

CHAPTER-V

ŚAṆKARADEVA'S *BHAKTI* MOVEMENT AND THE HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT OF ASSAM

5.0: Introduction

Human development is both mean and end of economic development. The proper human resource development is the most important precondition of accelerating economic growth of a country. It is possible to develop a country without natural resources but no country can develop without sufficient amount of human resources. In fact the present data of world economy shows the countries with huge stock of natural resources remain as the most underdeveloped ones (e.g. the African countries) mainly due to inadequate human resources. Again higher economic growth is futile if it deprives the development of majority of the human beings in the society. Human development is the expansion of people's freedom to live long, stay healthy and remain creative. Human development helps in the expansion of productivity of the people. It leads to higher efficiency on the part of the people. Efficiency helps in inventing better techniques of production and marketing. This in turn facilitates economic growth of the country. Śaṅkaradeva aimed to attain welfare of the people through his *Bhakti* Movement. His reformatory activities concerned with human development. His objective was to bring out the fellow people from a distress situation. He put utmost importance in all the aspects of human development including

the factors essential for creating conditions for human development. It can be presumed that Śāṅkaradeva utilized the following channel of development—

Human Resource Development→ Economic Development→ Human Development

5.1: Concepts of Human Development and Human Resource Development

The concept of human development was introduced by Mahbub-ul-Haque and Amartya Sen for the first time in 1990 in the Human Development Report. United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has been defining human development as ‘the process of enlarging people's choices which allowing them to lead a long and healthy life, to be educated, to enjoy a decent standard of living’. Human development is measured with the help of three indicators— life expectancy, education and per capita income. Besides the aspects essential for creating conditions for human development are – participation in political and community life, environmental sustainability, human security and rights, gender equality.

Human resource development (HRD) is the process of increasing the knowledge, the skills and the capacities of all the people in a society. The concept of Human resource development was first introduced by Leonard Nadler in 1969 at a conference of American Society for Training and Development. He defined human resource development as, “those learning experience which are organized for a specific time and designed to bring about the possibility of behavioral change.”¹ But

¹ Nadler, L. (1969). *Human Resource Development*. p.1

the most important definition was given by Swanson as “HRD is a process for developing and unleashing human expertise through organization development and personnel training and development for the purpose of improving performance.”² Thus, the concept of HRD includes the development of people including their physical, intellectual, emotional, social, moral, political, economic, spiritual, and all other forms of development.

5.2: Śaṅkaradeva’s Views on Human Resource

Śaṅkaradeva considered human being as asset or resource rather than liability. Among all the living beings on the earth, human being is most critical for others. He recognized the unlimited productive potentiality of human being. So he advised special treatment for mankind. He wrote—

*bṛkṣa paśu pakṣīko arccibā yathocite
tāto kari sādāribā manuṣya jātika
dharmmaśīla janaka arccibā tātodhika³*

[Pay due respect to trees, animals and birds: Give respect to the human beings more than them: One who is kind or religious, show him greatest respect.]

According to Śaṅkaradeva human life is rare and a person got it in turn off much sanctity. So he must try to spend it meaningfully. He should not stick in worldly materials only.

*durllabha manuṣya janma pāibā kata bhāigye
sattvare śmsāra sindhu taribāka lāge
yata dekhā dhana jana save viṣṇu māyā
ākāśata sañcāre meghara yena chāyā⁴*

[It’s great fortune to achieve rare life human: One should be quick to sail across world-ocean: Wealth, men, everything else are Viṣṇu-Illusions: They are like shadows of clouds fleeting in the sky.⁵]

² Swanson, R. A. & E. F. Holton. (2001). *Foundations of Human Resource Development*. p.4

³ *NNSS*, vs.152

⁴ *Kīrt.*, vs.509

The same is also reflected in *Kīrttana*—

manuṣya janmaka nāpāya senthare
*āko bṛthā karā kino abhāgi*⁶

[Human life is not easy to get: You are so unfortunate to waste it away.]

Śaṅkaradeva not only had good views on human beings but also advised others to respect his fellow people by believing him as a part of God. The virtues attained by a person by doing so are described by him as—

biśeṣata manuṣyagaṇata yito nare
viṣṇu buddhibhāve sarbbadāye mānya kare
īriyā asūyā tiraṣkāra ahankāra
*save naṣṭa hovai teve tāvakṣṇe tāra*⁷

[If a person has special respects for human beings: And regards them all ever as *Viṣṇu*'s forms: His qualities like jealousy, enmity, reproaches and pride: Are destroyed in no time with nothing to hide.]

He said that person's life goes in vain if he fails to earn recognition from others—

mahante nādarai yāka *kone bhāla bolai tāka*
*sijanara jīvana dhikkāra*⁸

[A person who is not greeted by noble man: Is not recognized as good person by others: His life is condemnable.]

Śaṅkaradeva also had a very positive view on women. He even compared women with the gems—

pāilā strī ratna sakhī kibā cāhā āra
*yujate bānija yena milila tohmāra*⁹

[You achieve the women gem, friend what else are you looking for: Like you acquired profit of trade while going to fight.]

Similarly, he had not only recognized the strength of women but also compared them with burning fire—

⁵ Saikia, 2005, p.252

⁶ *Kīrt.*, vs.69

⁷ *Ibid.*, vs. 1822

⁸ *Bhāg.*, 10th Canto, vs.1750

⁹ *Kurukṣetra*, vs.234

stīka durbbala kare koneno niṣkhale
*jwalanta bahnika bāndhe vastara āñcale*¹⁰

[Who fool, wants to weaken the women: Like wrapping the burning fire with cloth.]

5.3: Śaṅkaradeva's Effort on Human Development

Śaṅkaradeva gave utmost emphasis on all aspects of human development—health, knowledge and income. He strictly maintained hygiene, included a balanced diet in his *Prasāda* for long and healthy life. Knowledge earning activities were given top most priority his *EŚHND* for the enlightenment of the disciples. Despite a very tight schedule in religious and literary works, Śaṅkaradeva himself engaged in income earning activities and encouraged others to do so. He encouraged the devotees to take up some vocational occupation; introduced a system where expertise of the vocation is traditionally imparted by the older members to juniors in the *Thān* or *Satra*.

5.3.1: Long and Healthy Life

Śaṅkaradeva was very much concerned with good health not only his own but also his disciples. He practiced Yoga in his earlier years for fitness. As recorded in the hagiographies his physical fitness was so strong that he could swim across the swelling mighty Brahmaputra River; he could defeat a wild ox etc. Once he helped a devotee to cure tuberculosis. “This incidence proves that Śaṅkaradeva guided the people on health matters also. Thus he was a consulting physician too.”¹¹

Food: For maintaining good health of his disciples he introduced the system of distributing *Prasāda* among them after prayer. In the *Prasāda* he included a balanced

¹⁰ *HU*, vs.75

¹¹ Vairagi cited by Borkakoti, 1995, p.23

diet containing pulses, available seasonal fruits, ginger and rice etc. Pulses and fruits were for nutrition, ginger and rice for better digestion.

Cleanliness: Śaṅkaradeva always gave priority cleanliness. He was not only very choosy in taking food but also maintained that one should clean his body properly before taking food. He took food only after ensuring properly cleaning it. Śaṅkaradeva also cautioned his disciples to be very careful about where and what they ate. During the two pilgrimages, he carefully examined the hygiene matter before accepting hospitality in a family. When he visited Jagannath temple, during second pilgrimage, the head *pāṇḍā* offered him a special *Prasāda* (normally not given to anyone) called *maṇikī mādhurī bhog*. Since, their bodies were dirty after long journey Śaṅkaradeva refused to eat the *Prasāda* at once and asked Mādhavadeva to keep it very carefully so that after taking bath they could eat it. However, the head *pāṇḍā* was not satisfied with it.¹² Similarly, at the court of Naranārāyana he refused to take the unhygienic food offered several times. For instance, once banana was offered. The Brahmin priests ate those immediately, but Śaṅkaradeva refrained to do so. The priests reported the king that Śaṅkaradeva disregarded his gift. Then Naranārāyana asked the reason and Śaṅkaradeva told about the dirty process of banana collection. When inquired, the banana farmer confessed that he did not know much about sanitization. Again when a businessman brought pepper Śaṅkaradeva proved how dirty those were, so not fit to eat without cleaning properly.¹³ For maintaining cleanliness Śaṅkaradeva introduced the tradition of wrapping the mouth of the persons with a *gāmocā* who

¹² KGC, p.122

¹³ Ibid, 148

distributed the *Prasāda* and other food. This tradition still continues in the villages. In latter period it became a compulsory customs among the families to take bath by the cook before entering into kitchen. Even the *Bhakats* started to take bath before meal. “Purification by bathing and change of raiment is necessary before every meal and previous to entering their places of worship, as they cannot transact the affairs of everyday life without coming into contact with gentiles, and all such contact pollutes.”¹⁴

He also wrote that it is necessary to take bath before seeing an infant for the purpose of sanitization and hygiene.

putra utpatti dekhi prajāpati
*sapaṭe karilā snāna*¹⁵

[At the birth of his son: *Prajāpati* takes birth immediately.]

5.3.2: Education

Śaṅkaradeva observed that lack of knowledge was the main cause for the distressed situation of majority of people near him. The ignorant people became the subject of exploitations. To redeem the people Śaṅkaradeva opened up the process of learning, though in informal way. Through performing arts he tried to teach the people what were there in the scriptures written in Sanskrit. He composed the essence of those scriptures in vernacular language in a simple way so that those can be easily understandable to the common masses even by listening. His mission was not only to educate the people but also concerned with building the character of the people. So he emphasized on ethical literature. Das remarks—

¹⁴ Dalton, E. T. (1851). *Notes on the 'Mahapurushyas,' a sect of Vaishnavas in Assam*. Journal of the Asiatic Society. Vol. No. VI.

¹⁵ *Bhāg.*, 8th Canto, vs.171

He organized a Knowledge Management System which includes production, collection, dissemination and preservation of knowledge. Sankardeva searched for such methods which could be the ways to attain knowledge for every individual of a society - from scholar to general cultivator. Before the age of Sankardeva knowledge searching activities were confined only among the priestly and royal communities. But Sankardeva opened up the process of learning and searching knowledge for all.¹⁶

He encouraged his disciples to read the scriptures and even distributed his writings among them. He motivated the disciples to compose verses. For instance, once while traveling by boat Śaṅkaradeva and his group heard singing the glory of Lord Kṛṣṇa by a boy belonging to outcaste on the river bank. Amused by that Śaṅkaradeva at once asked Mādhavadeva, Nārayana Dāsa and Madhāi to compose poem.¹⁷ Due to his influence the ordinary disciples also developed the habit of reading. For example, a disciple Karola, an expert carpenter, led a reckless life-style. When Śaṅkaradeva called for explanation, Karola replied that the master himself had written in the *Bhāgavata* that ‘greed, attachment, lust, anger and power hungry etc. cannot touch my devotees’. Again he quoted another verse ‘Devotees who go above the principles and norms are not actually unreligious.’¹⁸ Another important point is that his religious activities also contained great educational value. “Śaṅkaradeva’s writings contained a major portion of the course material prevalent in the then residential schools known as ‘Tol’. So the common masses learnt those very things which made one educated in those days, when they listened to a song or enjoyed a play authored by him.”¹⁹ Although Śaṅkaradeva was proficient in Sanskrit still he preferred to write in vernacular medium for the sake of common man. Sarma remarks “His only aim was to

¹⁶ Das, H. P. (2009). *Socio-Cultural Ethos in Economic Development of Assam*. Dialogue, Volume 10. p.4

¹⁷ KGC, p.76

¹⁸ Borkakoti, 1995, p.102

¹⁹ Borkakoti, 2015, p.85

unlock the tight locked box of knowledge under the key of Sanskrit language with a new cut key of Assamese language for distributing it amongst the illiterate mass to whom knowledge was beyond reach.”²⁰ The regular morning assembly where question-answer session between Śaṅkaradeva and disciples took place provided them immense knowledge. They could directly asked Śaṅkaradeva to meet their quarries. The system was so effective that many of his ordinary disciples could debate accurately with other scholars came from outside.²¹ “Little wonder, even the ordinary people who made their livings by doing manual works made quite an impression on the outsiders by their depth of knowledge.”²² Again, Śaṅkaradeva selected a small group comprising Mādhavadeva, Ṭhākura Ātā, Śrī Rāma, Paramānanda, Udāra Ātai, Rāmdāsa, Rāmrāma and a few others for higher knowledge. He trained up that group as future leader of his order. To discuss the deep philosophical issues he along with the group used to sit in isolated places like paddy field or mustard field away from the *Thān* premise.²³

Śaṅkaradeva also took initiative for the education of women and lower caste people.

stri śūdra antyajāti tāko śikṣa dibā māti
*dharibe sisave aho prāṇe*²⁴

[Take initiative to provide education to woman, *sudra* and outcastes: They would absorb the knowledge whole heartedly.]

²⁰ Sarma, N N. (1996). *Contributions of Srimanta Śaṅkaradeva and His Associates towards education amongst the rural Folk of Assam.* p.131

²¹ KGC: p.168

²² Borkakoti, 1995, p.85

²³ Ibid, pp.139-140

²⁴ NNSS, vs.333

Śaṅkaradeva advocated that with proper education the women and other lower castes people, who were regarded as sinful person by birth for ages, could shine themselves.

strī śudraṇa adhama yavana
āno jāti pāpī nare
huyā tattwapara baiṣṇava janara
*yadi śīla śikṣā dhare*²⁵

[The woman, *Sudra* and nonsense *Yavana*: And other sinful persons by birth: Would become knowledgeable like the *Vaishnava*: If they adopt education.]

Śaṅkaradeva taught that the underprivileged or marginalized castes of the society could empower themselves with education. With the companion of scholarly people they could acquire knowledge which would wash away their inferiority. Thereby they can make their lives fruitful.

yadi sūta jāti āmi akulīna
ekore nuhiko kajī
tumisava mahā jnānīra ādare
sāphalilo janma āji
āmi antyajāti hena mana dukha
*āvese mora gucila*²⁶

[We are outcaste and so fit for nothing: With the gracious companion of emirate scholars like you: Our lives become empowered: The sadness in our mind being outcaste: Now wiped away.]

Through his insistent effort Śaṅkaradeva was able to create awareness towards education among underprivileged section of the society and women. For instance, one old couple of Dāukī village (who were expert in making bamboo products) came to reside in the *Thān* premise. The old man was required to explain what he learnt in the assembly to his wife at home. One day he had forgot what was taught and could tell

²⁵ *Bhāg.*, 2nd Canto, vs.181

²⁶ *Ibid*, 1st Canto, vs.317

nothing to his wife. The old lady got angry and refused to provide him food on that day.²⁷

Śaṅkaradeva also advised to whom the knowledge should be dissimilated. One should not try to give advice to proud, dishonest, deceitful and intolerant persons. But a Vaishnava person who is loveable to all should be given all noble guidance. If the women and lower caste people have devotions then they are qualified for imparting knowledge.

*upadeśa nedibāhā dāmbhika śthata
abhakata durjjanata nakaebā uddeś
baiṣṇav janaka diba sadā upadeśa
stri śūdro karai yeve āhmāta bhakati
tāhāto kahibā eṭo jnāna mahāmati*²⁸

[Don't provide advice to proud and dishonest person: Don't speak well tips to non-devotes and deceitful persons: But always provide all noble guidance to Vaishnavas: The women and lower caste people who have devotions to Me: Should be unrevealed this noble knowledge to them.]

5.3.3: Income

It is already stated that Śaṅkaradeva emphasized on economic activities. For economic uplift he wanted that everyone must involve in some occupations. Śaṅkaradeva always advised his disciples to take Nārayana Dāsa as their role model, not Mādhavadeva. Nārayana Dāsa (previous name was Bhavānanda Sāud) was a successful businessman and financially supported the fellow disciples very often. This proved Śaṅkaradeva put emphasis on work and livelihood. He barred begging by his disciples and made alternative adjustment of livelihood to the disciples involved in begging. Śaṅkaradeva involved in income earning activities to feed his family. He

²⁷ KGC, p.259

²⁸ *Bhāg.*, 11th Canto, vs.263

attached great importance to dignity of labour. He never advised people to part with work. He only asked the people to chant God's name while in work. He wrote—

tāne śunā gunanāma haste karā tāne kāma
mukhata neribā harināma²⁹

[Listen the good attributes of God: Keep on working with your hands: Never give up to pronounce the name of Hari.]

5.3.4: Conditions for Human Development

Śaṅkaradeva was also concerned with the factors essential for creating environment for human development— participation in political and community life, environmental sustainability, human security and rights and gender equality.

Participation in Political and Community Life:

For human development a suitable environment is required where people got the opportunity of self governance and express their views freely in the community's decision making process. During Śaṅkaradeva's time democracy was unthinkable. Common people's participation in the decision making process was rare. Śaṅkaradeva made an innovation in this regard by establishing the *Thān*. This institution later becomes popular as *Satra*. Within the *Thān* premise, Śaṅkaradeva maintained complete equality among its inhabitants. There was no division of rich and poor, high and low castes. All the members could easily participate in the management of the *Thān* or *Satra*. Śaṅkaradeva himself encouraged everybody to express their views regarding the mission of *EŚHND*. Based on their observation and suggestions, he kept on making necessary adjustment in the mission so that it approaches more to common people. Similarly, the *Nāmghar* innovated by him is not merely a prayer hall. It is a

²⁹Ibid, 6th Canto, vs.16

centre of local self administration. In the *Nāmghars*, the villagers assemble; discuss various matters regarding the development of the village, settle disputes among the members etc. In the *Nāmghars* every member has equal right irrespective of economic and social status. The poor or under privileged section has the equal right to give their opinion.

Spreading Democratic Temperament:

Śaṅkaradeva tried to spread democratic temperament among the devotees. He never imposed any decision on the followers. He asked the devotees to put forward their opinions on any matter and after detail discussion one consensus was taken. Since he listened carefully everybody's opinion, the devotees felt free to put forward their suggestion.

In religious exercise also, Śaṅkaradeva made the decorum to provide *Prasāda* at first to the person who lead *nāma-kīrtana* (known as *pāthaka*), not to any other leader. In many occasions he gave priority to Rāmrāma, who was the main *pāthaka* at that time, than himself.³⁰ Similarly, the responsibilities of arts, music, literature, social work etc. were bestowed on the *bhakats* according to their qualities and talents; not on their social positions or economic positions.

Environmental Sustainability:

According to the Cambridge Advanced Learner's Dictionary & Thesaurus, 'an environmentalist is a person who is interested in or studies the environment and who tries to protect it from being damaged by human activities'. Again, the Oxford English Dictionary defined environment as the surroundings or conditions in which a person,

³⁰ PKGC, p.150

animal or plant lives or operates. Thus, the task of an environmentalist is to create or promote awareness among the people for protecting the nature or to fight against the damages caused to environment by human activities. Śaṅkaradeva had tried to draw the attention of the people towards environment through his numerous writings. In his composition *Anādi-Patana*, Śaṅkaradeva described about the origin of earth and environment vividly. Similarly, in *Gajendra Upākhyāna* and *Haramohana* episodes of *Kīrttana*, Śaṅkaradeva depicts the pictures of nature beautifully with all literary ingredients. In both the episodes, he mentioned about numerous names of locally available flowers, trees, herbs, birds, insects, animals etc. For example, flowers like *mandāra*, *campaka*, *aśoka*, *padma*, *kumuda*, *indu*, *utpala*, *kadamba*, *raghu*, *nāgeśwara*, *mālati*, *madhai*, *yūti*, *yāi*, *pārijāta* (*Gajendra Upākhyāna*); *seuti*, *tamāla*, *mālati*, *lavaṅga*, *bāgī*, *gulāla*, *karabī*, *baka*, *kāñcana*, *śevālī*, *nevālī*, *palāśa*, *pārālī*, *bakula*, *banduli*, *kanoura*, *kānārī*, *kadamba*, *bābari*, *devanā*, *mandāra*, *mañirāja*, *rājacampā*, *kunda*, *kurubaka*, *ketekī*, *tagara*, *siṅhacampā*, *kunda*, *gutimali*, *rebatī* (*Haramohana*). Similarly, trees and herbs like *āma*, *jāma*, *lebu*, *jarā*, *jāmīra*, *khājura*, *bela*, *nārikala*, *tāla*, *tāmbūla*, *pākaḍi*, *agaru*, *candana*, *sarala*, *sonāru* (*Gajendra Upākhyāna*); *śiriṣa*, *devadāru* (*Haramohana*) are mentioned. It is already mentioned in chapter-III, how Śaṅkaradeva tried to teach the people that human beings alone cannot survive on the earth. Animal and plant kingdom must be protected for the survival of human being. He spread the awareness among his disciples that one tree is equal to ten sons (*eka bṛkṣa daśa putra samāna*) through his writing in *Kīrttana*.

Human Security and Rights:

Human security is mainly concerned with safeguarding and expansion of people's vital freedoms. It requires both protecting people from critical and pervasive threats and empowering people to take charge of their own lives.³¹ Śaṅkaradeva worked hard throughout his life to safeguard the rights of the people belonging to lower castes. During the time of Śaṅkaradeva, the woman as well as the lower caste people did not have any right to perform religious activities. But Śaṅkaradeva boldly recognized their rights. He argued that in devotion everybody has equal right. In his *EŚHND*, all devotees enjoy equal position irrespective of their birth status.

*hari guṇa nām-dharmma mahā sukhakara
strī bṛdha bālya samastare adhikāra
caṇḍālako kare nāme tekhene udhāra*³²

[Chanting the attributes of Lord Hari is very pleasing: The woman, old and young, all have equal right on it: Chanting god's name immediately rescue the outcastes also.]

Similarly,

*eke strī banacārī āro byabhicārī
tāhāro adhīna bhailā īśvaar murāri
nācāvei ajāti jāti pāpī puṇyavanta
bhakatite baśya kino prabhu bhagavanta*³³

[The women who are indisciplined: The God submits himself even to them: Without considering difference between upper or lower caste, sinful or honest: The God content only with devotion.]

The chanting of the attributes of Lord Hari has also the virtue of empowering the lower caste people. According to Śaṅkaradeva through practicing *Nāma-Kīrtana*, the lower caste people even become eligible for performing *Yajña*.

³¹ <https://www.mrglobalization.com>, 2012

³² *Bhāg.*, 2nd Canto, vss.12-13

³³ *Ibid*, 10th Canto, vs.1503

yito caṇḍālara jihvāra āgata
hari-guna-nāma bījai
tapa japa yajña homa mahādāna
yānā prati nite sijai
kukurako khāya hena mlecchsavo
harināma lavei māttra
eteke tekhane sisavo havay
*yajña karibāra pattra*³⁴

[The *Caṇḍāla* whose tongue always speak about the attributes of Lord Hari: He always got the same benefits which are achieved by performing illustrated rituals like *tapa*, *japa*, *yajña*, *homa*, *mahādāna*: The *mleccha* who eats dogs; if he only chant the name of *Hari*: Would be eligible for performing *yajña* then and there.]

Śaṅkaradeva severely criticized those persons who don't want to recognize the rights of lower caste people. He termed that person a fool who censure the outcaste for singing Hari's attributes. Again those support such fool persons have to lose all their virtues acquired since birth.

cāṇḍāle kariche hari kīrtana
buliyā nindai yito ajñayajana
tāka sambhāṣṇa yijane karai
*ājanmara puṇya tekhane harai*³⁵

[Only a fool may be there to denounce: Singing of Hari's attributes as the outcaste's nuisance: If a man shows honour to such a fool: He loses his all virtues since birth.]

Śaṅkaradeva believed that for empowerment of a human being, the basic requisite is that he must be physically fit. For a hungry man ornaments are meaningless. First he must feed his stomach, and then only he could think for empowerment.

kṣudhātura prāṇī yadi nakare bhojana
pindhe gandha candanādi nānāna bhuṣṇa
eko indriyara tāta tuṣṭa nāhi haya
*prāna tuṣṭa bhaile tuṣṭa hove indriyacaya*³⁶

³⁴ *ibid*, vss.1980-1981

³⁵ *Kīrt.*, vs.88

³⁶ *Bhakti Ratnāra*, vss.401-404

[If a hungry man without having meal: Wears various luxurious ornaments: Different parts of the body don't have any satisfaction: If the stomach satisfies then only other parts of the body satisfy.]

Spreading Gender Equality:

Śaṅkaradeva never hesitated to provide equal status to the women. He propagated that both man and woman are indispensable to perform household and social activities. In his literary works, Śaṅkaradeva raised various issues of women empowerment. For instance, in *Bhāgavata* he expressed that women are more courageous than men.

*parama nirbhayā bhāva puruṣatodhikā
nāhikā nārītā pare mahā sāhasikā*³⁷

[Have absolute attitude of fearless than man: There is none other more courageous than woman.]

Śaṅkaradeva also mentioned the multi-dimensional role played by woman. She supports her husband in every sphere of life. She works as friend, philosopher and guide to a man.

*karma samayata toka mantrī hena lekhi
raṅgara belāta yena tai prāṇa-sakhī
snehara prastāve tai mātṛ hena ṭhāna
śayana belāta tai dāsīra samāna*³⁸

[During the time of work you play the role as adviser like a minister to a king: In the time of amusement you become a bosom friend: You are like a mother in need of care: In bed you become like a slave.]

However, Śaṅkaradeva was also thoughtful about the security of woman. For women freely roaming at night is not out of danger.

*durghora rajanī prēta piśācara gati
aita nāthākibā torā sava tirīmati
tomāsāka nedekhiyā pitṛ mātṛcaya*

³⁷ *Bhāg.*, 12th Canto, vs.122

³⁸ *HU*, vs.432

*tāsambāra mane mahā miliba saṁsaya*³⁹

[Deep night is the time of roaming for devils and ghosts: You should not stay here as you are women: Without seeing you by their sides your parents: Would get great fears in their minds.]

Similarly, for women making journey during war is not safe.

*tuḥu strī jāti: yuddhaka samaye tohāri gamana ucita nahe*⁴⁰

[You belong to woman fraternity: During war time your journey is not good.]

Śaṅkaradeva also expressed his sorrow to a woman disserved by her merciless lover.

*nārīra manata natu hovante tṛpiti
teji yāi yena nidārūna upapati*⁴¹

[Without giving satisfaction properly to the body and mind of woman: The merciless lover deserts her.]

To shine outside, a woman's domestic life must be peaceful. If she got a favourable atmosphere of empowerment at home then she can easily grab the opportunity outside. The nature of her husband is a determining factor in this regard. So Śaṅkaradeva advised the women to be selective in choosing her husband. Persons who are angry, greedy, heartless, lustful, weak, suspicious could never be able to give peace to his wife. Śaṅkaradeva describes in *Bhāg.* about the demerits of choosing such persons as husband.

*sadāye nuguche tāna krodha ahaṅkāra
āṅka bari bhāla bolāibeka kāra bāpe
akāryato naṣṭa karibeka caṇḍa śāpe*⁴²

[One whose anger and proud never lessens: By marrying him, no woman could satisfy him: He keeps on rebuking the wife without any reason.]

lubhīyāta pare sāṁsārata nāhi manda

³⁹ *Kīrt.*, vs. 821

⁴⁰ *Pārijāta Haraṇa Nāta*

⁴¹ *Bhāg.*, 10th Canto, vs.2340

⁴² *Ibid*, 8th Canto, vss.268-275

yuti khāibe napāile lagāibe nite danda

[There is none worst in this world than a greedy person: If he fails to eat deliciously, he regularly involves in quarrel with his wife.]

nirddaya puruṣa najānaya dukha bethā

[The heartless husband is unable to feel the sorrow and misery of wife.]

*ātapare āna āura nāhi kāmātura
nite kolāhale yāibe ihānka barile*

[There is none lustful than him: Would have to spend the time in clash if married to him.]

*indraka baribo ente honta devarāja
tekhane palāya daitye kārhilanta rāja
kateka palāibo mañi ihāna lagata*

[Indra is the monarch of deity at the moment: But has to flee if his monarchy is snatched away by demons: If married to him, how many times I would flee with him.]

*dibya gr̥ha-bārī eri śmaśānata bāsa
ihānka barile eko nāhi sukha śānti*

[By giving up the luxurious residences he dwells in cemetery: If he is accepted as husband there would be no peace.]

*kāma krodha jiniya mukuta bheilā gāṇḍi
ihānka barile heibo jivantate rāṇḍi*

[By winning lust and anger, he becomes sanctimonious: If he is chosen as husband would have to be a prostitute.]

āti anācārī baribāka nohe yoga

[Very ill-disciplined persons are not appropriate to accept as husband.]

Although Śaṅkaradeva had such a positive outlook towards the power of woman, but he did not forget to criticize the dark side of the character of women. He regarded among all illusions, woman's illusion is the most dangerous. A bad woman could easily misguide even a dedicated man. So, he warned to avoid the company of such ghastly woman.

*ghora nārīmāyā sarba māyāte kutsita
mahā siddha muniro kaṭākṣe harai cittra
daraśane karai tapa japa yoga bhaṅga
jāni jnānīgane erai kāmīnīra saṅga*⁴³

[Among all illusions the most awful is that of woman: Most accomplished sages too lose heart at their playful look: Her visit can destroy all penances, meditations and *yoga*: Knowing it, the wise man give up the company of ghastly women]

Again he wrote, the beautiful women are always dangerous.

*yateka sundarī nārī parama anarthakārī
ātpare nāhikai nikāra*⁴⁴

[All the beautiful women are most dangerous: There is nothing precarious than them.]

Female characters were occupying major portion in his literary works. Among them he had special fond of the character Rukminī. Again, Śaṅkaradeva presented the character of Sītā bolder than the original Sītā of Valmiki's Rāmāyana. In Valmiki's version, in the final scene, Sītā does not speak a word to her husband and accepts all the miseries as destiny. But in Śaṅkaradeva's version of Rāmāyana, Sītā is an outspoken lady. "She is humiliated and enraged at the unnecessary public test of her chastity. In her anger she turned her back to Rama and laying aside her shyness condemns him in front of the audience that by a ruse he had me abandoned in the forest... He wanted to kill the two boys in my womb."⁴⁵

In his real life, Śaṅkaradeva had shown due respect to women and advocated for their freedom. He never forced his wife Kālindī, to accept his *EŚHND*. Kālindī was enjoying every freedom to worship the God *Ghara Deuty* in front of Śaṅkaradeva till Mādhavadeva's intervention to it.⁴⁶ It is worth mentioning here that Śaṅkaradeva was very much strict in his principle of worshiping one and only one God, i.e, Lord Viṣṇu.

⁴³ *ibid*, vs. 659

⁴⁴ *ibid*, vs. 128

⁴⁵ Smith, 1994

⁴⁶ KGC, p.54

Once he expelled two devotees, Vyaskalāi and Jairāma for worshipping other Goddess. Similarly, Śaṅkaradeva severely attacked the rituals where women were used as enjoyable commodity. To keep his *EŚHND* free from this menace he even did not recognize the character of Rādhā. In practical life also he encouraged women empowerment as proved from the episode of *Satī* Rādhika, Candarī *Āi* etc. “There are instances of Śaṅkaradeva giving initiation to women like Chandari and Banara, not to speak of wives of Bir Chilarai, the great Koch general. Woman also became Medhis during his period.”⁴⁷ Śaṅkaradeva was so optimistic about the growing power of women in future that he even predicted in *Kali Yuga* men will be subservient to women (*kalīta haibeka loka strī parādhīna*⁴⁸). In his religious order women were given due honour and were encouraged to acquire knowledge in scriptures. Once, his maid Candari defeated a group of scholars who came for arguments with Śaṅkaradeva. Candari was washing clothes on the bank of a river when she met the group and came to know about their purpose. Then she recited some verses explaining the main tenets of the Gītā in simple Assamese. The scholars were amazed to listen to that and thought that if the maid had such knowledge what depth of knowledge the master would have. In fear of humiliate, they flew away.⁴⁹

⁴⁷ Pathak, M. (2005). *Women Under the Umbrella of Neo-Vaishnavite Movement in Assam*. in B. Kalita and H. D. Mazumdar (ed.). Śrīmanā Śaṅkaradeva Bhārata Bariṣe. p.237

⁴⁸ *Bhāg.*, 12th Canto, vs. 124

⁴⁹ Deva Goswami, 2005, p.12

5.4: Śaṅkaradeva's Effort on Creating Human Resource Development

Śaṅkaradeva made endeavor for holistic development of fellow human beings. He believed that human beings should be both economically productive as well as morally strong for betterment of the society. Śaṅkaradeva tried to nurture the creativity in the minds of the people. Values like truthfulness, sincerity, non-violence, fraternity, equality, love, sacrifice, service to society etc. were the main concern of Śaṅkaradeva. He introduced such values with the help of religious activities of *EŚHND*, lecture cum discussions, writings, performing art etc. “Through religion Sankardeva taught people a lot, rather all for life and living.”⁵⁰ He taught that a devotee should be the embodiment of sweetness and amicableness. If one assaults others with words, he could never become a true devotee of God. Similarly, “cruelty and aggressive nature were hurdles to a true devotee. Śaṅkaradeva tried to curb the narrow minded nature of his disciples whenever he saw them afflicted with this trait. He discouraged them from criticizing others and always asked them to look for merits among people, not demerits.”⁵¹

5.4.1: Śaṅkaradeva's Initiative in Skill Development

Besides imparting knowledge, Śaṅkaradeva tried to impart some specific skills among his disciples. The best example was *kor* Dāmodara. This poor fellow worked very hard daily with a spade to cultivate land, still unable to produce sufficient crops

⁵⁰ Sarma, N N. (1996). *Contributions of Srimanta Śaṅkaradeva and His Associates towards education amongst the rural Folk of Assam*. p.111

⁵¹ Borkakoti, 1995, p.86

to feed his family. Under Śaṅkaradeva's guidance Dāmodara was not only able to earn more income but also latter on became one great leader of the Vaishnavism of Assam. Śaṅkaradeva was a promoter for vocational education. He sent his son Rāmānanda to study accountancy under Cakrapāṇi Mazumdāra along with three sons of his servant Ubanā.⁵² Śaṅkaradeva supervised the manufacturing of musical instruments and other items used in his plays by himself. He designed these things himself and then trained the local artisans about how to make those. Similarly, he helped the weavers of Tembuwani and Tāntikuchi in making improvement of their products. He also encouraged his disciples to engage in handicrafts like bamboo and cane product making, musk making, wood carving etc. Mādhavadeva had innovated the *Kaṭh* or mate used for sitting made of banana stems.⁵³ Disciples were also encouraged in acting, singing, dancing, painting, writing etc.

He did not offer religion as an opium for the masses whereby they could forget the problems of life like oppressions of feudal lords. He taught the people to take to religious life not as an escape route from day to day life but as a means to live a purposeful and productive life. He lived with the farmers and artisans and taught them the ways to increase their productivity. He was a master weaver and excellent in the art of handicrafts productions. His prominent disciples Madhavadeva and Narayan Thakur also knew several skills and often guided the fellow devotees in their occupations.⁵⁴

5.4.2: Value Nurture through Writings

Through his writings he tried to nurture the virtues like forgiveness, patience, humanity and respect, truthfulness, love towards other creatures etc.

⁵² PKGC, p.447

⁵³ KGC, p.103

⁵⁴ Borkakoti, 1995, pp.84-85

Role Model:

According to Śaṅkaradeva, he is an ideal person— who always do well to all creatures; who is devotional towards teacher, guest; who is honest in his profession and above all who is expert in all branches of knowledge.

samaste prāṇīra hita guru agni atithita
karileka aneka bhakati
bṛtti pāta nāhi āra nerileka sadācāra
*beda śāstra savāte pārgata*⁵⁵

[Perform welfare to all animals: Have devoted much towards teacher and guest: Perform his profession honestly: Never avoid good deeds: Becomes expert in all scriptures.]

He is like a God who could remain indifferent among enemy, friend etc.

acintya mahimā hari puruṣa pradhāna
*śatru mitra udāsīna savāte samāna*⁵⁶

[He is a man with unthinkable quality like Lord Hari: Think equally to all whether enemy or friend.]

He is the best devotee who never discriminates between one another with respect to knowledge and money; who believes whole heartedly that everybody has the same soul and so do equal treatment to all.

nakare āpuna para budhi dhana bitte
samastare eke ātmā jane yito citte
sakalo lokata sama bhāva nirupama
*cinibā nṛpati siṭo bhakata uttama*⁵⁷

[Don't pursue any discrimination in knowledge and money: Who believes by heart that everybody had same soul: Give equal importance to all individuals: King Nimi, identify him as the best devotee.]

⁵⁵ *Bhāg.*, 6th Canto, vs.145

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 8th Canto, vs.510

⁵⁷ *NNSS*, vs.91

Truthfulness:

He is the most wise man in the world who knowing his own danger sticks to truth.

*kino karma duṣkara karilā daityanathe
parama bipakṣa hena mādhavaka yāni
tathāpito satya nalārilā mahā jnyāni*⁵⁸

[What an impossible task you performed, demon's king: Knowing Mādhava as your sharp opponent: Hey wise man, you never come away from the truth.]

Forgiveness:

Śaṅkaradeva believes that forgiveness is a virtue which makes a person great.

So he tried to rear this virtue through his writings.

*sajjanara kṣamāse swabhāva*⁵⁹

[Forgiveness is the nature of noble man.]

A person who easily forgives others who are responsible for his loss, insult, pain and sorrow is the ultimate winner.

*hāni apamāna dukha śokaka sahay
tāre nāma kṣamā āve jānibā uddhava
kṣamāvanta puruṣara nāhi parābhava*⁶⁰

[One who could bear loss, insult, pain and sorrow: Uddhav you know it as forgiveness: He has no defeat who could forgive.]

Patience:

Patience is the main key of success. According to Śaṅkaradeva patience is the medicine to the disease of disaster.

*bāndhavara samāgata tehṇaya athira
dhaiyrase ouṣadha dādā āpada byādhira*⁶¹

[The crisis faced by our friend is temporary: Brother, patience is the medicine to the disease of disaster.]

⁵⁸ Bhāg., 8th Canto, vs. 309

⁵⁹ Ibid, 10th Canto, vs.123

⁶⁰ 11th Canto, vs.216

⁶¹ Rāmāyana, Uttarākāṇḍa, vs.243

Again,

kārya samayata kene bhailā hatabudhi
*āpada byādhira hovai dhairase ouṣadhi*⁶²

[Why you losing your intelligence during the time of work: Patience is the medicine to the disease of disaster.]

Winning or losing are purely temporary. One should not lose his temper if he fails or defeated. He must wait for good time with patience.

aśāśwata jaya bhaṅga *āta nakaribā khaṅga*
kālakrame jinile āhmāka
yudhara samaya nui *yeisāni sudina hui*
*ārakā jinibo hena jānā*⁶³

[Win and loss all are purely temporary: Don't be angry in it: We are defeated by circle of time: It is not favourable time for us to fight: When good time comes: Know it we would certainly defeat him.]

Śaṅkaradeva wrote different verses to console the people who lose the money and wealth. According to him one should be content with the fact that the God tests even his dearest devotee.

mora mahā anugraha bhailā yāka prati
si janaro haro mai bibhava sampatti
parama pramatta hove dhanara garbbata
*lokako namāne moka nalave manata*⁶⁴

[I have great mercy on whom: I deduce the money and wealth of him also: He becomes absolute proud in power of wealth: Don't obey anybody neither remembers me.]

Similarly, he tried to build the people mentally bold to face the death of the kin and kiths—

pañca bhutī deha *īse naṣṭa hui*
ātmāra maraṇa nāi
hena bimariṣi *karai yito prāṇī*
*nāthakai śokar ṭhāi*⁶⁵

⁶² *HU*, vs.258

⁶³ *Bhāg.*, 8th Canto, vs.638

⁶⁴ *Ibid*, vs.490

⁶⁵ *Ibid*, 10th Canto, vs.122

system in the then society. Earlier, only the Brahmins had been allowed to read or hear the holy books like the Vedas and the Srimad Bhāgavata. Now Śaṅkaradeva opened the door of religion to all and sundry. The shudras, the Muslims, the tribals—all were initiated by him in the path-breaking religious system.”⁶⁸ Śaṅkaradeva’s teaching resulted that the devotees treat each other as a part of God. Later on in his “religious order the devotees greeted each other by touching one another’s feet. They learnt from him that whenever anyone bowed before them, one was actually bowing before the lord who resides within them. This conception helped demolish their ego and imbued them with devotion and humility.”⁶⁹

Love towards Other Creatures:

Śaṅkaradeva had shown deep love towards other creatures also. During his childhood, Śaṅkaradeva captured wild animals and birds with his friends. They played with them sometime and later freed in the jungle. Similarly, the KGC recorded that during his second pilgrimage Śaṅkaradeva freed one deer and peacock from the trap set by hunter, however some money as price were left in the cage for the hunter⁷⁰.

Similarly, he propagated ‘Every human being and every living creature are a part of the God and therefore pay respect to them’. Śaṅkaradeva wrote—

*savāro hrdaye biṣṇu āchanta sākṣāta
hena yāni asura swabhāva eri
samasta prāṇika pūjā biṣṇu buddhi kari*⁷¹

[Lord Viṣṇu resides in the heart of all: Realizing it let all give up demon’s nature: Worship all creatures as Viṣṇu Himself.]

⁶⁸ Borkakoti, 1995, p.10

⁶⁹ Ibid, p.108

⁷⁰ KGC, p.116

⁷¹ *Kīrt.*, vs. 359

Reputation:

Śaṅkaradeva taught his followers that one must be concerned with his reputation seriously. If one loses his money, health and pleasure, all could be recovered latter. But if he lost respect and trust of others, it would be difficult for him to live.

*dhana jana bibhava sakale naṣṭa bheila
ito ghora nigrāhata kichu nāhi kaṣṭa
yama yātanāko lāgi nakampe hṛdaya
loka apabādateśa mora mahābhaya*⁷²

[If money, manpower and effluence perish all: Don't have any trouble in this loss: Not beats heart in the threat of *Yama*'s punishment: I have great fear in public's false accusation.]

5.4.3: Means and End of Life

Śaṅkaradeva taught his disciples that getting birth as human being it-self is a great achievement. So, one should not spoil his life. One must try to optimize his human birth by engaging himself in good deeds.⁷³ He preached that only material progress is not sufficient to bring glory in life. Spiritual progress is also important. However, Śaṅkaradeva never advised his disciples to retire from their household lives and occupations. He taught how one could attain the goal of life by a perfect admixture of work, knowledge and devotion to the lord. He wrote—

*hena yāni sukhe gr̥hate thāki
hari hari bolā samāje dāki*⁷⁴

[Knowing this stay at home peacefully: Hey assembly, pronounce *hari hari*.]

*hena yāni save caliyo gr̥haka
pāibā saṁsārar pāra*

⁷² *Bhāg.*, 8th Canto, vs.436

⁷³ Borkakoti, 1995, p.155

⁷⁴ *Kīrt.*, vs.1578

tāka gṛhabāse ki karibe pāre
*āhmāta bhakati yāra*⁷⁵

[Knowing this everybody go to home: All of you would get ultimate goal of life: What could do to him by household responsibilities: Who has devotion to Me.]

Śaṅkaradeva tried to teach his followers that the ultimate goal of life is not salvation, but is state of mind where a person goes beyond all earthly attachments. If one achieves such a situation, he would be indifferent in peace or sorrow, wealth, lust, salvation etc. The other people could also get such virtues if they take the companion of a perfect devotee.

tohmār bhaktara saṅga pāyā anupama
*dharmma artha kāmā mokṣa karai tṛṇa sama*⁷⁶

[They, in the matchless company of Thine devotees: Consider religion, wealth, lust and salvation as worthless straw.]

sampadako jānā nuhi sampada
jānā āpadako nuhi āpada
parama sampada hari bhakati
*āpada jānā hari birakti*⁷⁷

[Worldly weal is not a real one: Worldly woe is not a real one: Devotion to Hari is really great weal: Aversion to Hari is indeed real evil.]

Although Śaṅkaradeva never asked to detach from household activities, but he tried to teach that so much attachment to household activities and affairs is a barrier in one's path of development. So he advised not to stick to earthly affairs.

eḍāya saṁsāra kleśa kutsita biṣaya sukha
tāsambāra nāhi abhilāsa
ekabāra mātra tayu caraṇa cintile yito
*tāra sukha nuhi gṛhabāsa*⁷⁸

[Get rid of worldly sufferings and interest in nasty worldly enjoyment: One should not fond of them: If a person meditates on Thy feet only once: He finds in household no comfort.]

⁷⁵ *Bhāg.*, 10th Canto, vs.981

⁷⁶ *Kīrt.*, vs. 1657

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, vs.2034

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, vs.1668

Śaṅkaradeva illustrates with examples in his different compositions about the sufferings or sad full ending of a person's life who believes that wealth, power and own family are the ultimate pleasure. All these earthly belongings are completely temporary like the water on the leaves of lotus. So, one should not boast of it.

dhana jana yata putra paribāra
esava biṣa samāna
ehikṣane āse ehikṣane nāi
tāteka nāteka māyā
padma-patra jala jīvana cañcala
athira manuṣya kāyā⁷⁹

[Wealth, man-power, son and wife: All are equal to poison: Sometimes they are here, sometimes they are not with you: These are all illusions: Like the waters on the leaves of lotus: The life of human being is transitory.]

Similarly, he wrote that wealth, families as well as powerful responsibilities are giving pleasure at first but they may cause distress later. One could not take with him the money and physical strength if he dies. Only the good deeds pursued by him remains forever. So, one must try to perform good deed instead of involving solely in earning earthly materials.

yena biṣalatā caya phale phule
āche jaka maka kari
prathame sundara dekhante pācata
paraśile yāi mari
sehimete eṭo putra dwārā dhana
biṣayata yata sukha
prathame ānanda milay pācata
gucante parama dukha
yata dekhā dhana śarīra sajjana
marile lage nāyā⁸⁰

[Like the *bisalatā* blooms with flower and fruits: They are looking beautiful but dries if touched: In the same way the pleasure derived from wealth, family and power: Gives immense pleasure at first, but causes misery later on: All the wealth and physical supremacy would not accompany if one dies.]

⁷⁹ *Bhāg., 1st Canto, vs.257*

⁸⁰ *Ibid, 10th Canto, vs.511*

He also prescribes ways to reduce responsibility—

kichu kichu kari biṣaya eḍanta
*kṛṣṇata arpiyā cittra*⁸¹

[Give up the worldly attachments little by little: Dedicating the heart to Lord Krishna.]

5.4.4: Personality Development

Śaṅkaradeva insisted his disciples to lead a pious and disciplined life style. He observed their lives and doings minutely. If he saw any kind of irresponsibility on their part he did not bear that at all. He even once admonished his most able disciple Mādhavadeva when the later dared to cross a wild buffalo by front. When the matter was reported to Śaṅkaradeva by other disciples, he asked explanation for such unnecessary heroic action. Mādhavadeva then submitted that deaths only came at the time fixed by destiny. The buffalo could do nothing harm to him if he was not scheduled to die at that time. Śaṅkaradeva got angry with the reply and told him that death could overcome anybody even ahead of time. An earthen lamp could be kept alight with the help of out covers; but without the cover the lamp could get extinguished even if there is sufficient amount of oil.⁸² Śaṅkaradeva wrote that the great personalities should always behave rationally because they are imitated by common people.

śreṣṭha jane kare yadi garihita karma
*dekhā dekhi anye tāke bole dharma*⁸³

[If a great person performs condemnable task: By observing other common masses regard it holy task.]

⁸¹ *Kīrt.*, vs. 1610

⁸² KGC, p.84

⁸³ *Bhāg.*, 6th Canto, vs.160

It is already mentioned that Śaṅkaradeva advised in *Bhāgavata* that everyone must spend one-fifth of his income on personality development. By personality development he means that the people should try to acquire some good practices by giving up bad habits like gossiping, greed, lust, craziness for power etc. He regarded lust, anger, addiction to alcohol, craziness for reputation, affection etc. are the barriers in one's personality development.

*kāma krodha mada māna moha meri
aisava bairī biśāla*⁸⁴

[Lust, anger, alcohol, unnecessary affection for honour: All are gigantic enemy.]

Śaṅkaradeva did not approve the behavior like laziness, underestimate to the problems etc.

*prathama byadhita yeve nediya āṣudhi
pāce pīḍā karante haraya save buddhi*⁸⁵

[Not taking treatment at first to a disease: Lost all sense when it pains more.]

5.4.5: Ways for a Peaceful Life

Śaṅkaradeva gave guidelines to people how to make life happy in. Happiness in life would not come automatically; it must be brought one himself by performing certain norms.

*prathame leibeka hena jani sādhusaṅga
karibeka āna biṣayata āśā bhaṅga
samstake īśwarata arcibeka citte
uttamata prīti karibeka yathocite
samānata maitrī dina daridraka dāyā
karibe bhāvanā guru upadeśa pāyā
satya śouca ahiṁsā śikhibe sama dama
sukha dukha hariṣa biṣāde heibe sama
savāke sahibe āru heibe akūṭila
brahmacarya dharibeka heibe suśīla*

⁸⁴ *Bargīta*

⁸⁵ *Bhāg.*, 10th Canto, vs.135

*upayukta pātra buji parhibeka beda
savāte dhekhiba īśwaraka aviccheda
deha grhādita eribeka abhimāna
nirjjana sthānata karibeka avasthāna
pindhiba ānande cīra bākali basana
yehi mile tāhāte santtuṣṭa haiba mana⁸⁶*

[Realizing it, first you take the companion of good people: Control your greedy mind for earthly enjoyments: Regard everybody as a part of God: Take care adequately who is eligible for it: Become friends maintaining equal status, provide helping hand to meager: Be thinkable after receiving advice from teachers: Learn truth, honesty, non-violence and calmness: Try to be indifferent in happiness and sorrow, peace and distress: Tolerate everybody and be uncomplicated: Become pious with control in sexuality: Read the *Veda* with qualified person: See as God everybody: Give up ego at home and physical power: Stay at crowd less place: Wear happily the bark of trees: Satisfy your mind at whatever you get.]

5.4.6: Spiritual Upliftment

Śaṅkaradeva always tried his best for spiritual upliftment of his disciples. He not only delivered lectures on spiritual topics but also kept on monitoring the activities of his disciples. Similarly, through his writings he wanted to morally boost the people to a stage where they could regard all people equally, could accept win and loss easily, could enjoy peace and sorrow in the same way, could be patient in ups and downs in life etc.

*brāhmaṇara caṇḍālara nibicāri kula
dātāta corata yāra dr̥ṣṭi samatula
nīcata sād̥huta yāra bheila eka jnāna
tākese paṇḍita buli si si sarbbajāna⁸⁷*

[One who doesn't search the caste distinction between *Brāhmaṇa* and *Caṇḍāla*: Who has equal attention on donors and thief: Who could give same treatment to honest or dishonest persons: Is accepted as all known scholar by everybody.]

⁸⁶ NNSS, vs.142-146

⁸⁷ Bhāg., 11th Canto, vs.257

Śaṅkaradeva taught the people that one should not be impatient if he faces sufferings because it is not permanent. Both sorrow and happiness are moving cyclically. Nobody could resist the change.

*cakrakāre ghure saṁsārara sukha-dukha
āpada sampada āsi nile karmmagati
daivaka bādhiba pāre kāhāra śakati*⁸⁸

[Happiness and sorrow in life moves cyclically: Debacle and prosperity goes according to result of work: Nobody has the power to stop the divine fortune.]

Again he wrote, in due course of time the affluent may become poor, or meager may become rich; the heaven dweller would go to hell or hell reside might promote to heaven. Happiness or sadness would not remain in the same place always.

*mādhavara māyāra kamane pāve anta
eiśwarya daridra hove dukhī dhanavanta
swargīyo naraī narakīyo swarge yāya
sarbbakāle sukha-dukha eko sthāne nāi
saṁsārara sukha-dukha yānā save māyā
tilekate antara meghara yena chāyā*⁸⁹

[Who get the ending of Madhava's illusions: Richer become poor, poor turns into affluent: heaven dweller goes to hell or hell resider might promote to heaven: All the time happiness and sorrow do not remain in the same place: Happiness and sadness all are illusions: Suddenly disappear like the shadow of cloud.]

Śaṅkaradeva also tried to aware the people about different constraints which come in the way of one's spiritual uplift. Pride, deep attachment to earthly responsibilities etc. are constraints mentioned by him.

*strī dhana yana youvana made
andha hovai bidyā garbbara pade*⁹⁰

[Pride in having woman, wealth, relatives, youth: And in high learning makes a man blind.]

⁸⁸ Ibid, 8th Canto, vs.1428

⁸⁹ 8th Canto, vss.845-846

⁹⁰ Kīrt., vs.92

narakara patha iṭo gr̥havāsa
ātese yāhāra rati
bhāryyaka putraka puṣibe yatane
*eḍai trijagata pati*⁹¹

[If a person takes too interest in household life: He treads on path of hells: While maintaining with care his wife and children: He forgets ‘Master of three Worlds’.]

5.4.7: Sexuality

Sex is important for body and mind of a person which makes him economically more productive. “Sex actually has a physiological reason which makes a person blissful; because the body is flooded with oxytocin—a stress reducing hormone, a few minutes after climax. This makes a person feel relaxed and happy. People who had sex the night before work were more likely to immerge themselves at their jobs and enjoy their time the office the next day than those who didn’t make time for sex.”⁹² But an indisciplined sexual life may lead a person towards disaster. He may be the victim of sexually transmitted diseases. Extra marital affairs results nothing but displeasure among family members. This is what Śaṅkaradeva exactly wanted to teach the people. He do recognized the importance of sex in life. So he never took the side of celibacy. He never asked his disciples to forsake their spouses or children. Even the youngest son of Śaṅkaradeva, Haricaraṇa Ṭhākura was born when he was in late eighties. A number of verses composed by him contains with deep sentiment of love. He believed those who are passionate in sexuality would be able to purify their minds if they discuss about sexuality openly instead of dominating it. He wrote—

⁹¹ Ibid, vs.198

⁹² Hrustic, A. (2017). *10 Reasons You Should Have Sex Right Now*.

*śṛṅgāra rase yāra āche rati
āke śuni hoika nirmala mati*

*kāma sagare sukhe hoiba pāra
eto kāma jaya kṛṣṇara kathā⁹³*

[Those given to the sentiment of love: May purify their minds, hearing these: Happily shall overcome sea of lust: This conquest of lust relates Krishna's deeds.]

But Śaṅkaradeva's acceptance of the importance of sex in life should not be mistaken as he encouraged people to be sexually undisciplined. Rather, he appealed the people not to be lustful through his writings. He described vividly the troubles faced by sex passionate persons. He wrote that a sex addicted person would become shameless and loses all his respects in the society; even put his life in danger.

*kāmātura bhaile jīvako ucharge
erai yata bhaya lajjā⁹⁴*

[If become lustful, sacrifices life: Give up all fear and shame.]

Again he showed in his *Keli Gopāla* and *Pārijāta-Haraṇa* dramas the shameful condition of a lustful man. The person has to be a slave of impious women who has no option but to obey her orders.

*kāmātura puruṣaka dukha dekhāvala: strī bhaila rājā:
kāmātura tanikara dāsa: strī āṅgā pāli:
sarbbathā dhika: ihāka jānaba⁹⁵*

[See the pains bear by a lustful person: Woman becomes master: The lustful her slave: carrying out her orders: Everybody censures him: Know it well.]

*kāmātura puruṣaka aicana avasthā:
strī ye āṅgā kare: se avaśye karate lāge⁹⁶*

[The lustful man faces this pathetic condition: What woman orders: He must execute that.]

⁹³ *Kīrt.*, vss.974-977

⁹⁴ *Rukmiṇī-Haraṇa Kāvya*, vs.278

⁹⁵ *Keli Gopāla*

⁹⁶ *Pārijāta-Haraṇa Nāta*

Similarly, Śaṅkaradeva also prohibits unnatural sexes like oral sex and sex with animals. He wrote—

*yito nija bhārjyaka brāhmaṇa anācāra
kāme moha haiyā karei mukhata śṛṅgāra*⁹⁷

[The impious Brāhmaṇa who with his own wife: Do sex in mouth after becoming senseless in lust.]

*lāja kāja marjyadā erile yena naṭa
mile chāgalito dwija henase lampaṭa*⁹⁸

[Giving up shame and respect like a notorious man: The Brāhmaṇa was so characterless who even meet with goat.]

Similarly, Śaṅkaradeva regarded sex with woman during her period as sinful activity.

*ṛtu samayata strīka karibe ālāpa
tāta bāje nārī gamanata sije pāpa*⁹⁹

[During menstrual, only chat with woman: Besides it if one goes for sex would immerse into sins.]

Illegal sex and extramarital affairs are also considered as vice by Śaṅkaradeva.

*agamyāgamana pāpa yi jane ācarai
yito stri agamya nare rati karai*¹⁰⁰

[One who acquires the sin of involving prohibited sex: The woman who indulge in illegal sex with man.]

yito nārī kare para puruṣata rati

*kāmātura hūyā yito papī dwijagana
parara bhāryyāka kare mukhata cumbana*¹⁰¹

[The woman who establishes affair with other man: Becoming lustful the sinful Brāhmaṇa: Kisses in the mouth of other's wife.]

⁹⁷ Bhāg., 6th Canto, vs.16

⁹⁸ *ibid.*, vs.369

⁹⁹ NNSS, vs.351

¹⁰⁰ Bhāg., 6th Canto, vs.37

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 3rd Canto, vs.287

5.4.8: Time Management

Śaṅkaradeva taught his disciples that discipline is the key of success. Discipline nurses in the mind of a person determination and resolution. These qualities are in turn develops one's own personalities, thereby enriching society. "Attending the prasangas at the appointed time and chanting the name of God to the accompaniment of musical instruments were intended to discipline the mind of the individual."¹⁰² Śaṅkaradeva considered unnecessary debates and arguments only as cause of losses of one's invaluable times. So, he restrained his disciples from involving in unnecessary debates. He restricted himself and also did not allow other disciples to participate in the arguments with the scholars, priests and whoever came to argue for the sake of argument.¹⁰³

In his life also, Śaṅkaradeva managed his time skillfully. He obeyed a tight schedule regularly starting from his student life. Wonderfully, even after crossing the age of hundred years, Śaṅkaradeva got up early in the morning, did *nāma-kīrtana* with other devotees, took part in discussion session for hours, had lunch and took a nap, sat with a group of selected members to finalize about the future strategy of *EŚHND* in the evening and then sat up to late night for literary activities.

Through his writings, Śaṅkaradeva appealed the people to be cautious in spending of time. Although human's life span is long but the actual productive time is very limited. So he/she must spend it rationally.

*manuṣyara āyu śata bariṣa saṁkhāta
ardheka biphale yāi jānibā nidrāta*

¹⁰² Murthy, H. V. S. (1978). *The Lasting Values of Śaṅkaradeva's Teachings*. in B. P. Chaliha (ed.), Śaṅkaradeva: Studies in Culture. p.39

¹⁰³ Borkakoti, 1995, p.141

*bimśati bariṣa āra yāi omalante
 neya daśa bariṣ dhanaka upārjjante
 br̥ddha kāle yāya śeṣa bariṣa bimśati
 eko kārya sādhibāka nāhike śakati¹⁰⁴*

[Man's life-span is of one hundred years: Half of it goes away in sleep: Twenty years go away in childhood play: Man spend ten years in earning money: Next twenty years roll away in old age: When there is no strength to perform any task.]

Again, he said that if a man wastes his time in less important activities, he invites his own destruction.

*dina bheile dhana kuṭumbara cintā kare
 nidrā stri ālāpane rātri āyu hare
 michā biṣayaka mātra karai abhilāṣa
 yihetu nedekhai nare āpuna bināśa¹⁰⁵*

[In day time thinks about wealth and relatives: At night time passes with sleep and chatting with wife: Wish for only false power: For this becomes unable to foresee owns annihilation.]

5.4.9: Warning and Vices

Śaṅkaradeva endeavored to free his followers from involving any kind of vices. He warned his followers not to do any kind of crime, particularly not to commit crimes like adultery, theft, lying, being violent to other person or animal, involving in quarrel etc. Through his writings, Śaṅkaradeva tried to boost the moral power of the people so that they refrain from such vices.

He warned that if people immersed only in earthly pleasure, he would be unable to foresee his danger in future —

*biṣaya sukhata bheileka bhola
 nedekhe mṛtyu āsi pāile kola¹⁰⁶*

[He was thus lost in worldly pleasure: He failed to see his death was near.]

¹⁰⁴ *Kīrt.*, vss. 355-356

¹⁰⁵ *Bhāg.*, 2nd Canto, Verse No.7

¹⁰⁶ *Kīrt.*, vs. 493.

Śaṅkaradeva also warned the people not to be blind by accepting wealth and power as his master.

āpuni biṣayī huyā yito nare
biṣayīka guru mānai
yena andhalāka andhe upadeśe
biṣṇuka sito nāyānai¹⁰⁷

[If a man being attached to wealth: accepts wealth as his master: This is an act of one blind advising another: He fails in understanding Lord Viṣṇu.]

Again, he cautioned the people not to be spoiled their lives by running incessantly after earthly pleasure.

biṣayata yata sukha antata samste dukha
tāka yatna kari marā br̥thā
yito śarīrara arthe aneka pravandha kari
iyo mahā āpadara ghara¹⁰⁸

[All the pleasure derived from earthly responsibilities: Gives ultimately innumerable pain: Meaningless to spoil life for it: The physical body for which: People perform numerous activities: Is the home of severe problems.]

Śaṅkaradeva warned the people not to be proud of wealth, physical strength and enjoyment of life as all are diminishable subject to time.

tejiyoka dhana jana jīvanara garbba
kāle pāile eketile haribeka sarbba¹⁰⁹

[Give up proud of wealth, physical power and life: Time could loot them at once.]

Śaṅkaradeva regarded the following activities as vice—killing of Brāhmaṇa, patricide, drinking wine, involving in prohibited sex, killing of cow, killing of woman, stealing gold, enmities against friends etc.

brahmabadha piṭṛ badha surāpāna
agamyāgamana karai
garu tiri mārāi suvarṇaka harai
mittrara droha ācarei¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁷ Ibid, vs. 343

¹⁰⁸ Bhāg., 10th Canto, vs.127

¹⁰⁹ Ibid, 11th Canto, vs.351

[Killing Brahmana, patricide, drinking wine, involving in prohibited sex: killing of cow, killing of woman, stealing gold, and enmities against friends.]

Lying is also another serious vice particularly one who lies in assembly even if he was an eye witness; one who lies in selling and purchase.

*sākṣī heiyā sabhāta asatya bole bānī
kraya-bikrayato michā māte yito prāṇī*¹¹¹

[Speak false in assembly even being an eye witness: One who lies in selling and purchase.]

Śaṅkaradeva wrote that one who does not keep his promise is bound to go hell.

*āge dibo buli yibā pāche nede dāna
durgora rourava narakata hove sthāna*¹¹²

[One who promised earlier to donate something but later denied: Is bound to be placed in hell.]

Śaṅkaradeva also depicts a terrible picture in *Bhāgavata (naraka yātanā)* how the people who committed various vices in his life time are given punishment by the attendant of *Yama* after death in hell. He mentioned twenty eight types of hell. The persons committed vices like stealing wealth and wife of others, being violent in earning, kill animals for pleasure, eating meat by killing owns domestic animal, killing Brāhmaṇa, adopts other's religion by giving up own without facing any danger, being proud in knowledge, not receiving guest at home etc. are punished in those hells.

5.4.10: Prohibiting Use of Alcohol

Śaṅkaradeva prohibited use of alcohol or other drugs and tobaccos among his disciples. In fact, one condition to become a devotee in his religious order was that the person must give up the habit of having addictive commodities. During his time

¹¹⁰ *Kīrt.*, vs.182

¹¹¹ *Bhāg.*, 6th Canto, vs.44

¹¹² *Ibid*, 8th Canto, vs.428

offering wine was an integral part of religious rituals observed by both tribal and non-tribal people. Śaṅkaradeva disregarded this ritual. However, Śaṅkaradeva was so much practical that he never de-recognize the utility of alcohol in human life. He gave the description of preparing beef with wine by a *Caṇḍālinī* (an outcast woman) in *Bhāgavata*. He wrote—

vede bole surāka karibe mātṛa ghrāṇa
*kadācito nakaribe amadyaka pāna*¹¹³

[Veda allows only tasting alcohol: Never drink too much of it.]

But he regarded drinking of wine for pleasure as vice. He wrote that the *Kṣattriya* and *Brāhmaṇa* who drink wine for pleasure are bound to go hell.

kṣattriya brāhmaṇe surā piye pramādata
*pare sito pāpī araspāna narakata*¹¹⁴

[The warrior and priest who drink wine for pleasure: Those sinful persons go to hell certainly.]

Again, he wrote that

bipra biprapatnī yito kare surā pāna
*antakāle yamadute duiro lave prāṇa*¹¹⁵

[The *Brāhmaṇa* and his wife who take wine, their lives would be taken away by the representative of *Yama* at last.]

5.5: Impact of Śaṅkaradeva's *Bhakti* Movement on the Human Resource Development of Assam

Śaṅkaradeva's contribution to human development was so strong that it continues for centuries in Assam. "He taught the Assamese how to live hygienically and neatly in cottages built around a courtyard for each family. The Assamese lived a

¹¹³ *NNSS*, vs.350

¹¹⁴ *Bhāg.*, 3rd Canto, vs.286

¹¹⁵ *Ibid*, 6th Canto, vs.47

far better, more meaningful and spiritually richer life than most other communities in India till about the fifties of the last century. The per capita income also was higher than the national average.”¹¹⁶ Even during his life time, Śaṅkaradeva had inspired the people to live a decent, refined, cultured, materially affluent and spiritually enlightened life. The influence still continues. In this way Śaṅkaradeva had brought a socio-cultural renaissance through his Neo-Vaishnavism in the region.¹¹⁷ Śaṅkaradeva’s model of economic independence for *Satras* latter on influenced the economic organization of households in the villages. “Each household has a bari to produce fruits and vegetables, a fishery, a cow or two for milk etc. It is due to him that the villagers in Assam seem to enjoy a better quality of life than their urban counterparts in the same income category.”¹¹⁸

The literary movement initiated by Śaṅkaradeva proved to be a tremendous trendsetter. A host of people were not only inspired to undertake literary activities but also involved in educating others.

Many of the early Vaisnavite reformers took upon themselves the task of educating their pupils. Madhavadeva himself taught Rāmacarana (his nephew), Haricarana and Purusottama, the youngest son and grandson of Śaṅkaradeva respectively. He also imparted education to Paramānanda, son of Nārāyana Thākura, Acyuta Sarmā, Bar-Visnu Ātā and Lakṣmana Ojā. Bhattadeva, the Satrādhikār of the Pātbāusi Satra and the father of Assamese prose literature, conducted a regular *tol* in the precincts of his Satra and it is narrated in the biography by Rāmarāya that 1000 students received education from him. Rāmānanda Dvija, a biographer of Vamsigopāladeva, states that he received education from Vanamālīdeva, the founder of the Dakṣiṇpāt Satra. The medieval *caritas* record many instances to show that the Vaisnavite teachers were greatly responsible for diffusing knowledge among the masses. The *Satras* imparted both formal and informal education. It imparted formal education through the *tol*s and *catuspathis* maintained by some of the affluent *Satras* and informal education which was more effective than the former in the case of the masses,

¹¹⁶ Das, H. P. (2009). *Socio-Cultural Ethos in Economic Development of Assam*. Dialogue, Vol. 10.

¹¹⁷ Mazumdar, B. (ed.). (2015). *Descriptive Bibliography of Śaṅkaradeva Studies. Vol-I*. p.47

¹¹⁸ Sharma, A. (2012). *The Persistence of the Rural*.

consisted of sermons, exposition of scriptures and discussions on philosophical and theological matters during the prayer services.¹¹⁹

Similarly, Sankaradeva's another unique contribution *Nāmghar* later on became as the social education center or community development center for the people of Assam. In the *Nāmghar* instead of putting an idol, books like *Bhāgavata*, *Kīrttana*, *Nāmghoṣā* etc. are placed and worshipped. The illiterate men and women could learn what were there in those scriptures by listening to recitation, discussion and interpretation held in the *Nāmghar*. Śaṅkaradeva was successful in cultivating the eagerness towards knowledge in the minds of people which continued to modern time as well. For instance, the 1951 census showed that Assam's literacy rate was 28.53% as against 18.33% for all India.

Śaṅkaradeva was successful in building a society free of inequality, hatred and untouchability. Particularly, untouchability was unknown to the people of Assam as evident from Mahatma Gandhi's comment. When he came to Assam on his mission for eradicating untouchability he was overwhelmed to see that his dream of a *rāma-rājya* (i.e., an ideal society) already materialized here. He said, 'Assam, indeed, is fortunate, for Sankaradeva has five centuries back, given the Assamese people an ideal which is also my ideal of Ram-Rajya'. Similarly, Śaṅkaradeva's *Bhakti* Movement came in a big way against the spread of feudalism. After the kings and their officials initiated into *EṢHND*, they restrained themselves from feudal torture and punishment upon the subjects.¹²⁰

¹¹⁹ Retrieved from <https://www.tributetosankaradeva.org>

¹²⁰ Borkakoti, 1995, p.97

Śaṅkaradeva's effort to teach the people to be loveable towards other creatures was very much effective. The people particularly the devotees restrained themselves from killing animals. Ralph Fitch, an English traveler, who visited Assam (the Koch kingdom) during the time of Mādhavadeva observed

There they be all Gentiles and they will kill nothing. They have hospitals for sheep, goat, dogs, cats, birds and for all living creatures. When they are old and lame, they keep them until they die. If a man catch or buy any quick thing in other places and bring it thither, they will give him money for it, or other victuals, and keep it in their hospitals or let it go. They will give meat to the ants.¹²¹

Śaṅkaradeva's *Bhakti* Movement not only put a check on the then prevailing derogatory situation of woman but gradually helps to enhance their socio-economic status. Although the women were not getting chances of formal education but they were well versed with the knowledge of the scriptures through informal mode. Śaṅkaradeva and other leaders of his order provided a good amount of freedom to the women. Administrative responsibilities were given to some women devotees. For instance, the responsibility of *Medhi* was assigned to *Āi Dāyāla* (wife of *telī Kṛṣṇa Ātai*).¹²² Not only that, Śaṅkaradeva's own granddaughter in law *Āi Kanaklata* took charge as the head of the order. "With an extra ordinary zeal, she made definite contributions to the growth of the whole Sattrā system and organized a group of twelve apostles and deputed them to various parts of Assam, deputing them to expand the Sattrā network and to reach out to more and more people in different places."¹²³

Thus, the growth model which Śaṅkaradeva adopted via Human Resource Development was holistic and farsighted. UNDP Human Development Report, 2016

¹²¹ Cited by Gait, 2006, p.62

¹²² KGC, p.458

¹²³ Kakoti, P. & P. J. Mahanta. (2012). *Understanding Women in the Religious Institutions: A Study With Reference To the Sattras of Assam*. IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science; Vol. I, Issue 5, pp. 19-22

set a new goal of development under the heading ‘The World We Want’. It focuses on five categories—people, prosperity, peace, partnership and planet. Under the category of people it aims to end poverty and hunger in all forms and ensure dignity and equality; under prosperity it aims to ensure prosperity and fulfilling lives in harmony with nature; under peace it aims to foster peaceful, just and inclusive societies; under partnership it aims to implement the agenda through a solid global partnership and under planet it aims to protect our planet’s natural resources and climate for future generations. In the present study it is found that Śaṅkaradeva worked hard to fulfill all the objectives set in the UNDP HDR, 2016, five centuries ago.

It is also found that Śaṅkaradeva worked hard to enhance the work culture among the disciples. But in later period the exploitative or regressive taxation policy of the Āhom kings invites unwarranted accusation that Śaṅkaradeva’s *EŚHND* had made the disciples idle and unproductive. The fact was that the burden of *paik* system gradually becoming heavier on the peasants. Previously the unit *paik* was $\frac{3}{4}$, i.e., out of four cultivators one had to work for three months to the king. But the unit *paik* was gradually rises to $\frac{2}{3}$. It intensified their physical burden. To get rid of compulsory physical labour they could not adopt the alternative option of paying revenue in cash as they could hardly produce any surplus. “But as because money was neither available nor it was possible for them to pay revenue in cash, the paiks silently submitted to the system and were looking for any opportunity to escape from it. It is found that the paiks in order to avoid that compulsory manual service became bhakats

or residential devotees of the Satras, who as a matter of law, were permitted exemption from such compulsion.”¹²⁴

5.6: Present Scenario of Human Development of Assam

The Human Development Report, 2016 of UNDP estimates India's HDI Value at 0.624 as against world's HDI Value of 0.710. Assam Human Development Report, 2014 puts the HDI in Assam at 0.557 indicating that the level of overall human development in the state is just about half of the desired level. The report further observed that achievements in all three key dimensions of human development, that is, education, health and income are about halfway with education being at about two-thirds followed by health and income which are just at the half mark of the desired level. The district ranking based on the values of overall HDI puts Kamrup Metro at the top (with a value of HDI 0.703) followed by Jorhat (HDI 0.655). The lowest value is obtained in the district of Hailakandi (HDI 0.437). Life Expectancy at Birth in Assam was 54 years against 68.3 years in all India. Mean Year of Schooling (MYS) for Assam is estimated at 6.17 against national average of 4.4 years. The estimated average Per Capita Annual Income (PCAI) is found to be Rs.24,660. In Morigaon district, the HDI Value was estimated at 0.576 (Rank 13). Life Expectancy at Birth was estimated at 67.42 years, MYS was 6.54 and PCAI was Rs.17,196. Similarly, for Nagaon district the HDI Value was 0.592 (Rank 9). Life Expectancy at Birth was estimated at 58.24 years, MYS was 6.64 and PCAI was Rs.25,884.

¹²⁴ Gogoi, 2002, p.126