

BHAGVAD GEETHA IN MANAGEMENT STUDIES: AN OVER VIEW

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Abstract: Most of the people think that Bhagavad Geetha is a religious book of Hindus. But it is for the welfare of mankind irrespective of the caste, creed, religion, and country. The people in the modern world are currently experiencing a lot of stress, tensions, and worries. They gravitate to age quicker and inviting to various illness and diseases. The teachings of Bhagavad Gita are helpful for positive vision and to lead a peaceful life. It purifies the mind and soul and give relief from distresses to individuals and helps them to realize the inner-self and the Supreme (God). Further, it helps to enhance the values and ethics. Management has become an integral part of daily life whether it may be at home or at workplace of every individual in the universe. Bhagavat Gita strikes social agreement in the Working-Equilibrium through the thoughts and conducts, goals, and success, plans and accomplishment, products, and markets. In simple terms, management is a body of knowledge that enables entities to deal with a multitude of situations involving people, process, and the environment, to ensure work is done efficiently to deliver goods and services useful to the society. If we carefully study the Gita, we can infer that the main theme is all about doing work (karma yoga), in the most efficient manner. This Paper is an attempt to focus the relationship between Bhagavad Geetha and Management Studies.

Key words: Bhagavad Geetha, Lord Krishna, Entrepreneurs, Management, Leadership, Motivation, Karma yoga, Sthitapragnya.

INTRODUCTION

Most of the people think that Bhagavad Geetha is a religious book of Hindus. But it is for the welfare of mankind irrespective of the caste, creed, religion, and country. The people in the modern world are currently experiencing a lot of stress, tensions, and worries. They gravitate to age quicker and inviting to various illness and diseases. The teachings of Bhagavad Gita are helpful for positive vision and to lead a peaceful life. It purifies the mind and soul and give relief from distresses to individuals and helps them to realize the inner-self and the Supreme (God). Further, it helps to enhance the values and ethics. Management has become an integral part of daily life whether it may be at home or at workplace of every individual in the universe. Bhagavat Gita strikes social agreement in the Working-Equilibrium through the thoughts and conducts, goals, and success, plans and accomplishment, products, and markets. In simple terms, management is a body of knowledge that enables entities to deal with a multitude of situations involving people, process, and the environment, to ensure work is done efficiently to deliver goods and services useful to the society. Good management must result in greater satisfaction for all stake holders. If we carefully study the Gita, we can infer that the main theme is all about doing work (karma yoga), in the most efficient manner.

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Management always resolves the crisis or the issues that occurs in form of physical, technical, and behavioral through optimum utilization with the nominal available processes to achieve the set goal. Lack of Management will originate the disorder, turmoil, wastage, suspension, destruction, depression, and stress. Managing and supervising 3M's (Men, Money, and Material) is the best possible way according to situation and environment is the most essential factor for a successful management. 'Man' is the first prior syllable in the management, which speaks the volumes on the role of significance for the management practices. Bhagavad Gita is the key source of various management thoughts. Now, let us try to analyze the relation between Bhagavad Geeta and Management in detail.

LEADERSHIP

Leadership, a critical management skill, it is the ability to motivate a group of people towards a common goal. Therefore, it is necessary for a leader to be a visionary and seek the way forward. The essence of leadership is well explained in the Bhagavad Gita – Chapter 7, Verse 11 by lord Krishna to Arjuna *“I am the strength of those who are devoid of personal desire and attachment. O Arjuna, I am the legitimate desire in those, who are not opposed to righteousness”* It is very important that a leader is the one who believes in self-excellence which is attained by doing his duties rightly first. Bhagavad Gita talks about the meaning of life and its purpose. Its talks about what a human being finally attains self-realization and how karma plays an important role in shaping up our lives.

KNOWING YOURSELF

Today, we understand leadership as something that is not only about leading a nation, a corporation, or a big entity, but it is about influencing and guiding others. Leadership is about helping others to find their potential and purpose. According to the Bhagavad Gita, it is not possible to become an effective leader if the leader does not understand his or her own self and does not understand his or her own potential and purpose.

MANAGE YOURSELF

Management is a process of aligning people and getting them committed to work for a common goal to the maximum social benefit – in search of excellence. The critical question in all managers' minds is how to be effective in their job? The answer to this fundamental question is found in the *Bhagavad Gita*, which repeatedly proclaims that *“You must try to manage yourself.”* The reason is that unless a manager reaches a level of excellence and effectiveness, he, or she will be merely a face in the crowd. Management in principle teaches us to become better leaders, art of delegation, motivation and communication, work commitment, developing human resource, planning, and executing, way of enhancing knowledge and developing the overall managerial skills.

RENUNCIATION

The 18th Chapter of the Bhagavad Gita culminates about leadership renunciation.

The Gita defines renunciation as abstaining from selfish acts and detaching from the results of an action. Krishna mentions specific areas where true renunciation must be practiced, such as:

- Renounce negative thoughts, words, and actions.
- Renounce inequality and promote equality.
- Renounce selfish desires and exercise selfless service.
- Renounce indiscipline, dishonesty, and lazy attitude; and exercise integrity and proactiveness.
- Renounce arrogance and ignorance and be open-minded.
- Renounce momentary happiness that is derived from selfish behaviors. Instead, seek happiness that is long-lasting and beneficial to all.

MOTIVATION

Motivation is the driving force which causes us to achieve goals. Motivation is said to be intrinsic or extrinsic. Intrinsic motivation refers to motivation that is driven by an interest or enjoyment in the task itself and exists within the individual rather than relying on any external pressure. Extrinsic motivation comes from outside of the individual. Common extrinsic motivations are rewards like money, grades, coercion, and threat of punishment. *This situation is explained by the theory of self-transcendence propounded in the Gita.* Self-transcendence involves renouncing egoism, putting others before oneself, emphasizing team work, dignity, co-operation, harmony, trust – and indeed potentially sacrificing lower needs for higher goals. *The essence of Motivation is well explained in the Bhagavad Gita – Chapter 2, Verse 47 “You certainly have a right to prescribed activities, but never at any time in their results. You should never be motivated by results of the actions, nor there should be any attachment in not doing your prescribed activities.”*

DECISION MAKING

A decision is a choice. “The object of studying philosophy is to know one’s own mind, not other people’s. In eighteen chapters, seven hundred verses, the *Bhagavad Geeta* devotes itself to one task – making one decision. It does so through its protagonist, the warrior Arjun, and the metaphor of war. It does so by enabling Arjun to undertake a voyage of self-discovery so he can master the art of making a complex decision in the face of conflicting values.

What to Select and What not to Select: *Krishna said - “Dhūmenāvriyate Vahnir Yathadarso Malena Ca Yatholbenavrtto Garbhas Tatha Tenedam Avrtam.”* The meaning of this Shloka, it is like a dissuading curse – as everything pure has a covering that can often be misleading. For example, fire is covered with smoke, which prevents us from nearing it and if a mirror is covered in sheen, we cannot see what it is reflecting before removing the sheen. Similarly, knowledge is covered with desire that we must ignore or get rid of. This isn’t as easy as it looks but wise man is one who knows what to

avoid and what to select. Thus, an entrepreneur must be very cautious before starting a business, which type of business he should avoid and what to select.

BATTLEFIELD OF LIFE

The Setting of Gita is a symbolic of the battlefield of life. Our life having a continuous confusion between positive and negative thoughts, likes and dislikes, good and the bad. *One should balance his/her way of life to achieve his desired goals.*

KARMA

Krishna's reply to the dejection of Arjuna on the battlefield of Kurukshetra that "This is not the behavior of a great warrior" people and organizations wander to move ahead with different challenges and obstacles. *Determined towards action (Karma) not on its fruits. (Nishkama Karma Yoga).*

MANAGEMENT OF ANGER

Lord Krishna said that desire or want for sense of objects comes from attachment towards them (Maya), and anger generates from unfulfilled desires or wants " The modern psycho-analysis announced that anger is exhibition of suppressed desires. *The purpose of our life is our duties and responsibilities, our goals and most essentially, peaceful inner co-existence with fellow individuals.*

WORK CULTURE

Bhagavad Gita' talks about two types of work cultures 'Daivi Sampat' and 'Asuri Sampat'. 'Daivi' Work Culture involves less fear, purity, divinity, calmness, holistic environment, absence of fault, lack of greed and lust, ethical, modesty and full of cosmic energy and pride. Whereas in 'Asuri' Work Culture contains ego, jealous, misbelief, personal wants, lack of proper performance and lack of job oriented service. *'Daivi Sampat' work culture is the best option to become a world class enterprise by tapping the potential within the workplace.*

UTILIZATION OF ACCESSIBLE RESOURCES

Before the war of 'Mahabharata', Duryodhana choose Lord Krishna's large army (Krishna Sena) for his help during the war, while Arjuna chosen the Lord of Wisdom (Krishna) for his support. *Resources are limited and select wisely and utilize limited resources optimally.*

COMMITMENT TO WORK

"Karmanye Vadhikaraste Ma Phaleshu Kadachana, Ma Karmaphalahetur bhurma Te Sangostvakarmani" famous verse (Slokas) of the Bhagavat Gita advises "Detachment.- from the fruits or results of actions or karma performed in the course of duty and also detach yourself from the end rewards and focus on the work". *Being dedicated towards*

the work has to mean as a form of duty towards the society instead of focusing towards self-desire and lust.

SURRENDER TO THE SUPREME DIVINE

Lord Krishna asked warrior Arjuna to surrender himself to the Lord, you should not have any doubts on the existence of the Lord. Look for the higher and friendly picture, put yourself egoistic nature aside. *Spirituality inspires social harmony and become aware of ultimate destiny of human life as a result of self-assessment and self-determination towards the present action.*

STABILITY OF MIND

Lord Krishna says in the middle of the battlefield, that one should exercise the stability of mind by yoga or meditation. Human Life is like the battle field of 'Mahabharata' where the battle have been fought daily within the mind and soul. 'Chitta Sudhi' through yoga is the best practice to steady the mind. *By the stability of mind one can calm their emotions and can increase his/her 'Viveka' or 'Buddhi' with 'Vichikshana'.*

YOUR EXPRESSIONS REFLECTS YOUR INTENSIONS

'Bhagavat Gita' says that "Your intentions towards life should be clear in vision, practical and achievable, which should differentiate you from others". *'Power of Intention' is the main success mantra for achieving any desired goal.*

POWER OF WISDOM AND SCIENCE

Bhagavad Gita says that "Science can be assumed by our human-senses like mouth, eyes, ears, and other senses. Wisdom will create inner sense of feelings or intuition, it will enhance the power of intentions, which can be transformed into self-analysis, after series of inner exploration if the mind says 'Yes' then it becomes intentions. *Intentions begins with inner feelings then it transforms into intuitions and then travels as a self-analysis which will be supported by the wisdom and becomes plan of Karma or action, and science becomes the success formula of the action.*

Learn to adapt, innovate, and implore new opportunities: *"Vasamsi Jirnani Yatha Vihaya Navani Grhnati Naro 'Parani Tatha Sarirani Vihaya Jirnany Anyani Samyati Navani Dehi."* It is easy to say versatility and adaptation are the keys to success. But the biggest lesson for any entrepreneur is learning to adapt to changes quickly. Do not get stuck with your initial vision. Pave your journey like a traveler, who is not attached to the city he visits or the hotel he stays in but enjoys the experience of it all. Do not be adamant; be innovative, open minded and ready to absorb experiences like a sponge. The faster you adapt to a change, the better it is.

INTEGRATED PERSONALITY

Integrated personality integrates the various dimensions of the personality into a

balanced and integrated whole. It aims at developing the whole or the total human being which gives tremendous satisfaction. All the entrepreneurs must possess integrated personality. Otherwise, they will not be successful in their entrepreneurship.

Here temperament means, one should introspect his own character especially regarding his demerits and rectify himself, otherwise it affects his personality. Here, *Swadharma* refers to his duties towards his profession. Above this, one must not forget "*Social Responsibility*". For example, Corporate Companies must not forget their duty towards the society.

NO GREEDINESS

"Tasmad Asaktah Satatam Karyam Karma Samacara Asakto Hy Acaran Karma Param Apnoti Purushah." Inculcate the habit of being open to everything and being attached to nothing. Attachment does give strength to work and love beyond ourselves, but it also limits us and makes our journey and growth difficult, especially if the object of our desire is taken away from us. *Too much desire can be bad, as it turns into greed.* Greed takes you away from your true calling and dream, be it to achieve, create or innovate. Do not be super attached to your work, because stress makes your journey as an entrepreneur difficult. You have to keep an open mind about the ever-evolving market changes, adapt to them. Keep a close eye on your goals but do not get obsessive. Don't Be Over Ambitious - *"Bhagavad Gita is not against having desires, but stresses that one MUST have control over desires and have limits, that is, one must not be greedy"*. An entrepreneur should have reasonable targets for his business but should not be unrealistic. Otherwise, if desires are not fulfilled they leads to worries and worries in turn leads to lack of peace and anger. The result of anger is losing mental balance and down falling will start and the consequence is "Self-Ruin".

TRUTH ALWAYS PREVAIL

Lord Krishna gave message that "Truth can never be destroyed, so one should not be afraid of telling truth and doing good. A business man must always tell truths about his product and genuine price and thus create confidence to gain a greater number of consumers to his products.

SPECIFIC DISCIPLINES

In the Bhagavad Gita, Krishna defines three specific disciplines that are required for effective leadership: discipline of learning, discipline of speaking properly and discipline of equanimity. All of these disciplines are important for effective leadership. Today's leadership authorities also agree that effective leaders have to be effective learners. Leadership is not only about teaching people to follow a certain path or to do a certain thing, but it is also about learning things to be taught. In the business world, we know leaders like Jack Welch, Andy Groves, and John Chambers as great communicators. When these leaders communicated to their followers, they were always consistent on the vision and goals they presented to their organizations.

COMMUNICATION SKILLS

Without effective communication skills, leadership cannot become effective. *Lord Krishna says the most important part of communication is to communicate with honesty and with respect toward others.* For leaders to be effective, they must be able to motivate their followers when they speak, so they can guide them toward the common vision and goals.

STHITAPRAGNYA

Lord Krishna explained about "Sthitapragnya" in Bhagavad Geetha. It means one should not become emotional or over joyous when one achieves victories and become very nervous when failures occur. This means, one should maintain balance between success and failure. This is cent percent true in case of entrepreneurs. If any entrepreneur get success he should not be over joyed and careless, and if losses, he should not become nervous and must not lose courage. He must find out the loopholes in his business and plug them and try again for success.

DHARMO RAKSHITHI RAKSHITHA

Meaning of this quotation is, if you protect dharma, it will protect you. *Lord Krishna said, if you are in right path, I will always support you. Business men may get profits within a short period by cheating (unfair methods of business), but they will not sustain for long period.* One should have faith in reality and accept it, which is a great source of strength. A man is what his faith is, as the faith so will be our desires and thoughts and action. In any business, if there is no self-confidence, no business will be successful.

SATTVIC

The Gita defines sattvic as the character of harmony and purity. Sattvic character radiates peace and happiness. It offers selfless service and has a high level of emotional intelligence. Without a high level of emotional intelligence, the Gita suggests that we cannot attain a true meditative state. Today's leadership authorities also suggest that effective leadership flourishes only when leaders have a high level of emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence, abbreviated as EQ, is a discipline of understanding ourselves, especially the emotions that brew in our mind. EQ is the awareness and ability to manage our emotions in a healthy manner.

Timely food, timely sleeps, avoiding unnecessary talk, regular exercise and recreation is very essential for leading a good life. Daily prayer and meditation will bring peace and happiness. This is very important for everyone including all the businessmen.

The following is the brief summary from 18 Chapters of Bhagavad Geetha which are very helpful to everybody including the entrepreneurs for their successful business (in daily life).

- **Chapter 1: Vishada Yoga (Lamenting on the result of War).**

Lesson: Wrong thinking is the only problem in life.

- **Chapter 2: Sankhya Yoga** (How to eliminate lamentation and misery)

Lesson: Right knowledge is the ultimate solution to all our problem.

- **Chapter 3: Karma Yoga** (Each and every person has his/her own prescribed duties, which he/she has to perform at any cost).

Lesson: Performing once duties with selflessness is the only way to achieve progress and prosperity.

- **Chapter 4: Jnana Yoga** (Approaching the Ultimate Truth).

Lesson: Every act can be an act of prayer.

- **Chapter 5: Karma Vairagya Yoga** (Detachment and Renunciation).

Lesson: Renounce the ego of individuality and the bliss of infinity.

- **Chapter 6: Abhyasa Yoga** (Self-Realization).

Lesson: Connect to higher consciousness daily.

- **Chapter 7: Paramahansa Vijnana Yoga** (Knowledge of the Ultimate Truth).

Lesson: Live what you learn.

- **Chapter 8: Akshara-Parabrahman Yoga** (Attainment of Salvation)

Lesson: Never Give-up on yourself.

- **Chapter 9: Raja-Vidya-Guhya Yoga** (Most Confidential Knowledge of the Ultimate Truth). **Lesson:** Value your Blessings.

- **Chapter 10: Vibhuti-Vistara-Yoga** (The Infinite Glories of the Ultimate Truth).

Lesson: See the divine all around.

- **Chapter 11: Vishwaroopa-Darshana Yoga** (The Vision of the ultimate Universal Form). **Lesson:** Have enough surrender to see the truth as it is.

- **Chapter 12: Bhakti Yoga** (The path of devotion).

Lesson: Absorb by our mind and heart to supreme divine.

- **Chapter 13: Kshetra-Kshetrajna Vibhaga Yoga** (The Individual and Ultimate).

Lesson: Detach from materialistic assets and attach to divine.

- **Chapter 14: Gunatraya-Vibhaga Yoga** (To give away oneself from ignorance and passion and adopt the path of pure goodness until acquiring the ability to transcend them).

Lesson: Live a life style that matches your vision.

- **Chapter 15: Purushottama Yoga** (Realization of the Ultimate Truth).

Lesson: Give priority to divine.

- **Chapter 16: Daivasura-Sampad-Vibhaga Yoga** (The Definitions of Divine and the Demoniatic Natured).

Lesson: Being good is a reward in it self.

- **Chapter 17: Shraddhatraya-Vibhaga Yoga** (The Three Divisions of Material Existence).

Lesson: Choosing the right over the pleasant is a sign of power.

- **Chapter 18: Moksha-Upadesha Yoga** (Final Revelations of the Ultimate Truth).

Lesson: Let's go, let's move to union with divine.

To conclude, Bhagavat Gita teaches the ideal philosophy of 'Karma Yoga', a base for human action or karma. Each individual in the universe has his own potential of infinity. It is a matter of demonstration of that divine potential that everyone has in the inner- consciousness. It is the responsibility of all human beings on the earth to realize it and strive for the ultimate excellence in their own profession to meet socially desired targeted goals. It is also the responsibility of the organizations to focus on the up- gradation of their employees through effective training and development. Government needs to put attention on the allocation of the reasonable amount for the human resource development by promoting quality education to all the citizens of the nation, which will in turn enhance the competitiveness of the individuals and would create a source of resourceful human capital within the country, which can successfully compete globally.

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