THE UNIQUENESS OF NISHKAMA KARMA AS A MOTIVATIONAL STRATEGY IN COMPARISON WITH OPERANT CONDITIONING & EXPECTANCY THEORIES

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ABSTRACT

Rationale: The rationale is to realize the value of Nishkama Karma as a motivational strategy in empowering individuals and organizations to derive meaning and purpose in workplace and celebrate their full potential and think beyond profit margins. A comparative study of Ancient Indian style of motivation mentioned in Bhagavat Gita and Western theories of motivation like Operant Conditioning and expectancy theories has been attempted.

Objective: The objective of the study is to establish the value of Nishkama Karma as a deciding factor in realizing Organizational Excellence and enhancing personal competencies at workplace. The problems faced by today’s organizations and the workforce due to high stress and increasing complexities at the work place with the recommended solution as Nishkama Karma as a stress management strategy is also highlighted in this work.

Research Methodology: This paper is based on hermeneutics, a qualitative research methodology which involves study, understanding and interpretation of ancient or classical text. The Bhagavad-Gita is more than 5,000 years old and is written in Sanskrit language and selected verses have been re-interpreted to drive home the connection of ancient Indian motivation.

Research Limitations: The Research is limited to the concept of Nishkama Karma and western theories of motivation like Operant Conditioning and expectancy theories only.

Research Implications: The concept of Nishkama Karma can be extensively applied for talent acquisition, employee development, succession planning, leadership development etc. The concept of Nishkama Karma is getting popularity among corporate intelligentsia and the research will foster a renewed interest in wisdom of ancient India.

Findings: Nishkama Karma provides an intrinsic approach to human capital development that moulds competencies which foster Organizational Citizenship Behavior and personal excellence. It strengthens organizations to manage the turbulence of changing business environment and stay focused as a learning organization.

KEY WORDS: Nishkama Karma, Personal Competencies, Work Commitment, Organizational Excellence, Operant Conditioning Theory, Expectancy Theory.