

## SPIRITUAL MANAGEMENT IN SIKHISM

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### Abstract

Management is the process of reaching organizational goals by working with and through people and other organizational resources by the best use of human resources, money and material. The basic functions of management like planning, organizing, influencing and controlling are purely followed in Sikhism. In view of extremely competent and digital world today to gain confidence of seniors and loyalty of subordinates is the most important and difficult task. Instability and volatility of the market are bound to inculcate suspicion, self-centered thinking and failure in certain cases. Sincerity and mistrust also bound to creep thereby; management becomes more and more difficult. However, through spirituality which is being followed in Sikhism have achieved success in spite of these hurdles in every one's life. Futuristic scope of Management and Sikhism is based on the spirituality which is the best principle on successful management. Earning through spirituality is such a vast and never ending process. The present fast changing materialistic, internet driven and technology oriented world, time is at premium and survival is that of the fittest who is changing with the time. Therefore, to have successful, enjoyable and peaceful healthy life, while matching with the circumstances and environments, the only philosophy can work is through spirituality management, being followed in Sikhism. However, to convince and educate the young generations, having limited interest and knowledge about such spirituality oriented leaders is very limited. Use of Sikh spirituality can reduce stress; help in treating psychosomatic disorders; and improve mental health of the individual and of the community. This paper will conclude that as the Sikh religion is a universal religion, everyone can use Sikh spirituality.

**Keywords:** Spiritual Management, Sikhism, Successful.

### INTRODUCTION

Spiritual Management and Sikhism these three words are three different issues, different themes, different theologies, different schools and different philosophies. Spiritual word can be defined that this is a sense of connections to something bigger than ourselves. It typically involves a search for meaning of life. As such, it is a universal human experience which touches us all. Spirituality has to do with the spirit, not as in ghost, but as in the essence of being human, as in one's inner-life, or in soul. Here, one misunderstanding comes into existence and spirituality is intermingled with religion.

Religion is a set of text, practices and belief about the transcendent shared by a community and involves a relationship with GOD whereas spirituality on the other hand is about a person's relationship with the transcendent. This may or may not involve relationship with GOD. One who is religious, can't say that he is spiritual. On the other hand who is expert in spiritualism can't claim that he is religious. No one can claim, who practice YOGA or meditation and pray with spirit by spending some time in nature, that he is religious. This is his individual act. The religious one is different who have different believes, different rituals and different guide lines.

As regards, Sikhism, the word SIKH as per Chamber's twentieth century Dictionary edition, 1905 is defined as one of the NORTH Indian monotheistic philosophy founded by GURU NANAK (1469-1538) later a military confederacy i.e. SANT SIPAHI. The word ISM denotes any distinctive theory, unequal match, different characteristic i.e. personal appearance, the aggregate of peculiar qualities which constitutes personal or national individuality moral qualities. According to the interpretation of the dictionary SIKHISM is a different religion of different area known as North India founded by NANAK in 1469 AD having distinctive theory, disparagement system, distinct language and spirit, distinct Ethics, distinct appearance. The aggregation of peculiar qualities which constitute personal and emotional features with moral behavior. He endeavored to create a casteless society from the existing four castes of Hindus (the most practiced religion in India at that time), priests, 'Brahmin'; warriors, 'Khatries'; merchants, 'Vaishias'; and menial workers, 'Shudras'. Muslim rulers were exploiting Hindus and high-caste Hindus were exploiting low-caste Hindus. Guru Nanak's first sermon delivered in 1499 AD stated: 'No one is Hindu or Muslim. All are children of God, so they are equal.' It is your deeds which make you great, not your religion or caste (Singh, 1987). He endeavored to create a casteless society in which

there will be mutual coexistence and cooperation because of the universal Fatherhood of God and brotherhood of mankind. There are 10 consecutive Gurus who contributed in different ways to the spiritual, social and idealized behavior formation of the Sikh. Work started by Guru Nanak Dev was continued by the second Guru, Angad Dev, who propounded the concept of voluntary service, *sewa*. The third Guru, Amar Das, started community kitchens, *langar*, where everyone, rich and poor, of all castes and creed, sits together and eats food prepared in the common kitchen, which brings humility and equality. The fifth Guru, Arjun Dev, emphasized the concept of tolerance and martyrdom. To check the overwhelming popularity of Sikhism, the Mogul Emperor of the time, Jahangir, tortured the Guru by boiling Him in a pot of boiling water, making Him sit on a red-hot plate and pouring hot sand on His head. The Guru ultimately achieved martyrdom in the river Ravi. The sixth Guru, Hargobind, took two swords, one for temporal and the other for spiritual, *Miri* and *Piri*, to protect the oppressed from the oppressor. The ninth Guru, Tegh Bahadur, sacrificed his life to save the Hindu religion from extinction at the hands of Aurangjeb, the Mogul Emperor of the time. The Guru taught the Sikhs that they should be prepared to help the needy even at the cost of their own lives. The tenth and the last Guru, Gobind Singh, completed the task started by Guru

Nanak Dev by baptizing the Sikhs on 13 April 1699 AD, and made Khalsa, the Pure Ones, from the Sikhs, the disciples. He called them Saint-Soldiers, the Soldiers of God. Guru Gobind Singh then begged to be baptized Himself by the baptized Sikhs, and joined the Sikh brotherhood. He said: 'Now you are my Guru and I have become your disciple, your *Chela*'. This form of humility is unique to Sikhism only. All the Sikhs belong to the same brotherhood and do not belong to any caste, thus completing the work started by Guru Nanak. After baptism all men take the surname Singh, which means lion; and women take the surname Kaur, which means princess. The Sikh Gurus always preached that a Sikh's outward appearance, i.e. the wearing of these five symbols, is of no importance unless they are accompanied by true sincere devotion and ethics (Guru Granth Sahib, 1993, p. 488). It took the contribution of 10 Gurus and 239 years for the spiritual, social and idealized behavior formation of the Sikh, called the Saint-Soldier, the Soldier of God. No one has the privilege of such a vast and manifold training as the Sikhs get from their 10 Gurus. The teachings of the Gurus are preserved in the holy book, Guru Granth Sahib. The Guru Granth Sahib is the holy scripture of the Sikhs, but its appeal is to all mankind. It serves as a remedial manual for the ills of mankind (Singh, 2005) in different ways:

- Sikhism believes in mutual coexistence and cooperation because of the universal Fatherhood of God and brotherhood of mankind (Guru Granth Sahib, 1993, pp. 97, 611, 671, 1299, 1349–1350).
- The Gurus visualized a welfare state with no economic exploitation, political repression, social injustice, and freedom for all (Guru Granth Sahib, 1993, pp. 26, 345).
- Conflicts should be resolved through dialogue instead of fighting (Guru Granth Sahib, 1993, pp. 661, 1185).
- Sikhs respect all religions. It is not the religion, but deeds, which make you great (Guru Granth Sahib, 1993, p. 747).
- Sikhs do not believe in the caste system, idol worship, rituals, superstitions, gods and goddesses, karma and reincarnation.
- Sacrifices, austere living or gifts of money cannot manipulate God.
- Sikhism does not accept the ideology of pessimism. It advocates optimism and hope.
- Sikhism does not believe that mental illnesses are caused by spirit possession or violation of some religious principles and healing done through supernatural powers or rituals. In fact the third Guru made hospitals to treat the sick, the fifth Guru treated lepers and the eighth Guru treated smallpox patients.
- The Gurus prohibited the smoking of tobacco, the use of intoxicants and adultery (Guru Granth Sahib, 1993, p. 554).

Today most people know that smoking causes cancer and adultery sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV AIDS. Intoxicants affect mental and physical health. The sixth Guru made the high seat of temporal affairs, *AKAL TAKHAT*, in the same complex as *HARI MANDIR*, the Golden Temple, signifying that religious, spiritual and political affairs go together in Sikhism. Thus the Guru sowed the seed of democracy, socialism, secularism and collective leadership in India in 1708 AD.

While living in this world of *maya*, we encounter five evils which are *Kam*, *Krodh*, *Lobh*, *Moh* and *Ahankar*, i.e. Lust, Anger, Greediness, Attachment and Pride (Guru Granth Sahib, 1993, p. 600). One has to keep these evils under control. One does not have to be a Sikh to accept that these five are in fact evils. The Guru says that one should live in the world of *Maya* like lotus flowers in a pond. The lotus lives and takes its nutrition from the pond, but it does not get wet and dirty with mud from the pond. Learning to control ego by accepting humility as prescribed in Sikhism can directly improve the mental health of the individual. True humility is the recognition of one's imperfections. Humility does not mean one should not assert one's rights. Being a true devotee does not mean to give up rights. Being a humble servant of God does not mean that you let others walk all over you. Humility teaches equality, not manipulation. This is the reason, *Gurmukh*, a truly humble person is equated to a saint as well as a soldier (*Sant-Sipaah*). Thus, without true humility, there can only be manipulation, anxiety and hurt.

Most world conflicts could be resolved if all world leaders could relinquish ego, *haumai*, and accept humility to improve the mental health of the world populace.

## APPLICATION OF SIKHISM IN PRACTICE

By practicing the following five virtues, one can improve and maintain one's mental health:

1. *Truth*: Truth occupies the first place in the virtues recommended by the Sikh Guru. In Sikhism, greater than truth is truthful living (Guru Granth Sahib, 1993, pp. 62, 488).
2. *Contentment*: A contented mind is free from envy, greed and jealousy. Without contentment it is impossible to acquire peace of mind (Guru Granth Sahib, 1993, p. 279).
3. *Patience*: Patience gives courage to put up bravely with all the slings and arrows of an outraged future (Guru Granth Sahib, 1993, p. 607).
4. *Perfect Faith*: Perfect faith in God and considering the Guru's teachings as infallible and following these in daily life (Guru Granth Sahib, 1993, pp. 31, 288).
5. *Compassion*: Compassion implies considering another's difficulty or sorrow as one's own, and helping to relieve it as far as possible. Forbearance, particularly when one is in a position to punish one's opponent, is a great asset (Guru Granth Sahib, 1993, p. 299).

## MEDITATION

The Sikhs believe that the prime cause of disease is rooted in the mind. The mind by its very nature is a non-stop thinker and creates a continuous stream of thought patterns, some evil and some pious. These thought patterns are the cause of the disease. Ordinarily the mind functions on two planes, the conscious and the unconscious. But, there is another level, called the 'super conscious', where one becomes a different person after meditation. With meditation, there is recorded improvements in anxiety, depression and the development of insight (Kabat et al., 1992; Kutz et al., 1985).

In Sikhism, meditation is not only done to gain control over involuntary vital body functions as shown in the study of transcendental meditation, but also to gain peace of mind (Guru Granth Sahib, 1993, p. 6). This can be achieved by combining meditation with spirituality, called spiritual meditation. Spiritual meditation is done on the *Naam* of the Supreme Teacher, *WAHEGURU*, to achieve a super-conscious and blissful state in which one finds oneself close to or one with the God in addition to relaxation of body and mind. Spirituality is not worship or rituals to please God, but deeds and a positive attitude towards the self and others to make life joyful. Happiness does not come from external sources but from within. Being rich does not bring happiness, nor does being poor bring unhappiness. It is the attitude towards money that makes one happy or unhappy. In the same way one's attitude towards illness brings unhappiness. The Guru's concern is with humankind and its destiny. He taught that several distinctive and unique features set it apart from the rest of His creations and characterize humanity. They are as follows:

- We have the power to discriminate between good and bad. We can make choices.
- We have the ability to choose between different forms of action, i.e. we can use our earnings to help the needy, improve our responsibility towards society through *dasvand*.
- We have the opportunity to enter a conscious unity with God through choices that we make. The spirit of the human being is raised with a belief that one is not a helpless creature, but a responsible being with a will of one's own, which can do a lot to shape one's destiny.

## SIX STEPS TO APPLY SPIRITUAL MANAGEMENT IN LIFE:

They are:

- *Ego*. To understand what *haumai*, ego is, and how it affects us.
- *Self-realization*. To realize that my current problem is because of my ego, and that I have to get rid of this ego.
- *Five Vices (Weaknesses)*. To realize that, for my current problem, among five vices, which one is hurting me most? One has to learn how to keep these vices under control.
- *Humility*. To counter ego, one has to accept humility.
- *Five Virtues (Strengths)*. While learning how to control five vices, one has to develop five virtues.
- *Meditation and Spiritual Liberation*. Once these five steps are completed, and true humility has civil rest in nations,
- Decision-makers making a collective decision after giving up ego, in complete humility as stated by the Sikh Gurus.

- Considering all of humanity as equal and the children of God in the true sense of the Sikh Brotherhood (*Sikh Panth*) War to be waged as a last resort only after all other methods have failed. War should be waged according to the concept of the saint-soldier.

The integration of spirituality can play a key role in mental health programs as comprehensive, empowerment-focused and culturally attuned approaches to recovery from mental illness become more widely adopted (Fallot, 1998). Taking this into consideration mental health professionals should use cultural/religious specific models of counseling. As the Sikh religion is a universal religion, this model can be used in conjunction with Western counseling for everyone. There is also great scope for the use of Sikhism in the preventive, ancient and curative aspects of mental health. With all these qualities, the *Khalsa* (Baptized Sikh) is the ideal future international hope for humanity. The need of the day is to enable these principles to reach mankind all over the world.

Before the existence of SIKHISM, the spiritual management intermingled with religion of the existing set of theomacy. The Indian spirituality is based on VEDAS-PURANAS and SMIRITIES, in which numerous GODS and Goddesses have been characterised. With the beginning of NANAK ERA, the SIKHISM in 1469 AD, all definitions of GOD, its existence and doctrine stand changed and spell out differently. This change can be named SPIRITUAL MANAGEMENT in SIKHISM.

Sikhism is a scientific religion in the world. Its management, leadership, ethics, governance and aims are evergreen and true born. Its manager is a perfect professor, expert and convincing lecturer bestowed with such powers which were not bestowed to any other, who came on this earth as a messenger of GOD or who claim as Son of God. SIKH means a student. Student means who is enrolled for a course of instructions in a school, college or university. The moto of this Management in Sikhism is Kirat Karo- Vand Chhako- Naam Jupoo. Science of service, fairness, accountability, transparency, social responsibility, science of humanity and values of humanitarian rights and its protection is syllabus of this management.

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