

Understanding Human Values through Integrative Dialogue

The Śāstrārtha Method

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CENTRAL PROPOSITION

Shared inquiry.
Deeper understanding.

The Śāstrārtha method offers a structured way to examine values, reasons and assumptions.



Read the research

01 Background and question

Values shape organisational decisions, but people can use the same words while holding different assumptions. The chapter explores an Indian approach to dialogue that makes those assumptions open to examination.

RESEARCH QUESTION

How can integrative dialogue deepen understanding of human values in organisations and education?

02 Conceptual framework

Vāda

Dialogue directed towards shared inquiry.

Integration

Material and spiritual purposes considered.

The chapter distinguishes vāda from jalpa (argument to win) and vitaṇḍā (criticism without a counter-position). A five-part argument links a claim to its reasons, example, application and conclusion.

03 Evidence and method

Philosophical exposition of Śāstrārtha and Nyāya reasoning, with illustrations from management and teaching.

The chapter discusses trust, managerial roles and dialogue sessions at Banasthali Vidyapith. These examples explain how the method may be used; they do not constitute a controlled assessment of learning or organisational outcomes.

04 The structure of an argument

The original table contrasts reasoning through similarity and dissimilarity; the five stages below summarise the method.

Similarity-based example:	Dissimilarity-based example:
Pratijñā (hypothesis): Trust in an organisation is meaningful (a value that is a means to achieving higher purposes) Hetu (reason): Because it gives the experience of integrativeness expressed through harmony Udāharaṇa (example): Whatever gives the experience of integrativeness expressed in harmony gives meaning, as in the trust among the members of a household Upanaya (reaffirmation): so it is in an organisation, as it requires the experience of integrativeness expressed in harmony Nigamana (conclusion): therefore, trust is meaningful in an organisation	Pratijñā: Trust in an organisation is meaningful (a value that is a means to achieving higher purposes) Hetu: Because it gives the experience of integrativeness expressed in harmony Udāharaṇa: Whatever is not meaningful is not integrative; not harmonious, as in the distrust between soldiers on a battlefield Upanaya: an organisation is not a battlefield; it requires the experience of integrativeness expressed through harmony Nigamana: therefore, trust is meaningful in an organisation

Original comparison of similarity- and dissimilarity-based arguments, reproduced from [1], p. 100.

Pratijñā · claim

State the proposition to be examined.

Hetu · reason

Give the grounds for the claim.

Udāharaṇa · example

Establish the relevant relation through an example.

Upanaya · application

Relate that reasoning to the case in question.

Nigamana · conclusion

Draw the conclusion from the preceding steps.

05 Findings and contributions

A Clarifying the purpose of values

An integrative view treats human values in relation to both worldly concerns and higher purposes.

B Making reasoning inspectable

The five-part structure shows how a conclusion follows from a claim, a reason and an example.

C A practice for mutual inquiry

Dialogue invites participants to examine different perspectives and refine their understanding together.

06 Discussion

The method can support conversations about trust, responsibility and organisational roles. Its educational illustrations suggest scope for facilitated dialogue, with participants exploring the assumptions behind everyday judgments.

07 Limitations and next steps

The chapter provides conceptual and illustrative support. Systematic action research is needed to examine facilitation, participation and learning across different organisational and cultural settings.

CONCLUSION

Integrative dialogue makes values discussable by connecting purpose, explicit reasoning and openness to other perspectives.

SELECTED REFERENCES

[1] Nandram, S. S., Sukhada, S., Joshi, A., & Bindlish, P. K. (2022). Understanding Human Values through Integrative Dialogue: The Śāstrārtha Method. In Global Perspectives on Indian Spirituality and Management, 91-106. Springer. doi:10.1007/978-981-19-1158-3_8.

[2] Chakraborty, S. K., & Chakraborty, D. (2008). Spirituality in Management: Means or End? Oxford University Press.

[3] Mayer, R. C., Davis, J. H., & Schoorman, F. D. (1995). An integrative model of organizational trust. Academy of Management Review, 20(3), 709-734.

[4] Tandon, R. (2014). Dialogue. In D. Coghlan & M. Brydon-Miller (Eds.), The SAGE Encyclopedia of Action Research. SAGE.