Exploring Ancient Indian Insights for Contemporary Management and Technological Practices

Bharathi Karanth
Professor, Poornaprajna Institute of Management, Udupi, Karnataka State, India,
Orcid ID: 0000-0002-4456-7901; E-Mail: bharathikaranth@pim.ac.in

Area/Section: IKS in Management & Technology.
Type of the Paper: Conceptual/Exploratory Research.
Number of Peer Reviews: Two.
Type of Review: Peer Reviewed as per |C|O|P|E| guidance.
Indexed in: OpenAIRE.
DOI: https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.22084029
Google Scholar Citation: PIJPL

How to Cite this Paper:
Karanth B. (2026). Exploring Ancient Indian Insights for Contemporary Management and Technological Practices. *Poornaprajna International Journal of Philosophy & Languages (PIJPL), 3*(2), 52-66. DOI: https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.22084029

Poornaprajna International Journal of Philosophy & Languages (PIJPL)
A Refereed International Journal of Poornaprajna Publication, India.
ISSN: 3107-4634

Crossref DOI: https://doi.org/10.64818/PIJPL.3107.4634.0056

Received on: 30/07/2026
Published on: 25/08/2026

Exploring Ancient Indian Insights for Contemporary Management and Technological Practices

Bharathi Karanth
Professor, Poornaprajna Institute of Management, Udupi, Karnataka State, India,
Orcid ID: 0000-0002-4456-7901; E-Mail: bharathikaranth@pim.ac.in

ABSTRACT

Purpose: *To explore the contemporary relevance of selected ancient Indian knowledge traditions to management, leadership, technology, and sustainability, and to develop an integrated framework connecting Indian Knowledge Systems with modern managerial and technological practices.*

Methodology: *The study adopts an exploratory qualitative research design based on textual analysis, thematic content analysis, and comparative interpretation of primary texts – including Kautilya's Arthashastra, the Bhagavad Gita, Thiruvalluvar's Thirukkural, Patanjali's Yoga Sutras, the Charaka and Sushruta Samhitas, and Buddhist and Jain works – alongside twenty-five contemporary scholarly sources.*

Analysis: *The analysis identifies five broad areas of contemporary relevance: ethical and value-based leadership; strategic and financial management; human resource and self-management; technological innovation and knowledge systems; and sustainability and stakeholder welfare. Each ancient principle is mapped onto a corresponding modern management concept and a technological or organisational application.*

Results: *The findings indicate that concepts such as dharma, nishkama karma, sthitaprajna, yogakshema, self-discipline, wisdom-based decision-making, non-violence, moderation, holistic well-being, and responsible resource use provide useful conceptual foundations for contemporary managerial and technological practices. An integrated wisdom-based management framework is proposed, together with an outline of an Indian Wisdom-Based Management Index.*

Originality/Value: *The paper argues that Indian Knowledge Systems should not be treated merely as historical or cultural resources but critically interpreted and integrated with modern scientific and managerial frameworks, contributing to the development of managers and technologists who combine analytical competence, innovation, ethical responsibility, human well-being, and sustainability.*

Type of Paper: *Conceptual / Exploratory Analysis.*

Keywords: Ancient Indian Knowledge, Indian Knowledge Systems, Management, Leadership, Ethical Governance, Technological Innovation, Sustainability, Strategic Management.

1. INTRODUCTION :

Management in the twenty-first century is confronted with challenges that extend beyond efficiency and profitability. Organisations operate in environments characterised by technological disruption, artificial intelligence, globalisation, geopolitical uncertainty, ethical dilemmas, employee well-being concerns, environmental pressures, and increasing stakeholder expectations. While contemporary management theories have developed sophisticated frameworks for strategy, leadership, human resources, finance, innovation, and organisational behaviour, there is growing interest in knowledge traditions that provide a broader understanding of human conduct, responsibility, purpose, and social welfare. In this context, Indian Knowledge Systems offer an important intellectual resource for critical examination.

Ancient Indian intellectual traditions developed knowledge across diverse domains, including philosophy, statecraft, economics, mathematics, astronomy, medicine, linguistics, ethics, psychology, and systems of self-development. Kautilya's Arthashastra (Kangle (1969). [24]), for example, addresses governance, administration, taxation, accounting, resource management, intelligence, strategy, risk, and the conduct of officials. Contemporary scholarship has identified parallels between several Kautilyan ideas and modern discussions of organisational management, corporate governance, accounting, incentives, and economic governance (Kumar et al. (1996). [1]–Sihag (2009). [8]). Kautilya's emphasis on supervision, accountability, ethical conduct, strategic foresight, and prudent resource management provides an interesting basis for examining contemporary management problems.

The Bhagavad Gita (Radhakrishnan (1948). [21]) offers another important source of managerial insight. Its discussion of dharma, karma yoga, self-control, equanimity, duty, wisdom, and detached action has been interpreted in contemporary literature in relation to leadership, motivation, decision-making, organisational behaviour, and servant leadership (Agarwalla et al. (2015). [10]–Marothia et al. (2020). [13]; Mulla et al. (2014). [22]; Rarick et al. (2009). [23]). Empirical research has also examined the relationship between gunas, Karma Yoga, and transformational leadership, suggesting that certain qualities traditionally associated with sattva may support transformational leadership behaviours (Agarwalla et al. (2015). [10]).

Similarly, Thiruvalluvar's Thirukkural contains extensive discussions of ethical conduct, leadership, governance, decision-making, friendship, wealth creation, and social responsibility. Research has interpreted these teachings as a potential foundation for contemporary business ethics and leadership (Muniapan et al. (2011). [16]). Jain philosophical principles emphasising non-violence, truthfulness, non-stealing, and non-possessiveness have also been examined in relation to modern business ethics and responsible consumption (Jain (2016). [17]). Buddhist philosophy provides complementary insights into mindfulness, ethical leadership, compassion, decision-making, and sustainable organisational practices (Bahadur (2024). [18]).

Patanjali's Yoga Sutras provide another dimension through self-management and emotional regulation. Research on the application of Patanjali's ideas to organisational settings suggests that yogic principles can contribute to the management of emotions and leadership competencies (Mishra et al. (2014). [14]; Taware et al. (2017). [15]). Swami Vivekananda's emphasis on personality development, strength, self-confidence, service, character, and human development has likewise been interpreted as relevant to contemporary management and leadership (Goswami (2014). [19]).

The relevance of Indian knowledge systems extends beyond management and leadership. Indian mathematical and scientific traditions provide examples of systematic reasoning, computational thinking, and knowledge development. Contemporary efforts to digitally preserve Indian Knowledge Systems and apply digital technologies to their dissemination indicate new possibilities for connecting traditional knowledge with modern technological capabilities (Das (2026). [20]). Recent scholarship has also examined the intersection of Indian Knowledge Systems with artificial intelligence, digital learning, computational methods, and technological innovation.

The purpose of the present study is therefore not to suggest that ancient texts constitute substitutes for modern management science or contemporary technology. Rather, it seeks to examine whether selected principles can provide complementary conceptual insights for contemporary management and technological practices. The study adopts a critical and comparative perspective, identifying principles that can be interpreted in modern contexts while recognising that the historical, cultural, and philosophical contexts of the original texts differ from those of modern organisations.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY :

The study is guided by the following objectives:

To identify the principles of ethical and value-based leadership contained in selected ancient Indian knowledge traditions and examine their relevance to contemporary management.

To examine the relevance of ancient Indian insights to strategic management, financial management, human resource management, and organisational governance.

To explore the contribution of selected Indian knowledge traditions to contemporary technological thinking, innovation, and knowledge management.

To examine the relevance of Indian philosophical and knowledge traditions to sustainability, employee well-being, responsible resource utilisation, and stakeholder welfare.

To develop an integrated framework connecting selected ancient Indian insights with contemporary management and technological practices.

3. REVIEW OF LITERATURE :

The literature on Indian knowledge and contemporary management has expanded considerably, although it remains fragmented across management, economics, leadership, philosophy, accounting, organisational behaviour, technology, and Indian Knowledge Systems. This review synthesises twenty-five studies grouped into five thematic streams that together provide the foundation for the present paper.

3.1 Kautilyan Thought: Governance, Finance, and Management:

A substantial body of scholarship interprets Kautilya's Arthashastra in modern managerial terms. Kumar and Rao develop guidelines for value-based management from the treatise, addressing organisational philosophy, value-based leadership, internal culture, accomplishment of organisational purpose, and stakeholder feedback, thereby connecting ancient Indian thought directly with the modern concept of value-based management (Kumar et al. (1996). [1]). Sihag examines Kautilya's contribution to accounting, organisational design, and ethics, noting that Kautilya advocated bookkeeping, periodic auditing, and the separation of the Treasurer and Comptroller-Auditor functions to improve accountability and reduce conflicts of interest – ideas with clear relevance to contemporary internal control and audit independence (Sihag (2004). [2]). His study of public goods and taxation shows that Kautilya treated taxation, public welfare, and economic stability as interconnected (Sihag (2005). [3]), while his analysis of institutions, governance, knowledge, ethics, and prosperity argues that good governance, knowledge, and ethical conduct were viewed as interconnected with economic prosperity (Sihag (2007a). [6]).

Muniapan and Shaikh examine lessons from the Arthashastra for contemporary corporate governance, arguing that Kautilyan principles can be interpreted in relation to accountability, responsibility, and stakeholder welfare (Muniapan et al. (2007). [4]). Muniapan, using hermeneutic interpretation, emphasises self-management as a foundation of organisational management and identifies the importance of controlling internal weaknesses such as greed, anger, arrogance, and ego (Muniapan (2008). [5]). Sihag further examines moral and material incentives (Sihag (2007b). [7]) and Kautilya's ideas on property, contracts, and legal institutions, highlighting the relationship between economic efficiency and ethical conduct (Sihag (2009). [8]). Nallisamy and Rajantheran interpret the financial-management principles of the Arthashastra in relation to strategic financial management, indicating the relevance of ancient ideas concerning resource management and financial control to contemporary corporate finance (Nallisamy et al. (2022). [9]). The standard scholarly edition of the text by Kangle underpins these interpretive studies (Kangle (1969). [24]).

3.2 The Bhagavad Gita and Leadership:

The Bhagavad Gita, in Radhakrishnan's authoritative translation and commentary (Radhakrishnan (1948). [21]), has been widely interpreted as a source of leadership and self-management insight. Agarwalla, Seshadri, and Krishnan empirically examine the relationship between gunas, Karma Yoga, and transformational leadership among 110 marketing executives, finding that sattva was positively associated with transformational leadership relative to rajas, while tamas was negatively associated, and that Karma Yoga enhanced transformational leadership under certain conditions (Agarwalla et al. (2015). [10]). This work is valuable because it moves beyond purely philosophical interpretation towards empirical examination, and it is reinforced by Mulla and Krishnan's conceptualisation of Karma-Yoga as an Indian model of moral development comprising duty-orientation, indifference to rewards, and equanimity (Mulla et al. (2014). [22]).

Basu examines the Bhagavad Gita as a source of organisational-management principles relevant to leadership and self-management (Basu (2019). [11]). Simpson develops a Gita-inspired linked leadership model that connects self-leadership, integrity, servant leadership, motivation, team dynamics, culture, ecology, meaning, and purpose (Simpson (2021). [12]). Marothia and Vyas examine servant leadership through the Gita and develop a conceptual model connecting its principles with the characteristics of servant leadership (Marothia et al. (2020). [13]), while Rarick and Nickerson interpret the text as offering humanistic and inclusive leadership advice that anticipates the Western theory of servant leadership (Rarick et al. (2009). [23]). Together these studies demonstrate the potential of Karma Yoga and service-oriented action to enrich contemporary leadership thinking.

3.3 Yoga, Self-Management, and Well-being:

Patanjali's Yoga Sutras have been examined as a source of self-management and emotional regulation. Mishra and Mishra interpret Patanjali's aphorisms as a resource for managing emotions in organisational settings, empirically testing them on Indian managers (Mishra et al. (2014). [14]). Taware, Kumari, Akhilesh, and Nagendra study the impact of an integrated Yoga module on the leadership competencies of managers, providing empirical support for yoga-based practices in leadership development (Taware et al. (2017). [15]). This stream strengthens the argument that Indian knowledge traditions can be examined not merely as philosophical ideas but also through contemporary organisational interventions in the domains of emotional intelligence, mindfulness, and employee well-being.

3.4 Thirukkural, Jain, Buddhist, and Vivekananda Traditions:

A further stream examines other Indian traditions. Muniapan and Rajantheran examine the business-ethics principles of the Thirukkural through hermeneutic analysis, identifying honesty, trust, integrity, and moral responsibility as central to ethical leadership (Muniapan et al. (2011). [16]). Jain examines the relevance of Jain ethical principles – non-violence, truthfulness, non-stealing, and non-possessiveness – to responsible business and consumption, with the principle of non-possessiveness being particularly relevant to contemporary concerns regarding excessive consumption and sustainability (Jain (2016). [17]). Bahadur identifies mindfulness, ethical leadership, sustainable decision-making, and team dynamics as areas of contemporary relevance in Buddhist philosophy (Bahadur (2024). [18]), and Goswami examines Swami Vivekananda as a management thinker, particularly his ideas concerning personality development, strength, values, and leadership (Goswami (2014). [19]). Chakraborty's foundational work on Management by Values situates these traditions within a broader argument that Indian ethical values can be systematically integrated into managerial practice (Chakraborty (1995). [25]).

3.5 Indian Knowledge Systems and Technology:

Finally, an emerging stream connects Indian Knowledge Systems with digital technology. Das examines the role of digitisation, AI-supported preservation, digital libraries, and technology-enabled dissemination in preserving and teaching Indian Knowledge Systems across areas such as Ayurveda, astronomy, and ecological knowledge (Das (2026). [20]). This provides an important bridge between ancient knowledge traditions and contemporary technological practices, and it points toward new possibilities for connecting traditional knowledge with modern computational capabilities. Table 1 summarises the principal contributions reviewed.

Table 1: Summary of the reviewed literature

S. No.	Theme / Focus	Key Contribution	Reference
1	Kautilya & value-based management	Guidelines for value-based management from the Arthashastra.	Kumar & Rao (1996). [1]
2	Kautilya, accounting & design	Bookkeeping, auditing, separation of financial functions.	Sihag (2004). [2]
3	Kautilya & public finance	Taxation, public goods, and economic stability interconnected.	Sihag (2005). [3]
4	Kautilya & corporate governance	Accountability, responsibility, stakeholder welfare.	Muniapan & Shaikh (2007). [4]
5	Kautilya & organisational mgmt.	Self-management and control of internal weaknesses.	Muniapan (2008). [5]
6	Governance, knowledge, prosperity	Governance, knowledge, and ethics tied to prosperity.	Sihag (2007a). [6]
7	Incentive systems	Moral and material incentives and effort.	Sihag (2007b). [7]
8	Law, economics, and ethics	Property, contracts, and ethical conduct.	Sihag (2009). [8]
9	Strategic financial management	Financial principles of the Arthashastra.	Nallisamy & Rajantheran (2022). [9]

10	Gunas, Karma Yoga & leadership	Sattva and Karma Yoga enhance transformational leadership.	Agarwalla et al. (2015). [10]
11	Gita & organisational mgmt.	The Gita as a source of management principles.	Basu (2019). [11]
12	Gita & linked leadership	An integrated Gita-inspired leadership model.	Simpson (2021). [12]
13	Gita & servant leadership	A conceptual model of servant leadership from the Gita.	Marothia & Vyas (2020). [13]
14	Patanjali & emotions	Yoga Sutras for emotional management.	Mishra & Mishra (2014). [14]
15	Yoga & leadership competencies	Integrated yoga module improves leadership competencies.	Taware et al. (2017). [15]
16	Thirukkural & business ethics	Honesty, integrity, and moral responsibility in leadership.	Muniapan & Rajantheran (2011). [16]
17	Jain philosophy & ethics	Non-violence and non-possessiveness in responsible business.	Jain (2016). [17]
18	Buddhist philosophy & mgmt.	Mindfulness, ethical leadership, sustainable decisions.	Bahadur (2024). [18]
19	Vivekananda & management	Character, strength, service, and human development.	Goswami (2014). [19]
20	IKS & digital technology	Digitisation and AI-supported preservation of IKS.	Das (2026). [20]
21	Primary text – Gita	Standard translation and commentary of the Bhagavad Gita.	Radhakrishnan (1948). [21]
22	Karma-Yoga & moral development	Karma-Yoga as an Indian model of moral development.	Mulla & Krishnan (2014). [22]
23	Gita & servant leadership	The Gita as an early form of servant-leadership advice.	Rarick & Nickerson (2009). [23]
24	Primary text – Arthashastra	The standard scholarly edition of the Arthashastra.	Kangle (1969). [24]
25	Value-based management	Management by Values grounded in Indian ethics.	Chakraborty (1995). [25]

Synthesis of the literature. The literature indicates five recurring themes: self-mastery and ethical leadership; strategic thinking and governance; human-centred management and employee well-being; knowledge, science, and technological innovation; and sustainability, responsibility, and stakeholder welfare. However, much of the existing literature examines individual texts or thinkers in isolation, and comparatively less work brings together management, technology, ethics, and sustainability into a single integrative framework. The present study addresses this gap through a cross-textual thematic analysis.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY :

4.1 Research Design:

The study adopts an exploratory and qualitative research design. Since the purpose is to interpret ancient knowledge traditions and examine their contemporary relevance rather than to statistically test causal relationships, qualitative textual and thematic analysis is considered appropriate. The study follows a comparative interpretive approach, in which selected principles from ancient Indian texts are compared with concepts in contemporary management, leadership, technology, governance, and sustainability.

4.2 Sources of Data:

The study uses both primary and secondary sources. The principal primary sources include Kautilya's Arthashastra (in the standard editions of Kangle (Kangle (1969). [24]) and related translations), the Bhagavad Gita (in Radhakrishnan's translation (Radhakrishnan (1948). [21])), Thiruvalluvar's Thirukkural, Patanjali's Yoga Sutras, the Charaka Samhita and Sushruta Samhita, selected Buddhist and

Jain philosophical texts, the writings and teachings of Swami Vivekananda, and selected works associated with Indian mathematics and astronomy, including Aryabhata. Secondary sources include peer-reviewed journal articles, scholarly books and chapters, academic databases, institutional publications, open-access research papers, and research repositories accessed through Google Scholar and institutional repositories. Twenty-five scholarly sources were selected for the review on the basis of their relevance to Indian knowledge, management, leadership, governance, technology, ethics, and sustainability (Kumar et al. (1996). [1]–Chakraborty (1995). [25]).

4.3 Method of Analysis:

The study uses thematic content analysis and comparative textual analysis. The analysis was conducted through the following stages: identification of major principles in selected Indian texts; classification of principles into thematic categories; identification of contemporary management concepts corresponding to each theme; comparison of ancient principles with contemporary practices; identification of areas of convergence and potential application; and development of an integrated framework. Five major analytical themes were identified: ethical leadership and self-management; strategy, governance, and finance; human resources and organisational behaviour; technology, innovation, and knowledge management; and sustainability, well-being, and stakeholder welfare.

4.4 Analytical Framework:

The study follows the conceptual relationship: Ancient Indian Knowledge → Core Principle → Contemporary Management Concept → Technological/Organisational Application → Expected Organisational Value. For example: Karma Yoga → duty-oriented action → purpose-driven leadership → responsible decision-making → organisational trust. This framework enables ancient principles to be interpreted without treating them as direct substitutes for contemporary management theories.

5. ETHICAL AND VALUE-BASED LEADERSHIP (OBJECTIVE 1) :

The first major insight emerging from the literature is that Indian knowledge traditions place considerable emphasis on the quality of the individual who exercises authority.

5.1 Self-management as the foundation of leadership :

Kautilya's approach emphasises control over internal weaknesses before attempting to manage external circumstances (Muniapan (2008). [5]). Desires, anger, greed, arrogance, and ego can influence managerial judgement. In contemporary organisations, this can be related to emotional self-regulation, executive maturity, and ethical decision-making. The modern implication is that leadership development should not focus exclusively on technical competencies; it should also develop self-awareness, emotional regulation, integrity, responsibility, resilience, ethical judgement, and the ability to manage personal biases. This resonates with the argument that Indian ethical values can be systematically integrated into managerial practice (Chakraborty (1995). [25]).

5.2 The Bhagavad Gita and duty-centred leadership :

The Bhagavad Gita (Radhakrishnan (1948). [21]) places considerable importance on performing one's duty with discipline and without excessive attachment to personal rewards. Contemporary literature interprets Karma Yoga as relevant to purpose-driven and service-oriented leadership (Agarwalla et al. (2015). [10]–Marothia et al. (2020). [13]; Mulla et al. (2014). [22]; Rarick et al. (2009). [23]). The managerial implication is not that managers should ignore organisational outcomes; rather, the principle can be interpreted as encouraging managers to focus on the quality of action, responsibility, and process, instead of becoming excessively dependent on short-term recognition. The validated dimensions of Karma-Yoga – duty-orientation, indifference to rewards, and equanimity – give this teaching an empirical and measurable foundation (Mulla et al. (2014). [22]).

5.3 Sthitaprajna and emotional stability:

The concept of sthitaprajna – a person with a stable and balanced mind – has potential relevance to contemporary emotional intelligence and leadership under uncertainty. A manager who is able to remain composed during crisis can make more rational decisions. This is particularly important in contemporary environments involving technological disruption, market uncertainty, organisational restructuring, employee conflicts, crisis management, and rapid strategic change.

5.4 Thirukkural and ethical leadership:

The Thirukkural emphasises honesty, integrity, appropriate conduct, wisdom, and responsible leadership. Muniapan and Rajantheran demonstrate its relevance to business ethics and contemporary leadership (Muniapan et al. (2011). [16]). Its contemporary message can be summarised in the principle that competence without ethics is insufficient for sustainable leadership.

5.5 Vivekananda and character development:

Swami Vivekananda's ideas place strong emphasis on strength, confidence, character, human development, and service (Goswami (2014). [19]). In management education, these principles can be translated into leadership development programmes that combine professional competence with character development. Taken together, ancient Indian traditions consistently present leadership as a combination of competence, self-control, ethical responsibility, service, and purpose – a broader understanding of leadership than a purely performance-oriented approach.

6. STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT, FINANCE, HRM, AND GOVERNANCE (OBJECTIVE 2) :

6.1 Strategic management:

Kautilya's Arthashastra is particularly relevant to strategic thinking. His approach emphasises assessment of resources, competitors, alliances, risks, timing, and alternative courses of action. Sihag's research demonstrates the presence of concepts related to strategic interaction, incentives, risk, information, and economic decision-making in Kautilyan thought (Sihag (2007a). [6]–Nallisamy et al. (2022). [9]). Contemporary managers can interpret these ideas through environmental scanning, scenario planning, competitive intelligence, risk assessment, contingency planning, stakeholder analysis, and strategic flexibility.

6.2 Strategic decision-making under uncertainty:

Kautilyan thinking emphasises that decisions should be based on available information, assessment of relative strength, and consideration of alternative outcomes. This has direct relevance to contemporary business intelligence, predictive analytics, strategic forecasting, risk management, competitive intelligence, and scenario analysis. The important lesson is that information should lead to wisdom and action, rather than information accumulation for its own sake.

6.3 Financial management:

Kautilya's attention to revenue, expenditure, accounting, auditing, and financial control provides a significant connection to contemporary financial management. Sihag identifies the importance Kautilya placed on accounting, measurement, and the separation of financial functions (Sihag (2004). [2]), and Nallisamy and Rajantheran interpret the Arthashastra in relation to strategic financial management (Nallisamy et al. (2022). [9]). Contemporary organisations can connect these principles with internal controls, independent audit, budgeting, financial accountability, resource optimisation, fraud prevention, risk management, and financial governance.

6.4 Human resource management:

Kautilyan thought recognises the importance of selecting, supervising, rewarding, and disciplining officials. The modern interpretation can be linked with recruitment, role clarity, performance management, incentives, employee development, accountability, and retention. Sihag's work on moral and material incentives (Sihag (2007b). [7]) indicates that Kautilyan thought did not rely exclusively on financial incentives, which is consistent with the contemporary understanding that employee motivation is multidimensional.

6.5 Corporate governance:

Muniapan and Shaikh identify important connections between the Arthashastra and corporate governance, with accountability, supervision, ethical conduct, and stakeholder welfare as central themes (Muniapan et al. (2007). [4]). The contemporary corporate-governance lesson is that governance should combine formal controls with ethical culture: rules and regulations are necessary, but they cannot completely substitute for ethical leadership. Overall, ancient Indian insights are relevant to strategic and organisational management through the principles of planning, information, accountability, incentives, control, ethics, and stakeholder welfare.

7. TECHNOLOGY, INNOVATION, AND KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT (OBJECTIVE 3) :

This objective requires a more careful interpretation, because ancient Indian texts obviously did not deal with artificial intelligence, cloud computing, robotics, or modern digital platforms. Therefore, the relevance lies primarily in underlying approaches to knowledge, reasoning, systematic inquiry, and problem-solving, rather than in claiming that ancient texts directly predicted modern technologies.

7.1 Indian mathematical traditions and computational thinking:

Indian mathematical traditions associated with scholars such as Aryabhata, Brahmagupta, and Bhaskara demonstrate sophisticated approaches to numerical reasoning, astronomy, and mathematical computation. The contemporary value lies in algorithmic thinking, systematic problem-solving, numerical reasoning, abstraction, computational efficiency, and mathematical modelling. Recent research has explored the implementation of ancient Indian mathematical techniques using modern computational tools, demonstrating one possible bridge between traditional mathematical methods and contemporary programming (Das (2026). [20]).

7.2 Knowledge management and wisdom:

Kautilyan thinking can be interpreted as emphasising the distinction between data, information, knowledge, and wisdom, suggesting that information becomes useful only when it is appropriately understood and applied (Sihag (2007a). [6]). This has strong contemporary relevance in the age of Big Data, business analytics, artificial intelligence, machine learning, decision-support systems, and generative AI. Organisations today possess enormous amounts of data; the managerial challenge is not merely data collection but responsible interpretation and wise decision-making.

7.3 Indian Knowledge Systems and digital preservation:

Digital technology creates new opportunities for preserving manuscripts, translating texts, building searchable databases, developing digital archives, and making traditional knowledge accessible to new generations. Das highlights the role of digitisation and AI-supported technologies in preserving and teaching Indian Knowledge Systems (Das (2026). [20]). A potentially useful model is therefore: Traditional Knowledge → Digitisation → Structured Knowledge Repository → AI/Analytics → Contemporary Application.

7.4 Ethical technology:

Indian philosophical traditions can also contribute to discussions surrounding responsible technology. The principle of dharma can be interpreted as a reminder that technological capability should be accompanied by responsibility. Similarly, Buddhist and Jain principles of non-harm, moderation, and compassion can pose ethical questions for technological development: does technology increase or reduce human well-being; does it create unnecessary harm; is it inclusive; does it respect human dignity; is resource consumption sustainable; and who benefits and who bears the risk? The strongest contribution of Indian knowledge to technology is therefore not a claim that ancient texts contained modern technologies, but rather its emphasis on systems thinking, mathematical reasoning, knowledge integration, ethical responsibility, and human-centred application of knowledge.

8. SUSTAINABILITY, WELL-BEING, AND STAKEHOLDER WELFARE (OBJECTIVE 4) :

8.1 Sustainability as a holistic concept:

Contemporary sustainability often emphasises the environmental, social, and economic dimensions of development. Indian knowledge traditions frequently approach human well-being as interconnected with society, nature, and responsible resource use. Kautilyan thought connects governance and economic prosperity with public welfare (Sihag (2005). [3]; Sihag (2007a). [6]); Jain philosophy emphasises non-violence and limited possessiveness (Jain (2016). [17]), which can be interpreted in relation to responsible consumption; and Buddhist philosophy emphasises mindfulness, compassion, and the avoidance of harmful behaviour (Bahadur (2024). [18]). These principles can contribute to broader conceptualisations of sustainable management.

8.2 Ayurveda and holistic well-being:

The Charaka Samhita and Sushruta Samhita represent important traditions of Indian medical knowledge. Their relevance to management should not be presented as a substitute for evidence-based modern medicine; instead, their contribution can be considered in relation to a preventive orientation, holistic well-being, balance, lifestyle, individual differences, and the integration of physical and mental well-being. These concepts are relevant to contemporary employee-well-being programmes.

8.3 Yoga and employee well-being:

Research on Patanjali's Yoga Sutras and integrated yoga programmes provides a stronger contemporary connection. Mishra and Mishra examine emotional management (Mishra et al. (2014). [14]), while Taware and colleagues examine leadership competencies (Taware et al. (2017). [15]). Organisations can therefore consider evidence-based yoga and mindfulness interventions as complementary components of stress management, leadership development, employee well-being, emotional regulation, and workplace resilience.

8.4 Jainism and responsible consumption:

The Jain principle of aparigraha, or non-possessiveness, is particularly relevant to contemporary sustainability discussions, as it challenges excessive accumulation and unnecessary consumption (Jain (2016). [17]). In contemporary business, this can encourage responsible consumption, circular-economy thinking, resource efficiency, sustainable product design, reduction of waste, and stakeholder responsibility.

8.5 Buddhist principles and mindful organisations:

Buddhist principles can contribute to organisational mindfulness, compassion, and ethical decision-making (Bahadur (2024). [18]). A mindful organisation can potentially emphasise a sequence of awareness, reflection, ethical decision, reduced harm, and sustainable outcome. Overall, ancient Indian knowledge systems provide a broader understanding of sustainability in which economic prosperity, social welfare, human well-being, and environmental responsibility are not necessarily treated as independent objectives.

9. AN INTEGRATED FRAMEWORK (OBJECTIVE 5) :

Based on the analysis, an integrated framework can be developed that connects Indian knowledge principles with contemporary management concepts and technological or organisational applications, as presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Proposed ancient Indian wisdom-based management framework

Indian Knowledge Principle	Contemporary Management Concept	Technological / Organisational Application
Dharma	Ethical leadership	Ethical AI and responsible governance
Karma Yoga	Purpose-driven action	Responsible performance management
Sthitaprajna	Emotional intelligence	Crisis and change management
Self-mastery	Self-leadership	Executive development
Rajarishi ideal	Servant / value-based leadership	Stakeholder-oriented governance
Yogakshema	Welfare and security	Employee well-being and social responsibility
Kautilyan strategy	Strategic management	Business intelligence and scenario planning
Kautilyan accounting	Financial governance	Digital accounting and audit systems

Kautilyan incentives	HR motivation	Balanced reward systems
Thirukkural ethics	Business ethics	Ethical corporate culture
Ahimsa	Non-harm	Responsible innovation
Aparigraha	Moderation	Sustainable consumption
Buddhist mindfulness	Mindful management	Employee well-being
Yoga	Self-regulation	Stress and leadership development
Ayurveda	Holistic well-being	Preventive wellness programmes
Indian mathematics	Computational reasoning	Algorithms and analytical thinking
Knowledge-to-wisdom	Knowledge management	AI-supported decision-making

The framework can be represented as an integrated model in which Indian Knowledge Systems inform a set of foundational capacities, which in turn shape contemporary management and technology and ultimately produce responsible organisational outcomes:

INDIAN KNOWLEDGE SYSTEMS
↓
Self-Mastery + Ethics + Wisdom + Duty + Compassion + Strategic Thinking
↓
CONTEMPORARY MANAGEMENT
Leadership | HRM | Finance | Strategy | Governance
↓
CONTEMPORARY TECHNOLOGY
AI | Analytics | Digital Knowledge | Innovation | Decision Support
↓
RESPONSIBLE ORGANISATIONAL OUTCOMES
Performance | Trust | Well-being | Innovation | Sustainability | Stakeholder Welfare

The central proposition of the framework is that technology should be guided by wisdom and ethics, while management should combine competence with human and social responsibility.

10. MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY :

The study leads to the following major findings:

Finding 1 – Self-management is a recurring foundation of leadership. Across Kautilya, the Bhagavad Gita, Patanjali, and Vivekananda, effective leadership begins with the development of the individual. Self-control, emotional stability, discipline, and character are treated as prerequisites for responsible leadership (Muniapan (2008). [5]; Goswami (2014). [19]; Mulla et al. (2014). [22]).

Finding 2 – Ethical leadership is central to sustainable management. The Arthashastra, Bhagavad Gita, Thirukkural, Jain philosophy, and Buddhist philosophy all provide perspectives that connect leadership with ethical responsibility (Muniapan et al. (2007). [4]; Muniapan et al. (2011). [16]; Jain (2016). [17]; Bahadur (2024). [18]).

Finding 3 – Strategic thinking is strongly represented in Kautilyan thought. Planning, information, resource assessment, alliances, risk, incentives, and contingency thinking provide conceptual connections with contemporary strategic management (Sihag (2007a). [6]–Nallisamy et al. (2022). [9]).

Finding 4 – Financial governance has strong historical roots. Kautilyan discussions of accounting, auditing, revenue, expenditure, and control provide useful historical perspectives on financial governance and accountability (Sihag (2004). [2]; Nallisamy et al. (2022). [9]).

Finding 5 – Human resource management requires both incentives and values. Ancient Indian approaches recognise the importance of incentives but also emphasise discipline, responsibility, character, and purpose (Sihag (2007b). [7]).

Finding 6 – Technology requires ethical direction. Indian knowledge traditions can contribute to contemporary technology discussions primarily through principles of responsible knowledge use, human welfare, non-harm, sustainability, and wisdom-based decision-making (Jain (2016). [17]; Bahadur (2024). [18]; Das (2026). [20]).

Finding 7 – Sustainability is multidimensional. Ancient Indian traditions frequently connect individual welfare, social welfare, and responsible resource use, supporting a broader interpretation of sustainability beyond environmental indicators alone (Sihag (2005). [3]; Sihag (2007a). [6]; Jain (2016). [17]).

Finding 8 – Ancient knowledge should be critically interpreted. Ancient knowledge should not be transferred mechanically into contemporary organisations; historical context, cultural context, scientific validity, and contemporary institutional requirements must be considered.

11. SUGGESTIONS AND MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS :

Integrate Indian Knowledge Systems into management education. Management institutions can introduce carefully designed modules on Kautilya and strategic management, the Bhagavad Gita and leadership, the Thirukkural and business ethics, yoga and self-management, Jain and Buddhist approaches to responsible management, and Indian mathematics and analytical thinking, taught through critical comparison with modern management theories rather than as purely philosophical or religious subjects.

Develop value-based leadership programmes. Leadership development can include modules on self-awareness, emotional regulation, ethical decision-making, duty orientation, stakeholder responsibility, service orientation, and long-term thinking.

Use ancient principles to enrich – not replace – modern technology. Organisations should not treat ancient knowledge as a substitute for modern science and technology; instead, it can provide ethical and philosophical perspectives for AI governance, responsible innovation, data ethics, digital inclusion, sustainability, and human-centred technology.

Strengthen financial and governance systems. Kautilyan ideas regarding accounting, audit, supervision, and accountability can be used as historical perspectives in management education and corporate-governance discussions (Sihag (2004). [2]; Muniapan et al. (2007). [4]).

Promote employee well-being. Evidence-based yoga, mindfulness, and self-management practices can be incorporated into employee-well-being and leadership-development programmes where appropriate (Mishra et al. (2014). [14]; Taware et al. (2017). [15]).

Encourage sustainable consumption. Principles such as non-possessiveness, moderation, and responsible resource utilisation can be incorporated into sustainability education and corporate social responsibility programmes (Jain (2016). [17]).

Establish digital repositories for Indian Knowledge Systems. Universities and research institutions should collaborate to create digitised manuscripts, multilingual databases, searchable knowledge repositories, AI-assisted translation systems, digital learning resources, and interdisciplinary research platforms (Das (2026). [20]).

12. SCOPE FOR FUTURE RESEARCH :

The present study is exploratory and conceptual. Several opportunities exist for future empirical research:

- Empirical testing of Indian leadership principles: validated scales could be developed for constructs such as dharma orientation, Karma Yoga orientation, self-mastery, ethical leadership, and wisdom-based decision-making, and tested against organisational outcomes.

Indian Knowledge Systems and employee performance: survey-based research could examine whether exposure to Indian philosophical practices is associated with employee engagement, job satisfaction, organisational commitment, leadership effectiveness, resilience, and ethical behaviour.

IKS and responsible AI: future studies could examine whether principles derived from dharma, ahimsa, compassion, and human welfare can contribute to frameworks for ethical, explainable, and responsible AI, AI governance, and algorithmic fairness.

Experimental research on yoga and leadership: controlled studies could examine the impact of structured yoga or mindfulness interventions on emotional intelligence, stress, decision-making, leadership competencies, and employee well-being.

Comparative cross-cultural research: Indian knowledge-based management models could be compared with Western, Japanese, Buddhist, Confucian, and African Ubuntu-based management.

Industry-specific applications: future studies could examine the application of Indian knowledge principles in banking, financial services, healthcare, education, technology companies, start-ups, family businesses, and social enterprises.

Development of an Indian Wisdom-Based Management Index (IWMI): a particularly promising area would be the development of an index incorporating ethical leadership, self-mastery, stakeholder orientation, sustainability, wisdom-based decision-making, and human well-being, which could subsequently be tested empirically across organisations.

13. CONCLUSION :

Ancient Indian knowledge traditions provide a rich and multidimensional source of ideas concerning leadership, governance, strategy, finance, human behaviour, knowledge, well-being, and responsible resource utilisation. The present study demonstrates that selected principles from Kautilya's Arthashastra, the Bhagavad Gita, Thiruvalluvar's Thirukkural, Patanjali's Yoga Sutras, Jain and Buddhist philosophy, Ayurveda, Indian mathematical traditions, and the teachings of Swami Vivekananda can be meaningfully examined in relation to contemporary management and technological practices.

The most important contribution of these traditions is not a collection of ready-made management techniques. Their greater value lies in the underlying emphasis on self-mastery, ethical conduct, purposeful action, wisdom, responsibility, stakeholder welfare, and harmony between human activity and broader social and environmental interests. Kautilyan thought provides particularly strong insights into strategy, governance, finance, accountability, and resource management (Kumar et al. (1996). [1]–Nallisamy et al. (2022). [9]). The Bhagavad Gita provides a framework for self-management, duty, emotional balance, and ethical leadership (Agarwalla et al. (2015). [10]–Marothia et al. (2020). [13]; Radhakrishnan (1948). [21]; Mulla et al. (2014). [22]). The Thirukkural contributes principles of integrity, wisdom, and responsible conduct (Muniapan et al. (2011). [16]); Patanjali provides insights into self-regulation and emotional management (Mishra et al. (2014). [14]; Taware et al. (2017). [15]); and Jain and Buddhist traditions offer perspectives on non-harm, moderation, mindfulness, and responsible behaviour (Jain (2016). [17]; Bahadur (2024). [18]). Vivekananda contributes a strong emphasis on character, strength, service, and human development (Goswami (2014). [19]), while Indian mathematical and scientific traditions demonstrate the importance of systematic reasoning, and contemporary digital technologies create new possibilities for preserving and disseminating these knowledge systems (Das (2026). [20]).

At the same time, the study emphasises the need for critical interpretation. Ancient knowledge should not be romanticised or treated as a substitute for modern scientific evidence, management research, or technological expertise. Its contemporary relevance must be established through careful interpretation, empirical validation, and integration with established theories (Chakraborty (1995). [25]). The emerging management paradigm therefore need not be a choice between ancient wisdom and modern technology. A more productive approach is to combine modern scientific and technological capability with ethical wisdom and human-centred values. In this sense, Indian Knowledge Systems can contribute to a management philosophy in which organisational excellence is pursued together with integrity, human well-being, social responsibility, and sustainability. The future of management and technology may consequently benefit from a synthesis in which technology provides capability, management provides organisation, and wisdom provides direction.

REFERENCES :

[1] Kumar, N. S., & Rao, U. S. (1996). Guidelines for value based management in Kautilya's Arthashastra. *Journal of Business Ethics, 15*(4), 415–423. https://doi.org/10.1007/BF00380362 Google Scholar

[2] Sihag, B. S. (2004). Kautilya on the scope and methodology of accounting, organizational design and the role of ethics in ancient India. *Accounting Historians Journal, 31*(2), 125–148. Google Scholar

[3] Sihag, B. S. (2005). Kautilya on public goods and taxation. *History of Political Economy, 37*(4), 723–753. https://doi.org/10.1215/00182702-37-4-723 Google Scholar

[4] Muniapan, B., & Shaikh, J. M. (2007). Lessons in corporate governance from Kautilya's Arthashastra in ancient India. *World Review of Entrepreneurship, Management and Sustainable Development, 3*(1), 50–61. https://doi.org/10.1504/WREMSD.2007.012130 Google Scholar

[5] Muniapan, B. (2008). Kautilya's Arthashastra and perspectives on organizational management. *Asian Social Science, 4*(1), 30–34. https://doi.org/10.5539/ass.v4n1p30 Google Scholar

[6] Sihag, B. S. (2007a). Kautilya on institutions, governance, knowledge, ethics and prosperity. *Humanomics, 23*(1), 5–28. https://doi.org/10.1108/08288660710725109 Google Scholar

[7] Sihag, B. S. (2007b). Kautilya on moral and material incentives, and effort. *History of Political Economy, 39*(2), 263–292. https://doi.org/10.1215/00182702-2007-004 Google Scholar

[8] Sihag, B. S. (2009). Kautilya on law, economics and ethics. *Humanomics, 25*(1), 75–94. https://doi.org/10.1108/08288660910934790 Google Scholar

[9] Nallisamy, V., & Rajantheran, M. (2022). Strategic financial management in Kautilya's Arthashastra. *Journal of Indian Studies, 15*(1), 96–101. Google Scholar

[10] Agarwalla, S., Seshadri, B., & Krishnan, V. R. (2015). Impact of gunas and karma yoga on transformational leadership. *Journal of Human Values, 21*(1), 11–22. https://doi.org/10.1177/0971685815569590 Google Scholar

[11] Basu, M. (2019). The essentials of organizational management: A study on the Bhagavad Gita. *Management Insight, 15*(1), 18–28. https://doi.org/10.21844/mijia.15.1.3 Google Scholar

[12] Simpson, A. V. (2021). A Bhagavad Gita-inspired linked leadership model. *Journal of Leadership Studies*. Advance online publication. https://doi.org/10.1002/jls.21786 Google Scholar

[13] Marothia, P., & Vyas, P. (2020). Servant-leadership through Bhagavad Gita: A review and synthesis of servant leadership characteristics and a conceptual model. *International Journal of Psychosocial Rehabilitation, 24*(10). https://doi.org/10.53555/V24I10/400235 Google Scholar

[14] Mishra, V. N., & Mishra, N. (2014). Management of emotions: A study using Patanjali's Yoga Sutra. *International Journal of Business and Emerging Markets, 6*(1), 3–18. https://doi.org/10.1504/IJBEM.2014.058254 Google Scholar

[15] Taware, D. S., Kumari, S., Akhilesh, K. B., & Nagendra, H. R. (2017). Impact of integrated Yoga module on leadership competencies of managers. *Prabandhan: Indian Journal of Management, 10*(7), 7–23. https://doi.org/10.17010/pijom/2017/v10i7/116491 Google Scholar

[16] Muniapan, B., & Rajantheran, M. (2011). Ethics (business ethics) from the Thirukkural and its relevance for contemporary business leadership in the Indian context. *International Journal of Indian Culture and Business Management, 4*(4), 453–471. https://doi.org/10.1504/IJICBM.2011.040961 Google Scholar

[17] Jain, A. (2016). Relevance of business ethics of Jain philosophy in modern corporate world. *International Journal of Science and Research, 5*(2), 108–110. https://doi.org/10.21275/NOV161022 Google Scholar

[18] Bahadur, S. (2024). Management lessons from Buddhist philosophy: A contemporary perspective. *International Journal of Engineering and Management Research, 14*(6), 71–76. https://doi.org/10.31033/ijemr.14.6.71-76 Google Scholar

[19] Goswami, S. (2014). Swami Vivekananda: A management guru. *Global Journal of Management and Business Research, 14*(G1), 21–24. Google Scholar

[20] Das, S. K. (2026). Integrating digital technologies to preserve and teach Indian Knowledge Systems. *International Journal of Science, Strategic Management and Technology, 2*(2). https://doi.org/10.55041/ijsmt.v2i2.005 Google Scholar

[21] Radhakrishnan, S. (1948). *The Bhagavadgītā: With an introductory essay, Sanskrit text, English translation and notes*. London, U.K.: George Allen & Unwin. Google Scholar

[22] Mulla, Z. R., & Krishnan, V. R. (2014). Karma-Yoga: The Indian model of moral development. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *123*(2), 339–351. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-013-1842-8 Google Scholar

[23] Rarick, C. A., & Nickerson, I. (2009). Expanding managerial consciousness: Leadership advice from the Bhagavad Gita. *Journal of Behavioral Studies in Business*, *1*, 1–6. Google Scholar

[24] Kangle, R. P. (1969). *The Kauṭilīya Arthaśāstra* (3 vols.). Delhi, India: Motilal Banarsidass. (Reprint 1986.) Google Scholar

[25] Chakraborty, S. K. (1995). *Management by values: Towards cultural congruence*. New Delhi, India: Oxford University Press. Google Scholar

****