

- Management & Leadership Studies - Life is Constant Risk-taking

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...'Akurvata' is in the past tense and means 'did do'. Dritarashtra asked Sanjaya: "What did my sons and those of Pandu do, assembled in the sacred ground of Kurukshetra, etching to fight?" In fact this incident occurred on the 9th day of the battle after the fall of Bhishma and the war turned in favour of Pandavas.

...I would like to bring a few points to your notice just for the sake of perspective. There are three motifs in the Mahabharata which flavour the story and its philosophy of life. First, the ideal of yagna- the Raja suya in the beginning and the Asvamedha in the end. In both these rituals the king first fights to acquire enormous wealth and then distributes all that wealth among his citizens.

Second, the game of dice. The king is obligated to risk and wager all his wealth and possessions in the game of dice. Third, war. It is Kshatriyas duty to fight incessantly to expand his kingdom and subdue his enemies.

Life is constant risk taking, recklessly thrown to the uncertainties of chance, and the passion to die with boots on. These are the ideals of a

Kshatriya. He is mainly interested in power and fame/kirity. It is the Vaisya's duty to create wealth through agriculture/krishi, husbandry/goraksha and commerce/vanijyam.

The Brahmin is responsible for creating knowledge and ethical values and dissemination of those values. And the Sudras, constituting 80 percent of the population, were split into many castes according to their crafts. When we read Mahabharata this socio-political-economic template/varnashrama dharma has to be kept in mind.

Today India is pursuing a competitive market economy and parliamentary democracy where every citizen regardless of gender, religion, race or language is constitutionally guaranteed equality of opportunity. We read Mahabharata for insights about human nature and mind and interpersonal dynamics in the pursuit of power, wealth and fame. The actual nitty-gritty of wealth creation-distribution-consumption is not the core of this study. And high level management and leadership are essentially a matter of power or decision making and risk taking/a mindset of living dangerously and in total freedom.

The key negative words are 'arrogance', 'greed', and positive words are 'coexistence' and 'collaboration'. A paltry settlement is no settlement and Pandavas would not have long been happy with that kind of a humiliating situation.

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