

Five Skandhas, Prajnaparamita Heart Sutra, and Business Management

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IJMSSSR 2022

VOLUME 4

ISSUE 4 JULY - AUGUST

ISSN: 2582 - 0265

Abstract: Buddha Shakyamuni believe all sentient beings are "aggregated" by the Five Skandhas (Aggregates), which includes: (1) Rūpa Aggregate, (2) Feeling Aggregate, (3) Preception Aggregate, (4) Volition Aggregate, and (5) Consciousness Aggregate. Prajnaparamita Heart Sutra (The Heart Sutra of the Perfection of Wisdom) is one of the most important Buddhist sutras. Among the many teachings taught by Buddha Shakyamuni to his disciples, the Large Prajñāpāramitā Sūtras is the highest sutra on the intellectual level. It is a collection of all the teachings of prajna sutras in 22 years and the Prajnaparamita Heart Sutra belongs to one of the 600 volumes. The Prajnaparamita Heart Sutra is the only sutra that condenses the vast content and thoughtful essence of the Large Prajñāpāramitā Sūtras into just a few hundred words. There is no certainty of success or failure in business management, and it is the result of the combination of different causes and effects. By awareness of impermanence and dependent origination dharma, we can do our best to keep calm to face the success and failure in business management.

Keywords: Skandhas, Aggregates, Prajnaparamita, Heart Sutra, Business Management, Humanistic Buddhism, Hsing Yun

Five Skandhas

The empty nature of the Four Elements manifests in existence; the incorporation of the Five Skandhas (Aggregates) is not real either. This is the explanation of all phenomena in the universe by Buddha Shakyamuni. All sentient beings are unaware and often persist to the Five Skandhas (Aggregates) as "ego". If there is an "I" existing and causing trouble and pain.

The bodies of all sentient beings are the aggregates of suffering. There is suffering from greed, hatred, and delusion psychologically and from aging, sickness, and death physically. There is the pain of worrying about clothing, food, and love and separation within the family. There is the struggle between right and wrong, and the pain of hatred in society. There are wind, water, fire, earthquakes, military disasters and other sufferings in the world. All sentient beings may understand "suffering" as learning Buddhism in the very first beginning; people may seek "liberation" only after realizing "suffering".

All sentient beings are combinations of material and spirit. The material is the aggregates of four elements, so called bodies, given by parents. The name of Buddhism is "Rūpa Aggregate".

Buddha Shakyamuni believe all sentient beings are "aggregated" by the Five Skandhas (Aggregates) (Sanskrit: pañca-skandha, Pali: pañca khandhā), which includes: (1) Rūpa Aggregate (Sanskrit: rūpa-skandha), (2) Feeling Aggregate (Sanskrit: vedanā-skandha), (3) Preception Aggregate (Sanskrit: sajjñā-skandha), (4) Volition Aggregate (Sanskrit: sajskāra-skandha), and (5) Consciousness Aggregate (Sanskrit: vijñāna-skandha). Buddha Shakyamuni discovered that the Five Skandhas (Aggregates) are all arising and passing away due to Dependent Origination. There is no constant "ego" in all physical and mental actions. For instance, the physical body belongs to the substance. The physical world is constantly changing and all cells in the physical body have been dissimilar second by second due to metabolism as aging. Mental states are same as physical world. Thoughts appear and disappear in an instant, there is also no constant "ego". (Hsing Yun, 2005a)

The first (Rūpa Aggregate) of the Five Skandhas (Aggregates) belongs to material, and the last four belong to spirit, which are the elements that make up the all sentient beings. It is unwise to be attached to the Five Skandhas

(Aggregates) and cause nuisances. Buddha Shakyamuni taught us how to recognize the truth and realize the wisdom of No-self, so that we can completely let go of “ego”. All sentient beings should not worry about physical things, get rid of suffering and perseverance. There is the way to liberate from the Cycle of Rebirth, and obtain freedom.

"Rūpa" refers to substance and “Rūpa-skandha” refers to the aggregation of all substances that have form and exist objectively. In other words, it means material phenomena nowadays. Rūpa Aggregate (Sanskrit: rūpa-skandha) includes four material factors: (1) earth, (2) water, (3) fire, and (4) wind. The "Four Elements" refer to elements of combining objects: (1) earth, (2) water, (3) fire, and (4) wind. The nature of (1) earth is hard, (2) water is damp, (3) fire is warm, and (4) wind is fluid. Hsing Yun (2005b)

According to Abhidharma-mahāvibhāṣā-sāstra (Sanskrit: Abhidharma Mahāvibhāṣā Śāstra), there are three types of Rūpa Aggregate. Firstly, tangible substance, such as shape or color, can be seen by eyes (visible) but also can be hinder by other objects such as hand or wall, called “visible with hinder rūpa”. Secondly, something can not be seen (invisible), such as sound, smell, or taste, but can be received by facial features, such as ear, nose, or tongue, called “invisible with hinder rūpa”. These rūpa also can be hinder by other objects such as bag or box. Thirdly, something can not be seen (invisible) and can not be received by facial features, such as ear, nose, or tongue, called “invisible without hinder rūpa”. For instance, feelings contacted by manas-vijñāna (Sanskrit) such as beautiful, ugly, or evil. These rūpa also called “Manas-vijnana” (Sanskrit: manas-vijñāna) . Fo Guang Shan (1988)

Second, Feeling Aggregate (Sanskrit: vedanā-skandha) is a function of the faculties to experience the external environment and to generate feelings, which means receiving. For instance, the feelings of suffering, the feeling of pleasure, the feeling of neither suffering nor happiness are examples of Feeling Aggregate. There are two types of Feeling Aggregate. Firstly, body receiving refers to the sensations generated by the Five Sensory Faculties: (1) eyes, (2) ears, (3) nose, (4) tongue, and (5) body. Secondly, mind receiving refers to emotions arising from aware objects. The feeling arising from the aware acceptance of favorable circumstances is called pleasurable receiving. The feeling occurring from the aware acceptance of adversity is called sad receiving. Receiving between body and mind are also connected. For instance, sentient beings may feel annoyed by the heat but happy as experiencing cool breeze.

Third, Perception Aggregate (Sanskrit: sajjñā-skandha) refers to the corresponding aspect emerges in the mind as facing the realm. For instance, when you see “red color”, the “red color” you have just seen in the past instantly emerges in your mind, and you recognize it is “red color”. In other word, it is a process of imaging after the received realm. In other word, it is a process of imaging after the received realm.

Fourthly, Volition Aggregate (Sanskrit: saṃskāra-skandha) refers to "mental formation" or the willpowers of good and evil in a narrow sense, for instance, the mental formation of ideas, willpower and so on. On the other hand, Volition Aggregate includes the mental functions that are not included by the three aggregates such as "feeling", "perception", and "consciousness" in a broad sense. Volition Aggregate is a kind of "mental dharma", which can also be called "corresponding". What is corresponding? For instance, there are many complex effects in this mind as rising a thought. It is a series of combinations of various psychological effects, not just one. The relationships among these effects are corresponding. Mostly, there are two kinds of meanings of Volition Aggregate: one is "come to mind", and the other is "flow". It is a thoughtful decision about a concept in the mind. The thoughts and intentions arising from the body, mouth, and mind, as well as the good and evil from the body and mouth, are Volition Aggregate.

Finally, Consciousness Aggregate (Sanskrit: vijñāna-skandha) is a process of "distinction", which is the function of the mind to evidently recognize the external environment. For instance, the eyes can distinguish red, blue, yellow, white and black; the ears can distinguish the like and dislikes of sounds; the nose can distinguish fragrance and fumes; and the tongue can distinguish sour, sweet, bitter, spicy, and salty; the body can distinguish between cold, warm, soft and hard. In other words, consciousness means the entirety of individual spiritual harmony so that the leading and integration of thoughts come from the consciousness (Berzin, 2001)

Overall, Rūpa Aggregate is all material phenomena, feeling, perception, volitional action, and consciousness is a function of the spirit. Taking the sentient beings as examples, Rūpa Aggregate belong to the physiology, which is the combination of the Four Elements (earth, water, fire, and wind). On the other hand, Feelings, Perception, Volitional, and Consciousness Aggregates belongs to the psychological level, which is similar to the emotional, concept, will, and cognition in terms of psychology. (Hiemstra, 2019)

Prajnaparamita Heart Sutra

Prajnaparamita Heart Sutra (The Heart Sutra of the Perfection of Wisdom) is one of the most important Buddhist sutras. The Palm-leaf manuscript at Temple of the Flourishing Dharma in Japan is the oldest reserved Sanskrit version of the Prajnaparamita Heart Sutra and exhibited at Tokyo Museum now. Part (A) of of the Prajnaparamita Heart Sutra (Heart Sutra of the Perfection of Wisdom) uses the Sanskrit text in Roman phonetic alphabet. The Chinese version in part (B) is the version of Hanyu phonetic alphabets translated by Monk Xuanzang of the Tang Dynasty in China. Finally, the English version in part (C) is translated by the Sanskrit and the Chinese version in the Table one (CBETA, 2006).

Among the many teachings taught by Buddha Shakyamuni to his disciples, the Large Prajñāpāramitā Sūtras is the highest sutra on the intellectual level. The Large Prajñāpāramitā Sūtras, 600-volume, in Chinese translation is the fourth prajna period preached by the Buddha in the "Preaching dharma in five Periods". It is a collection of all the teachings of prajna sutras in 22 years. The Prajnaparamita Heart Sutra (Heart Sutra of the Perfection of Wisdom), translated by Monk Xuanzang, belongs to one of the volumes of The Large Prajñāpāramitā Sūtras. It is the only sutra that condenses the vast content and thoughtful essence of the Large Prajñāpāramitā Sūtras into just a few hundred words.

Most of the Buddhist sutras can be divided into three parts: "preface", "orthodox" and "spread" parts. The preface part is the beginning of the sutra, which introduces the background of the sutra being preached, including information about who said, what to say, time, place, and reason. The Orthodox part means what the Buddha said must be authentic and has the function of proving the essence of the sutras. It is the most important part of a Buddhist sutra. This part generally contains teachings, demonstrations, and practices, and is usually written in a question-and-answer format. The "Spread period" is intended to assist the Buddhist sutras spread around the world. It is at the end of the text of the Buddhist sutras, praising merits and promoting the benefits of spiritual practices. The Prajnaparamita Heart Sutra (Heart Sutra of the Perfection of Wisdom) translated by Monk Xuanzang keeping only the content of the Orthodox part and removing the Preface and Spread parts. The version of Monk Xuanzang's only includes 260 Chinese characters. (Fo Guang Shan, 1988)

Table 1 The Prajnaparamita Heart Sutra in Three Language Versions

(A) Sanskrit version (Roman phonetic alphabet)	(B) Chinese version (Hanyu phonetic alphabets)	(C) English version
Prajñāpāramitā Hṛdaya	bō rě bō luó mì duō xīn jīng	The Heart Sutra of the Perfection of Wisdom
Arya-Avalokitesvaro bodhisattvo	guān zì zài pú sà	Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara
gambhiram prajna - paramita - caryam caramano vyavalokayati	xīng shēn bō rě bō luó mì duō shí	practices the insightful Prajna Paramita
sma: panca-skandhas tams ca sva - bhava - sunyan	zhào jiàn wǔ yùn jiē kōng	gazes down that the Five Aggregates are all emptiness
pasyati sma.	dù yī qiē kǔ è	free from all suffering

<p>iha śāriputra rūpaṃ sūnyatā sūnyataiva rūpaṃ rūpān na pṛthak sūnyatāsūnyatāyā na pṛthag rūpaṃ yad rūpaṃ sā sūnyatāyā sūnyatā tad rūpaṃ </p>	<p>shě lì zǐ, sè bú yì kōng, kōng bú yì sè, sè jí shì kōng, kōng jí shì sè</p>	<p>Here Sariputra! Form does not differ from emptiness; emptiness does not differ from form; form itself is emptiness; emptiness itself is form.</p>
<p>evam eva vedanā - saṃjñā - saṃskāra - vijñānāni </p>	<p>shòu xiǎng háng shí, yì fù rú shì</p>	<p>So are feeling , preception, volition, and consciousness as well.</p>
<p>iha śāriputra sarva - dharmāḥ sūnyatā - lakṣaṇā anutpannā aniruddhāmalā na vimalānonā na paripūrṇāḥ </p>	<p>shě lì zǐ, shì zhū fǎ kōng xiàng, bú shēng bú miè, bú gòu bú jīng, bú zēng bú jiǎn</p>	<p>Here Sariputra! All dharmas are marked with Emptiness. Neither arises nor extinguishes; neither impure nor pure; neither increase nor decrease.</p>
<p>tasmāc chāriputra sūnyatāyāṃ na rūpaṃ na vedanā na saṃjñā na saṃskārā na vijñānāni </p>	<p>shì gù kōng zhōng wú sè, wú shòu xiǎng háng shí</p>	<p>Therefore, Sariputra! There is no form, nor feeling, nor perception, nor volition, nor consciousness in emptiness.</p>
<p>na cakṣuḥ - śrotra - ghrāṇajihvā - kāya - manāṃsī </p>	<p>wú yǎn ěr bí shé shēn yì</p>	<p>No eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, and mental actions;</p>
<p>na rūpa - śabda - gaṃdha - rasa - spraṣṭavya - dharmāḥ </p>	<p>wú sè shēng xiāng wèi chù fǎ</p>	<p>No forms, sounds, smells, tastes, objects of touch, or dharma.</p>
<p>na cakṣur - dhātur yāvan na manovijñāna - dhātuḥ </p>	<p>wú yǎn jiè, nǎi zhì wú yì shí jiè</p>	<p>No realm of sight-cognition up to and including no realm of mental cognition</p>
<p>na vidyā nāvidyā na vidyā - kṣayo</p>	<p>wú wú míng, yì wú wú míng jìn</p>	<p>No ignorance or ending of ignorance</p>
<p>yāvan na jarā - maraṇaṃ na jarā - maraṇa - kṣayo</p>	<p>nǎi zhì wú lǎo sǐ</p>	<p>up to and including no old age and death or ending of old age and death.</p>
<p>na duḥkha - samudaya - nirodha - mārgā</p>	<p>wú kǔ jí miè dào</p>	<p>There is no suffering, no accumulating, no extinction, and no Way, (The Four Noble Truths)</p>
<p>na jñānaṃ na prāptiḥ </p>	<p>wú zhì yì wú dé</p>	<p>and no understanding and no attaining</p>

	yǐ wú suǒ dé gù	Since nothing is attained
tasmād	yóu cǐ	therefore
aprāptitvād bodhisattvāṇām prajñāpāramitām āśritya viharaty acittāvaraṇaḥ	pú tí sà duǒ, yī bān ruò bō luó mì duō gù, xīn wú guà ài	Bodhisattva has no impediments in mind by observing prajna paramita.
cittāvaraṇanāstivād atrasto viparyāsā - tikrānto niṣṭha - nirvāṇaḥ	wú guà ài gù, wú yǒu kǒng bù, yuǎn lí diān dǎo mèng xiǎng, jiū jìng niè pán	Fearless due to no impediment, away from dreaming of self-obstinacy (ātma- grāha), then reaching Nirvana in the end.
tryadhva - vya - vasthitāḥ sarva - buddhāḥ prajñāpāramitām āśrity ānuttarāṃ samyaksambodhim abhisambuddhāḥ	sān shì zhū fó, yī bān ruò bō luó mì duō gù, dé ā nòu duō luó sān miǎo sān pú tí	All Buddhas of the three periods of time achieve Anuttara-samyak- sambodhi through reliance on Prajna Paramita.
tasmā jñātavyaṃ prajñāpāramitā mahā - mantra maha - vidyā - mantra 'nuttara - mantra 'samāsama - mantraḥ sarva - duḥkha - prasāmanaḥ 	gù zhī bō rě bō luó mì duō · shì dà shén zhòu, shì dà míng zhòu, shì wú shàng zhòu, shì wú děng děng zhòu, néng chú yī qiē kǔ	Hence, Prajna Paramita is known as the great holy mantra, the great wisdom mantra, also the supreme mantra and incomparable mantra that removes all suffering.
satyam amithyatvāt	zhēn shí bú xū	It is truth, not illusion.
prajñāpāramitāyām ukto mantraḥ	gù shuō bō rě bō luó mì duō zhòu	That is why the Mantra of Prajna Paramita was chanted.
tadyathā gate gate pāragate pārasaṃgate bodhi svāhā	jí shuō zhòu yuē, jiē dì jiē dì, bō luó jiē dì, bō luó sēng jiē dì, pú tí sà pó hē	go - go - go to the other shore - go to the other shore together - go - wake up being Bodhisattva
īti prajñāpāramitāḥṛdayaṃ samāptam	yǐ shàng, bō rě bō luó mì duō xīn jīng, yuán mǎn wán bì	the above-mentioned Prajnaparamita Heart Sutra is completed

Prajnaparamita Heart Sutra and Business Management

Companies are now focusing on people-oriented business philosophy with social and environmental responsibilities progressively. One of the most important tasks in business management is to manage people, in which managing people is to manage their “hearts”. Enterprises need to manage employees so that successful human resource management is not just to induce employees to finish their jobs for the company with salaries and bonuses.

According to Maslow's theory of needs, people have needs including: (1) physiological needs, (2) safety needs, (3) love and belonging needs, (4) esteem needs, (5) need for self –actualization. Successful human resource management can meet the needs of employees at all levels (i.e. physiological, safety, love and belonging, esteem, self –actualization) in order to consolidate the consensus of all employees and move towards the company's vision

A manager is a person who works with a group of coordinates to accomplish tasks and achieve organizational goals. Top Managers are responsible for planning strategies and making decisions for the companies.

There are four important functions of management: planning, leading, organizing, and controlling. Planning refers to formulate strategies to achieve goals, and integrate and coordinate the various tasks of the company. Organizing refers to arrange works and tasks to achieve goals. Leading is an activity to achieve the goals through the employees in the company. Controlling refers to the function of monitoring, evaluating and correcting performance for the company. Among them, leadership is particularly important. Scientific management can measure performance outcomes, however, physical health and needs of employees are not easy to quantify and are often unnoticed. It is easy to have conflicts within companies and may eventually be eliminated as the physical health and needs of employees are ignored.

Traditional business management focuses on economic results; Humanistic Buddhism's business management put emphasis both on spiritual expansion and economic performance equally. Buddhism instructs us to establish a career goal initially.

As a top manager, you may formulate the vision and mission then formulate strategic planning for the company.

The Four Noble Truths (i.e. suffering, the Cause of Suffering, the Ending of Suffering, and the Way to Ending Suffering) in the Heart Sutra are complete procedures to deal with problems, which can be exercised for strategic management. Firstly, suffering is the beginning of finding problems as we formulate strategies and goals for company. Secondly, the Cause of Suffering is to analyze the cause and effect. Wise managers understand the conditions around business environment are Impermanence. They have to identify the main causes behind the problems in order to make proper decisions and achieve goals. Thirdly, the Ending of Suffering, extinction is to construct vision and long-term goals for company. Decision makers have to formulate strategies and build goals as they aware of the internal and external factors for the companies. Finally, the Way to Ending Suffering refers to implement the plan and evaluate its performance.

The famous American management scientist Deming proposed that PDCA includes: (1) Plan, (2) Do, (3) Check, (4) Act. Firstly, Plan, make plan first and act later, and think wisely about how to do! Secondly, Do, accurately execute all works and tasks by formulated plan. Thirdly, check, performance must be evaluated at checking point during implementation period. It is essential to propose improvement methods as difference between PLAN and DO. Finally, act, revise the current works and implement amended plan by using the improvement method proposed in the step of CHECK, so that the future work may be making progress properly. (Dudin, Smirnova, Vysotskaya, Frolova, and Vilкова, 2017)

Buddhism inspires us to be aware of things, not only observe at superficial phenomena, but also have a deeper understanding of its cause and effect. This is Dependent Origination (Paṭicca-Samuppāda Dharma). The story of the Buddha's self-revelation of the Dependent Origination Dharma is recorded in the Miscellaneous Agama Sutra. The Buddha told his disciples: what kinds of laws and principles lead to aging and death? Aging and death may appear under what kinds of conditions? Hence, Shakyamuni realized the Dependent Origination Dharma under the Bodhi tree. (Wu, 2000)

"Dependent Origination Dharma" is the law by which things arise through the combination of causes and conditions. "Cause" is the primary factor and "Condition" is the secondary factors. "Cause" has the meaning of seed, which refers to the appearance of things has its antecedents and consequences, or occurs in the combination of cause and effect. For example, if a watermelon seed is sown, it must be a watermelon as it grows. "Condition" is an supplementary factor. Only the appearance of "cause" will not produce "effect", it must appear together with "condition" in order for the result to arise. This is Karma. For example, in order for the seeds of watermelon to grow, supplementary factors such as water, temperature, and soil must be present at the same time in order to produce watermelon smoothly.

In general, each thing arises, must meet certain factors; the elimination of a thing also requires various factors of destruction. "Condition" birth and contingent cessation are both in line with the Dependent Origination Law. Among the Four Noble Truths, the origin and cessation of the Noble Truth of Collection depend on Dependent Origination Law. The same is true of business management. The success of a company requires the combination of external key success factors and internal key success factors to generate a successful company.

This is quite similar with the function of Strengths-Weakness-Opportunities-Threats (SWOT) matrix analysis. The SWOT Matrix is a very important matching implement that assists decision makers and managers assemble four types of strategies: (1) SO (strengths-opportunities), (2) WO (weaknesses-opportunities), (3) ST (strengths-threats), and (4) WT (weakness-threats) strategies. Firstly, SO strategies implement as company's inside strengths to catch the most of external opportunities. Secondly, WO strategies intend at improving internal weakness by taking external opportunities. Thirdly, ST strategies work out a company's strengths to keep away from or reduce the impact of external threats. Finally, WT strategies are self-protective approaches in reducing inside limitation and avoiding outer threats. (David, 2005)

According to the impermanence of all dharma and the Dependent Origination dharma, there is no certainty of success or failure in business management, and it is the result of the combination of different causes and effects. By awareness of impermanence and dependent origination dharma, we can do our best to keep calm to face the success and failure in business management.

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