders are respected, have a high degree of referent power, maintain high standards and set challenging goals for their followers too.

The Bhagavad Gita (BG III, 21) contains insights about idealized influence. It is stated in the above mentioned verse that, whatsoever the leader does, that the followers also do. The standard he creates, people follow.

Similarly, in organizations, employees tend to emulate the examples set by the leadership. Whatever path he treads, the employees follow because he sets the norms for others. Employees performing selfless duty are always respected by team members and are approached when anyone faces challenges personally or professionally.

6.2.2 Inspirational Motivation

A leader has to provide an emotional appeal to increase the understanding of mutually beneficial goals. Successful leaders elevate followers’ expectations. The subject contained in the Bhagavad Gita (BG II, 2-3) urges every man to rise above impotency by coming out of paltry faint-heartedness.

A leader has to instill this confidence in every team member to achieve his best when working towards organizational goals. Also a spiritually backed leader inspires his followers with high standards, talks optimistically with enthusiasm and continuously provides encouragement and meaning for what needs to be done.

6.2.3 Intellectual Stimulation

Intellectual stimulation is to encourage followers to question their old ways of doing things. The followers are supported for questioning their own values, beliefs and expectations as well as that of the leader and the organization. Leadership should push employees to consider new points of view, to question old assumption and to articulate their own views. This forms a very important foundation for TQM.

The content contained in Bhagavad Gita (BG IV, 34) brings out this point. Knowledge on a particular subject could be got by service and questioning the preceptor. Similarly, leadership should commit to guide the employees of the organization to reinvent themselves during the journey of life to achieve excellence.

6.2.4 Individualized consideration

Individual consideration is when a leader treats his or her followers differently but equally on a one to one basis. Not only the needs of the employees are addressed and
their perspectives are raised but also their means of more effectively addressing goals and challenges are dealt with. In other words, the leader takes into account the needs, capacities and aspirations of each individual follower in the effort to treat followers equitably. The contents in the verses (BG II, 30; BG III, 11-13; BG III, 20 and BG VII, 7) of the Bhagavad Gita provide rich inputs about interconnectedness among all created beings.

The whole of Bhagavad Gita is a clarion call to a warrior to get out of a depressed state of mind and perform his duty in the interest of the kingdom and the society. Hence it inspirationally motivates and intellectually stimulates a warrior who had sulked from performing his duties. It also individually considers the connection between all that is created.

6.3 Managing Organizational Environment: Spiritual Leadership at the Organization Level

Leadership should take initiative to manage the entire organizational environment for the TQM philosophy to sink in.

As Warren Bennis says, leaders have their eyes on the horizon. They need to envision the future of the organization and develop processes which guide the organization. In this process, they not only become extremely capable learners but also take responsibility to improve the quality of the organizational environment.

Bhagavad Gita clearly stresses on selfless work and aligning oneself to the sense of duty. The aligning of personal and professional goals has been the main theme of the Gita. It also gives a clarion call for having the right sense of duty and accepting responsibilities.

Research has shown that individuals who score high on spirituality, rated being 'responsible' as the most important instrumental value. This is extremely important for setting the right vision for growth of the organization.

Hence, workplace spirituality has a significant positive influence on Institutional Citizenship Behaviour.

7. Spiritual Leadership contained in the Bhagavad Gita and its contribution to Soft Dimensions of TQM

As discussed earlier, effective leadership is the foundation for the other TQM dimensions.

This paper would examine the effect of Spiritual Leadership on Empowerment, Teamwork, Continuous Improvement, Customer and employee satisfaction, Communication, Training, Culture forming, Change management, Systems thinking, Self assessment and Processes which form the soft dimensions of TQM.

7.1 Empowerment:

A spiritually backed leader enables and empowers an employee by removing the ignorance and misgivings through effective transfer of knowledge and authorizing the employee to make decisions. Bhagavad Gita (BG XVIII, 63) substantiates the above fact where the leader reveals the entire Body of Knowledge to the subordinate and urges him to internalize the same and do what he thinks is the best.

7.2 Teamwork

It is stated in the Bhagavad Gita (BG VII, 7) that the leader binds the team as a string connects the beads of the necklace. Hence every activity should be performed as a sacrifice towards the team members and the society.

7.3 Continuous Improvement

Spiritual leadership aids in developing the Citizenship Behaviour in the employees of the organization. Good Organizational Citizenship Behaviours (OCB) leads to higher job satisfaction. A higher job satisfaction generally results in reduced workplace absenteeism, lower turnover intentions and less deviant workplace behaviour. Further, according to Jung and Yoon, if there is reduced workplace absenteeism, lower turnover intentions and less deviant workplace behaviour. This results in an improved organizational commitment. An increased organizational commitment is a result of job satisfaction which an employee experiences in the workplace and as a result of this satisfaction, the intention to stay increases. When employees are guided and inspired to bring the spiritual side of them to work, they become more creative, which leads to happiness and satisfaction.

The Bhagavad Gita gives insights of a dedicated worker achieving this Intuitive state when it says that if a person is constantly pursuing a passionately chosen activity, he discovers the infinite inside him. This would improve the absorptive capacity in the individual which aids sustained improvement.
7.4 Customer and Employee Satisfaction
Selfless work has been the core of Bhagavad Gita teaching. It has rich contents about working without desire and surrendering the work for the benefit of the society and the universe at large. Bhagavad Gita (BG III, 10-11) gives insights about bringing in delight across the value chain both to the external and internal stakeholders.

7.5 Communication
Communication of an individual is propelled by the decoding or understanding of a particular subject. Spiritual leadership enables the right understanding among employees which forms effective, purposeful and seamless communication.

Bhagavad Gita (BG XVII, 15) gives an illustration of the right way to communicate so that the communication is not perverted and is unadulterated. Communication should not agitate the mind of the listener, it should not in any way enkindle the base emotions of the listener, it should be the truth, it should be beneficial to the listener, it should be pleasant to hear and communications should be made only after through self study.

7.6 Training
Sustained training of employees is critical for organizational performance. Any organization’s operations cannot be improved without a well-trained workforce.

It is the Leadership that provides the resources required for training employees in the use of new principles and tools, thus creating a work environment which is conducive to employee involvement in the process of change. A spiritually backed leader ensures that the quality-related training is available.

Bhagavad Gita has relevance to training as it was unfolded as a discourse from a teacher to a student. It predominantly forms a ladder to rise from despondency caused due to ignorance to wisdom gained through sustained training and learning. It strongly focuses on creating awareness and learning with every activity we perform when it says, sarvamkarmAkhilaM-parthajAneparisamApyate Bhagavad Gita (BG IV, 33). Every action performed results in knowledge and wisdom supporting the organization growth.

7.7 Culture Forming
Culture as defined by E. B. Tylor is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, cus-

tom and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society. Culture forming is a process that trains citizens of an organization in the knowledge of the organization and the common humanity while giving them moral and intellectual virtues.

The entire Bhagavad Gita lays the foundation for a well cultured organization. The subordinate is called upon to live according to the highest ideals of his age and the prevailing culture backed by the understanding of the knowledge which lay behind. It urges us not to live as ordinary men but to rise to greatness.

7.8 Change Management
The inspiration given by the leader to the follower in the beginning of the II chapter wherein the leader urges student to stand up leaving his chicken heartedness which does not befit a human being as shown in Bhagavad Gita (BG II, 2-3), nurturing the inherent capabilities in the follower through the flow of knowledge through the 17 chapters (BG II through BG XVIII) of the Gita, urging the student to decide on what he felt right based on the learning outcomes by asking the follower whether the root cause for despair i.e. attachment is eradicated (BG XVIII, 72) forms a perfect quality management cycle making the Bhagavad Gita a process manual for the entire learning process. When this is followed it will yield sustainable results improvement in quality of the organizational environment in MSMEs. The entire Plan-Do-Check-Act cycle popularized by W. E. Deming for continuous quality improvement constitutes the entire body of the Bhagavad Gita.

7.9 Systems Thinking
Management discipline integrates all disciplines and fuses them into a coherent body of theory and practice. It keeps them from being separate gimmicks or the latest organizational fads. Without a systemic orientation, there is no motivation to look at how the disciplines interrelate. By enhancing each of the other disciplines, it continually reminds us that the whole can exceed the sum of its parts. The eleventh (XI) chapter of the Bhagavad Gita which brings out the universal form or the supreme form, symbolizes the examination of the big picture or the concept of systems thinking from the standpoint of contemporary management science. The Universal form signifies that the leader should look at the overall strategic picture which is the crux of the systems thinking approach.
7.10 Processes

Total Quality Management is focus on process and process control. Bhagavad Gita (BG XVIII, 13-14) gives the cause of every work that happens. There are five causes for any work to be performed. They are the seat of action (Body), the agent of work (the self), the sense organs, the mind and the divinity Bhagavad Gita (BG XVIII, 14).

Also, it is contained in the Upanishads that the above five causes sustain the fulfilment of all actions and lead the actions to their end. This would give the basis to examine the concept of work, develop the fundamentals for work improvement and refine the process of work.

7.11 Self Assessment:

A spiritually oriented leader is in constant state of inspiration which means in constant awareness of his self. Every activity performed externally is assessed with awareness and through the gift of intuition, constantly reviewed and improvised. The Bhagavad Gita gives two paths for assessing one’s inner self. The first path is through the path of self assessment as given by the seventh chapter of the Bhagavad Gita. Meditation or revisiting the same subject over and over again is one of the paths of Self assessment. The second is through relationships with the surroundings, people, beings and things. This is given by the thirteenth chapter of the Bhagavad Gita. The process of Self assessment leads to the identification of strengths and weaknesses of an individual. Refining the strengths and correcting the weaknesses, a person can reach full potential of life.

Hence Bhagavad Gita forms a process manual when followed will yield sustainable results for work and aid the process of quality management. A leader enriched by the spirituality contained in the Bhagavad Gita would immensely contribute to the improvement of the Soft Dimensions of TQM which in turn strengthens the organization and aids better performance.
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The conceptual model as discussed above is pictorially represented hereunder.

Parthasarathi’s Model

Contribution of Spiritual Leadership to Soft TQM Dimensions based on Bhagavad Gita
(Numbers in the brackets represent the Bhagavad Gita (BG) Chapter in Roman and Verses in digits)

Dotted boxes represent hard dimensions of TQM.
8. Conclusion

The conceptual model which has been developed and discussed in the above sections will equip organizations to improve on all the soft dimensions of TQM and support Total Quality Management. The implementation of this model will ground employees in the organization in spirituality and aid the growth of the organization at the individual, team and organizational levels.

The practice of Workplace Spirituality discussed in this paper will aid the leadership in the MSMEs to remain inspired or aligned with the spirit and in turn drive the soft dimensions of TQM. This in turn will improve in the strategic planning and creation of the supportive structures, systems and resource management in the organization. This would aid MSMEs to achieve process efficiencies and empower them to perform better and stay competitive in the global market.

Further research on this model could focus on validating the framework presented in this paper. An instrument to measure the dimensions of TQM could be constructed to verify this conceptualization empirically using quantitative methods.

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