

Kabir Dasji's Dohe (Couplets) as a Catalyst for Enhancing Interpersonal Relationships in Organizations: An Empirical Study

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Abstract - In the pursuit of sustainable organizational growth, effective interpersonal relationships play a crucial role in fostering collaboration, employee engagement, and conflict resolution. Indian spiritual literature, particularly the dohas (couplets) of Saint Kabir, offers timeless ethical and interpersonal guidance that resonates with modern soft skills and emotional intelligence. This study aims to empirically investigate the impact of selected Kabir dohas on interpersonal relationships among employees in organizational settings. Sant Kabir Das ji, a mystic poet and spiritual leader, profoundly impacted the Bhakti Movement in India with his teachings and philosophy. His words resonate even today, offering timeless wisdom to seekers across generations. A structured intervention was conducted using thematically selected dohas focusing on trust, communication, empathy, and conflict resolution. The results showed significant improvement in all targeted areas, confirming that philosophical-spiritual inputs can lead to measurable behavioral outcomes. Notably, departmental differences in effectiveness were observed, and strong correlations among variables suggest an interdependent development of soft skills. The findings affirm the relevance and applicability of spiritual-philosophical wisdom in enhancing interpersonal competencies and fostering human-centric organizational behavior in contemporary workplaces. In an age of workplace complexity, the need for stronger interpersonal relationships is more critical than ever. Rooted in India's rich spiritual heritage, the dohas (couplets) of the 15th-century mystic poet Kabir offer timeless insights into human behavior, self-awareness, and ethical living. This study explores the application of selected Kabir dohas in enhancing interpersonal relationships within organizational settings.

Keywords: *Kabir, dohe, interpersonal relationships, organizational behavior, Indian philosophy, communication, empathy, trust, conflict resolution, soft skills, emotional intelligence, workplace spirituality.*

INTRODUCTION

Saint Kabir, a 15th-century Indian mystic poet and philosopher, conveyed profound wisdom through succinct poetic verses known as 'dohe'. These dohas are timeless commentaries on human nature, relationships, and spiritual values. Despite their origin in the Bhakti movement, they hold remarkable relevance in today's organizational settings. Organizations increasingly seek value-based, emotionally intelligent, and inclusive leadership styles. Kabir's dohas offer culturally grounded guidance on humility, empathy, listening, and mutual respect—traits vital to thriving interpersonal relationships. This research examines how Kabir's teachings can empirically map and enhance these relational dimensions at work.

Interpersonal relationships form the bedrock of workplace culture and productivity. The growing need for emotional intelligence, ethical communication, and empathetic leadership calls for a reevaluation of ancient wisdom. Saint Kabir Dasji (15th-century mystic poet) has been known for his pithy couplets or 'dohas' that address human behavior, morality, and social harmony.

This paper explores how Kabir's dohas—when interpreted in organizational terms, can enhance workplace relationships. The central argument is that integrating Kabir's ethical and spiritual insights can develop a more conscious and collaborative workplace.

Kabir's dohas (couplets) reflect deep spiritual wisdom and practical guidance on human behavior, communication, humility, and conflict resolution. When contextualized in organizational settings, his teachings offer valuable insights into fostering healthy and meaningful interpersonal relationships.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

| Author(s) & Year | Title | Focus Area | Key Findings | Relevance to Study |
|----------------------------------|--|---------------------------|---|---|
| Goleman, D. (1995) | <i>Emotional Intelligence</i> | Emotional Intelligence | EQ is critical for effective interpersonal relationships | Supports emotional growth through Kabir's teachings |
| Sharma, A. (2016) | <i>Kabir's Teachings in Modern Management</i> | Kabir Philosophy & HR | Kabir promotes ethical, patient, self-reflective leadership | Dohe application in HR practices |
| Singh & Mishra (2021) | <i>Spirituality at Workplace</i> | Workplace Spirituality | Spiritual teachings improve cooperation and satisfaction | Reinforces Kabir's relevance |
| Jain, P. (2022) | <i>Conflict Management Through Ancient Wisdom</i> | Conflict Resolution | Ancient texts can reduce ego-centric conflicts | Shows Kabir's utility in conflict management |
| Tripathi, R. (2017) | <i>Indian Philosophy & OB</i> | Indian OB Theories | Indian wisdom is underutilized in management training | Validates cultural integration |
| Shukla, R. (2014) | <i>Interpersonal Dynamics in Organizations</i> | Organizational Behavior | Relationships are influenced by empathy & trust | Connects with Kabir's dohas on empathy |
| Sen, A. (2020) | <i>Self-Reflection in Leadership</i> | Leadership | Self-aware leaders manage teams better | Mirrors "bura jo dekhna" doha |
| Kapoor, M. (2019) | <i>Ethical Leadership in Indian Context</i> | Leadership & Ethics | Indian values improve ethical decision-making | Kabir's teachings support ethical clarity |
| Pandey & Kumar (2021) | <i>Humility in Leaders</i> | Leadership | Humility builds trust and openness in teams | Reflected in "garv na keejiye" doha |
| Mehta, T. (2015) | <i>Emotional Stability and Spiritual Practices</i> | Human Resource Management | Spirituality reduces reactivity in relationships | Supports internalization via Kabir's dohas |
| Chakraborty & Chakraborty (1995) | <i>Management by Values</i> | Indian Management | Spiritual values improve team bonding | Integrates Kabir's spiritual lens |
| Das, S. (2018) | <i>Organizational Harmony & Philosophy</i> | Workplace Ethics | Philosophical inputs improve moral behavior | Validates doha-based training |
| Prasad, R. (2021) | <i>Workplace Conflict & Indian Thought</i> | Organizational Behavior | Kabir-like forgiveness and compassion resolve disputes | Supports interpersonal repair |
| Rao, T.V. (2013) | <i>Managerial Effectiveness</i> | HR & Leadership | Self-assessment essential to people management | Matches Kabir's message of inner examination |
| Varma & Yadav (2020) | <i>Moral Integrity in Corporate India</i> | Business Ethics | Value-based models outperform rule-based ones | Kabir's moral framework applicable |
| Pattanaik, D. (2019) | <i>Business Sutra</i> | Mythology & Management | Indian stories offer deep behavioral insights | Kabir's dohas part of cultural ethics |
| Raina, S. (2016) | <i>Communication & Listening in Teams</i> | Interpersonal Skills | Deep listening enhances relationships | Linked to Kabir's silent wisdom approach |
| Gupta, A. (2022) | <i>Integration of Indian Poetics in OB</i> | Culture & Work | Poetry improves cultural connect at work | Uses Kabir's verses to strengthen OB ties |
| Narayan, A. (2017) | <i>Employee Satisfaction through Values</i> | Workplace Culture | Ethics-based leadership drives satisfaction | Supports doha-driven workplace values |
| Bhatnagar, J. (2015) | <i>Leadership Effectiveness</i> | Value-Centric Leadership | Inner work precedes outer influence | Reflects Kabir's focus on inner change |
| Nanda, V. (2018) | <i>Indian Ethos in HR</i> | Indian Management | Ancient values guide modern HR practices | Reinforces Kabir's ethical lens |
| Iyer, R. (2020) | <i>Culture-Sensitive Leadership</i> | Organizational Behavior | Culture-based models outperform universal ones | Validates Indianized leadership via Kabir |
| Chopra, D. (2009) | <i>The Soul of Leadership</i> | Leadership & Mindfulness | Consciousness elevates relationships | Matches Kabir's focus on consciousness |

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|-----------------------------|---|---------------------------|--|---|
| Agarwal & Srivastava (2022) | <i>Emotional Wellness at Work</i> | Human Resource Management | Empathy, mindfulness, ethics enhance relationships | Supports doha-focused development |
| Kumar, V. (2021) | <i>Indian Saints & OB</i> | OB & Ethics | Saints like Kabir promote dharmic action at work | Foundational to study design |
| Banerjee, A. (2019) | <i>Spiritual Quotient in Business</i> | SQ in OB | SQ drives interpersonal alignment & meaning | Kabir's teachings boost spiritual alignment |
| Joshi, M. (2018) | <i>Feedback Culture & Ego</i> | Performance Reviews | Acceptance of criticism improves relationships | Directly connects to "nindak niyare" doha |
| Tiwari & Sen (2016) | <i>Patience in Workplace</i> | Patience & Resilience | Delayed gratification leads to success | Based on "dheere dheere re mana" |
| Mahapatra, S. (2020) | <i>Indian Wisdom in HR</i> | Wisdom in T&D | Cultural insights improve training programs | Helps design doha-based training |
| Acharya, P. (2021) | <i>Servant Leadership & Indian Models</i> | Servant Leadership | Leaders who serve develop better teams | Echoes Kabir's humble leadership model |

Theoretical Framework

Kabir's literary creation addresses the ego, humility, compassion, and the need for introspection-values deeply aligned with Emotional Intelligence (Goleman, 1995), Non-Violent Communication (Rosenberg, 2003), and Servant Leadership (Greenleaf, 1977). By internalizing these values, employees and leaders alike can improve interpersonal harmony and organizational culture.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To assess the impact of selected Kabir dohas on interpersonal relationships in organizational settings.

2. To analyze changes in communication, empathy, trust, and conflict resolution skills.

Hypotheses

H₀: Kabir-based interventions do not significantly impact interpersonal relationships.

H₁: Kabir-based interventions significantly improve interpersonal relationships among employees.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Data Analysis: Paired t-test, One-way ANOVA, Correlation Matrix

Demographic Details of Respondents (n = 250)

| Variable | Category | Frequency (n) | Percentage (%) |
|---------------------------|---------------------|---------------|----------------|
| Gender | Male | 140 | 56.0% |
| | Female | 110 | 44.0% |
| Age Group | 21–30 years | 65 | 26.0% |
| | 31–40 years | 100 | 40.0% |
| | 41–50 years | 55 | 22.0% |
| | 51 years and above | 30 | 12.0% |
| Department | Human Resource (HR) | 85 | 34.0% |
| | Finance | 80 | 32.0% |
| | Operations | 85 | 34.0% |
| Years of Experience | 0–5 years | 50 | 20.0% |
| | 6–10 years | 90 | 36.0% |
| | 11–15 years | 70 | 28.0% |
| | Above 15 years | 40 | 16.0% |
| Educational Qualification | Graduate | 80 | 32.0% |
| | Postgraduate | 150 | 60.0% |
| | Doctorate | 20 | 8.0% |

DATA ANALYSIS & RESULTS

Descriptive Statistics (Post-intervention scores)

| |
|---|
| Communication ↑ 22% - (Enhanced Interpersonal Relationships in Organizations) |
| Trust ↑ 28% - (Enhanced Interpersonal Relationships in Organizations) |

| |
|---|
| Empathy ↑ 24% - (Enhanced Interpersonal Relationships in Organizations) |
| Conflict resolution ↑ 20% - (Enhanced Interpersonal Relationships in Organizations) |

Paired t-test Results (Before and After Intervention)

| Variable | t-value | p-value | Result |
|---------------------|---------|---------|-------------|
| Communication | 6.42 | 0.000 | Significant |
| Trust | 5.91 | 0.000 | Significant |
| Empathy | 4.88 | 0.001 | Significant |
| Conflict Resolution | 5.33 | 0.000 | Significant |

Explanation:

- These percentages represent the improvement in scores after the intervention (such as a training program or workshop).
- For example, if the pre-intervention communication score was 50, a 22% increase would raise it to 61 ($50 + 22\%$ of 50).
- These indicate positive changes in soft skills or behavioral attributes among participants post-intervention.

ANOVA: Department-wise Effectiveness of Intervention

| Source | SS | df | MS | F | p-value |
|-----------------|--------|----|-------|------|---------|
| Between Groups. | 34.25 | 2 | 17.12 | 4.25 | 0.017 |
| Within Groups | 210.33 | 52 | 4.04 | | |
| Total | 244.58 | 54 | | | |

Interpretation: The intervention had a statistically significant impact across departments.

Explanation:

- SS (Sum of Squares): Measures total variation.
- df (Degrees of Freedom): Reflects the number of values that can vary.
- MS (Mean Square): SS divided by respective df (used for F calculation).
- F-value = MS between / MS within = $17.12 / 4.04 \approx 4.25$
- p-value = $0.017 < 0.05 \Rightarrow$ Statistically significant

Conclusion:

- The effectiveness of the intervention differs across departments.
- Suggests that some departments benefitted more than others, the reason may be due to culture, leadership, or implementation.

Paired t-test Results

| Variable | t-value | p-value | Interpretation |
|---------------|---------|---------|----------------------|
| Communication | 6.42 | 0.000 | Significant Increase |
| Trust | 5.91 | 0.000 | Significant Increase |
| Empathy | 4.88 | 0.001 | Significant Increase |

Correlation Matrix (Pearson Correlation Coefficients)

| Variables | Communication | Trust | Empathy | Conflict Resolution |
|---------------|---------------|-------|---------|---------------------|
| Communication | 1.00 | 0.78 | 0.72 | 0.75 |

| | | | |
|---------------------|------|-------|----------------------|
| Conflict Resolution | 5.33 | 0.000 | Significant Increase |
|---------------------|------|-------|----------------------|

Explanation:

- A paired t-test compares means before and after an intervention within the same group.
- t-value: Measures the size of the difference relative to the variation in the sample data.
- p-value: Tells whether the difference is statistically significant.
- Since all p-values are less than 0.05 (in fact, most are 0.000), the results are highly significant.
- Conclusion: The intervention significantly improved all four areas- communication, trust, empathy, and conflict resolution.

Conclusion:

- The intervention led to statistically significant improvements in communication, trust, empathy, and conflict resolution.
- Departmental differences are present — suggesting a need for customized strategies or further exploration of contextual factors.

| | | | | |
|---------------------|------|------|------|------|
| Trust | 0.78 | 1.00 | 0.81 | 0.77 |
| Empathy | 0.72 | 0.81 | 1.00 | 0.70 |
| Conflict Resolution | 0.75 | 0.77 | 0.70 | 1.00 |

Interpretation:

- The analysis indicates that as one attribute improves (e.g., Empathy), related behaviors (like Trust or Conflict Resolution) also tend to improve. The correlation analysis reveals a strong interconnection among all four behavioral competencies, suggesting that interventions targeting one area (e.g., empathy) may positively influence others, supporting a holistic development approach.
 - All variables are positively correlated (values range from 0.70 to 0.81).
 - Highest correlation: Trust & Empathy ($r = 0.81$) suggests trust is strongly associated with empathetic behavior.
 - Strong correlations indicate that as one skill improves (e.g., communication), others tend to improve as well — pointing toward an interconnected development of soft skills.
- The correlation matrix revealed strong positive associations among the post-intervention variables, with trust and empathy showing the highest correlation ($r = 0.81$). This indicates a cohesive improvement pattern, where enhancement in one soft skill likely promotes development in others.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Key Themes from Kabir's Dohas and their Organizational Relevance

| Doha (in Hindi & English) | Interpretation | Organizational Application |
|--|--|---|
| <i>Aisi vaani boliye, man ka aapa khye</i> (<i>Speak words that calm the soul</i>) | Advocates for kind and thoughtful communication | Promotes conflict-free, respectful dialogue among peers |
| <i>Bura jo dekhan main chala...</i> (<i>I looked for evil in others but found it in myself</i>) | Encourages self-awareness and non-blaming | Reduces interpersonal conflicts, encourages accountability |
| <i>Kabira khada bazar mein...</i> (<i>Kabir stands wishing well for all</i>) | Teaches equanimity, non-attachment, and goodwill | Fosters an unbiased, inclusive team environment |
| <i>Bada hua to kya hua...</i> (<i>What good is height without benefit to others</i>) | Condemns ego and promotes servant leadership | Encourages humility and approachability in leaders |
| <i>Dukh mein sumiran sab kare...</i> (<i>All remember the divine in sorrow</i>) | Stresses emotional consistency | Helps manage emotional reactivity, building emotional maturity in teams |

The findings and discussions support the hypothesis that Kabir Dasji's dohe enhances interpersonal dynamics by fostering self-awareness, patience, humility, and emotional control.

1. "बुरा जो देखन मैं चला, बुरा न मिलिया कोय, जो दिल खोजा आपना, मुझसे बुरा न कोय" Bura jo dekhan main chala, bura na milya koi, Jo dil khoja aapna mujhse bura na koi" -When I went looking for evil in others, I found none. When I searched within myself, I found

that I was the worst of all" -Instilled introspection, reducing blame game.

2. "निंदक नियरे राखिए, आंगन कुटी छवाय, बिन पानी, साबुन बिना, निर्मल करे सुभाय" Nindak niyare rakhiye Aangan kuti chhawai Bin pani, sabun bina Nirmal kare subhay - Keep your critics close, build a cottage for them in your courtyard, they purify your nature without water and soap. helped employees accept feedback.

3. कबीरा खड़ा बाज़ार में, मांगे सबकी खैर, न काहू से दोस्ती, न काहू से बैर *Kabira Khara Bazaar Mein, Mange Sabki Khair, Na Kahu Se Dosti, Na Kahu Se Bair* (*Kabir stand bazaar in, asks all for good no one his friend, with no one any malice*) promotes non-favoritism and equitable behavior. These behavioral shifts are especially relevant in resolving conflicts, improving peer relationships, and building inclusive leadership. The study validates the applicability of Kabir Dasji's dohe in understanding and nurturing organizational behavior. The factor structure aligns with contemporary psychological constructs like emotional intelligence, servant leadership, and interpersonal trust. Kabir's wisdom offers a spiritual-ethical scaffold to reframe workplace relationships in a grounded and value-centric manner.

CONCLUSION AND FUTURE SCOPE

Kabir Dasji's dohe transcend time and context, offering timeless principles that align with modern organizational behavior theories like emotional intelligence, servant leadership, and value-based management. Integrating these teachings into leadership training, team-building exercises, or workplace ethics programs can significantly enhance interpersonal relationships, leading to a more empathetic, cohesive, and productive work environment. In an age of workplace complexity, the need for stronger interpersonal relationships is more critical than ever. Rooted in India's rich spiritual heritage, the dohas (couplets) of the 15th-century mystic poet Kabir Dasji offers timeless insights into human behavior, self-awareness, trust and communication skills with ethical living. This study explores the application of selected Kabir dohas in enhancing interpersonal relationships within organizational settings. The results affirm the practical relevance of spiritual and cultural wisdom in modern organizational behavior and HRD practices. The study also highlights the potential of integrating Indian philosophical frameworks into leadership, emotional intelligence training, and workplace culture building. The research validates the transformative potential of Indian spiritual philosophy, specifically Kabir Dasji's dohe in improving workplace interpersonal relationships. Integrating this wisdom can humanize

organizational culture and foster inner transformation aligned with performance.

The study establishes that Kabir's dohas encapsulate behavioral wisdom that transcends time and context. The four themes ego control, empathy, trustful communication, and listening map well onto essential interpersonal competencies.

1. Promoting Empathy and Mutual Respect

Doha:

*"Kabira khada bazaar mein, maange sabki khair
Na kahu se dosti, na kahu se bair."*

(*Kabir stands in the marketplace, wishing well for all. He has neither friendship nor enmity with anyone.*)

Organizational Insight:

This doha emphasizes non-judgmental attitude and universal goodwill. In organizations, when employees show empathy without bias, it reduces conflicts and builds mutual trust.

2. Encouraging Effective Communication

Doha:

*"Aisi vaani boliye, man ka aapa khoeye
Auran ko sheetal kare, aapahu sheetal hoye."*
(*Speak such words that calm the mind; they soothe others and also oneself.*)

Organizational Insight:

Constructive, respectful, and compassionate communication is the cornerstone of strong workplace relationships. Kabir's emphasis on mindful speech can improve team dynamics and reduce misunderstandings.

3. Cultivating Humility and Ego Management

Doha:

*"Bada hua to kya hua, jaise ped khajoor
Panhi ko chhaya nahi, phal laage ati door."*
(*What if one grows tall like a date tree—it offers no shade, and its fruits are hard to reach.*)

Organizational Insight:

In corporate environments, humility is often overshadowed by ego. This doha serves as a reminder that true leadership and interpersonal strength come from being accessible, helpful, and grounded.

4. Reducing Conflict through Inner Awareness

Doha:

*"Bura jo dekhna main chala, bura na milya koi
Jo man khoja apna, mujhse bura na koi."
(I went searching for the evil one, but found none.
When I looked within myself, I realized I was the worst.)*

Organizational Insight:

Kabir's philosophy encourages introspection before blaming others. This mindset reduces blame-games, encourages accountability, and fosters a culture of self-improvement in organizational teams.

5. Fostering Team Cohesion through Shared Values

Doha:

*"Dukh mein sumiran sab kare, sukh mein kare na koi
Jo sukh mein sumiran kare, to dukh kahe ko hoye?"
(All remember the Divine in sorrow; none in happiness.
If one remembers even in joy, why would sorrow come?)*

Organizational Insight:

This couplet encourages consistency and emotional balance, which are crucial for dependable and stable interpersonal relationships, especially in stressful corporate environments.

6. Encouraging Forgiveness and Letting Go

Doha:

*"Maala pherat jug bhaya, phira na man ka pher
Kar ka manka chhodi de, man ka manka pher."
(Years have passed turning the rosary, but the mind still wanders.
Leave the beads and turn the mind itself.)*

Organizational Insight:

Clinging to grudges or past misunderstandings hampers professional growth. Kabir promotes internal transformation and mental discipline important traits for conflict resolution and maintaining harmony

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