

Teaching sustainability through traditional wisdom: a conceptual framework for business studies

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It is imperative to strive for sustainable ways of designing and managing businesses. The managers need to develop competence to usher the path of business sustainability by understanding the concept and developing suitable strategies that build the framework for business sustainability. Students pursuing studies in Business Administration will hold managerial and leadership positions in the forthcoming years; hence their competence would be an important determinant in the successful implementation of sustainable business practices. This article proposes to explore the Indian scriptures to teach sustainability to students through examples and validations from these texts.

Keywords: Education, management application, sustainability, wisdom.

‘Sah Navavtuh Ma Vidvishavhe’

(May we together shield each other and may we not be envious towards each other; Ishavasya Upanishad Verse 1)¹.

DEPLETION of natural resources and fast vanishing species are a reflection of the man’s insensitivity towards the environment. The largely clinical and selectively scientific approach to development was myopic as it led to a technological mastery over nature to fulfil the needs and wants of the immediate, mindless of the implications for the future which were adverse. The dysfunctional responses of the environment are posing a serious threat to the very core of a safe existence of humankind as the dwindling varieties and populations of various species, except human beings will alter the natural cycle of existence. The long-term viability of human development and modern society in its current form can be seriously challenged. Today, professionals across all fields are battling ways to counter the disharmony between humankind and ecosystem, and to ensure that the equilibrium between nature and human development remains poised and balanced.

Sustainability is a challenge and an important issue for the corporates. The literature posits that it is imperative to

strive for sustainable ways of designing and managing businesses²⁻⁴. Corporates have realized that their single-minded, focused economic activities have ignored society and environment leading to adverse effects on account of which they are now introducing practices for sustainable development. Therefore, it becomes imperative for managers to gain a better understanding of sustainability and devise appropriate strategies required to implement and enhance business sustainability. The recruiters of business school graduates expect them to be aware of ‘sustainable development’ (SD), and to possess skills to critically think about sustainable ways for business. The students currently pursuing their graduate degree in Business Administration would hold managerial and leadership positions in the future; hence their competence would be an important determinant in the successful implementation of sustainable business practices. Therefore, awareness about issues of sustainability and its approaches is the need of the hour. Leading institutions in the field of education and sustainability have detailed and listed down various skills and objectives which sustainability education must impart to students.

Traditional Indian wisdom is characterized by a holistic approach, where man and nature are considered indivisible. Traditional Indian wisdom is replete with instances where human sensitivity towards nature is glorified. The Vedas, Jain, Buddhist texts, and Kautilya’s *Arthshashtra* established the principles of sustainability centuries ago, which are discussed here. Humankind is understood to be a composition of elements of nature and therefore maintaining a symbiotic relationship is essential for self-preservation, which is reinforced through the theory of Karma that lays heavy emphasis on one’s action and corresponding rewards and punishment, and therefore establishes adverse consequences to negative acts of destruction and depletion. Importance of teaching sustainability and prevalence of sustainability concerns in the Indian scriptures have been identified by extant literature, but a composite presentation of the two has not been made by researchers in the past. This article is a maiden attempt to create a pedagogical tool which presents a matrix of teaching objectives of sustainability mapped against examples and validations from traditional Indian texts and scriptures. This pedagogical tool would help

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Table 1. Sustainability literature and its focus area

Authors	Area of focus
Aras and Crowther ⁶	Urgency for business to wake up to the cause of 'sustainability'
Dunphy <i>et al.</i> ⁸	Sustainability change matrix
Shrivastava ¹³	To find a new way of engaging and preserving nature
Stead and Stead ¹⁴	'Sustainability management' in B-school curricula
Stubbs and Cocklin ¹⁵	Sustainability business model
Ehrenfeld and Hoffman ¹⁰	Economic development and overconsumption cause of unsustainability
Matten and Crane ¹⁶	Business sustainability due to either self-interested concern or altruistic concerns
van Marrewijk ¹⁷	Motive of business sustainability could be individualistic or benevolent
Bruntland ⁵	Overconsumption and production main cause of unsustainability
Galbreath ⁷	To bestow the futuristic values upon stakeholders
Sarabhai ⁹	Sustainable development – ecological, economic or societal
Lynam and Herdt ⁵¹	Maintaining output at historical average
Dyllick and Hockerts ⁵²	Meeting the needs of a firm's direct and indirect stakeholders and also future stakeholders
Schneider <i>et al.</i> ⁵³	Reduce consumption and production and cooperate
Meadows <i>et al.</i> ⁵⁴	Love, sacrifice and cooperation facilitator of sustainability
Jamali <i>et al.</i> ⁵⁵	Consumption and production to be reduced
Victor ⁵⁶	Cooperation to reduce impact on the environment
Assadourian ⁵⁷	Competition to be ruled out
Nayak ⁵⁸	Love, cooperation and sacrifice foster better rapport-building
Hellemont ⁵⁹	To reduce overconsumption through cooperation

bring to class a synergetic combination of theology and business management, where students shall find essence and a deep sense of association between the theological thoughts and their commercial applications.

Conceptual framework

Sustainability – meaning

The Bruntland Report⁵ defines sustainable development as 'development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs', and discusses three aspects of sustainable development – environmental protection, economic growth and social equity^{6–9}.

According to Ehrenfeld and Hoffman¹⁰, 'Economic development itself is undermining the very roots of sustainability. Instead of being an appropriate market mechanism for creating human satisfaction, consumption has become a central cause of unsustainability, in both environmental and human terms'. The literature focuses on the need for corporates to usher in the path of sustainability^{6,8,11–15}. The motive to choose the path of business sustainability is both due to the self-interest concern and altruism^{16–17}. Table 1 provides the literature on business sustainability and the key areas highlighted by various researchers.

Pillars of sustainability

Kahn¹⁸, while discussing about the paradigm of 'sustainable development', describes three conceptual pillars – economic sustainability, social sustainability and envi-

ronmental sustainability as the facilitators of sustainable development.

Economic sustainability refers to rationalized production and consumption, with a provision for the future needs. Production must satiate current requirements of consumption, but not at the cost of the future upheavels. Hicks coined the term 'economic sustainability' and defined 'income' as 'the amount one can consume during a period and still be as well off at the end of the period'¹⁹. Social sustainability as defined by Widok²⁰ is 'a way to achieve the protection, promotion, and preservation of these values for future generations. This includes human rights, preservation of diversity, protection and promotion of health and safety, intra and intergenerational equity among many others'. It is a function of social values and social capital facilitated by values specific to individual and collective elements like culture^{18,20}. Social capital comprises 'shared knowledge' and 'related organizational networks' that augment the possibility for effectiveness in the effort of individuals and teams for human development^{19,21,22}. Environmental sustainability involves ecosystem integrity, carrying capacity and biodiversity. It requires that natural capital be maintained as a source of economic inputs and as a sink for wastes. Resources must be harvested no faster than they can be regenerated. Wastes must be emitted no faster than they can be assimilated by the environment^{18,23}.

Kahn¹⁸ advocates the interlinking and integration of the three pillars of sustainability – economic, social and environmental, which eventually leads to bringing about an all-round holistic development than top-sided growth in certain area only. They are part of the same system and hence to foster sustainable development, none of them should be looked at in isolation; rather the interrelated

systems approach needs to be applied^{24,25}. Figure 1 brings out the inter-connectedness of the three basic attributes – people, planet and profits, essential for development²⁶.

Corporates and the issues of sustainability

As economies grow and as corporate economies outgrow national economies, the role of business in driving sustainable development becomes important because, most often, as businesses grow, social and natural capital has been destroyed. In effect, profit has come at the cost of the planet and people.

Freeman²⁷ suggests that ‘to be responsive and effective in the long run, you must deal with those groups that you can influence’. He describes stakeholders as a group or individuals with the power to influence as well as to show an interest in the corporate’s action. Stakeholders and organizations are interdependent²⁸. Figure 2 shows the classification of stakeholders.

The fundamental purpose of an organization is to create value for all its stakeholders^{29,30} and often different stakeholders place conflicting demands on the organization (Table 2). Hence, managers now need to balance, probably trade-off, between these conflicting demands. There is a potential to use the stakeholder perspective to understand changes in the external environment and therefore improve the long-term success. The social sustainability effort of the business improves the quality of life and hence strengthens the rapport between the corporate and its stakeholders which in turn enhances the performance of the organization.

Business education and sustainability

Sustainability education has gained acceptance as an area of theory and practice and this helps promote and practice

sustainability goals set up by various institutions like the United Nations (UN) and worked upon by various educational bodies of different countries. As early as in 1992, the UN Conference on Environment and Development, Agenda 21 identified ‘sustainable development, increased public awareness of environmental issues and promoted environmental training’ as the orientation of education^{31–33}. The emphasis on sustainability agenda continued and became focused after a decade and a half when the UN³⁴ emphasized on the need of business schools to introduce business sustainability in their graduate programme of management and recommended them to ‘develop the capabilities of students to be future generators of sustainable value for business and society at large and to work for an inclusive and sustainable global economy’. Benn and Dunphy³⁵ elucidated that stand-alone courses or short programmes on sustainability are effective ways to integrate sustainability into the curriculum of the graduate programme in management and discussed mindsets and multi-disciplinarity as the top roadblocks in achieving this. Stubbs and Cocklin¹⁵ describe an integrative structure that helps management students to comprehend and integrate the various facets of sustainability and also propose that the business students are always exposed to neoclassical economic approach throughout the curriculum which lays emphasis upon utility and economic growth and needs to be changed. The students need to be made aware of multi-dimensional view of sustainability than the isolated approach.

Business schools play a critical role in training their graduates to understand the need and relevance of incorporating sustainability in business operations, instil optimal competence to take decisions and execute them in a manner that encourages sustainable development (SD).

Research indicates that employees do not possess the competence required to pave a path to the sustainable development of their organizations^{36,37}. The corporates believe that the sustainability practices would positively affect the financial outcomes, but very few corporates implement them³⁸. The unsatisfactory implementation could be due to ignorance regarding the ‘best practices’^{17,39}. KPMG International³⁹ found that managers are not well informed about sustainable development and are unable ‘to identify and prioritise issues, to develop strategies and policies, and measure performance’. Hence, it is critical to develop ‘sustainability literate’ workforce, who ‘understand the need for change to a sustainable way of doing things; have sufficient knowledge and skills to decide and act in a way that favours sustainable development; [and are] able to recognize and reward other people’s decisions and actions that favour sustainable development’²³. There are several frameworks and models developed to integrate and promote sustainability through higher education with the key objective of creating and nurturing a sustainability literate workforce^{32,40,41}.

Processes and flow between capitals/pillars

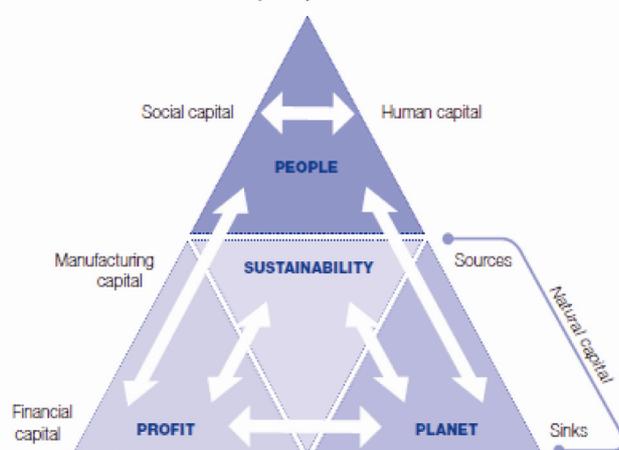
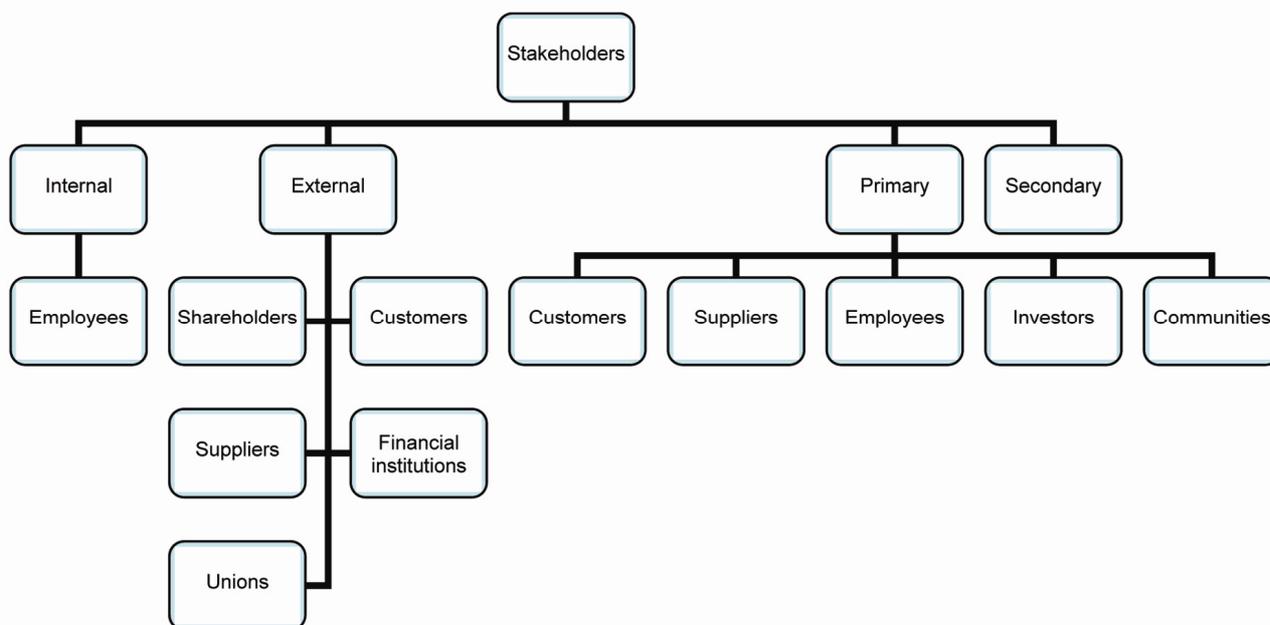


Figure 1. Interconnectedness of people, planet and profits. Source: Ref. 35.

Table 2. Stakeholder expectations

Stakeholders	Expectations
Stockholders	Share appreciation and dividends; customers expect new products and services
Employees	Employment opportunities, increased wages, better employee policies
Suppliers	Increased revenues and growth opportunities
Society/local community	More jobs and improved quality of life

**Figure 2.** Classification of stakeholders.

Teaching objectives

Teaching objectives of a course on ‘sustainability’ have been discussed^{21,42–44}. ‘The major objectives of this new emerging discipline are to nurture a generation of leaders who are capable of appreciating the significance of changes in global, social and human system, and who tread the path of sustainability in implementing policies on the basis of this understanding’⁴⁵. It should be able to create awareness and a sense of social, economic and environmental issues confronted by the contemporary world. The students must be able to understand the linkages among all the three issues. Sustainability education can stimulate and activate people to work for a sustainable future, by encouraging ‘critical reflection’ and ‘decision making’ in the individual’s lifestyle and pledging for the citizenship behaviour, helps in building SD^{42,43}. Several organizations like Canadian Educational Group (CEG) and Dorset Local Education Authority in England have enlisted the objectives pertaining to attitude, skill and knowledge essential for education on SD. CEG has laid down aims of the education on SD and then deduced objectives under the heads of knowledge, value and skill. The Dorset Local Education Authority has identified

seven objectives – ‘interdependence of society, economy and the natural environment; citizenship and stewardship; needs and rights of future generations; diversity – cultural, social, economic and biological; quality of life, equity and justice; sustainable change and uncertainty and precaution in action’⁴². These touch upon the various facets of sustainability ranging from knowledge to skill and domains to applications and impact. All these are highly inter-linked.

The Leadership Steering Committee has compiled a list of eight skills which could facilitate the path to sustainable economy by developing sustainability literate⁴⁴. These are listed below:

- Sufficient knowledge about sustainability to translate it into successful business strategies.
- The ability to innovate in sustainable approaches, technologies, products and services.
- Commercial awareness to identify the risks and opportunities presented by a sustainable economy.
- The ability to inspire change on sustainability in a broad range of people within and outside the organization.

Table 3. Views of researchers/institutions on teaching sustainability

Authors	Viewpoint
Komiyama and Takeuchi ⁴⁵	Teaching sustainability should develop leaders who can understand the impact of changes on society, humans and environmental system
UNESCO ⁴²	Stimulate and activate people to work for a sustainable future, by encouraging critical reflection and decision-making
Lopez ⁴³	Develop skill among students to work for a sustainable future
UNESCO (Dorset Local Education Authority) ⁴²	Learning objectives of the 'Sustainability' course are: Interdependence of society, economy and the natural environment; citizenship and stewardship; needs and rights of future generations; diversity – cultural, social, economic and biological; quality of life, equity and justice; sustainable change; and uncertainty and precaution in action
UNESCO (Canadian Educational Group) ⁴²	Listed knowledge, value and attitude required to 'Educate for sustainability'
Ipsos ⁴⁴	Sufficient knowledge, ability to innovate, commercial awareness, ability to inspire, ability to empower, work collaboratively, communication

- The ability to empower a diverse range of people within the organization to make sustainable business decisions.
- The ability to work collaboratively with different stakeholders (such as other companies, Government, the third sector and community groups) towards a sustainable economy.
- Effective and persuasive communication on sustainability issues, using clear and accessible language.
- The ability to consistently work towards a longer-term vision for how the organization will contribute to a sustainable economy.

Table 3 provides the literature on sustainability and teaching the same at higher education level and brings out the key findings of the research conducted on business sustainability.

The available literature brings out the following objectives of teaching sustainability:

- (i) Sustainability literacy: The business graduates should understand the need of sustainable development and should be aware about the social, economic and ecological issues arising due to the focus on mainstream development activity around the globe. They should be able to sense the threats and challenges of the sustainable economy.
- (ii) Sensitization towards stakeholder overlap: The students should be able to envisage the impact of the intricate inter-linkages among social, economic and ecological issues.
- (iii) Skills to strategize sustainability: The students should be equipped with critical reflection and decision making to work for a sustainable future.

India's traditional wisdom

Sustainability has garnered a great deal of attention and discussion, and has been extensively reported in the Indian scriptures. The 4 *Vedas*, the *Upanishads* and the 18

Puranas are inundated with expressions in the forms of invocations and eulogies to different Gods and Goddesses, which are practised through rites and rituals that ensure compliance towards the preservation and protection of manifestations of nature. The Jain and Buddhist texts along with non-religious Hindu scriptures accord sacred position to trees, animals, rivers, etc. Most festivals spread across the year involve an individual to get back to the elements of nature in the form of animals, vegetation (plants and trees), water (rivers) and sources of energy and light (sun, moon and the stars).

The UN General Assembly³¹ acknowledged this approach in its session on Sustainable Development: Harmony with Nature and stated, 'The Vedic philosophy of India has always emphasized the human connection with nature. Vedism is a way of life based on scriptures called *Aranyakas* which were written by sages who lived in the forest. *The Mahabharata*, *Ramayana*, *Vedas*, *Upanishads*, *Bhagavad Gita*, *Puranas* and *Smriti* contain some of the earliest messages on ecological balance and the need for people's ethical treatment of nature. They emphasize harmony with nature and recognize that all natural elements hold divinity'. All these scriptures emphasize the need for a balanced and justified approach towards human values, economic development and environment. Further, a balance has to be struck between spiritual and materialistic values, between greed and compassion, between self-restraint and self-indulgence, and between violence and peace.

SD is a holistic approach which focuses on man's sustenance and living in harmony with nature, and its manifestations, but to sustain this harmony is a big challenge for people in contemporary times. Lessons from ancient wisdom help sensitize, accept, respect and appreciate nature and the environment, and apply their holistic vision and approaches judiciously in solving our problems. Kodandaramayya⁴⁶ studied corporate social responsibility as mentioned in Rajdharma through Shantiparva of the *Mahabharata*. The resources generated should be shared amongst all⁴⁷. Khuman *et al.*² discuss 'sustainability science' in reference to Indian ethos. Chapple and Tucker⁴⁸

Table 4. Mapping teaching objectives in traditional Indian scriptures

Teaching objective	Rationale for the objective	Stakeholders involved	Source/s of lessons from traditional wisdom	Description
To develop a 'sustainably literate' Workforce (an understanding and awareness about sustainable development)	Van Marrewijk ²⁷ ; KPMG International ⁴⁸ ; Forum for the Future ³² ; Brunton ⁴⁹ ; Reid and Petocz ⁴² ; Sibbel ⁵⁰ ; Holdsworth <i>et al.</i> ⁴¹ ; The UN ¹⁰	Society, ecology, economy	<i>Atharvaveda</i> (Prithvi Sukta) ⁶⁰ (XII,3) <i>Atharvaveda</i> (19.2.1-2, 3.24.5) (ref. 60) <i>Ishavashya Upanishad</i> ¹ (Verse 1) <i>Mahabharata</i> (Shantiparva) 59.14–27 and 141 (ref. 50) <i>Shrimad Bhagwat</i> (Prithu's story) ⁶¹ , 9.8 <i>The Bhagvad Geeta</i> ⁶¹ <i>Dhammapada</i> , Buddhism Holy scriptures, Ch.1 verse 10 (ref. 62) <i>Jainism</i> , The Bhagwati Sutra ⁶³ <i>Acharanga Sutra</i> ⁶⁴ <i>Yajur Veda</i> (2.8) ⁶⁵ <i>Bridhasmrithi</i> ⁶⁶ (Yagnavalkya Smrithi) ⁶⁶ <i>Vishnu Samhita</i> ⁶⁷ <i>The Rigveda</i> 6.48.17, 7.49.2,5.43 (ref. 68) <i>Manusmriti</i> ⁶⁹ <i>Charak Samhita</i> ⁷⁰ <i>Advaita Vedanta</i> ⁷¹ <i>Arthashastra</i> ⁷² <i>Manusmriti</i> ⁶⁹ <i>Atharvaveda</i> (3-24-5) ⁶⁰ <i>The Mahabharata</i> (Svargarohan parva, 18.5) ⁵⁰	The importance of trees/forests for the reduction of pollution explained and advised not to destroy forests We must help each other and protect each other without being envious. Wealth is just a tool which should serve the well-being of society
To sensitize towards Stakeholder overlap	UNESCO ⁵⁵ ; Lopez ⁵² ; Khuman <i>et al.</i> ² ; Munasinghe ³⁴	Society, ecology, economy	<i>Advaita Vedanta</i> ⁷¹ <i>Arthashastra</i> ⁷² <i>Manusmriti</i> ⁶⁹ <i>Atharvaveda</i> (3-24-5) ⁶⁰ <i>The Mahabharata</i> (Svargarohan parva, 18.5) ⁵⁰	The economy can flourish on the environmental resources
To foster the competence and participation required for sustainable development	Forum for future ²³ ; Ipsos MORI ⁴⁴ ; IEMA ³⁶ ; Jackson ³⁷	Primary – individual secondary – society, ecology, economy	Stories from the Epics, Vedas, etc. <i>Srimad Bhagwat</i> 4.8.7 (ref. 61) Chapters 143 through 147 of the <i>Mahabharata</i> , Fable of fowler and the Pigeon told by Bhishma to Yudhishtira ⁵⁰	We need skill, knowledge and attitude to become sustainability literate. For example, critical thinking, creativity, decision-making

affirm that India 'with its vast storehouse of text, ritual and spirituality can help contribute both theoretical and practical responses to this'. Tables 4 and 5 present the various teaching objectives as covered in different Indian scriptures and the sustainability issues they address. They also discuss the different stakeholders focused upon in the Indian scriptures and also the sustainability issues addressed in them.

'Whatever animate or inanimate objects we witness in this world are the abode of the Almighty. Enjoy it with a sense of renunciation, do not grab, because it belongs to nobody i.e. the resources of the world belong to God and it is for his pleasure that they ought to be used.' (Ishopanishad 1)⁴⁹

The Mahabharata (XII, Shantiparva 59.14)⁵⁰ discusses dandaniti:

'For the good of the world and for establishing the triple aggregate, viz. virtue, profit and pleasure, I have composed this science representing the very cheese of speech.'

Discussion and conclusion

Development is essential and inevitable for growth and evolution of humankind. However, a myopic view of development which was prevalent during the 1960s is redundant and the world order has arisen to a multiple-stakeholder view of development where apart from the economic growth measured through revenue generation, other facets of development are also considered. Society and environment along with economic growth have been identified as the three pillars of development. Therefore, practitioners and future managers need to consider the well-being of the stockholders along with being able to manage the other stakeholders – consumers, employees and the community. They should also be able to manage the well-being of the future generations who are the distant stakeholders.

Sensitivity and awareness of the managers need to be worked upon to ensure that they hold a broad perspective to development and consider the multiple-party view while taking decisions. Conflict between the short-term immediate gain and the long-term larger benefits will arise and therefore, it is the responsibility of the

Table 5. Traditional wisdom and sustainability issues addressed

Classification	Stakeholders involved	Traditional wisdom	Description
Ecological	Panch Mahabhutas – (Jal – Water; Vayu – Air; Prithvi – earth; Agni – fire and Aakash – ether)	The Rigveda 6.48.17 (ref. 68) Atharvaveda 19.2.1-2 (ref. 60) Mundaka Upanishad 1.1.1 (ref. 73) Bhagwad Gita 9.8 (ref. 61) Mahabharata, Shanti Parva, Sec 89 (ref. 50) Charaka Samhita ⁷⁰	We should consume and produce as much as is required. Air, water, fire, space and earth should be consumed rationally and judiciously This refers to maintaining ‘natural capital’
Societal	Community	Atharvaveda 3.24.5 (ref. 60) The Rigveda 5.43 (ref. 68) Mundaka Upanishad 1.1.1 (ref. 73) Dhammapada, Buddhism Holy scriptures, Ch.1 verse 10 (ref. 62) Arthashastra ⁷²	The well-being of ‘human capital’ is important for the development of economy Also institutions like the community, business, schools, etc. which form ‘social capital’ help in the development and management of human capital
Economic	Stockholders/shareholders; employees, customers	Arthashastra ⁷² Atharvaveda (1-15-3, (3-24-5) (ref. 62)	‘Manufacturing capital’ includes material goods or fixed assets that help in the production process and hence, affect the economic sustainability ‘Finance capital’ helps in owning or trading any other capital

educational system to develop sustainability-sensitive managers.

This article offers a way to teaching sustainability to management graduates. Traditional Indian wisdom can be employed as a tool to teaching sustainability. This article also offers a wide spectrum of examples from traditional Indian scriptures which teachers can use in their sessions to effectively draw home the point that sustainability is a proven way to life which finds mention in the scriptures left behind as treasures generations ago and which has been ignored by practitioners during the last couple of decades in their fervour for economic development.

The Indian civilization has blossomed in close, sacred and divine association with the nature. Indian philosophy and religion preach about being compassionate towards all life forms and address it as ‘Dharma’. Man, in Indian culture, is taught about the divineness of nature and hence to respect it. The Indian scriptures reinforce the Unity of Divinity as mentioned in *Yajurveda* (2.8), ‘The loving sage beholds that Being, hidden in mystery, Wherein the universe comes to have one home; Therein unites and there from emanates the Whole; The omnipresent one pervades souls and matter, Like warp and woof in created beings.’ The fundamental concept is of ‘Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam’ (all beings on the earth are a part of family). Hence, we should take care of the well-being of all beings just as we do for our family members.

‘Aham Brahma asmi’, which means ‘I am Brahma’. ‘I’ is the self referred to as ‘Atman’ in the traditional Indian scriptures. This implies Brahma and Atman are identical. Reality is omnipresent. It is to this that the *Bhagwad Gita* (13.17)¹⁴ refers when it speaks of Avibhaktam ca bhutesu – ‘Undivided even in the midst of division’. The

first verse of the *Upanishad (Ishavasya Upanishad 1* (ref. 15).1) By Isa (the Lord) enveloped must this all be, Whatever moving thing there is in the moving world. With this renounced, thou mayest enjoy, Covet not the wealth of another’. (Reality pervades everything. The part that is assigned to one can alone be the source of one’s joy. To covet the wealth of another is to display utter ignorance of the fact that the tiniest part of the universe is impregnated with whole.) This refers to developing harmony with nature and not exploit the resources of nature for one’s own selfish purpose.

Thus the Indian scriptures focus on the harmony and well-being of the large human order based on cooperation and sacrifice for the future generations and preservation of resources; this is currently being emphasized by many scholars as ‘sustainability science’, which finds reduction in consumption as a tool to support and balance the existence of various economic and social activities in this world. New concepts of deep ecology and de-growth are emerging, but we need to address the spiralling demand of developing a sustainability literate workforce. Hence, sustainable development should be taught to management students to prepare them to accept the challenge of ‘making the world a better place to live, not only today, but also tomorrow and forever’.

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