

THE MORAL BEHIND INDIVIDUAL EFFORTS AND SUCCESS: AN INDIAN PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract In today's world of cut throat competition everyone is running after success. People give credits to different elements for success e.g. operational efficiency, quality of work, personality traits, time management, legitimate path, right methods, tools & techniques, knowledge management, spirituality or moral power. Even the most eminent personalities and management experts, in organizations, suggest different principles related to their respective areas. The 'doctrine of work' is considered to be one of the most important and fundamental doctrines of classical Indian moral philosophy, explaining the fundamentals behind human efforts and results. This article is an effort to analyse Indian ethico-moral principle of cause & effect, the doctrine of work, for managers and other professionals in the areas of management, to remove controversies regarding the factors contributing to success and to develop a holistic view. A brief story, as a case study, is taken from 'Gargasamhita' (an ancient Indian epic by Garga-acharya, 3000 B.C.), which describes the role of six prime elements, the Karma (work), Karta (doer), Kala (time), Yoga (path), Vidhigyan (knowledge), and Brahmapurusha (Supreme God) in achieving success. The dialogue between Pradhumn and Sakuni in the case focuses on the role of various elements of different areas of management in achieving success.

Keywords Karma (work), Karta (doer), Kala (time), Yoga (path), Vidhigyan (knowledge), and Brahmapurusha (Supreme God).

In today's world of cut throat competition everyone is running after success and has different experience and principle to achieve success, even the most eminent personalities and management experts, in organizations, suggest different principles related to their respective areas. People give credits to different elements for success e.g. operational efficiency, quality of work, personality traits, time management, legitimate path, right methods, tools & techniques knowledge management, spirituality or moral power. The 'doctrine of work' is considered to be one of the most important and fundamental doctrines of classical Indian moral philosophy, explaining the fundamentals behind human efforts and results.

This article is an effort to analyse Indian ethico-moral principle of cause & effect, the doctrine of work, for managers and other professionals in the areas of management, to remove controversies regarding the factors contributing to success and to develop a holistic view. A brief story as a case study, is taken from 'Gargasamhita' (an ancient Indian epic by Garga-acharya, 3000 B.C.), which describes the role of six prime elements, the Karma (work), Karta (doer), Kala (time), Yoga (path), Vidhigyan (knowledge), and Brahmapurusha (Supreme God) in achieving success. The dialogue between Pradhumn and Sakuni in the case focuses on the role of various elements in achieving success. The respective western theories related to these elements have also been discussed.

It is a human tendency that man gives credit for his success to himself and blames others for his failure. He never holds

responsibility of his failure. In many cases, we suffer or enjoy not because of our deeds, but because of deeds of others. Sometimes we are not even sure of the positive results, even after putting the best of our efforts. If working hard does not assure success, then what counts for success? To what extent the doer (*karta*) can be held responsible for his action/efforts (*karma*) and results (*karmaphal*) that he receives or deserves? This story clearly reflects the various components associated with 'karma', which determines the nature of 'karmaphal'.

The Case

This story is about King Pradhumn, son of Lord Shri Krishna about his conquest over the world, When Pradhumn was fighting with Sakuni, one of the nine sons of Daitya (Demons) Hiranyaksh, who lived in Chandravati Puri, north Indian Himalayan region. When all the brothers of Demon Sakuni were killed in the battle and he confronted Pradhumn. The following dialogue took place between King Pradhumn and Demon Sakuni.

Sakuni Said - Oh king! On this earth, prime important part of life is Karma (work). Only Karma is vital. It is the Guru (Master or Guide) and it is the 'Almighty God'. It is the Karma of an individual that reflects one's high and low character and it is because of these Karmas through which one receives victory or Defeat. Only Karma, is whole sole responsible for "to Win" or "to Ruin", for example the small calf is able to recognize his lovable mother in a herd of

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thousands of cows. Like wise any ‘deed’ or ‘misdeed’ done by an individual received by the very same individual or ‘doer’ among the thousands of individuals. The ‘doer’ only receives the fruit of *karma*(work). I have vowed to do my determined *Karma* in this tradition, by doing so I will conquer the enemy that is you. I give a sincere advice to you that you should also follow this tradition and defend your self from my attack.

Pradhumn- Daitya Raj (Oh! king of Demons) if you give utmost importance to ‘*Karma*’ then you should also know that one can’t achieve the (result) fruit of his *Karma* in the absence of *Kala* (Time). It is known that even if we perform our ‘*Karma*,’ hurdles come across in receiving results therefore it is said that a wise man is one who gives due importance to *kala* (time) than *Karma*. You can receive fruit of your action, when time is in your favor.

Daitya Raj! Listen even if it is the appropriate time to reap the fruit of action, no one can receive the result except the ‘doer’ *Karta* himself - that is why wise men give importance to ‘doer’(*karta*) in comparison to ‘*Kal*’ and ‘*Karma*’.

Some treat ‘*yoga*’(Upaya) as most important because without yoga, one cannot decide *Karma* (what action to take) and achieve its ‘*Phala*’(fruit) or results on this earth. Without yoga the *Kal*, *Karma* and *karta* every thing is proved to be futile.

On the other hand, even if the *karta* (doer is following

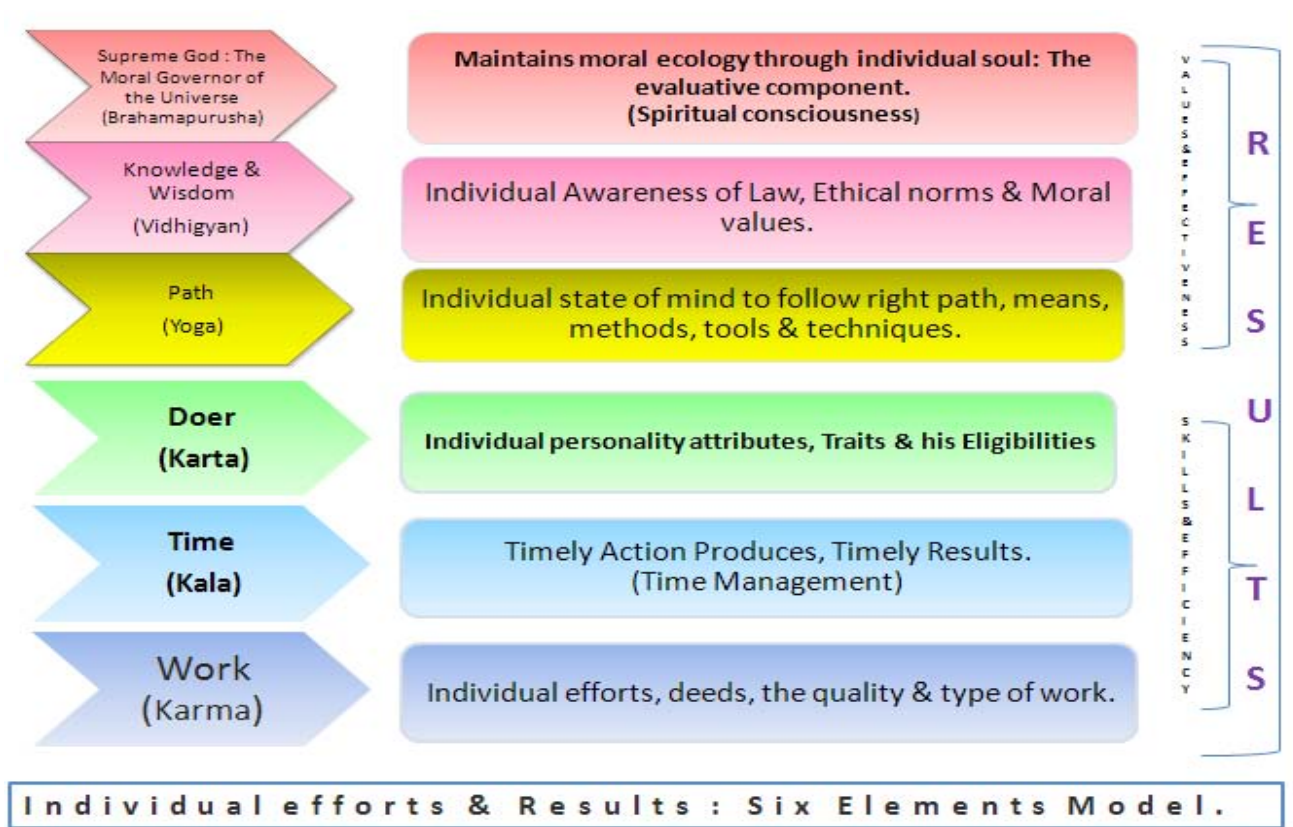
the right path and using proper means, putting his best efforts (*karma*), at the right time, without ‘*vidhigyan*’ (the knowledge of moral and immoral), everything proves to be futile.

If one does not consider the nature and type of *Karma*, one can not achieve result even by following the right path, proper means or manner of doing (*Yoga*). And *Brahmapurusha* (Supreme God) is above yoga, *Karma*, *Karta*, *Kala* and *Vidhi Gyana*. I offer my obeisance’ to that perfect, almightily ‘God’ who is the source of all kinds of knowledge of this universe.

On hearing this Daitya Sakuni thanked Pradhumn for making him realized the true knowledge on *Doctrine of Karma*. Then they fought, at the end Pradhumn used Shri Krishna *astra* (weapon) and compelled Sakuni to leave the battlefield.

The Analysis-It highlights the following points-

- ‘*Karma*’ (action/efforts) is important. (as it is the ‘guru’ and the ‘*ishwar*’(God)).
- ‘*kala*’ (time) is more important than ‘*Karma*’.
- ‘*karta*’(doer) is more important than ‘*Kala*’ and ‘*Karma*’.
- ‘*Yoga*’ (path) is more important than the ‘*Kala*’, ‘*Karma*’ and ‘*karta*’.
- ‘*vidhigyan*’(knowledge) is more important than the ‘*Kala*’, ‘*Karma*’, ‘*karta*’, and ‘*Yoga*’.
- And ‘*Brahmapurusha*’ (Supreme God) is above all e.g.



‘yoga’, ‘Karma’, ‘Karta’, ‘Kala’ and ‘Vidhi Gyan’. (‘God’ is the source of all kinds of knowledge of this universe.)

All the six factors stated above determines the nature and type of result, success/failure (*karmaphal*) we receive. Let us analyze each one stated above: (as shown in the six elements model of individual efforts and success)

A. Karma (action/work/efforts/deeds) The word *karma* is derived from the root ‘*kr*’ which means ‘to do’ and therefore it is defined in the sense of our actions/efforts, a work, or a deed. In *Sanskrit* it means Volitional Action. Conscious activities undertaken by the body, speech or mind are regarded as action. *Karmas* are also divided in to three kinds-mental, vocal, and bodily. Thinking, willing, desiring, and imagining are called mental *karma*. Talking and speaking are called vocal *karma*. Breathing, hearing, and seeing are called bodily *karma*. Whatever we do, see, know, imagine, or remember is all *karma* as long as it is knowingly or deliberately done (voluntarily). Involuntary actions or instinctive activities carried out on in the human system are not *karma* (breathing, digesting food, movement of eyelid, and other reflex action).

One should know properly what action (*karma*) is, and what is a forbidden action (*vikarma*)? And what is inaction (*akarma*)? Even the most intelligent person bewilders in determining action, inaction and perverted action. Good actions produce good results and bad actions produces bad results. This concept of work is same as work efficiency or operational efficiency in management.

B. Kala (time) - The concept of *kala* indicates the significance of time management. Taking action at the right time also determines the nature of results. It takes time to achieve the results of actions and also in producing the results, while putting efforts for the same. When we sow a seed it does not germinate immediately. It takes time to grow, to become a plant/tree, to bear flowers/fruits. The concept of time also indicates the idea of change management. One should always be ready to adapt himself according to changes taking place in the environment and adapt himself according to the demand of time.

Action is not the sole ground for holding doer responsible for results. Producing of results by *doer* is different from reaping the results. Doer may play an active role in producing the results and someone else may receive fruit even without plying any active role. The flowers and fruits may be enjoyed by the other person, may not by the person who have sown the seed of the tree.

C. Karta (doer)-A *karta* is one who performs actions. *Karta* is an active being. A conscious effort on the part of agent (doer) is required in bringing about action or refraining from it. Conscious beings are conceived to have power

of choosing, deciding, planning, intending, aiming, and thinking etc. No *karma* can be conceived to be possible without doer because what makes it possible is the conscious agency. The notion of *karma* is conceptually related with the notion of *kriya* (activity) and the notion of *kriya* is conceptually related with the notion of *karta* (agent). *Karta* without *kriya* is not possible and the *kriya* without the *karta* is not conceivable. The personality traits and eligibility of the doer determines the nature and quality of results. His internal values intentions and external skills both matters a lot in determining the nature of results. Doer of action only gets the results of his action sooner or latter. Doer of good gets good results and the doer of bad gets bad results. It is true that the doer can be held responsible unless the doer performs any actions freely.

D. Yoga (path)-Lord Krishna has defined yoga (Ch II: 50 & 48 in *Gita*) “Yoga is dexterity/skill in activities” (*Yoga karmasu kaushalam*) and “Evenness of mind” (*Yoga samattvam uchyate*). Other definition of yoga are “To be in inner union with the Supreme consciousness while performing any job”, “Yoga means a state of union with absolute *Brahman* (God)”. Yoga also means “legitimate path and means of concentrating one’s mind on supreme personality to be in union with him”. Anyone who performs any action in this state of mind surely achieves success. In simple word yoga means the path we follow to achieve results or objectives. One should select the best and the right way of performing action, keeping in mind the nature of the doer. The nature of results is also determined by selection of the right methods, tools and techniques.

E. Vidhigyan (knowledge) - The doer should have the right knowledge and wisdom to distinguish between right and wrong. If he follows the ethical norms while performing any action the doer is more likely to receive positive results of his actions. Going against the laws and rules will result in complete waste of time and energy. Means are equally important as the ends. Determination of means and ends must be in correspondence with values prevailing in society. Socially acceptable values are to be followed in determining the objectives as well as in the process of achieving these objectives. One must be aware of the consequences of his action. Acquisition of right knowledge makes action ineffective and enables the agent to obtain freedom from bondage of *karma*. The individual who acts with right knowledge and non-attachment exhibits all his liabilities to rebirth and become free from bondage of *karma*. As ignorant perform their duties with attachment to results, the learned may similarly do, but without attachment, just for the sake of leading people on the right path.(exemplary conduct)

F. ‘Brahmapurusha’ (Supreme God) -*karmaphala* (results) has both casual and an evaluative components in it. And this evaluative component determines the nature of results. God is the moral governor of the universe and Supreme source

Figure 1.1 Professional Success: A=Monitory Growth, B=Power and Authority, C= Quality of Work Life and D= Others; Success in Personal Life: A=Self Identity, B=Comforts, Convenience and Lifestyle, C=Faith and Bonding in relationship and D= Others.

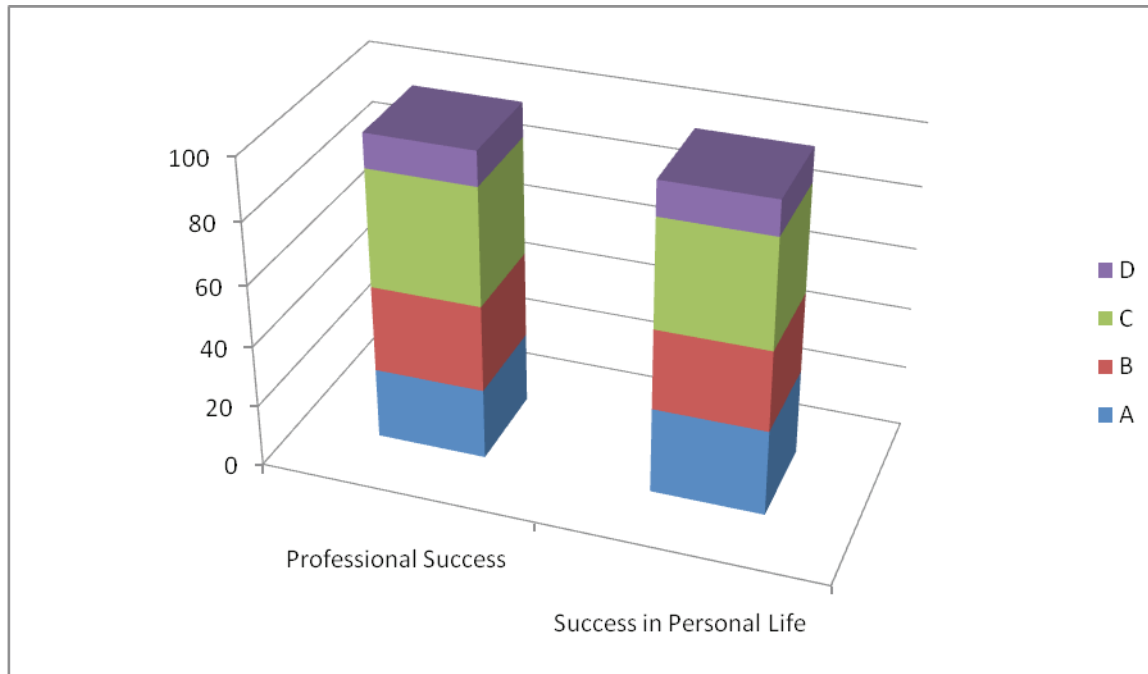


Figure 1.2 Indicates the contribution of major factors in a person's overall success.

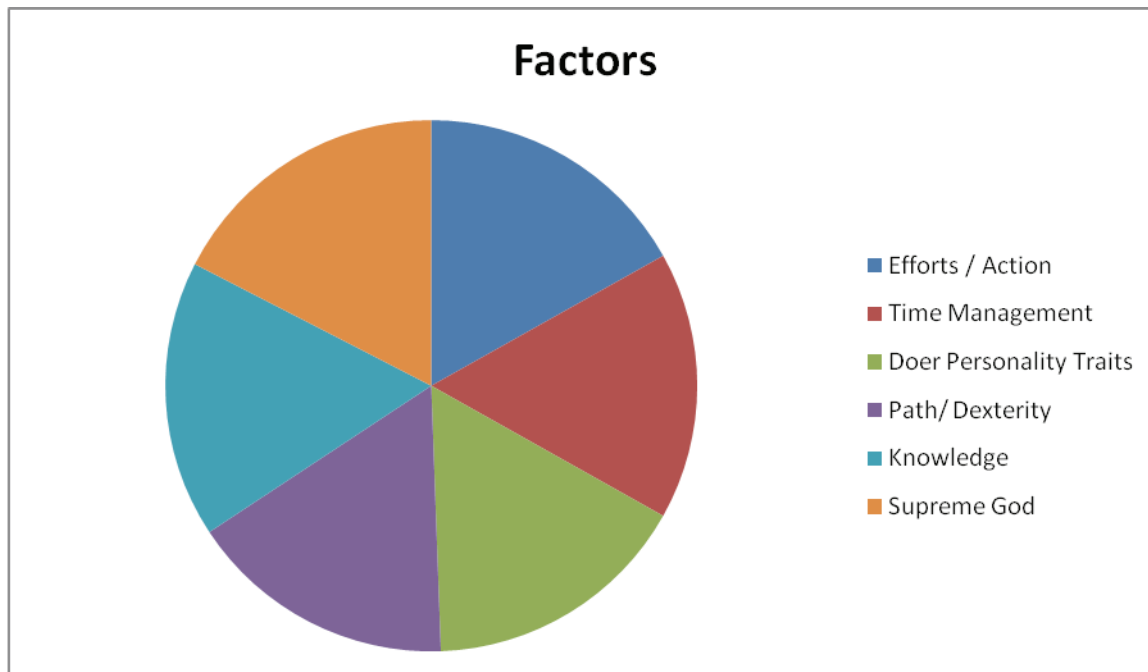
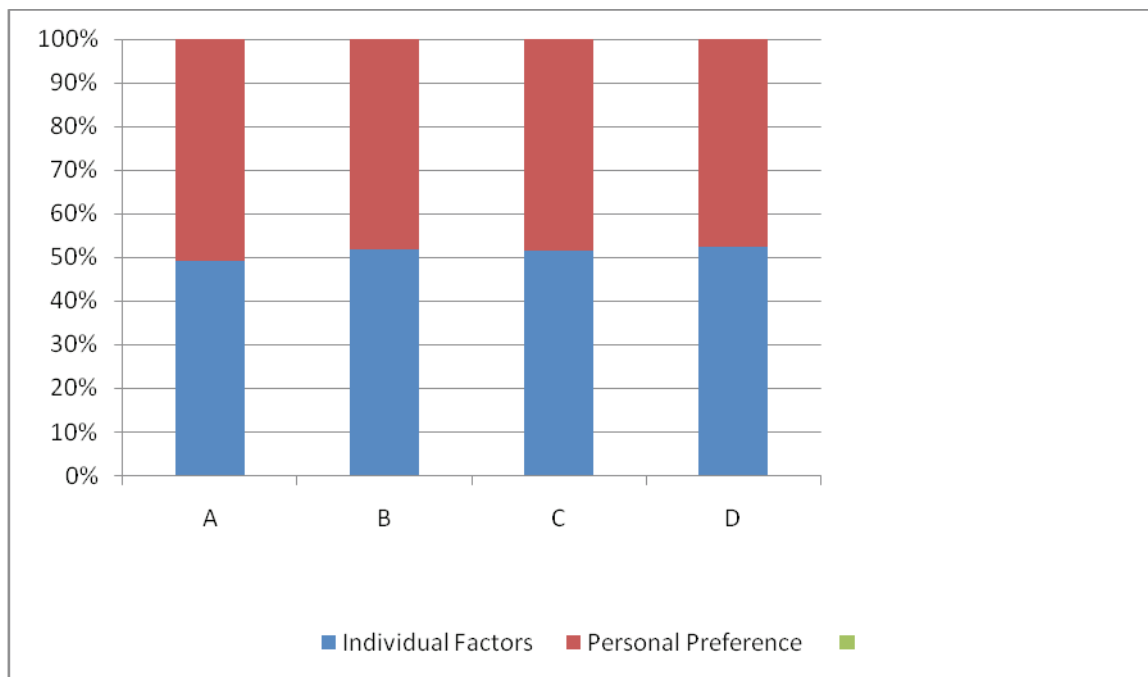
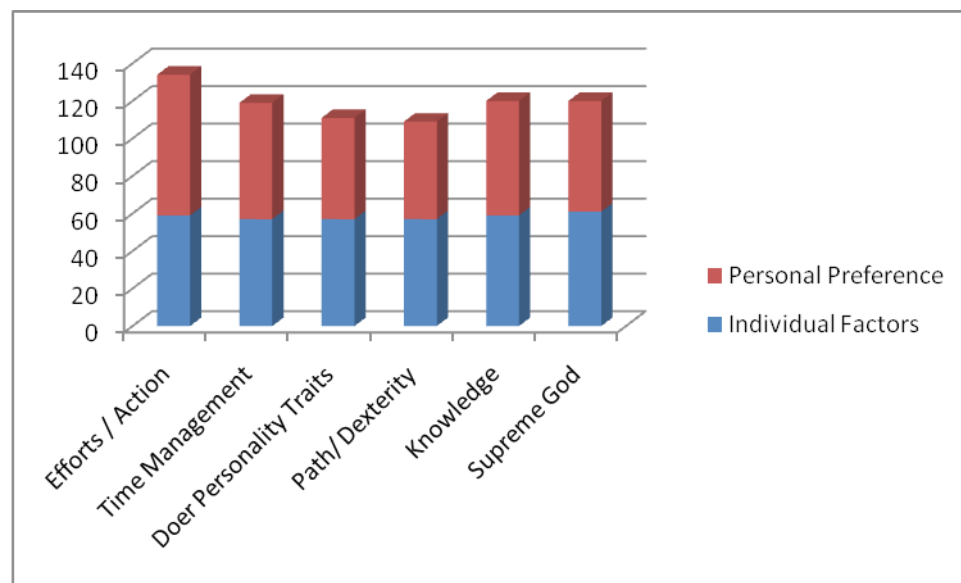


Figure 1.3 Depicts the contribution of major factors in a person's overall success.**Figure 1.4** Depicts the contribution of major factors in a person's overall success.

of knowledge in this universe. He maintains moral ecology by upholding the law of *karma*. According to yoga, God is not governed by law of karma, the law of karma depends on God for its function. It can not work by itself. Our soul maintains the records of our actions, and we get awards, rewards & punishment according to merit and demerit of our actions. We can't hold God responsible for creating evils for the existence of miseries and suffering in the universe. It is

the doer only who is responsible for everything, whatsoever happens in his or her life and not God.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

The proposed model of success referring six factors and other associated factors responsible for individual success has been tested through a six question questionnaire. A mail

survey of 100 respondents selected from Oriental group of Institutes purely from academic sector.

A group of 100 respondents purely from teaching professionals were selected, following results indicate their responses to the various questions based on six factors mentioned in the research study contributing to the individual success.

Content analysis indicated that the concept of success: professional success means self development along with organizational growth and personal success means balance, affirmity and growth in daily life. Out of 100 academicians 85 gave importance to personal life, 5 to professional life and 10 to both.

In professional life out of 100%; 28% have given weightage to self identity and self satisfaction, 26% have given weightage to comfort, convince and life-style, 35% have given weightage to faith and bonding in relationships & 11% have given weightage to others.

In modern days life there is a degradation of goals to be achieved in human life. The concept of success has completely changed in today's life. People are evaluating individual success in monetary and material terms. The results obtained after multivariate analysis indicated that the above proposed model is found true and a considerable amount of similar weightage was given by the respondents to the various attributes.

CONCLUSION

The law of karma is the law of moral and spiritual causation that upholds and justifies the moral and spiritual values manifested in this world. It ensures that one achieves success only if he does 'right things' than 'things right'. Efficiency

and effectiveness are the two major components of managerial performance, the results, and the individual effectiveness, is determined by his 'ability to do right things'. (Peter F. Drucker). This article focuses on the fact that success needs a holistic view; it is a combination of inner and outer achievement. And all the six elements, the Karma (individual work, his efforts, operational efficiency, quality of work), Karta (doer, his personality traits), Kala (time management), Yoga (legitimate path, right methods, tools & techniques), Vidhigya (knowledge management), and Brahmapurusha (Supreme God, spirituality & moral power) plays very important role in achieving efficiency & effectiveness in individual efforts and finally the results, the success.

Right action, at the right time, by the right doer with ethical, moral & spiritual consciousness of right path, right knowledge & wisdom, assures success in individual's efforts.

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