

Tracing the Elements of Soft Skills in the Teachings of the Panchatantra

Debadrita Sen

Department of Humanities, Dr. B. C. Roy Engineering College, India
Corresponding Author Email: [debadrita.sen\[at\]gmail.com](mailto:debadrita.sen[at]gmail.com)

Abstract: "Literature is the mere imitation of life," (Plato), which reflects the different shades and nuances of living, existence and survival. With its many hands of expression, literature has featured forth the animation of 'fables' which unanimously has sufficed the responsibility of delegating morals, teachings and training over centuries together. The significance and application of such a tool to impart modern-day training and grooming stand tall where 'The Panchatantra,' (literally 'Five Devices') can act as a medium aiming to infuse the evergreen pedagogy of Sri Vishnu Sharma into the contemporary education system and corporate structures to yield the best result. Soft Skills as an independent genre, has gained immense popularity over the last few decades and now exhibits as an inevitable standard, which needs to be achieved by every professional to exist in the industry. Though, Soft Skills apparently seems to be very novel and contemporary, but traces of its full-grown existence have been witnessed in our legendary texts and scriptures. The ancient teachings as found in The Bhagwad Gita, The Epics, and several other scriptures have reflected the evidence of psychosocial competencies, communication skills and managerial attributes to teach the generations ahead the lessons of Ethics, Dharma, Soft Skills and Management Skills. This paper aims to trace the elements of soft skills from a Rig Veda contemporary text-'The Panchatantra' trying to present the relevance and innovation of its teachings and bearing in the present-day scenario.

Keywords: Elements, Panchatantra, Soft Skills, Tracing, Teaching and Training.

1. Introduction

The Panchatantra written by Pandit Vishnu Sharma, is a succession of interlaced fables with many interesting characters deploying the allegory of anthropomorphized animals with human values and evils which creates an interesting and entertaining work of five parts called The Five Principles or the Panchatantra. *Pancha* means "five," and *tantra* means "treatises." The five parts were titled as follows.

- 1) "Mitra-bheda: The Separation of Friends (The Lion and the Bull) ""Mitra-labha or Mitra-samprapti: The Gaining of Friends (The Dove, Crow, Mouse, Tortoise, and Deer) "
- 2) "Kakolukiyam: Of Crows and Owls (War and Peace) "
- 3) "Labdhapranasam: Loss of Gains (The Monkey and the Crocodile) "
- 4) "Apariksitakaragam: Ill-Considered Action/Rash Deeds (The Brahman and the Mongoose)" (India's Ancient Fables: The Five Principles of the Panchatantra: PHYLLIS DOYLE BURNS: JUN 18, 2022).

Talking about literary history, The Panchatantra dates back to the 3rd century BCE, and exhibits a uniqueness of its style by unveiling as an amalgam of prose and verses often known as 'champu.' The dialogue delivery and the narrative structuring have been done in prose from in this style while the delineation of the morals, values and standards has been done in verse form. The very idea of writing the Panchatantra sprung from a very catastrophic situation, "*Of sons unborn, or dead, or fools. They cause a little grief, no doubt; But fools, a long life through. Unborn or dead will do:*" (Arthur W Ryder, 1949), where once a very able king from the kingdom of Mahilaropyam named Amarashakti requested the venerated guru Sri Vishnu Sharma to enlighten his three imprudent sons, so that they could take the responsibility of the kingdom in the future, and in the pursuit of imparting knowledge to these three princes through

colourful animal stories, the Panchatantra happened, and since then it has continued to be an epitome of 'Nitishastra, or textbook of niti.' The word 'niti' means roughly "the wise conduct of life." (Arthur W Ryder, 1949).

The popularity of this book is evidenced by its innumerable translations in several foreign languages and "Versions in more than fifty languages. . . there are recorded over two hundred different versions known to exist in more than fifty languages, and three-fourths of these languages are extra-Indian. As early as the eleventh century this work reached Europe, and before 1600 it existed in Greek, Latin, Spanish, Italian, German, English, Old Slavonic, Czech, and perhaps other Slavonic languages." - Franklin Edgerton, 1924.

The worldwide acceptance and influence of this book has inspired oriental writings like The Jataka Stories etc. and has also been considered partly as the origin of European secondary works, such as the folk tale motifs found in Boccaccio, La Fontaine, Aesop's Fables and the works of Grimm Brothers (wiki). The pertinence of this text as a merely documented storybook for the sake of storytelling only vanishes absolutely when researcher and translator Chandra Rajan explains how Borzuya's (chief minister to the Persian king, came to India in 570 CE, in search of a legendary herb that held the elixir of life and was reputed to resurrect the dead) encounter with an Indian philosopher exhilarated his real search for the Elixir "The high mountains were the wise and learned men of lofty intellect; the trees and herbs their virtuous writings and the wisdom extracted from these writings the Elixir of Life that revived the dead intelligence." (The Panchatantra: The ancient 'viral memes' still with us by Nilanjana S Roy, 2018).

Truly so, standing in the 21st century, when Chandrayan 3 has safely landed on the moon's floor, Artificial Intelligence and Chat GPT have already posed a challenge to the professional world, metaverse has supposedly spread its

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tentacles to engulf the entire job market, Alexa & Siri are constantly professing about the imminent vacuum of vacancies in the global job market, actually exposes us to a bigger threat of sustenance in the professional world. A world that is driven by technology and Software brings us to the awakening: "To be or not to be is the question?" (Hamlet, Act III, Scene I, by William Shakespeare). Taking this challenge into consideration a lot of terms have surfaced in recent times like up skilling, life skills, hybrid work environment, power skills, soft skills etc. which means that the antidote to this impending challenge is naturally hidden in the terms above suggesting the survival of the fittest through upgrading and adapting. Terms like adaptability, flexibility etc. stand constant while the rest stand as variables. But surprisingly, to actuate these terms into reality one seriously needs to pursue the development of soft skills to exist and survive in the market, and surprisingly more, the age-old content in the Panchatantra acts as an Elixir to heal all sorts of sustainability issues, and our incessant pursuit should be in trying to infuse the soft skills teachings from this ancient text to our modern day pedagogy to warranty an overall accomplishment of an entrant by offering the best concoction of Hard and Soft Skills amalgamated.

2. Literature Review

The Great Panchatantra Tales: reading-2_the-great-Panchatantra-ales_complete. Pdf 460K as a translated work of the Original Sanskrit text precludes the original stories to understand them better and to use the same for attaining the objective of relating the stories and their morals to associate it with the soft skill component to justify the title of this paper.

Panchatantra Tales: An Effective Tool for Inculcating Life Skills and Managerial Skills in Management Education: Prof. Vinay K Y and Lt. Sowmya M A International Journal of Research in Management & Social Science Volume 6, Issue 1 (XI): January-March 2018 The researchers here have aimed to synthesise the study of Panchatantra with Management skills and has also tried to identify an achievable way to teach Management through the study of Panchatantra, and since Soft Skills is but a natural ally of Management Skills, this information has immensely helped in the construct of this paper.

India's Ancient Fables: The Five Principles of the Panchatantra: PHYLLIS DOYLE BURNS, 2018: <https://owlcation.com/>: This article gives an overview of the history of the text with an insight into the stories with their morals thereafter and the preaching of the different communication approaches etc. The Soft Skills components have surfaced in this paper through the narratives and descriptions which too have helped in the fundamentals of this paper.

Panchatantra: A Treatise on Life Skills Education and Training: Vijendra Kumar SK and A. R. Krishnamurthy, Published in the Proceedings of the International Conference on Life Skills Education and Training 2017 at SM Joshi College, Pune, India, February, 3-5, Pp.166-170, ISBN: 978-93-86256-43-The researchers here have demonstrated the link between Panchatantra and its relevance in any training

programme and enhancement of Life Skills thus, Soft Skills through the text. The stories of 'The Panchatantra, ' have focused on integrating it with the life skills education model of WHO (1998, 1999 &2004), (Kumar & Krishnamurthy, 2014a, 2017). The psychological aspect presented in this paper, impacting the Life Skill Education, helps in understanding and analysing the stories from an ariel perspective.

The Panchatantra: The ancient 'viral memes' still with us by Nilanjana S Roy: 17th May 2018: <https://www.bbc.com/culture>. The writer here in this article has excavated the richness of the text as Elixir and has talked about its undying utility in all spheres of teaching and training to date. The 'Viral Meme,' expression has been used in this article with thorough research and sophistication contributing in the best way possible to the structuring of this paper.

The Panchatantra of Vishnu Sharma-English Translation: Arthur W Ryder: Copyright 1925 by The University of Chicago, All rights reserved. Published 1925: This book is a translation of the original with amplification on several Soft Life Skills that act as liaisons between man's Niti and his wise conduct of life (Ryder, 1949). This book highlights the minutest detail of the original Sanskrit text and reflects on the nuances professed by the great Pandit-Sri Vishnu Sharma.

Hypotheses

- To trace the elements of soft skills inherent in the Panchatantra and to associate it with modern education and corporate Training and grooming.
- The fables that act as moral imparting device needs to be inculcated as a tool for imparting Business Communication and Soft Skills Training.
- Exploring the wide vista of The Panchatantra to synthesise it with the industry-required managerial skills.
- Studying the overall influence of The Panchatantra in the light of Soft Skills Development with special reference to Management Studies.

3. Methodology

The information required for this paper has been collected primarily from secondary sources, from multiple websites, previous journal papers, documents, articles from books, social media platforms, Newsletters, old archives and special reference to Arthur W. Ryder's translation of the Panchatantra. The data collected from different sources have been mentioned beside the quote or the data provided. The reference of the translated stories from the original Sanskrit language has been taken from the PDF of The Great Panchatantra Tales to understand and analyse the stories to justify the title of this paper.

4. Discussion

Soft Skills as a genre though seems to be new, has its roots spread since 1968-1972 from the US Military Services, where training on not only using arms & and ammunition but also how to work in teams and exhibit leadership traits

were also trained. This term Soft Skills despite being 'Soft' is a hard adhesive that binds our domain knowledge with human & and life skills. A professional devoid of soft skills, "In a world where job-related roles are changing rapidly, soft skills will be one of the few constants." -Chris Jones is destined to be challenged and ousted if certain intricate attributes like Effective Communication, Crisis Management, Time Management, Team Management, Creative Thinking, Adaptability, Persuasive Skills, Negotiation Skills, to name a few and of course, Positive Attitude is not mastered in time by every professional. The need and necessity to imbibe, practice and exhibit these soft skills traits are even validated further with statistics from STEM employers, 72% of whom consider that soft skills are not only integral but also pivotal during the process of hiring (Dr. Gauri Bhasin, 2nd Sept 2023, Edugraph: The Importance of Soft Skills in Engineering Education). The platter of soft skills serves the basic of an amalgam of life skills with managerial attributes that make a professional complete. Soft skills are a continuous practice that needs to be nurtured by any human being since his/her school days and as rightly noted it cannot be taught overnight. The art of Soft Skills needs to be manifested through rigorous training and that training can start by ensuring discipline both at home and on the campus, initially, by devising measures to compel an entrant to accept and follow it once these young adults get exposed to such live situation their attitude, automatically begets their sense of responsibility, which helps them groom to become a compassionate human being. The fact that Soft Skills has gained so much popularity is because we have stopped being courteous and polite, the reverence and responsibility we had earlier have almost vanished to give birth to a stereotypical selfish society where 'I' stands more predominant over 'WE, ' and this I-factor is another vile that is slowly devouring the humane attributes from the society. These far-stretched negatives which seem to be societal concerns are impacting the mindset of a young adult which is invariably being reflected in his/her behaviour, which in the long term is also impacting the career. "The day of considering quality and teamwork as special has passed. Not because they aren't important, but because the bar has been raised to the point where we feel they're mandatory. We don't even consider hiring someone who can't exhibit these skills." -Patricia Murray, Corporate VP for HR, Intel Corp. The above expectation from any fresher is a benchmark that points to a direction that Soft Skills training is not only a must but also a mandate for any professional. Soft Skills Training coupled with live projects and case studies needs to be continuously nurtured, and not only this, but a separate counselling body also needs to run parallelly on every campus to meet the psychological needs of the new entrant. These counselling sessions can heal and address the real problems in a youngster's life that often subconsciously trigger their untoward behaviour. Regular Therapies of meditation, hobbies and co-curricular activities can also bring about a change in their Soft Skill Practice. Some industry leaders say, 'We hire you for your ATTITUDE, and train you for your SKILLS.' This saying holds true because, domain knowledge or formulae-based education changes according to the needs of the companies, for which there are a team of stalwarts who can train a candidate on the newest technologies, software and codes, but if the candidate on the contrary, is groomed to learn

these new trends and boasts of whatever he knows is absolute, then one can imagine the pain the trainers will go through to motivated its 'Learned' fresher, to be a learner again. Therefore, the attitude of being a flexible learner is more important than being a stubborn 'learned.' The art of shaping attitude commensurate with the industry need is also an ardent exhibit that every professional needs to learn. Soft skills as the term goes is that liaison that bridges the gap between the campus and the industry, and if we want to see our students touch heights then soft skills training needs to be infused into the curriculum as a mandate and a conducive environment also need to be provided to ensure a caterpillar's journey from a pupa to a butterfly. "A man to thrive Must keep Alive," (Arthur W Ryder., 1925) rightly talks about the impediment the entrants need to overcome to taste success and one of the biggest challenges forecasted in the education system based on a report of Microsoft's survey says that the average concentration span of a young mind has come down to 12 to 8 secs, (24th May 2021), in the post covid era, another study conducted by EU Business School claims it to be for 10-12 minutes, whatever be the findings, these surveys quite obviously indicate Kevin McSpadden's study published in Time, on May 14th, 2015, stating that the attention span of young minds are decreasing since the 2000s and is now lower than goldfish. This excerpt as it features in (Dr Suneeta De., et al., Vol.6 | Issue 32 | July 2022 ISSN: 2456-8104, Crossref/DOI: <https://doi.org/10.54850/jrspelt.6.32.002>) paper on Business Communication Teaching to Indian Students in the Times of COVID19, very clearly states the challenges of teaching Business Communication and soft skills to young professionals in the post Covid times where virtual communication is not only acting as the all-towering influencer, motivating the young minds but also acting as an agent of distraction, deviating their levels of concentration. In such a constrained and challenging situation, the Panchatantra can permeate the teaching-training sessions as an obvious methodology to impart quality lessons through its animated anecdotes and lively presentation. Almost every story of this series has an equivocal prophecy, though corroborated in a very simple package in reality heightens the standard of societal norms, individual discipline, valuable values, ethics and communication. The Panchatantra-an apparent book of morals, can be deployed as a strong medium of knowledge transfer typifying the proverb:

"Since verbal science has no final end.

Since life is short and obstacles impend.

Let central facts be picked and firmly fixed.

As swans extract the milk with water mixed." (Arthur W Ryder., 1925)

Panchatantra & Soft Skills:

Tom Gerencer, CPRW Career Expert in his article titled

('Hard Skills vs. Soft Skills: List of Examples for Your Resume') mentions an interesting fact from LinkedIn where he states that about 57% of employers prefer soft skills to hard skills. Some very important attributes of Soft Skills that can be traced from diverse sources are as follows: Communication Skills, Interpersonal Skills, Positive Thinking, Time Management, Team Management, Creative Thinking, Adaptability, Persuasive Skills, Negotiation

Skills, Crisis Management, problem-solving, Leadership Skill and Emotional Intelligence which seems to be some very common corporate terms coined in the recent times, but has its roots in the ancient studies and analysing each of these skills with a befitting story from the Panchatantra will serve the purpose of soft skills training and grooming in an Indianised way adhering to the standards of Indian Morals, Values and Ethics.

The Art of Communication & Presentation

Stories, since eternity, have been a very strong tool of expression, acting and achieving their targeted purpose of teaching and learning through methodological implementation. And in this scheme of execution, we find Sri Vishnu Sharma also professing his lessons to his three imprudent students in the form of stories. The stories introduced by Pandit Sharma had animal characters though appearing simple, innocent and naive were manifestations of personified virtues and the vices of human traits. These pseudo-children's stories, in reality, were targeted for the society at large to delegate lessons on Political Science, Social Sciences, Code of Conduct, Management Studies and Life Skill Training. That is the reason why the Panchatantra to date holds its relevance, significance and acceptance as the storyteller's archive and also as an art form manifested to be emulated as a genre for the generation next where the success and validity of its existence lie in the fact when even a western trainer advises his trainee to start any oral presentation with an anecdote. The art of any Presentation be it writing or oral always aims at, 'Brevity is the soul of wit,' (Shakespeare) and Keep It Short and Simple (K-I-S-S) and factually we find almost all the stories of the text unveiled with brevity and directly targets the moral with minimal ado.

Creative Thinking & Positive Attitude

The introduction to the Panchatantra in itself is a simulation of several amalgamated soft skills components. When Pandit Vishnu Sharma was summoned to King Amarashakti's court he was requested to groom the king's three foolish sons who were hitherto the king's greatest concern for being dim heads (Ryder, 1949). The king offered a hundred land in return for Sri Sharma's successful services, but Vishnu Sharma comprehended the situation and understood that he was stuck between the devil and the deep blue sea, and that if he turned down the offer he would be punished, and again, if he failed to educate the three fools he might be hanged, so just after the king promised him the prize, playing on his creative and problem-solving abilities he immediately said that money was of no good to him and that he would take just six months to educate his pupils and if he failed in the mission, he proactively would change his name from Vishnu Sharma to something else. This pleased the king and the deal was closed. The lesson that we derive from here can help our trainees to analyse any hypothetical situations like the said and ask them to make a SWOT (Strength, Weakness, Opportunity & Threat) Analysis of it and then come to a concrete decision, rather than jumping to solutions which when taken in haste and hurry may inflate the problem to a burst-up situation. Several Soft Skills components are evident through this 1st section from the Panchatantra.

The Need for a Trainer

In the second case, after the guru took the three princes with him, he made them learn (I) "The Loss of Friends, " (II) "The Winning of Friends, " (III) "Crows and Owls, " (IV) "Loss of Gains, " (V) "Ill-considered Action. " And after learning them in six months they answered the prescription. Since that day this work on the art of intelligent living, called Panchatantra, or the "Five Books, " has travelled the world, aiming at the awakening of intelligence in the young. To sum the matter up:

Whoever learns the work by heart. Or through the storyteller's art

Becomes acquainted.

His life by sad defeat — although

The king of heaven be his foe —

Is never tainted. (Arthur W Ryder, 1949)

This analogy alludes to the fact that a learned and motivating Guru or a trainer is a must for any kind of training programme who will not only module a particular session according to the need and preparedness of the trainee but will also motivate the scholar by making the curriculum tailor-made and interesting.

Organizational Hierarchy & Channels of Communication

The setting of the jungle at the very beginning of the text intends to reflect the power structure of the society where Pingalaka, the lion king is seen roaming with his company in what is called the Circle of Four. (i) the lion, (2) the lion's guard, (3) the under strappers, (4) the menials. In all cities, capitals, towns, hamlets, market centres, settlements, border-posts, land grants, monasteries, and communities there is just one occupant of the lion's post. Relatively few are active as the lion's guard. The under strappers are the indiscriminate throng. The menials are posted on the outskirts. The three classes are each divided into members high, middle, and low. (Arthur W Ryder, 1949), these lines clearly state the organizational hierarchy that acts as a premise for organizational behaviour and strategic communication. The lion forever has been the king of the jungle and has symbolised eternal power, supremacy and authority just like kings and political leaders of the modern time. The council of ministers-the two jackals, Karataka and Damanaka are the advisors or ministers to run the state of affairs well, and then there are the commoners and other supporters who all together function to run any organisation/state well, therefore the functioning of the jungle as collaged through different stories from the Panchatantra hints at the different communication and soft life skills required to exist and co-exist in the society. This power layering is apt and very contemporary and suits all our societal and organizational execution even to date. The upward, Downward, Horizontal and Diagonal flow of information stands befitting in the stories where orders are given by 'Pingalaka, ' the lion, hinting at the downward flow of information. Damanaka the jackal who is also the advisor to the king reports about 'Sanjeevaka', the bull he channelizes upward flow of information and like choric characters when Karataka and Damanaka, the two banished ministers from the lion's council communicate laterally, the flow of communication gets exemplified with appropriation.

Leadership and other Managerial Skills

Another story from The Panchatantra, "The Rabbit and the Elephant" featuring the third principle of the Panchatantra titled "Of Crows and Owls," teaches how to get along with opponents, and keep cool during adversity. This story from the Hitopadesha collection narrates the migration of a herd of elephants from one part of the jungle to another in search of water and the pursuit of their search they bulldoze the colony of the rabbits, killing many of them. Unable to bear the loss of so many comrades the leader of the rabbit called for a meeting, to find a solution to the problem, from the crowd emerged a leader who pleaded to take the initiative to go to the elephant king and persuade him to stop from coming to the lakeside for water henceforth, and also to stop the vandalism on the rabbit colony. With an iota of doubt in mind the leader of the rabbit agreed to send the young rabbit for negotiation, when the young rabbit reached the elephant herd, he stood atop a rock and addressed the elephant king. *"O great leader of elephants, please hear me, I am a messenger of the Mighty Moon. He sends you an urgent message. But before I deliver the message, I want you to remember that I am only a messenger and you must not be angry with me or harm me. I am only doing my duty."* (India's Ancient Fables: The Five Principles of the Panchatantra: PHYLLIS DOYLE BURNS: JUN 18, 2022), This introduction of the rabbit impressed the elephant and he immediately promised not to harm him and asked him to continue, the rabbit then said that he was an agent from the moon and the king of rabbits also lived with moon and that the moon was very upset and angry because the upheaval of the elephants did not only kill many innocent rabbits but has also dirtied their sacred pond and if the elephants wanted to please the moon and save the herd from the moon's wrath, they should immediately vacate the place and go and stay elsewhere, to assure and prove the ire of the moon, the young rabbit very intelligently asked the elephant to follow him to the pond where the moon stayed. It was evening by then when the elephant went to the pond with the rabbit, where the rabbit asked the elephant to peep into the water and greet the moon. The elephant did as instructed, he saw the moon (reflection) in the lake and when he tried to greet the moon with a splash of water, the ripples in the water distorted the image of the moon which triggered the witty rabbit to say that the moon was angry and was moving to and fro to tell that it was livid with the elephant for touching the holy water, the scared elephant asked for forgiveness from the moon and promised never return to that place again.

The soft skills learnings presented through this story are vivid and brilliant, where the exuberance of communication skill heightens and we find the art of the rabbit's drafting and articulation of the situation leads him to persuade the elephant to finally leave that place, the art of taking responsibility or better initiative like a leader though a fresher suggests that leadership skill is not an outcome of age, experience or familiarity but a proactive initiation taken to think and perform out of the box. The aspect of negotiation which is in regular demand in the corporate is portrayed well in this story and the persuasive skill coupled with creative thinking, problem-solving skills, positive attitude and presence of mind presents the rabbit as a

brilliant negotiator, and communicator, innovator and of course the leader who knows the art of Crisis Management.

Team Building & Crisis Management

'The Bird pair and the Sea,' from the "Mitra-bheda: The Separation of Friends (The Lion and the Bull)" series (India's Ancient Fables: The Five Principles of the Panchatantra: PHYLLIS DOYLE BURNS: JUN 18, 2022), is a multidimensional story that fusions several soft skills components to teach and train how the adversities of life and situation can be overcome by displaying proper organizational skills. The story opens with a disagreement between a husband and a wife pheasant where the wife emphasizes on laying the egg in a new nest away from the sea but the husband insists the wife should not fear the sea waves as the waves could not harm them in any ways and again insists her for laying the eggs there only, the sea in the meantime enraged by the pride and arrogance of the male bird, decides to wash away the eggs, and does so, this unexpected situation infuriates the birds and they decide to avenge the sea, the significance of the story within a story unveils here with the wife bird motivating the husband by telling him the story of "The Elephant and the Sparrow," that, how a team of good friends – a woodpecker, a fly and a frog, apparently feeble and naive, by their perfect planning and execution defeated the mighty elephant. This sermon, motivated the husband-bird too and he called in all other birds and motivated them in turn to seek revenge on the sea, but still the contingent was not that powerful to avenge the sea, so they visited Garuda-the vehicle of Lord Vishnu, and told him about the plight, hearing this the Garuda too took this to be an insult on the bird fraternity and insisted Lord Vishnu to look into the matter and help the pheasant couple to get back their eggs, with indulgence from Lord Vishnu the eggs were restored and the battle was also won.

The soft skills perspective that gets highlighted here are the communication skills of the birds and animals persuading and negotiating for help, the organizational skill of the birds and animals portrayed here to achieve their goals, the interpersonal skill of networking with diverse animals apart from same the fraternity, and above and beyond these skills what champions as the most prominent skill in this story is team dynamics with proper leadership.

Persuasive Skill & Positive Attitude

The story of "The Monkey and the Crocodile," from the 4th series of the "Labdhapranasam: Loss of Gains" summarizes some management skills that need to be a component of a true professional. The art of Marketing is heightened in this story when the crocodile persuades the monkey to go along with him to his den, the innocence of his advertisement concealing the real intention of taking the monkey as prey also establishes the art of influence and persuasion, the monkey also on the other hand displays the required life skills by keeping his nerves strong in times of great adversity and applies his presence of mind to tackle the situation without letting the opponent know about the next move. Kinesics is an art that exhibits our feelings and emotions in any kind of situation, and the monkey here quite successfully does so by curbing his fear and anxiety and by portraying a very normal countenance which imparts the lesson of stress management, emotion management and

problem-solving ability. The never-dying positive attitude in times of dire calamity is what breeds a true champion, and that is exactly what has been garnished in the story. Crisis Management at its best has been projected to motivate one and all to achieve their goals. Nav Singh, from Infoglen LLC in his LinkedIn post, dated 28th Aug 2019, takes this story a step further and relates it to a Sales Management case theory also.

Sartorial Communication & Self-Confidence

The technique of using a story within a story somewhat seems to be very symbolic, where the smaller stories act as the nourishment to the bigger story and to compare, the inside stories are the life skills required to be imbibed to further impact the bigger story-called life with all its social, political, economic and professional wellbeing. The story of Panchatantra does not only impact the socio-political structure of the society with its code of ethics but also impacts the psychological and psychosocial grooming of the human mind. Psychological perception of the stories with its innovative methodology of narration has helped in changing human behaviour (Nair & Santhanam, 2011, Vijendra Kumar SK and A. R. Krishnamurthy, 2017). To highlight, this concept the mention of 'The Story of The Blue Jackal, ' is a must, where a bit of change in the complexion of the jackal, gives him the boost to become the king of the jungle. This story holds for any hesitant entrant or employee suffering from an inferiority complex. If given adequate training can boost their success confidence, can also take on the world with fortitude and determination. In this context, it would be unwise to forget the role of sartorial communication, where dressing and presentation of self, matters. Sartorial communications these days have rocked the market and more and more grooming classes are being conducted to make an entrant understand its need and importance. We know that the first impression is the last, so the jackal here came differently dressed to create an impression that compelled his onlookers to take him seriously, here again we have the second part of the learning stated in an oxymoronic way, where, after a while of ruling, when one day hears his pack howling, he too joins them, revealing his real identity, he is caught and killed. This again clearly highlights the fact that only 'Darshandhari, ' will not solve the problem permanently, alongside 'Gunnvichari, ' is also something that needs to be trained sidewise. So, the teaching that we can assemble from this story says, that content is the foundation and looks are embellishments and both have their roles to play to make anything look complete and perfect.

Adaptability & Flexibility

Anagatavidhata, Pratyutpannamati and Yadbhavishya were the three fishes from "The Tale of the Three Fish, " which not only conveyed morals but also predicted the teaching of soft skills and communication through the display of their adaptability and flexibility skills. The first two fishes as stated in the story are presented as great leaders who foresee the market condition and accordingly strategies their decisions for the betterment, this story again talks about moving beyond the comfort zone and merging or collaborating with like-minded associates to grab an opportunity that has come to help explore new horizons. The theory of merger and acquisition is also slightly hinted at

here in this story and other stories like 'Gain of Friends', 'The Crow-Rat Discourse, ' and many more to amplify this marketing concept of innovation and existence. 'Microsoft-Nokia', 'Kelvinator-Electrolux, ' and 'Hero-Honda' have all been examples of such concepts. The idea is, was and will be, is to exist and continue successfully in this competitive world, for which, exploring new avenues and researching new possibilities should continue, going beyond the comfort zone to yield the best results.

Thinking Out of the Box

Talking about a very common statement today, we say, that it is the idea that sells, truly so, stories like 'The Thirsty Crow, ' 'The Crow and the Snake, ' 'The Rabbit and the Mindless Lion, ' are some of the stories that very loudly announce the manifestation of quick and innovative ideas on the face of dire adversity that helped the protagonists of these stories to escape their impending and evident doom. The lessons learnt from these stories may also be applied to the idea of self-assessment, and continuous research and development to explore new avenues and ways of standardizing self, products and services to exist and survive in this hard-core competitive market. In this context, the popularity of OYO, AIRBNB, UBER, and Rapido to name a few, needs an obvious mention because most of such brands have earned their dividends by selling their exceptional and unparallel ideas, where even without owning a single hotel as an asset, Ritesh Agarwal, Founder & Group CEO of OYO Hotels have estimated a growth of 19% from ₹ 4, 780 Crore in FY 2022 to ₹ 5, 700 Crore in FY 2023. (<https://www.livemint.com>>. . . >India, 27-March-2023), AIRBNB too has shown a rise of \$2.5 billion in FY 2023 from \$2.1 billion in 2022. (<https://news.airbnb.com>>airbnb-q2. . . .3rd August 2023), These examples celebrate the victory of marketing ideas to such an extent that they become a brand in a very constrained market scenario, where threats are more than opportunities, and fear of loss is more than profit. The analogy of the crow in the story of 'The Thirsty Crow, ' who maximizes the level of the water by just dropping its idea of 'stone', into the pitcher, actually acts as a symbol of an innovator who practices and applies the concept of 'out of the box, ' thinking which finally leads to the compliment of, "Wah! Kya idea Sir Ji. " (IDEA network Ad).

Morals & Ethics

The standardization of morals to values and values to ethics is what we find in the majority of the stories where a simple moral of 'look before you leap, ' in the story of 'The Brahman and the Mongoose, ' forms the fifth series of the Panchatantra, talks about the killing of a prospective resource without much introspection. The killing of the mongoose stands as an example that teaches to inculcate the value of compassion, camaraderie and solidarity among all and from here the implementation that can be exercised as an ethical standard are contemplation, respect, unbiasedness and humanity. From the communication and soft skill perspective, the lessons taught through the story focus on active listening, retrospection and not jumping to conclusions, analytical bearing, critical thinking and perspective investigation. The mongoose symbolically stands here as the whistleblower where the stick represents the system. The hidden analogies used in these stories make

them a version of timeless encryption where 'neither age nor custom can wither its infinite variety.' (Antony & Cleopatra, Shakespeare)

5. Limitations of the Study

- 1) *The Translations*-The deficiency of knowing the original language of the text has created a barrier of communication which perhaps, in some cases have brought the desired understanding to a slight doubt, and have probed in reading a number of translations, from different sources to come to the right inference. Translations are never original, they are a mere imitation, which sometimes may get biased and influenced.
- 2) *Insufficient data*-Opulence of information for the said title was quite scanty, as, a lot of data addressing the societal growth and political relevance of text was evident in comparison to the modern implication of its theories in the contemporary corporate setting. In an era where westernization is dominating, the modern application of the morals from this book can definitely be cited as independent case studies allowing new entrants in the professional world to respect and accept the high-end teaching standards of the ancient stalwart.

6. Conclusion

The countless collages of stories that the Panchatantra knits together are essentially case studies with diverse ramifications. It seems the live projects the situational simulations and the innovative incubations those was conducted centuries ago were versed and archived to impart all sorts of lesson to monitor and improve the functioning of any society/organization. The apparently naïve characters of the text actually personified the immeasurable emotions, egos, virtues and vices of human existence, and studying this text between lines has helped to associate it with many similar cases that still exist but in a modern mode. The societal power structure still exists as it did centuries ago, the conventional way of delegating managerial skills as it was imparted to the three management trainees of the yester is still practiced to date to develop the different managerial, communicative and soft life skills in any trainee or fresher of the modern day. The training of the king's three sons is likened to the contemporary teaching-learning and trainer-trainee symbiotic relationship that once helped Pandit Vishnu Sharma to achieve his target a millennium ago are now helping our corporate trainers in doing the same job to accomplish their goals in the recent times. The confluence of several innovative concepts and methodologies has made the Panchatantra a medium of instruction which on the one hand acts as a guidebook for enhancing all types of groundbreaking skills and on the hand carries a disclaimer with caution talking about the adversities lurking in ambush for mishandling the teachings which if implemented with imprudence might lead to problems larger than the solution. This book has been rightly described as the fountain of nectar and if utilized and employed properly can truly act as an Elixir endowing life to our stereotypical pedagogy. This seasoned text with its neo-modern teachings and contemporary sermons has conquered over time and age and it continues to be the "Viral Meme." (The Panchatantra: The

ancient 'viral memes' still with us by Nilanjana S Roy, 2018), still impacting the Socio-Political and Psychosocial competencies of the society at large.

7. Future Scope of the study

- 1) *Case Studies*-Going forward the stories from the five segments of the Panchatantra, can be modelled as unique case studies, for imparting different lessons for grooming soft life skills and other managerial skill. The potential of this text champions beyond the mere shackles of being just a children classic, instead the scope of exploring this book as a trainer's manual can definitely do wonders to train and groom entrants with enriched values and ethics.
- 2) *Communication Skill and Body Language*-The scanty information about the other details of communication skill, like tracing the various channels of communication, barriers of communication, Grapevine, body language and its attributes, viz. kinesics, haptics, optics, chronemics, paralinguistics and proxemics etc. may be probed in expanding the vista of the research area in the said domain, and exploring the nitty-gritty of communication skills and discovering newer ways to handle and master this skill, which may be hiding in an incipient way, in the text's background and stories, when explored, may yield phenomenal results.

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Author Profile



Debadrita Sen is a dedicated academician with a combined experience of 20 years in research, training and teaching. She is currently working as Assistant Professor of English at Dr B. C. Roy Engineering College. Her specialisation includes Business Communication and Soft Skills.

(debadrita.sen[at]gmail.com)