Ancient Indian wisdom for managers: the relevance of *Valmiki Ramayana* in developing managerial effectiveness

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Abstract: *Valmiki Ramayana* is considered as a marvellous epic and the first written literature in the Indian context. Over the centuries, several authors have explored various dimensions of *Ramayana* ranging from philosophy, spirituality, politics, economics, sociology, culture, literature, language, poetry, technology and others. However, management does not seem to be a popular subject of analysis from the *Ramayana*, although *Valmiki Ramayana* is pregnant with several lessons for managers. Therefore, this paper aims to fill the gap in the literature by exploring the relevance of *Valmiki Ramayana* for development of contemporary managers. By employing hermeneutics, a qualitative methodology, the authors have explored work motivation, *dharmic* management, principles of control and vigilance, decision making, humanism and equanimity from *Valmiki Ramayana* which provide lessons for enhancing managerial effectiveness. The prospect of exploring *Valmiki Ramayana* in other areas of management such as strategic management, people management, and others can be considered in the near future.

Keywords: *Valmiki Ramayana*; managerial effectiveness; Indian wisdom; Indian management.

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1   Introduction

yAvat sthasyanti girayaH saritaH cha mahItale

tAvad rAmayaNa kathA lokeSu pracariSyati

"As long as the mountains and even rivers flourish on the surface of the earth, so long the legend of *Ramayana* will flourish in this world" – *Valmiki Ramayana*, Book 1 (*Bala Kanda*), Chapter 2, Verse 36

Managerial effectiveness has gained a critical importance in the current business environment, which is now becoming competitive and unpredictable. Effectiveness involves doing the right things, in the right way and effectiveness translates a manager's intelligence and knowledge into results. Effectiveness ultimately makes a manager successful in achieving organisational goals. Therefore, the importance of developing managerial effectiveness is essential for organisations to create and also to sustain their competitive advantage (Samson and Daft, 2009). Although there have been several models, methods and views on managerial effectiveness presented in the western management literature; there seems to be no universal or standard approach towards developing managerial effectiveness which can be applied to every country and community. Therefore, several new approaches towards managerial effectiveness are being developed from various perspectives.

In contemporary management literature, there seems to be a growing interest in exploring philosophy, transpersonal psychology, meditation, Yoga, Vedanta, Islam, Christianity, Buddhism, Taoism and many other philosophical schools of thought in developing managerial effectiveness. Also, there has been an increasing interest in integrating philosophy in management development as the numbers of related papers in management journals are increasing (Kale and Shrivastava, 2003). The ancient Chinese military literature, the Sun Tzu Art of War, which was written 2,500 years ago has been researched extensively in the management literature especially in strategic planning. The Indian civilisation, with recorded history of more than 5,000 years is one of the oldest civilisations in the world. In the Indian context, the studies to explore *Vedanta*[1], *Ramayana*, *Upanisads*[2], the *Bhagavad-Gita*[3] (a part of *Mahabharata*[4]) and *Arthashastra* of Kautilya[5] were made by scholars such as Chakraborty (1993, 1995, 1999), Chakraborty and Chakraborty (2008), Sharma (1996, 1998, 1999, 2002, 2003), Krishnan (2001, 2003), Kejriwal and Krishnan (2004), Satpathy (2006; 2007), Muniapan (2006, 2007, 2009), Muniapan and Dass (2008, 2009), Satpathy and Muniapan (2008),

Roka (2006), Parashar (2008) and others. However, due to the vastness of Indian *Vedic* literatures[6] and philosophies many of the above studies are considered to be limited as several areas within the Indian literature are yet and needs to be explored.

One of the literatures which need to be explored in the context of management is *Valmiki Ramayana*, considered to be the most glorious Indian epic in the world. The most recent study done on *Valmiki Ramayana* was by Muniapan (2007) who made a study on transformational leadership demonstrated by Sri Rama, from the perspectives of the epic. As there is no detailed papers written on *Valmiki Ramayana* in the context of managerial effectiveness, this paper by the authors aims to fill the gap in the Indian management and *Ramayana* literature. In this paper, the authors employed a qualitative methodology known as hermeneutics. Hermeneutics is described as the interpretation and understanding of ancient literatures and religious texts. Hermeneutics is widely applied in many others field of social science such as philosophy, law, sociology, international relations and also management.

The objective of this paper is to extract and explore some of the principles of managerial effectiveness as found in *Valmiki Ramayana*. This is also in line with the *Call for developing indigenous organisational theories in India: setting agenda for future*, an article which appeared recently in *Int. J. Indian Culture and Business Management*, by Panda and Gupta (2007). The authors have called for the development indigenous organisational theories in India which also includes the studies on the managerial effectiveness from the *Vedic* literatures. Managerial effectiveness is subjective and generic area to explore, however in this paper the principles of managerial effectiveness which relates to work motivation, *dharmic* management, control and vigilance, decision making, humanism and equanimity have been explored from *Valmiki Ramayana*. As the epic, *Valmiki Ramayana* is vast and pregnant with several lessons for developing managerial effectiveness; in this paper the authors have selected verses mostly from Chapter 100 of Book Two (*Ayodhya Kanda*) of *Valmiki Ramayana*. It is beyond the scope of this paper to explore all the seven books of *Valmiki Ramayana* as it is just like attempting to explore a vast ocean.

2 *Valmiki Ramayana*

In the Sanskrit literature, *Valmiki Ramayana* is known as *Adikavya* or the first poem and the author Sri Valmiki Muni is known as *Adikavi* or the first poet. The epic consists of 24,000 verses divided into six *Kandas* (sections) namely *Bala Kanda*, *Ayodhya Kanda*, *Aranya Kanda* and *Yuddha Kanda*. *Uttara Kanda* is the seventh *Kanda* of *Ramayana* and it stands apart from the main epic (Tapasyananda, 1991). The verses of *Valmiki Ramayana* were sung in every royal court and around villages throughout India many thousands of years before Shakespeare. Even 200 years ago, British missionaries in India were astonished to find Indians discussing and quoting from the *Ramayana* in everyday conversation (Vikasa, 2000 cited in Muniapan 2007).

The *Ramayana* has been the source of spiritual, cultural, sociological, political and artistic inspiration for ages for the people of India and also to the people of South East Asian countries especially Thailand, Cambodia, Indonesia and Malaysia. In South East Asian countries especially in Thailand, Cambodia, Indonesia and Malaysia, *Ramayana* has enriched the national literatures, and has also provided themes for every form of their art such as drama, dance, music, painting and sculpture. The *Ramayana* has enriched the

national literatures of these countries, and also provided themes for every form of their art such as drama, dance, music, painting and sculpture (Subramaniam, 2003). *Valmiki Ramayana* became the source for many other popular versions of *Ramayana* such as *Adhyatma Ramayana* (Sanskrit), *Tulsidas Ramayana* (Hindi), *Kamba Ramayana* (Tamil), *Ezhuttachan Ramayana* (Malayalam) and many other versions of *Ramayana* in all the languages of the states in India as well as in South East Asian languages such as Burmese, Cambodian, Thai, Javanese, Khotanese Laotian, Malay, Indonesian and Tagalog. The *Ramayana* is called *Ramakien* in Thailand, *Serat Rama* in Indonesia, *Hikayat Seri Rama* in Malaysia, the *Yama Pwe* in Myanmar and the *Maharadia Lawana* in the Philippines (Rosen, 2002 cited in Muniapan, 2007).

  Valmiki Ramayana narrates the journey of virtue to annihilate vice. Sri Rama is the hero and *aayana* (journey) is his journey and adventures (Rao and Murthy, 2009). The *Valmiki Ramayana* contains much wisdoms and lessons in all aspect of human life. There are lessons in *dharma* (righteousness), *artha* (economic development), *kama* (fulfilment of desires) and *moksha* (liberation). The *Valmiki Ramayana* is the standard history of Sri Rama. Verily, a *Veda* (knowledge) by itself was revealed by Sri Valmiki Muni, in the form of *Ramayana* when Sri Rama, the seventh *avatara* (incarnation) of Maha Vishnu who is the goal of *Vedas* came as the son of King Dasaratha (*VedavEdyE parE pUnsi jAtE DasarathAtmaje; Vedah prAchEtAsAdAsit sakshAdrAmAyanAtmanA*). *Valmiki Ramayana* is a majestic epic, expounding *dharma* (righteousness, occupational duty) by way of depicting the great heroic life of the ideal person, Sri Rama. The narration of *Valmiki Ramayana* revolves around the life and character of Sri Rama who was born to King Dasaratha – the King of *Ayodhya*. Sri Rama acted as an ideal king, ideal son, ideal brother, ideal husband, ideal friend and ideal student and even as an ideal enemy. The greatness of *Valmiki Ramayana* cannot be adequately described. The life of the 'ideal man' (Sri Rama) described in *Valmiki Ramayana* is an incentive to all men to strive to become embodiments of *dharma* (Sivananda, 1996). The beauties of *Valmiki Ramayana* are really beyond human description. Unless one has read the entire *Valmiki Ramayana*, it is difficult to describe its greatness as only those who have tasted honey knows its sweetness as sweetness cannot be described by words.

  The first book of *Valmiki Ramayana* is called *Bala Kanda*; it relates the divine birth of Sri Rama, Bharata, Lakshmana and Satrughana, Sri Rama's childhood, his marriage to Sita and his encounter with Parasurama. The second book (*Ayodhya Kanda*), narrates the preparation for the coronation of Sri Rama, the intrigue that leads to his forest exile, Bharata search for Sri Rama, the meeting of the brothers and Bharata's return to *Ayodhya* with Sri Rama's sandals. *Aranya Kanda*, the third book describes the forest life of Sri Rama, Sita and Laksmana, the personalities they met including Surpanaka, killings of Khara and Dussana by Sri Rama, kidnapping of Sita by Ravana, Jatayu (slain by Ravana) dying on the lap of Sri Rama and meeting with Kabandha and Sabari. In the fourth book (*Kishkinda Kanda*), Sri Rama meets Hanuman and Sugriva and forms strategic alliance with them and crowned Sugriva as the King of *Kishkinda* after killing Vali. This book also describes the start of the search for Sita and the *vanaras* (monkeys) going to the southern direction met Sampati (brother of Jatayu). *Sundara Kanda* is the fifth book. This book describes beautifully the adventures and *lila* (pastimes) of Hanuman who managed to cross the ocean to find Sita and give her the message from Sri Rama along with Sri Rama's ring. This book also describes Hanuman's meeting with Ravana face to face and the burning of *Lanka*. *Yuddha Kanda*, the sixth book, describes the surrender of Vibheeshana, the bridge construction and the long waited battle between Sri Rama's

army and that of Ravana plus the victorious return of Sri Rama to *Ayodhya*. The seventh book, (*Uttara Kanda*), which stands apart from the main epic, is a controversial one. Sri Rama's sons Kusa and Lava are born to Sita in Valmiki's *ashram* (hermitage), to which she had been banished by Sri Rama. Eventually, Kusa and Lava are established on the throne of *Ayodhya*. But Sita, broken at her banishment merges into the earth, and remorseful Rama departs to his celestial abode (Rosen, 2002 cited in Muniapan, 2007).

3   Managerial effectiveness

Management is a process that involves integrating and coordinating the work of others so that the goals of an organisation are achieved efficiently and effectively. Management is an interdisciplinary field with contributions from various fields such as psychology, social psychology, sociology, anthropology, political science, economics and finance (Muniapan, 2008). Contemporary management also includes issues related to cross-cultural management and international management. Increasingly the understanding of management is coming to depend on understanding, analysing and predicting organisational behaviour, which is the basis for human resource management.

There are numerous definitions of 'management'. However, the most quoted definition is 'to get things done through people'. Barnard (1986) has defined management as an organisation as a system of consciously coordinated activities or forces of two or more people. This presupposes an organisation as a system and management has its origin in human civilisation. The earliest civilisation flourished because of the organised human efforts, so management of men has naturally received much importance and attention in human society. In management, often references of ancient scholars and philosophers of Egypt, Rome, Greece and China are made but there is seldom any reference to the thoughts of Indian thinkers on this subject. Applicability of ancient Indian concept in modern business management is of relevance because of the fact that with out strong management techniques India could not have seen an organised and culturally advanced civilisation like Indus Valley. The Indian culture throughout ages was very much organised and had its own leadership style and management system. The Indian epics and *Vedic* literatures are full of such evidences. The *Vedic* literatures also provide the background for Hinduism[7], which is the oldest living organised religion in the world; and it was not founded by any individual prophet and is not compose of teaching of any particular group of them. The Indian epics and the Vedic literatures inspire every manager and leaders to reflect, investigate, search and cogitate.

One of the keys to successful management is the ability to understand and apply management principles and techniques effectively. Managers must develop an in-depth knowledge of past and present models, theories and processes to manage effectively and intelligently. Contemporary management practice is pervasive in every aspect of human life within all types of organisations and managers in organisations play numerous roles. In the context of roles, Minzberg (1973) in his book the *Nature of Managerial Work* provided ten roles of that manager's play for increasing managerial effectiveness, which can be divided into interpersonal roles, informational roles and decisional roles. Interpersonal roles include the roles of managers such as figurehead, leader and liaison roles, which arises from a manager's status and authority in an organisation. Among the activities associated with these roles directly involve implementing interpersonal contact and developing relationships among people. Informational roles of the managers include

monitor, disseminator and spokesperson roles, relates to the receiving and transmitting of information, while decisional roles include entrepreneur, disturbance handler, resource allocation and negotiator roles. Decisional roles might be the most crucial part of a manager's work as performing the roles justifies the manager's great authority and his powerful access to information (cited in Robbins and Judge, 2007).

As the business environment today is becoming more complex, more dynamic and more uncertain, the skills and knowledge a manager needs to succeed are wide and varied. To play the above mentioned roles effectively, managers need some sets of skills. There are basically three types of managerial skills, which include technical skills, human skills and conceptual skills. Technical skills refer to the ability to apply specialised knowledge or expertise. Managers can learn the special knowledge and practices in their field of study through formal management education in universities and colleges, and not all technical skills have to be learned in schools or formal training programs. Many people develop their technical skills on the job. A lot of technical skills related to management requires on the job training and education. A human skill is the ability to work with, understand, and motivate other people, both individually and in groups. Since managers get things done through other people, they must have good human skills to communicate, motivate and delegate their people to achieve organisational goals. A conceptual skill on the other hand is the mental ability to analyse and diagnose complex situations. Different managers at different levels in the hierarchy of management within an organisation do not need the same combination of the three sets of skills. In general, managers at lower levels need to have more technical skills while the managers at higher levels should have stronger conceptual skills (Muniapan, 2008).

Managerial functions on the other hand involve work activities such as planning, organising leading and controlling. Planning involve the problems of creating vision, mission, defining goals and establishing strategies; organising involves how the goals or task need to be group, who will be involve in doing it, who reports to whom and how decisions are made; leading involve motivating, influencing, communicating and developing employees to work towards the defined goals while controlling refers to the monitoring performance to make sure it is going according to the plan (Muniapan, 2008).

4   *Valmiki Ramayana* **and managerial effectiveness**

Valmiki Ramayana is one of the greatest Indian epics whose contribution deserves much better study and understanding in the context of management. The *Valmiki Ramayana* and the *Vedic* literatures of India are thought to be showing only the relationship between men with the creator. As a result, most of the people have been impressed by the astoundingly wide range of subjects and philosophical thoughts expressed in the literatures and epics of India. But what they have forgotten to notice is that the literatures and epics such as the *Valmiki Ramayana* also believe in the principle of work life and effective management which can be applicable even today. With regards to work life and management, in another *Vedic* literature the *Isopanishad* (Verse 2) it has been said,

> "One may aspire to live for hundreds of years if he continuously goes on doing work in that way, because that sort of work will not bind him to the law of karma. And there is no alternative to this way for man." (*kurvann eveha karmaei jijevinec chataa samau evaa tvayi nanyatheto 'sti na karma lipyate nare*) (Prabhupada, 1998, p.17)

The *Valmiki Ramayana* is primarily written as a biography of Sri Rama, who ruled with great justice and equity to ensure protection and prosperity of his subject. He was such a great ruler that the concept of '*Rama Rajya*'[8] has become the benchmark for all the subsequent rulers in India till today. *Valmiki Ramayana* is vast and covers all range of subjects. Besides management, *Valmiki Ramayana* also encompasses religion, statesmanship, international relation, wars, treaties, administration, collection of revenue, rules of taxation, agriculture, mining, forestry, etc. There is hardly any area of human endeavour, which Sri Valmiki Muni has not analysed in depth in his *Ramayana*. *Valmiki Ramayana's* insight into human nature and its immensely practical advice would provide great benefit and guidance to the present day managers. Therefore, in this paper some of the topics of management, which has been beautifully revealed in *Valmiki Ramayana*, will be highlighted in the following sections. The topics highlighted covers management areas such as work motivation, *dharmic* management, control and vigilance, decision making, humanism and equanimity.

4.1 Work motivation in Valmiki Ramayana

Motivation has been defined as: the psychological process that gives behaviour purpose and direction (Kreitner, 1995); a predisposition to behave in a purposive manner to achieve specific, unmet needs (Buford et al., 1995); an internal drive to satisfy an unsatisfied need and the will to achieve (Bedeian, 1993). For this paper, motivation is operationally defined as the inner force that drives individuals to accomplish personal and organisational goals. Motivation represents the outcomes of several behavioural inputs such as perception, attitude and learning, and it is an important concept receiving considerable attention from academics, researchers and practicing managers. For attending high level of productivity and quality in any system it is very important to understand the motivational factors responsible to improve the morale of individuals and that of the group. McGregor (1960) in his famous book *Human Side of Enterprise* has set forth two pairs of extremely opposite assumptions about human beings. He, however, made an implicit assumption that all the individuals are fundamentally decent and wants to do their best. This is the 'Y' assumption of McGregor's theory. One who staunchly believes in theory 'X' assumption may view that people seek pleasures and like to avoid pain, and therefore they tend to be lazy and shirk work. Strict discipline, supervision, rewards and punishment are therefore necessary. This approach does not go beyond assuming man as a pleasure-loving animal.

Valmiki Ramayana on the other hand, looks at the human intellect aspect and divides men in an altogether different way into intellectual elite (*Mahat*), mediocre (*Madhayam*) and ordinary (*Jaghanya*). According to Sri Rama the intellectual elites are to be appointed in the prime posts, which require decision making and planning. The mediocre are to be appointed in regular jobs which requires implementation of the plans and the ordinary people are to be appointed for serving the organisation and in the jobs which requires more of manual work and less of intelligence. According to Sri Rama for attending peace and prosperity everyone has to be assigned with a work as per their ability and worth or else it would lead to chaos in the organisation.

> "I hope that superior servants are assigned superior works only, mediocre servants in mediocre works and inferior servants in inferior works." (*kaccin mukhyaa mahatsu eva madhyameShu ca madhyamaaH; jaghanyaaH ca jaghanyeShu bhR^ityaaH karmasu yojitaaH*) (*Ayodhya Kanda*, Chapter 100, Verse 25)

Similarly, Sri Rama also described three types of employees (servants) in openings part of *Yuddha Kanda* (Book 6) after Hanuman's exploits in Lanka. Sri Rama was extremely pleased with Hanuman's extraordinary accomplishment. He praised Hanuman and said

> "Of all servants, the best is he who accomplishes more than the duty entrusted by his master. A mediocre servant is he who never attempts to do more that what his master orders, even though he may be capable of doing more. Finally, the worst servant is he who does not carry out the order of the master, even though qualified." (*Yuddha Kanda*, Chapter 1, Verses 7–9 – *yo hi bhRityo niyuktaH san bhartraa karmaNi dushhkare, kuryaattadunuraageNa tamahuH puirushhottamam. yo niyuktaH param kaaryam na kuryaannaRipateH priyam, bhRityo yuktaH samarthashcha tamaahurmadhyam naram. niyukto nRipateH kaaryam na kuryaadyaH samaahitaH, bhRityo yuktaH samarthashcha tamaahuH purushhdhamam*)

This may be related with the three types of personality as said by Sri Krishna in the *Bhagavad-Gita*. The *Bhagavad-Gita* provides the *Guna*[9] (quality) theory to aid the understanding of the mental make-up of an employee or a manager. The *Guna* theory has also been called the tri-dimensional personality theory, to explain differences across individual leaders. There are three *Gunas–Sattva* (awareness), *Rajas* (dynamism) and *Tamas* (inertness). *Gunas* are the fundamental constituents of every being and each being is composed of all the three *Gunas*. When one of the three *Gunas* is dominant in a person, that person is said to be characterised by that *Guna* (Kejriwal and Krishnan, 2004).

The manager (i.e. the administrator) should respect the elders, old people, wise and guests and should respectfully offer wealth and confer honours on these people. Sri Rama says the following:

> "I hope your income is abundant and expenditure, minimum. I hope your treasure does not reach undeserving people, O, Bharata!, I hope that your expenditure goes for the cause of divinity, manes, *brahmins*, unexpected visitors, soldiers and hosts of friends." (*aayaH te vipulaH kaccit kaccid alpataro vyayaH, apaatreShu na te kaccit kosho gagcCati raaghava; devataa arthe ca pitr arthe braahmaNa abhyaagateShu ca, yodheShu mitra vargeShu kaccid gagcCati te vyayaH*) (*Ayodhya Kanda*, Chapter 100, Verses 54 and 55)

and

> "I hope that you seek to conciliate by the following three means, viz. gifts, a loving mind and polite words – the aged, the children and the foremost physicians." (*kaccid vRidhaamH ca baalaamH ca vaidya mukhyaamH ca raaghava daanena manasaa vaacaa tribhir etair buibhuuShase*) (*Ayodhya Kanda*, Chapter 100, Verse 60)

The king (managers) should pay regularly and in time the salary to his subordinates because if the salary is not paid in time the subordinates become dissatisfied and makes irreparable damage for the kingdom, that is, the organisation. This was asserted by Sri Rama,

> "I hope you are regularly giving your army, the daily provisions and the suitable salary to them, without any delay. When there is delay in giving bread and wages, the servants become incensed against their master and become corrupt; and that is said to be a great unfortunate occurrence." (*kacid balasya*

> *bhaktam ca vetanam ca yathaa ucitam, sampraapta kaalam daatavyam dadaasi na vilambase; kaala atikramaNe hy eva bhakta vetanayor bhRitaaH, bhartuH kupyanti duShyanti so anarthaH sumahaan smRitaH*) (*Ayodhya Kanda*, Chapter 100, Verses 32 and 33)

Sri Rama also advised his brother Bharata to be respectful to preceptors, sons of noble family, persons with wide range of knowledge, persons without enviousness and who have insights and hold high esteem to gods, ancestors, dependents and teachers, people of father's age, the doctors and the *brahmanas* (the intelligentsia class). This in our present day management can be termed as knowledge management (KM). It is really astonishing that these KM techniques were known to the rulers of that time what we are presently relearning (*kaccid vinaya sampannaH kula putro bahu shrutaH, anasuuyur anudraShTaa satkRitaH te purohitaH. kachchiddevaan pitRuun bhRitvaanguruun pitRisamaanapi, vRiddhaaMshcha taata vaidyaaMshcha braahmaNaaMshchaabhimanyase*) (*Ayodhya Kanda*, Chapter 100, Verses 11and 13).

To win the confidence among the ministers, that is, the advisors and departmental heads the manager should pay proper attention and should be respectful to them. The manager should have a hearty admiration and should be polite in his behaviour to the old and wise people and should have love for the children and should offer wealth to these people. Sri Rama has also advised Bharata to appear before the people, well dressed, every morning, on the great high way; this makes the king popular among the common mass since they get a chance to redress their grievances. *(kaccid darshayase nityam manuShyaaNaam vibhuuShitam utthaaya utthaaya puurva ahNe raaja putro mahaa pathe) (Ayodhya Kanda, Chapter 100, Verse 51)* (*kaccid vRidhaamH ca baalaamH ca vaidya mukhyaamH ca raaghava daanena manasaa vaacaa tribhir etair bubhuuShase*) (*Ayodhya Kanda*, Chapter 100, Verse 60).

In *Valmiki Ramayana*, on several occasions we find some of the important determinants of effective motivational theory that leads to efficient performance of the subordinates. The principle of scientific management originally propounded by Taylor[10] which subsequently was proved to be inadequate by Mayo's[11] work stress upon the fact that the psychological and sociological factors are more important to increase human effort and productivity. Surprisingly it is seen in *Valmiki Ramayana* that several thousand of years before Mayo's work, the stress is laid upon the acquisition of the skill and knowledge by the managers to clearly appreciate the cause and effect of human behaviours and the ability to call for a sustainable increased productive effort from their workers. According to Sri Rama, the motivational level should be such that the council of ministers and officers, that is, the subordinates should genuinely love the king or the administrator and even they should feel proud to sacrifice their life for the betterment of their master.

> "I hope all the foremost descendents of your race are devoted to you and do they lay down their lives steadfastly for your sake?" (*kaccit sarve anuraktaaH tvaam kula putraaH pradhaanataHkaccit praaNaamH tava artheShu samtyajanti samaahitaaH*) (*Ayodhya Kanda*, Chapter 100, Verse 34)

The managers in order to motivate the people need something more than skills, knowledge, tools and techniques. That something more is virtually impossible to define, though it most certainly can be experienced. It is a compound of many factors such as mutual trust and confidence, a strong sense of common purpose, the acknowledgement and maintenance of standards, or it may be just a simple, but very obvious sense of

belongingness 'US'. To foster these factors, Sri Rama has asked Bharata to share the fruit of achievement among the people and thus creating a sense of 'We' feeling or collectivist perspectives, which was identified to be an Indian cultural characteristics by Hofstede in his famous study of cultural dimensions (Hofstede, 1983).

Sri Rama says to Bharata

> "I hope you do not eat by yourself nicely made eatable and do you share it with your friends, who seek it?, A wise and learned king, having obtained and ruled the entire earth, properly by righteousness and by administering justice to the people, indeed ascends to heaven when detached from the mortal body." (*kachchit svaadu kRitaM bhojyameko naashnaasi raaghava; kachchidaashaMsamaanebhyo mitrebhyaH samprayachchhasi. avaapya kRitsnaaM vasudhaaM yathaava, ditashchhyutaH svargamupaiti vidvaan*) (*Ayodhya Kanda*, Chapter 100, Verses 75 and 76)

He has also stressed upon the need of a *dharmic* management. He has advised Bharata to rule righteously because such a ruler attaints the heaven after his death (*Ayodhya Kanda*, Sarga 100, Sloka, 76).

4.2   Dharmic management

In Sanskrit, the word *dharma* is derived from the root word *dhri* meaning to hold or sustain. *Dharma* is what defines managers, giving them strength, character, attitude and inner core. Sri Rama is the very embodiment of Dharma (*Ramo Vigrahavan Dharmaha*). Honesty, justice, straightforwardness and sincerity are only modifications or expressions of *dharma*. Truth (*satyam*) and non-violence (*ahimsa*) are the highest *dharma*. *Dharmic* management considers each organisation as a single living entity, the soul residing in the hearts of the people and the hands working in accordance with the *dharma*. *Dharma* in Indian concept is almost synonymous with integrity. The *dharma* constitutes the character of the organisation. According to *dharmic* management a soulless organisation has no life. *Dharmic* management calls upon to have strong character and ethical values and the organisation in its struggle for high character and values can rely upon the collective potential power and capacity of its employees to fight against evil forces. Business organisations are considered to be a social system or more appropriately as a social organism. The motivational theories developed by Western philosophers like Nietzche[12], Freud[13], McClelland[14], Karl Marx[15] have considered 'Will to Power', Sex (Eros), Achievement and Money as the motivational factors. All these factors fall in the broad group of artha (Economic pursuit) and kama (Sense gratification) of Indian philosophy.

Indian management system recognises four goals of life, that is, *Dharma*, *Artha*, *Karma* and *Moksha*. Here, *Dharma* stands for rectitude; *Artha* means economic pursuits, *Kama* for desire or need fulfilment and *Moksha* for emancipation. *Dharmic* management theory recognises two more motivational factors, that is, *Dharma* and *Moksha* than the Western philosophers. Sri Rama himself has asked to enjoy *Dharma*, *Kama* and *Artha* but he has also laid stress upon its proper and proportional use in appropriate time. Sri Rama says,

> "I hope your pursue wealth, religion and the delights of the sense dividing them all according to time, O Jewel among the victorious, the one who is conversant with the proper time and O, the bestower of boons!" (*kaccid artham ca dharmam ca kaamam ca jayataam vara, vibhajya kaale kaalajna sarvaan bharata sevase*) (*Ayodhya Kanda*, Sarga 100, Sloka 63)

The *Karma* Yoga in the Indian context has recognised work and workplace as a means to attend *Moksha*, that is, emancipation the ultimate goal of human life. It also advise to enjoy senses and to have material pursuits but within limits by the norms and principles of *Dharma*. The main idea of an Indian philosopher and poet Rabindranath Tagore[16] regarding work-life and *Moksha* (*Mukti*) is "to strive to live the empirical life in alignment with the essential spirit of Brahman, and thus convert one's work-life itself to the status of freedom or *mukti*, not bondage or *bandhan*. And this *mukti* is by definition *ananda*" (Chakraborty, 2000, pp.255). An important principle of *karma* Yoga for managers in the Indian context is *niskama karma* concept from the *Bhagavad-Gita*, which emphasises the performance of duties in organisations without any desire for fruits and without attachment, or other selfish motives.

Considering the nature of motivation explained in *Valmiki Ramayana*, it is interesting to note that *Dharma*, that is, values and rectitude are given utmost importance but in Western motivational theories identification of specific needs and incentives are the major factors of motivation. So in the management system explained in *Ramayana*, value system constitutes an important ingredient in the managerial style, organisational functioning and executive behaviour.

4.3 Principles of control and vigilance in Valmiki Ramayana

The management of any organisation must develop an effective control and vigilance system tailored to its goals and resources. Control and vigilance system provide managers with the type and amount of information they need to measure and monitor performance. The information from various controls must be tailored to a specific management level, department, unit or operation (Samson and Daft, 2009).

Long ago, Sri Rama had also recognised the need for effective control and vigilance system with a rigid framework for keeping an eye on the officers of the state management for preventing the misuse of the state resources. His concept of an able management was based on management information system (MIS) generated through a network of trusted spies placed all over. He had earmarked 18 important categories of people on whom the king should keep a vigilant eye and their actions and conducts are to be spied by at least three spies. He had suggested for three spies to cross check the information. The persons who are to be spied and occupies high offices in the society are ministers, religious leaders, politicians or the would be administrators, chief of army, chief of guards, ministerial staff of the administrators, jailors, treasurers or secretaries in charge of finance and financial control, district collectors, superintendent of police, chief engineers, judges, lawyers, coast guards and army officials posted at border, members of the different committees who frame rules and regulation for social justice, planning, financial matters, that is, which are of utmost importance to the society and to the organisation, people in charge of distributing salaries and financial assistance, foresters and mining in charge, other high profile influential people of the society (*kaccid aShTaadashaany eShu sva pakShe dasha panca ca, tribhiH tribhir avijnaatair vetsi tiirthaani caarakaiH*) (*Ayodhya Kanda*, Chapter 100, and Verse 36).

According to Sri Rama, the king (manager) once decides to do something should act quickly basing on the information gathered (*kaccid artham vinishcitya laghu muulam mahaa udayam, kShipram aarabhase kartum na diirghayasi raaghava*) (*Ayodhya Kanda*, Chapter 100, Verse 19). The king (manager) must have no mercy for the people engaged

in wrong doing against the king (management) and the kingdom. Sri Rama has advised kings (managers) to eliminate such people who are cunning, conflict creators, highly ambitious and apt in politics and are engaged in plotting against the king or the manager (*upaaya kushalam vaidyam bhRitya samduuShaNe ratam; shuuram aishvarya kaamam ca yo na hanti sa vadhyate*) (*Ayodhya Kanda*, Chapter 100, Verse 29). Since the efficiency of the management depends upon the integrity and the working knowledge of the officers, Sri Rama was very particular about their selection and placement. But conversant as he was with human psychology, he was somewhat skeptic about the rationality of human behaviour when exposed to great temptation by virtue of their holding high offices. Therefore, he emphasised the need for setting up inspection machinery to keep a constant watch on them {*Ayodhya Kanda*, Chapter 100, and Verse 15 – "I hope that ministers who are valiant like you, learned, masters of their senses of noble birth and skilled interpreting internal sentiments by external gesture, are assigned to you" (*kaccid aatma samaaH shuuraaH shrutavanto jita indriyaaH, kuliinaaH ca ingitajnaaH ca kR itaaH te taata mantriNaH*)

> Verse 22–24 – "I hope you solicit for one wise man rather than for a thousand stupids for, a wise man can be of a great help to you in difficult matters. Even if a king employs thousands or tens of thousands of fools, they will not be helpful to him. Even one wise, valiant sagacious and efficient minister alone can cause to secure a great prosperity to the king or to one who enjoys royal authority."(*kaccit sahasraan muurkhaaNaam ekam igcCasi paNDitam, paNDito hy artha kR igcCreShu kuryaan nihshreyasam mahat. sahasraaNy api muurkhaaNaam yady upaaste mahii patiH, atha vaa apy ayutaany eva na asti teShu sahaayataa. eko apy amaatyo medhaavii shuuro dakSho vicakShaNaH raajaanam raaja maatram vaa praapayen mahatiim shriyam*)

> Verse 26 – "I hope you are appointing those ministers, who are eminent incorruptible, born of the fathers and for bears of good family and who are full of integrity in matters of great importance" (*amaatyaan upadhaa atiitaan pitRi paitaamahaan shuciin, shreShThaan shreShTheShu kaccit tvam niyojayasi karmasu*) and Verse 35 – "I hope that a knowledgeable man, living in your own country, a wise man a skilled person endowed with presence of mind and the one who knows how to speak to the point, is selected as an ambassador by you" (*kaccij jaanapado vidvaan dakShiNaH pratibhaanavaan, yathaa ukta vaadii duutaH te kR ito bharata paNDitaH*)}.

The secrecy of the decisions taken and the information gathered are of vital importance for the king so he has advised to maintain secrecy in administration to the extent that it cannot be guessed from the outward activities and the behaviour of the officials and the king.

> {*Ayodhya Kanda*, Chapter 100 and Verse 16 – "The source of victory for kings indeed comes from a concealed counsel by ministers, who are well-versed in political sciences and who can hide their thoughts within themselves." (*mantro vijaya muulam hi raajnaam bhavati raaghava susamvR ito mantra dharair amaatyaiH shaastra kov*idaiH), Verse 18 – "I hope that you do not deliberate alone nor indeed with numerous men. I hope your decision arrived at by you through such deliberation does not flow to the public (even before it is carried out." (*kaccin mantrayase na ekaH kaccin na bahubhiH saha, kaccit te mantrito mantro raaShTram na paridhaavati*)

Verses 20 and 21 – "I hope the other kings know your entire undertakings only after they have been successfully completed as well as those which have taken a shape, but not your proposed undertakings. I hope that others do not know, by their enquiries or strategies or by any other approaches not mentioned, the details of discussions you make with your ministers." (*kaccit tu sukR itaany eva kR ita ruupaaNi vaa punaH, viduH te sarva kaaryaaNi na kartavyaani paarthivaaH. kaccin na tarkair yuktvaa vaa ye ca apy aparikiirtitaaH, tvayaa vaa tava vaa amaatyair budhyate taata mantritam*)}

4.4 Decision making in Valmiki Ramayana

Managers are required to make decisions about appropriate solutions for the problems and act to utilise organisational resources to implement these solutions. A manager plans, organises, staffs, leads and controls the organisation by executing decisions. The effectiveness and quality of those decisions determine how successful a manager will be. For a good manager problem solving and decision making skill is very much needed. The health of an organisation or a kingdom does not depend upon its economy and productivity alone rather the most important factor, which leads to better organisational health, is the satisfaction of the people and customers. The main purpose of problem solving and decision making is to transform the internal and external forces, that is, environment, customers, people, policies, etc. into friends and helpers to achieve the above-mentioned goal or objective. Managers are constantly called upon to make decisions in order to solve problems. Decision making and problem solving are ongoing processes of evaluating situations or problems, considering alternatives, making choices and following them up with the necessary actions (Samson and Daft, 2009).

According to Swami Someswarananda (1999), when a decision is made and implemented, it can, produce four types of results:

1 developing own organisation

2 harming own organisation

3 helping other organisation

4 harming other organisation.

When an organisation grows harming others it is a parasite organisation. It can be compared with a terrorist organisation, which grows at the cost of others and ultimately dies. The decision, which begets this type of result, is the worst. When an organisation gives up its own interest and safeguards others it is martyr type decision but such decision sounds unrealistic in present day context. Harming own organisation is considered to be suicidal decisions. But what most organisation can do is to grow and help others to develop. So the ideal decisions are always directed towards this goal. The best strategy to achieve the goal of what has been said earlier is to concentrate on solving the deeper problem of the people and customer. "Instead of competing with others one should try to excel in one's own area and concentrate on how best it can be utilized to serve the people." (Swami Someswarananda 1999, pp.62) The Indian ethos is based on cooperation to grow along with others and to share with others (*Sahana Babatu Saha nau bhunaktu, Saha birya karbabahai TejaswinaVaditomistu Ma Vidvisabahe*) (*Kathopanishad, Santi Patha*). For that reason, Swami Vivekananda[17] while establishing the Ramakrishna Mission highlighted upon the principle of '*Atmano-mokshartham*

jagat-hitaya cha'. This means, one should try for the betterment of the self along with the betterment of the whole world (Vittal, 2005). Unfortunately, today decisions are taken to compete and people think that through competition only one can grow. The term healthy competition is a misnomer since competition always means to 'beat others'.

On decision making Sri Rama says,

> "The source of victory for kings indeed comes from a concealed counsel by ministers, who are well-versed in political sciences and who can hide their thoughts within themselves." (*Ayodhya Kanda*, Chapter 100, Verse 16 – *mantro vijaya muulam hi raajnaam bhavati raaghava, susamvR ito mantra dharair amaatyaiH shaastra kovidaiH*)

In *Ayodhya Kanda*, Chapter 100, Verse 18, Sri Rama again says to Bharata,

> "I hope that you do not deliberate alone or indeed with numerous men. I hope your decision arrived at by you through such deliberation does not flow to the public." (even before it is carried out) (*kaccin mantrayase na ekaH kaccin na bahubhiH saha, kaccit te mantrito mantro raaShTram na paridhaavati*)

Sri Rama has clearly stated that the decisions should not be taken alone. To encourage organisational democracy and to avoid the limitations like lack of information, discovering alternatives to the problem, choice of rational solutions, multi objective solutions generation and other organisational variables such as philosophy of the organisation, power structure, existence of informal power groups, etc. a collective decision-making process should be evolved. According to him even one wise, valiant sagacious and efficient minister alone can cause to secure a great prosperity to the king or to one who enjoys royal authority (*Ayodhya Kanda*, Chapter 100, Verse 24 – *eko apy amaatyo medhaavii shuuro dakSho vicakShaNaH raajaanam raaja maatram vaa praapayen mahatiim shriyam*).

In the process of collective decision making, a large group of people should be avoided. The decision-making group should consists of experienced and intelligent people with positive attitude since people with negative intelligence always tries to thrust their ideas upon others and cite references in support to their view. They always debate with a negative biasness and pose themselves to be learned but are fools in reality. Sri Rama says,

> "I hope you are not honoring the materialistic *brahmanas*, my dear brother! These men are skilled in perverting the mind, ignorant as they are and thinking themselves to be learned and reaching to their logical acumen, these men of perverted intellect preach meaninglessly, in the presence of eminent books on righteousness." (*Ayodhya Kanda*, Chapter 100, Verses 38 and 39 – *kaccin na lokaayatikaan braahmaNaamH taata sevase, anartha kushalaa hy ete baalaaH paNDita maaninaH. dharma shaastreShu mukhyeShu vidyamaaneShu durbudhaaH, buddhimaan viikShikiim praapya nirartham pravadanti te*)

The ideal type of decision-making model discussed earlier in this paper finds its reference in many verses where the development of self as well as society is given utmost importance. *Dharma* (Virtue, Righteousness) always takes precedence over two other life goals – *Artha* (wealth) and *Kama* (enjoyment). Sri Rama says,

> "A wise and learned king, having obtained and ruled the entire earth, properly by righteousness and by administering justice to the people, indeed ascends to heaven when detached from the mortal body." Protecting *Dharma* is the most sacred duty of the king and leaders in all the segments and institution. *Dharma* is the key to success and prosperity. The main teaching of *Valmiki Ramayana* is

that *Dharma*, upholds the fabric of the society and helps us eventually to achieve *Moksha* (Transcendence) (*Ayodhya Kanda*, Chapter 100, and Verses 76 – *avaapya kR itsnaaM vasudhaaM yathaava, ditashchhyutaH svargamupaiti vidvaan*). Rightly, *Valmiki* has described Sri Rama to be comparable in bravery with Maha Vishnu, and in his looks he is attractive like full-moon, he equals the earth in his perseverance, but he is like the era-end-fire in his wrath… and in benevolence he is identical to Kubera, (God of Wealth-Management), and in his forthrightness he is like *Dharma Raja* (God of Justice), the other God Probity on earth (*visnunaa sadrisho viirye somavat priya darshanah, kaala agni sadrishah krodhe ksamayaa prithvii samahdhanadena samah tyaage satye dharma iva aparah*) (*Bala Kanda –* Chapter 1 – Verse 18)

4.5 Humanism in Valmiki Ramayana

In *Valmiki Ramayana*, the idea of the welfare of the state and the subject, including the idea of happiness and prosperity, peace and bliss of the people has been explained very lucidly. The first and foremost duty (dharma) of the king is said to be the protection of people, their property and livelihood. In *Ayodhya Kanda*, Chapter 100, and Verses 47 and 48 (*kaccit te dayitaaH sarve kR iShi go rakSha jiivinaH, vaartaayaam samshritaH taata loko hi sukham edhate. teShaam gupti pariihaaraiH kaccit te bharaNam kR itam rakShyaa hi raajnaa dharmeNa sarve viShaya vaasinaH*), it has been explained why the king should protect the traders. The reason being the traders and the farmers are the backbone of the state's economy so their welfare leads to welfare of the society. Sri Rama makes a query to his brother and says,

> "Are you cherishing all those who live by agriculture and cattle-rearing, O, dear brother? The people living on agriculture and cattle-rearing should indeed prosper well. I hope their maintenance is being looked after by you, in providing what they need and abstaining from what they fear. All the citizens are indeed to be protected by a king through his righteousness." (*Ayodhya Kanda*, Chapter 100, and Verses 47 and 48)

Sri Rama was of the opinion that protecting the traders and farmers (*Vaisya*) the king can bring material wellbeing for his subjects. In *Ayodhya Kanda*, Chapter 100, Verses 43–47 (*kaccic caitya shatair juShTaH suniviShTa jana aakulaH, deva sthaanaiH prapaabhiH ca taDaagaiH ca upashobhitaH. prahR iShTa nara naariikaH samaaja utsava shobhitaH, sukR iShTa siimaa pashumaan himsaabhir abhivarjitaH. adeva maatR iko ramyaH shvaa padaiH parivarjitaH, parityakto bhayaiH sarvaiH khanibhishchopashobhitaH. vivarjito naraiH paapairmama puurvaiH surakSitaH, kaccij jana padaH sphiitaH sukham vasati raaghava*) references of the activities, which are beneficial to the people such as irrigation facilities, protection of cows, elephants, horses, building of temples, tanks and cultural centres for the public, trade routes and mines has been mentioned elaborately.

The ideal ruler, according to Sri Rama should have absolute mastery over his senses and be a paramount of virtues. He said, "Because O Bharata you are wise I hope that the *brahmanas* versed in the knowledge of the scriptures, the inhabitants of town and the country pray for your happiness" (*Ayodhya Kanda*, Chapter 100, Verse 64 – *kaccit te braahmaNaaH sharma sarva shaastra artha kovidaH, aashamsante mahaa praajna paura jaanapadaiH saha*). This statement makes it clear that the followers respect a virtuous and wise leader and pray for his wellbeing. The effect of character and conduct of the leader on his followers or the king on his subjects has been emphasised in details in

the verses of *Valmiki Ramayana*, *Ayodhya Kanda*, Chapter 100 and Verses 65–67 (*naastikyam anR itam krodham pramaadam diirgha suutrataam, adarshanam jnaanavataam aalasyam panca vR ittitaam. eka cintanam arthaanaam anarthajnaiH ca mantraNam, nishcitaanaam anaarambham mantrasya aparilakShaNam. mangalasya aprayogam ca pratyutthaanam ca sarvashaH, kaccit tvam varjayasy etaan raaja doShaamH catur dasha*). According to Sri Ram the fourteen vices which makes a leader ineffective are, lying, short tempered, fearful, laziness, licentious, autocratic, keeping unwise counsellors, denouncing the wise and learned people, delayed action on earlier decisions, non-secrecy, taking action on all the opposition party at a time, to cease all public interest programs, immoral and capricious. The reference of ten important matters relating to the state craft have been mentioned in *Ayodhya Kanda,* Chapter 100 and Verses 68–70 (*dashapaMchachaturvargaan saptavargaM cha tattvataH, aSTavargam trivargaM cha vidyaastisrashcha raaghava. indndriyaaNaaM jayaM buddhyaM SaaDguNyaM daivamaanuSam, kR ityaM viMshativargaM cha tathaa prakR itimaNDalaM. yaatraadaNDavidhaanaM cha dviyonii saMdhivigrahau, kachchhidetaan mahaapraajJNa yathaavadanumanyase*) that are of utmost importance even for the political leaders of the present time. Sri Rama asked Bharata whether he knows about the following ten matters properly or not and have cautioned him to deal with them tactfully.

The ten things Sri Rama mentioned are

1   the five kinds of fortifications

2   the four expedients

3   the seven limbs of the state

4   the eight evils (born of anger) the three objects of human pursuit

5   the three branches of learning

6   subjugation of the senses, the six strategic expedients

7   adversity brought about by divine agencies

8   by human agencies

9   the twenty types of monarchs

10   the entire population of the kingdom.

Setting about an expedition, drawing up an army in a battle-array and the two bases viz. peace and war. Sri Rama has explained about the

1   Ten evils attendant on royalty to be eschewed they are hunting, gambling, sleeping during the day, lustfulness, inebriation, pride, calumny, lounging about idly or aimlessly, diversions such as singing and dancing.

2   Five kinds of fortifications: by moat, high bank, trees thickly planted, a space destitute of grain or provisions and the turning of waters.

3   Four expedients – making peace, liberality, sowing dissension and chastisement.

4   Seven limbs of the state are the king, ministers, friends, treasure, territory, forts and an army.

5   Three objects of human pursuit: religious merit, material wealth and sensuous enjoyment or the three kinds of power (viz. energy, power of dominion and power of counsel).

6   Three branches of learning are the three Vedas, the knowledge relating to agriculture, commerce, economics and other vocational pursuits and political science.

7   Six strategic expedients: coming to terms with the enemy, waging war against him, marching against him, biding one's time to seek a favourable opportunity, causing dissension in the enemy's ranks, seeking protection of a powerful ally.

8   Adversity brought about by divine agencies: fire, water in the shape of excessive rains or floods, epidemic or endemic diseases, famine and epidemic, earthquakes and Tsunamis.

9   Adversity brought about by human agencies: officials, thieves, enemies, king's favourites and king himself, when actuated by greed.

10 Twenty types of monarchs (who are not worth-negotiating with):

a   a king who is yet a child

b   aged

c   who has been ailing for a long time

d   who has been ostracised by his own kith and kin

e   who is characterised by a cowardly attitude

f   who is being surrounded by cowards

g   who is greedy

h   who has greedy associated

i   who has estranged his ministers and others

j   who confers with fickle-minded persons

k   who speaks ill of divine begins and Brahmins

l   who is extremely indulged in sensuous pleasures and luxuries

m   who is ill-fated

n   a fatalist (who believes that all things are pre-determined or subject to fate)

o   who is afflicted by famine and

p   by military reverses

q   who (mostly) remains away from home

r   who has numerous enemies

s   who is in the clutches of adverse times

t   who is not devoted to truth and piety.

In the last verse of the *Ayodhya Kanda* Sri Rama says "*Raja tu dharmena hi palayitwa mahipatirdanda dharaha prajanam*" the king (or manager) who is righteous and rules his subject righteously is wise and thus becomes the rulers of the whole world (industry) (*Ayodhya Kanda*, Sarga 100 and Sloka 76). Similarly, Thiruvalluvar in Thirukural[18] had also dealt with this when talking about the responsibility of a king (manager), Thiruvalluvar quote "*Murai saithu kapatrum mannavan makkalkku iraiyentru vaikkapadum*" (the king who administers justice and protects his people will be considered of divine quality), and "*Irai kakkum vayyakam ellam avanai murai kakkum muttacheyin*" (the leader or king protects the world and if he acts according to justice or dharma, then justice itself will protect him) (Muniapan and Dass, 2009). Kautilya in his *Arthashastra* (1.19.34) also states in the happiness of his subject lies the happiness of the king; and in their welfare lies his welfare. He shall not consider as good only that which pleases him but treat as beneficial to him, whatever pleases his subjects (*Praja sukhe sukham Ragya, Praajanam cha hite hitam; Natam Priyam hitam Ragaya, Prajanam tu Priyam hitam*). Maha Kavi Kalidasa also says something similar in his classic Raghuvamsa (I.18): *Prajanam eva bhutyartham sa tabhyo balim agrahit; Sahasragunam utsrastum adatte hi rasam ravih* (It was only for the welfare of the people that the state (under the Raghu line of kings in which was born Sri Rama in a later age) took taxes from the people; as is the case with the sun which draws moisture from the earth only to shower it back thousandfold (in the form of beneficent rain) (Muniapan and Dass, 2009). One can go on and on with such illustration to prove *Ramayana* as a treatise of lasting values and universal applications.

4.6   Equanimity in Valmiki Ramayana

Equanimity is one of the most sublime emotions and it is considered as the foundation stone for wisdom and freedom. It is considered as the protector of compassion and love. A mind filled with equanimity is abundant, exalted, without resentment and without ill-will. A great leader always maintains equanimity of mind in what ever condition he is. A calm and cool mind can only take judicious decisions in the face of adversity. Seven mental qualities support the development of equanimity. The first is virtue or integrity. Integrity leads to confidence about actions and words that result in the equanimity of blamelessness. The second support for equanimity is the sense of assurance that comes from faith. Faith grounded in wisdom is especially powerful and is called *Shraddha* in Indian scriptures. The third support is a well-developed mind. The fourth support is a sense of well-being. The fifth support for equanimity is understanding or wisdom. Wisdom is an important factor in learning to have an accepting awareness, to be present for whatever is happening without the mind or heart contracting or resisting. Wisdom teaches to separate people's actions from who they are. Agreement or disagreement with someone's action does not change the relationship with them. Wisdom brings in the understanding that thoughts and impulses are the result of impersonal conditions. By not taking them personally, one is more likely to stay at ease with their arising. The sixth support is insight, a deep seeing into the nature of things as they are. The final support is freedom, freedom is letting go the reactive tendencies and seeing a big picture than what is apparently visible. Equanimity is an inner strength that keeps the mind balanced in middle of all that is happening. This discussion on equanimity is based on the work of Fronsdal and Pandita (2005).

In Sri Rama's character, we find all these seven qualities and therefore rightly he has been described as *Maryada Purusottama* by Valmiki Muni meaning 'righteous and the best of men'. Once to Narada Muni, Valmiki inquisitively enquired about a man who is a combination of all merited endowments in his form and calibre. Narada Muni says,

> "Oh! Valmiki, the merits which you have extolled are many, and unattainable even for great emperors, let alone ordinary humans, and also infinite are they… but, about such a man with such merits I will speak on… for I, having known from Brahma (the creator) of such a man, will make clear about that man… one who emerged from *Ikshvaku* dynasty and known to people as Rama by his name, and he is conscientious, highly valorous, resplendent, steadfast and a controller of vice and vile… and his own senses, as well…" (*Bala Kanda*, Chapter 1, Verse 1 – *tapaH svaadhyaaya nirataam tapasvii vaagvidaam varam, naaradam paripapracCha vaalmiikiH muni pu.mgavam*, 7 and 8 – *bahavo durlabhaaH ca eva ye tvayaa kiirtitaa guNaaH, mune vaxSyaami aham buddhvaa taiH uk taH shruuyataam naraH. ikSvaaku va.msha prabhavo raamo naama janaiH shrutaH, niyata aatmaa mahaaviiryo dyutimaan dhR itimaan vashii*)

The following narration from the *Valmiki Ramayana* would portray a picture about the equanimity of mind Sri Rama exhibited when he was banished to jungle for a long 14 years at a time when he was about to be declared as the crowned prince of Ayodhya. *Valmiki Ramayana* writes,

> "As Sri Rama was a pleasing personality, he was loved by all the people. The loss of kingdom could not diminish such a great splendour of Sri Rama as a night cannot diminish the splendor of the moon. Sri Rama, who was leaving the kingdom after having decided to go to the forest, there was no perturbation of mind in him like in an ascetic who is beyond worldly pain and pleasure. Sri Rama, the man of great courage, refused fans and umbrella, sent away his friends; chariot and citizens kept back sorrow in his mind, subdued his senses and entered his mother's house to inform the unpleasant news. The people adjacent to Sri Rama could not visualise any change in the face of Sri Rama who was dignified and truthful in his words. Sri Rama with his courageous spirit and of great fame, paying his respects to the people with his sweet words, went nearer to his mother. Lakshmana, who got virtues equal to Sri Rama, who was having great heroic valour and who was the brother, kept the grief within himself and went along with Sri Rama." (*Ayodhya Kanda*, Chapter, 19, Verse 32–39 – *na ca asya mahatiim lakSmiim raajya naasho apakarSati, loka kaantasya kaantatvam shiita rashmer iva kSapaa. na vanam gantu kaamasya tyajataH ca vasumdharaam, sarva loka atigasya iva lakSyate citta vikriyaa. pratishhiddhya shubham chhatraM vyajane cha svalaMkR ite, visarjayitvaa svajanaM ratham pauraastathaa jannaan. dhaarayan manasaa duhkham indriyaaNi nigRhya ca, pravivesha aatmavaan veshma maatura priya shamsivaan. sarvo hyabhijanaH shriimaan shriimataH satyavaadinaH, naalakshayat raamasya kimchidaakaaramaanane. uchitam cha maihaabaahurna jahau harshhamaatmanaH, shaaradaH samudiirNaamshushchandrasteja ivaatmajam. vaachaa madhurayaa raamaH srvaM sammaanayan janam, maatussamiipaM dhiiraatmaa pravivesha mahaayashaaH. taM guNaissamataaM praapto bhraataa vipulavikramaH, saumitriranuvavraaja dhaarayan duHkhamaatmajam*)

The concluding chapters of *Yuddha Kanda* and in *Uttara Kanda* describe the outcome of Sri Rama's management. The forests, the rivers, the hills and the mountains, the states, the seven islands and the seven seas were all favourable in supplying the necessities of life for all living beings. All bodily and mental suffering, disease, old age, bereavement,

lamentation, distress, fear and fatigue were completely absent. There were no widows to lament the loss of their husbands; nor any diseases or thieves. Indeed, even wild animals gave up their natural enmity and thus did not kill each other. All citizens were fully righteous, always looking towards Sri Rama as their lord and master. Thus, the entire *Ayodhya* appeared as if transformed into *Vaikunta* (place without anxieties) (Muniapan, 2007).

5   Conclusion

The *Valmiki Ramayana* is rich with several lessons in the development of managerial effectiveness. In this paper, selected verses from the *Valmiki Ramayana* have been explored to show some relevance to managerial effectiveness. It is not within the scope of this paper to explore all seven books of *Valmiki Ramayana* in the context of managerial effectiveness and this is one of the limitations of this paper. However, the authors hope that in future more studies will be conducted to further explore the mysteries of the *Valmiki Ramayana* in management. The authors hope that modern managers and consultants can dive into the ocean of *Valmiki Ramayana*, to extract valuable management lessons to enhance their managerial effectiveness. The authors also suggest that *Valmiki Ramayana* to be included in the curriculum of management schools apart from teachings of western approach to management.

The fundamental significance of the *Valmiki Ramayana* is to reveal how to go ahead with a righteous living with out infringing any rule of the Nature. Lord Rama is a shining example of virtues (*Dharma*). Rightly, it has been said in Sanskrit 'Ramo *Vigrahavan Dharmah*' meaning Sri Ram: the personification of Dharma. The *Valmiki Ramayana* is a revelation of 'Dharmic' living. Mahatma Gandhi was inspired by the life and act of Sri Rama and he loved the 'Ram Dhun' 'Raghupati raaghav raajaaraam, patit paavan sitaram' the most. By this Mahatma Gandhi wanted to send a message to the leaders that good governance is always directed towards the upliftment of the downtrodden, the people who are fallen like that of '*Ram Rajya*'. Mahatma Gandhi was an ardent advocate of '*Ram Rajya*'. The ideal life of Sri Rama is itself a message for our managers to imbibe the highest moral values of life. If they do not then they are ordained to perish, even though they are powerful like Ravana.

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Notes

[1] The word *Vedanta* is a compound of *Veda* 'knowledge' and *anta* 'end, conclusion', translating to 'the culmination of the *Vedas*'. See Radhakrishnan, Sarvepalli and Moore, Charles A. *A Source Book in Indian Philosophy*. Princeton University Press, 1957. Princeton paperback 12th ed., 1989, p.3.

[2] *Upanisad* literally means 'sitting down beside'. Different *Upanishad* are affiliated with the four *Vedas*. The *Upanishads* were transmitted orally by the *Vedic* schools. The longest and oldest *Upanishad* are the *Brhadaranyaka* and *Chandogya*, respectively. Dr. B.B. Paliwal (2006) *Message of the Vedas*. New Delhi: Diamond Books, pp.45–70.

[3] The *Bhagavad-Gita* is a philosophical dialogue between Sri Krishna and Arjuna before the commencement of the war between the Pandavas and Kauravas in Kurukshetra, India more than 5,000 years ago. It is a part of *Bhisma Parva* of the *Mahabharata*.

[4] The *Mahabharata* is one of the two major ancient Sanskrit epcis of India, the other being the *Ramayana*. The *Bhagavad-Gita* contains in *Bhisma Parva* of the *Mahabharata*. The *Mahabharata* was composed by Sri Vyasa Muni and written by Sri Ganesa. The full version contains more than 100,000 verses, making it around four times longer than the Bible and seven times longer than the Illiad and the Odyssey combined.

[5] Kautilya is also called Canakya, or Visnugupta was the adviser of Chandragupta Maurya. Kautilya was a statesman and philosopher who wrote a classic treatise on polity, *Arthashastra* a compilation of almost everything that had been written in India up to his time on *artha* (property, economics or material success).

[6] The *Vedic* literatures are vast and composed of many books. However, Sri Madhvacharya, one of the principal teachers of the *Vedic* philosophy, while commenting on the *Vedanta-sutra* (2.1.6), quotes from the *Bhavisya Purana* as follows: *rg-yajuh-samartharvas ca bharatam pancaratrakam, mala-ramayanam caiva Veda ity eva sabdita, puranani ca yaniha vaisnavani vido viduh* – "The *Rig Veda*, *Yajur Veda*, *Sama Veda*, *Atharva Veda*, *Mahabharata*, *Pancarata* and the original *Ramayana* are all considered *Vedic* literatures…. The supplements such as, the *Puranas*, are also *Vedic* literatures". We may also include the *Upanisads* and commentaries of great teachers who have guided the course of *Vedic* thought for centuries.

[7] Hinduism (known as Hindu *Dharma* in some modern Indian languages is religion originated from the Indian subcontinent. In contemporary usage, Hinduism is also referred to as *sanatana dharma*, which means eternal religion. See *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of World Religions* (2000) John Bowker (Ed.). Oxford University Press; The term can be traced to late 19th century Hindu reform movement (J. Zavos (2001), *Defending Hindu Tradition: Sanatana Dharma as a Symbol of Orthodoxy in Colonial India*, Religion (Academic Press), Vol. 31, No. 2, pp.109–123; see also R.D. Baird (1987) 'Swami Bhaktivedanta and the encounter with religions', In Harold Coward (Ed.), *Modern Indian Responses to Religious Pluralism*. State University of New York Press).

[8] The reign of Rama was called *Rama Rajya*, the reign of Righteousness and Truth. People were not afflicted by diseases. Children did not die at tender ages. Women did not suffer from widowhood. Rains came on time and people prospered. *Rama Rajya* was marked by peace, prosperity and harmony. All these, that is, *Rama Rajya* are assured in a kingdom where there is a ruler like Rama, priests like Vasishta and Vamadeva, and able guardians like Bharatha, Lakshmana and Satrughna.

[9] *Guna* theory is a theory of psychological energies or forces that determine individual propensities and dispositions. *Gunas* can be understood as attitudes with which mind functions or as influences under which the thoughts function. *Guna* theory provides the explanation for the innumerable and distinctive nature of people in the world. For details see http://rstpq.com/research_on_guna_composition.php.

[10] Frederick Winslow Taylor (20 March 1856–21 March 1915), was an American mechanical engineer who sought to improve industrial efficiency. He is regarded as the father of scientific management.

[11]George Elton Mayo (26 December 1880–7 September 1949) was an Australian psychologist, sociologist and organisational theorist. Mayo is known as the founder of the Human Relations Movement, and is known for his research including the Hawthorne Studies, and his book *The Human Problems of an Industrialised Civilisation* (1933).

[12]Friedrich Wilhelm Nietzsche (15 October 1844–25 August 1900) was a 19th century German philosopher and classical philologist. He wrote critical texts on religion, morality, culture and philosophy.

[13]Sigmund Freud (6 May 1856–23 September 1939), was an Austrian neurologist who founded the psychoanalytic school of psychology. Freud is best known for his theories of the unconscious mind and the defense mechanism of repression and for creating the clinical practice of psychoanalysis for curing psychopathology through dialogue between a patient and a psychoanalyst.

[14]David C. McClelland (20 May 1917–March 1998) was an American psychological theorist, noted for his work on achievement motivation and consciousness. He published a number of works from the 1950s until the 1970s and had a hand in the creation of the scoring system for the Thematic Apperception Test.

[15]Karl Heinrich Marx (5 May 1818–14 March 1883) was a German philosopher, political economist, sociologist, communist and revolutionary, whose ideas are credited as the foundation of modern communism. Marx summarised his approach in the first line of the first chapter of *The Communist Manifesto, published in 1848*: 'The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles'.

[16]Rabindranath Tagore (7 May 1861–7 August 1941), was a world renowned Indian poet, novelist, painter, musician and playwright, he reshaped Bengali literature and music in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. As author of Gitanjali and its 'profoundly sensitive, fresh and beautiful verse', he became Asia's first Nobel laureate by winning the 1913 Nobel Prize in Literature.

[17]Swami Vivekananda (1863–1902) is considered one of the most famous and influential spiritual leaders of India. He was the chief disciple of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa and was the founder of Ramakrishna Math and Ramakrishna Mission. He is considered by many as an icon for his fearless courage, his positive exhortations to the youth, his broad outlook to social problems, and countless lectures and discourses on *Vedanta* philosophy.

[18]*Thirukkural* written by Thiruvalluvar is one of the most notable literary and ethical treatises in the Indian languages. There is a general consensus among the historians and literary authorities that *Thirukkural* was written around 2,000 years ago.