

# The Bhagavad Gita: A Manual for Self-Management

Puja Agarwal<sup>1</sup>, G. Singaiah<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Research Scholar, Department of Management, North-Eastern Hill University (NEHU)

<sup>2</sup>Professor, Department of Management, North-Eastern Hill University (NEHU),

## ABSTRACT:

The Holy Indian Epic, the Bhagavad Gita is not merely a religious text of the Hindus; rather it is a comprehensive philosophy which has universal applicability. By applying the teachings of Bhagavad Gita in everyday regime, individuals can enlighten themselves, dispel their doubts and overcome their dilemmas. This philosophy acts as a guide that offers numerous self-management lessons. Self-management is a basic prerequisite for effective management of people, groups, organizations, and societies. It enables individuals to maximize their productivity, improve their performance and accomplish personal and professional goals. However, self-management has received scant attention in the western and modern management. On the contrary, the Indian philosophy has emphasized the relevance of self-management since time immemorial. This paper aims to explore our rich heritage to uncover probable solutions in the Bhagavad Gita that can be implemented to resolve problems that confront modern man in the discharge of his or her duties.

**Keywords:** atman, dharma, swadharma, karma yoga, sthitaprajna

## I. Introduction:

Bhagavad Gita, a philosophical poem par excellence, is not only a sacred and spiritual text of the Hindus; rather it is a popular provenance of knowledge and wisdom for the global community. Bhagavad Gita is a Yoga Shastra. It is a treatise on the rules of conduct for laymen and ascetics which can be verified practically by all (Reddyb and K.V.S). Hence it is applicable to all walks of life. It is narrated in the Bhishma-Parva of the great epic Mahabharata, a widely popular mythological story in Hindu philosophy. This manual comprises of 18 chapters and 700 verses (*shlokas*) drafted by Vyasa and dates back to 2500 to 5000 years BC. In the great epic Mahabharata which has 100,000 shlokas, the Gita constitutes the chapters ranging from 25-42. This scripture encloses an indispensable vision of actualizing the sole purpose of life, i.e., the attainment of moksha (liberation) or nirvana (peace) while totally engrossed and engaged in the hustle and bustle of life. The Gita puts forth the divine virtues which if developed will aid individuals to attain inner peace (Matliwala, 2014).

The Song of the Lord, i.e., the Gita is uttered before the commencement of the decisive battle at Kurukshetra, a splendid setting of martial valor. The very first verse of the Bhagavad Gita starts with the words ‘dharma-kshetre kuru-kshetre’ which means that the battlefield of Kurukshetra was the land of dharma or the sacred land that nourished dharma. The setting of the Gita is the austere battlefield of Kurukshetra where the armies have been drawn between the Kauravas and Paṇḍavas. After the

termination of the exile period (12 years) and incognito living period (1 year), as per the defined agreement, the Pandavas claimed to procure half of their kingdom from Duryodhana, but the latter broke his commitment and refused to return even a needle size of land. Subsequently, the Pandavas decided to wage war against the Kauravas. It begins with the Pandava prince Arjuna, as he becomes saturated with doubts and shrouded with inner weakness, in a state of quandary on the battlefield. Substantiating that his rivals are his own kith and kin, he turns to his charioteer and guide, Lord Krishna, for advice.

Swami Chinmayananda, in his commentary on the Bhagavad Gita beautifully acclaimed that the philosophy delineated by BG is not an idealism which has no contact with the actual work-a-day world or a philosophy fit for entertaining a pleasant idea, but it is one that is capable of making man a nobler being. The Gita, a scripture par excellence, is universal in its message, all-inclusive in its outlook, and concrete in its suggestions. The ideas disseminated by the Gita does not dwindle away with time, rather just as a liquid takes the shape of the container in which it is poured, similarly these ideologies change as per the reader's perspective and the context in which it is read.

According to the Gita, lack of self-knowledge is the fundamental human problem. Self-knowledge reconstructs our ambition and motivation. It liberates us from the narrow confines of selfish action to the privilege of serving others. Engaging in worldly activities with a profound sense of tranquillity and intrinsic gratification is possible only through self-enquiry and self-reflection. When actions are performed selflessly, it purifies the mind and thus makes it suitable for the acquisition of self-knowledge. Listening to our inner self, accepting responsibility for what we are, learning at a deeper level as compared to others and reflecting on our experiences are the paths that lead one towards self-knowledge (Bennis & Townsend, 1989).

## **2. Review of Literature:**

Satpathy & Muniapan (2008) asserted that self-knowledge is an essential personality value in the absence of which managers lack innovation and become egocentric and thus fail to respond to human situations in a human way. This subsequently leads to strained interpersonal relationships in the organisation thereby restricting human capital development.

Rao & Varanasi (2010) concluded that the five principles of Bhagavad Gita namely, inner peace, steady mind, focusing on the means, mode of goodness and surrendering to the Supreme can be applied to managerial situations to excel in time management, conflict resolution, leadership, transactional analysis and the ability to influence which would ultimately lead to creating a new mind set, a skill set and a new tool. The study further highlighted the fact that a leader is expected to demonstrate self-management before being worthy of organizational management.

Gayathri & Meenakshi (2012) in their study on Emotional intelligence through the Bhagavad Gita stated that when insights from the eastern philosophy are incorporated into the theory of emotional intelligence, it becomes more complete in thought.

White (1971) acclaimed that the four most fundamental kinds of yoga mentioned in the Bhagavad gita namely Karmayoga (yoga of selfless action), Bhaktiyoga (yoga of devotion), Jnanayoga (yoga of

knowledge) and Rajayoga (yoga of psychophysical control) are effective for the attainment of human perfection. The study further asserted that throughout the gita each of these yogas is proclaimed to be the best and most efficacious means for the attainment of highest good.

Rastogi & Prakash (2015) in their study on Karma Yoga stated that Karma Yoga is an energetic involvement by individuals where languor is denied and energy is channelled discretionally in selfless actions. Equanimity is a prerequisite to Karma Yoga. The study also stated that the universality of karma yoga leads to the gift of happiness at work to every individual across races, organizations and nations.

### **3. Objectives of the study:**

This paper intends to highlight the self-management lessons that our age-old scripture, the Bhagavad gita in particular, imparts. It also brings forth the process of self-development, the desirable set of actions and the prerequisite traits for attaining wisdom by human beings.

### **4. Research Questions:**

1. What is our true self?
2. What is the process of self-development as mentioned in the gita?
3. How can one attain wisdom?
4. How can one attain the state of equanimity (*Sthitapragya*)?

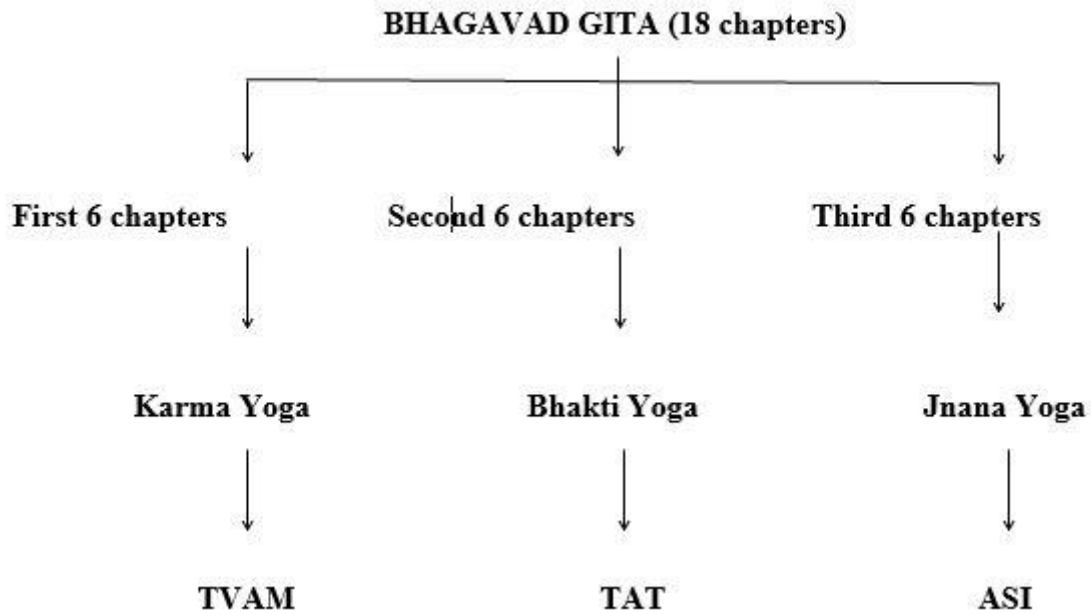
### **5. Methodology:**

This conceptual paper is a part of qualitative research and therefore applies hermeneutics as the research methodology to unfold the meaning of Bhagavad Gita. Hermeneutics is a qualitative inquiry which can be applied to interpret the text, especially to those texts that are very meaningful in nature. Basically, hermeneutics is used to interpret the meaning of ancient literature.

### **6. Self-management in Bhagavad Gita:**

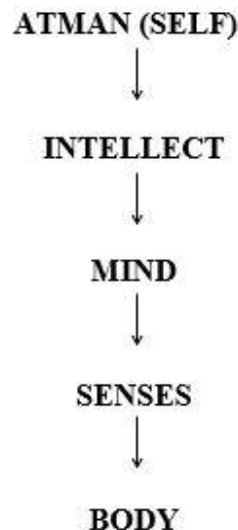
#### **6.1. SELF: The Ultimate Reality**

The essence of Bhagavad Gita is to make one realize TAT TWAM ASI (That you are). It is a great Upanishadic sentence exhorting us to realize our own divine entity. These lines illustrate a complex concept of who we are, because to understand and know the world, it is vital to know ourselves first. Self-observation, self-examination, and self-evaluation is a stepping stone to self-knowledge. Tat Twam Asi “That Thou Art” in a fundamental philosophical statement indicates that the Self is the Ultimate Reality. The eighteen chapters of Bhagavad Gita are consciously divided according to the threefold law; six chapters of aspiration, six chapters of illumination and six chapters of realization. The poem initiates with the hunt for the light of consciousness, the heart of the poem is subjected by the metamorphosis of Lord Krishna and the poem transcends towards the end by the empirical operation of all the laws and inspirations learned so far (Johnston, 1908:56).



**Figure 1 – The Essence of the Gita.**

The Self (Atman) is the illuminating consciousness within each individual. It is that spiritual entity which is eternal, all –pervading, unborn, undying, the one changeless factor that is infinite in each living entity. The Self is Sanatanah (ancient) and not Nutana (new), thus it is unconditioned by time and place. Evolution and change are all for the mind-and-intellect and not for the Self. The complete understanding of life can arise only when individuals understand how from the Self the endless multiplicity of names and forms rise up and spread to become the Universe. Shravana (listening), Manana (continuous reflection) and Nididhyasana (contemplation) lead to the realization of the Self. The Light-of-Wisdom by which we become aware of our own mental and intellectual conditions at any given moment is called the Light of the Self or the Consciousness. Life is the summation of the varied experiences we encounter that originate from our illuminating consciousness. Man’s awareness, inclusive of both the conscious and the unconscious aspect, is equivalent to the Self (Norton, 1968:177-192).



**Figure 2 – Hierarchy of Illuminating Consciousness in Every Individual.**

Introspection, contemplation, and reflection help individuals release from the chains of self-devastating practices and fixate positively on the task at hand. Lord Krishna acclaims in the Gita that there cannot be a greater possession and a nobler endeavour than the acquisition of self-knowledge (Bhagavad Gita:4.38). The ones who experience internal bliss, take pleasure within the self and are illumined by the divine knowledge that springs from within, certainly liberate themselves from the external temptations and absorb their mind in God (BG:5.24). In a state of equilibrium, when the mind does not get affected by the pairs of opposites namely pleasure and pain, gain and loss & conquest and defeat, which operate as a barrier to the knowledge of Reality, the Self can be realized. The detachment requisite for this condition is induced when a man acts according to his dharma.

Dharma is “the law of being”. A thing cannot remain itself without faithfully maintaining its own nature and “That Nature, Which Makes A Thing What It Is” has been referred as its Dharma. It refers to the essential nature of a thing without which it cannot retain its independent existence. By realizing and following one’s own dharma, one attains knowledge. Knowledge of the Absolute can be attained only through knowing oneself and to accept the truth that the Atman or soul is identical with Brahman. To vent our inner potential candidly and experience the dynamic world, resolving our identity crisis is a prerequisite which is possible only through knowledge of the self.

In a famous analogy, the Muṇḍaka Upanishad compares “the syllable Om with a bow, the self (Atman) with an arrow and Brahman with the target to be struck” (2.2.4). It resembles an individual who with sheer meditation, is pulled back ready to fire “with the mind fixed on the nature of that,” i.e., Brahman (2.2.3). This idea of an individual, self-purified by meditation is augmented when a person whose desires have been fulfilled and he has realized the supreme place of Brahman. Such an individual is described as *kṛtatma* (3.2.2), or *yuktamanah* “one who’s self is perfected” (3.2.5). Self-ignorance is the fundamental human error. It is the ultimate cause of sorrow; it is the source of all our existential maladies and gnawing sense of inadequacy which can be eradicated only by the knowers of self as propounded by the Gita. The Gita acclaims that only our true self can give us pure bliss (*atmany evatmana tustah*: BG, 2.55).

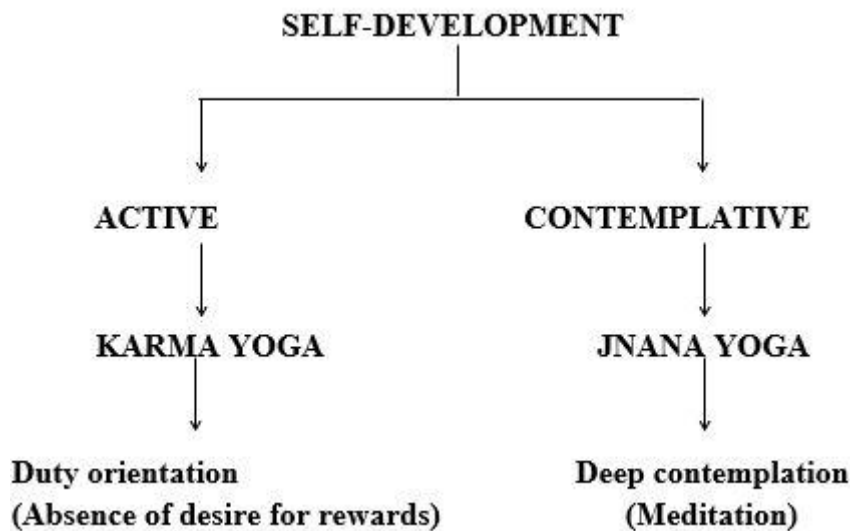
Swami Chinmayananda, in his interpretation of the Gita, beautifully quotes –“Man awakened to the self’s glory is God; God forgetful of his own glory is the deluded man.” The true knowledge makes a man realize that he is “The Soul with a body”, but now in his utter ignorance, he assumes that he is a ‘body with a soul’. The purpose of all events and facades in the substantiated world can be comprehended only with the possession of self-knowledge (Mukherjee, 2017). It is only through self-knowledge that an individual can liberate himself from all his selfish desires and self-centred actions and thus work towards the welfare of the society. The inevitability of self-knowledge is extolled by Lord Krishna all through the Bhagavad Gita.

## 6.2. Self-Development through Action:

The Bhagavad Gita is a global scripture pertinent to people of all caste, creed, race, temperaments and is everlasting. The ideas disseminated by the Gita does not dwindle away with time, rather just as a liquid takes the shape of the container in which it is poured, similarly these ideologies change as per the

reader’s perspective and the context in which it is read. The beauty of the Gita lies in the fact that its meaning, interpretation, and significance depends on how one looks at it.

Men fit for spiritual discipline fall in two distinct categories: the active and the contemplative. The Gita justifies its universal application by manifesting methods of self-development that align with the mental and intellectual temperaments of both the active and contemplative categories. Krishna clearly explained in the Gita that there exists a twofold path of Self-development; the path of Knowledge to the Meditative or Contemplative, and the path of Action to the Active. Action enables an individual to clean and purify from within and thereafter tread on the path of knowledge to approach the final destination of self-development. The art of disentangling ourselves from our own thought-processes within, is the very art of meditation. Such a true meditator is able to behold and encounter immanently, the state of pure knowledge, uncontaminated by the clutter and chains of thoughts.



**Figure 3 – Path of Self–Development.**

An intellect, invigorated by its own intrinsic capacity to differentiate between the real and the unreal, the right and the wrong, is the potent instrument of self–development in man. Lord Krishna urged in the Gita that a man should lift himself by his own Self. If a man wishes to magnify himself into the greater possibilities now lying latent in him, then he has to rise above to the greater perfection that is the true and eternal core in himself. Lord Krishna further states a glorious idea in the form of a beautiful expression that we are considered both as our own friend as well as our own enemy and ultimately it depends on us whether we accept the responsibility for blessing or damning ourselves (BG:6.6).

By splintering the chains that fetter us with the past and the future, and working without being hustled by apprehensions or intimidated by desires, in the full liberation and inspiration of the present, is the noblest way to perform actions. The finest cure to the turbulence of the mind is equanimity (*samatva*).

**6.3. Actions Lead to Supremacy in Life:**

Man is invariably under the influence of the triple tendencies (modes of existence) of *Sattva* (awareness), *Rajas* (dynamism) and *Tamas* (inertness) inherent in him. One cannot remain inactive even



for a single moment. Due to the influence of these three mental tendencies (Gunas), man is prompted to labour and to act. Therefore, the Gita advises him to act vigorously for the purification of the mind and with a right attitude, so that he may avoid all internal waste and misuse of energy and learn to evolve in himself as well as set an example for the masses. Krishna prompts Arjuna to execute his prescribed duty, for action is far more superior to inaction. No man can maintain his physical body without work (BG: 3.8). Action occupies a dominant place in this age –old scripture and hence it is instructed that the wise should not encourage the ignorant to refrain from work, but to engage in work in the spirit of devotion.

According to the Bhagavad Gita, appropriate action (*Karma*) is governed by one's "Varna" or endowment and "Ashrama" or state of growth. Four "Varnas" (viz., *Brahmin* or priest class, *Kshatriya* or warrior class, *Vaishya* or business community and *Shudra* or labourer) and four "Ashramas" (viz., *Brahmacharya* or learning stage, *Grahashta* or householder stage, *Vanaprastha* or retirement from household and *Sanyasa* or complete renunciation from the worldly affairs) are the two dimensions which determine each person's action within this social fabric. Actions have been classified in two broad categories, namely, *Sakama karma* and *Nishkama karma*. Actions done with the desire which are called "sakama -karma," and actions done without a desire which are called "nishkama-karma. Krishna describes the path of non-attachment as Yoga and thereby admonishes Arjuna to attain equanimity of mind by relinquishing attachment and remaining indifferent to the pairs of opposites (success and failure) in the performance of his duties. These ideas portray Gita's philosophy of right action that helps to attain liberation (Srivastava, 1977:97-108).

One should therefore: (1) procure one's fulfilment from doing his duty and not from its result viz. "Nishkamakarma", (2) perform his task efficiently viz. "Karmasu Kaushalam" and (3) devote action for Society's Welfare viz. "Lokasangraha". These three aspects of action are technically termed as "Karmayoga" in the Gita (Balodhi, 2011:300-302). A karma yogi is one who is expected to perform the duties with dexterity and utmost efficiency (Karmesu kausalam). As per the Gita, hen an individual executes his natural duty with sheer devotion and dedication, not only does he attain growth and development, but is also blessed with success (*vijayam*), prosperity (*sree*) and progress (Jayamani, 2013:60-65). The successful accomplishment of one's mission is possible only if we put in our heart and soul in the performance irrespective of any ulterior motive or desired end result.

Lord Krishna enumerates the five component parts that go into the constitution of any action, namely, *Adhishthanam* (the body), *Karta* (the doer), *Karanam* (instruments of perception), *Cheshta* (function or physiological activities) and *Daivam* (the presiding deity). These five components must all come into full play in order to accomplish any work, and therefore, they are called as the causes of all actions. A real *Karma Yogi* is the one who understands that his only interest is with action alone and that he has no regard with results. He should never entertain the motive of procuring a specific result for any specified action. However, these ideas do not mean that he should lie idle courting inaction. As per the Gita, the work of man is judged by the vigor in which it is done and not by the nature of the work. A spirit of dedication helps a person to reach the state of actualization (Realizing the God within) (Natesan, 2009). Elimination of selfish desires paves the path –of –work. When the ego and egocentric desires are wiped out, the work accomplished through such an individual is the true divine action, which is intended to

have everlasting success. Each individual should engage in creative, character-moulding, moral-rebuilding work that can aid the individual's personality-integration.

#### 6.4. Sthitaprajna (Emotional Stability):

*Sthita* connotes steady and *pragya* connotes wisdom. Therefore, a *sthitapragya* refers to an individual who possess steady wisdom, the one who has realized the internal truth. *Pragya* (wisdom) has two facets: *Puranattvam* (fullness of being) and *Samatavam* (equanimity of mind). *Puranattvam* permits an individual to get rid of the ever-augmenting desires while *Samatavam* authorizes a person to do away with the affirmative and adverse experiences of life by possessing an equanimous mind. All our agonies and hardships can be eradicated by imbibing such wisdom. A person, who having conquered desires, is impervious by the fluctuations of life and being forever self-possessed attains a state of equanimity which is the state of *sthitaprajna* (Sharma, 1997:49-53). The ultimate goal of *sthitaprajna* is self-realization wherein all human sufferings come to an end. Disinterested actions (*Nishkama karma*) are the result of intellect uncoupled with desires. A *sthitaprajna* practices *nishkama karma* by virtue of its inherent nature.

*Sthitaprajna* does not mean emotionlessness but the sublimation of emotions. The Gita asserts that individuals attain a state of emotional stability as a result of governing (a) their senses (BG: 2.58), (b) their desires (BG: 2.55), (c) their anger (BG: 2.56) and (d) their mind (BG: 2.57) (Sivakumar, 2020:172). Desires flare up when the intellect is contaminated by ignorance. The individual who has disengaged himself of this ignorance by means of right knowledge attains the state of desirelessness and is thus considered to be a man-of-wisdom. Such a Perfect-One is blissful in his own experience of the Self as he becomes the very source of all bliss and bears equanimity in pleasure and pain. The emotions that must be absent in such a perfected-one include Raga (attachment), Bhaya (fear) and Krodha (anger). A man of Steady Wisdom has a special aptitude for disengaging his senses from all the annoying 'fields-of-objects'.

According to Isa Upanishad (Swami Nikhilananda, 1990:206), 'The wise man beholds all beings in the self and the self in all beings.' Comprehension of these ideas lifts up a man to the perfect state of steady wisdom. Such a person relishes and experiences the joys and sorrows without attachment. It is essential for an individual to enhance one's self-concept in order to reach this perfect state of mind (Dhingra, 2011:63-72).

A man of perpetual consciousness will operate in the world as a mastermind – all his activities drenched in selflessness, his feelings aged in compassion and all his thoughts repleted with love. Possessing equanimity ensures consistency of intellectual application to the complexities of life.

#### 6.5. Swadharma – Attainment of Perfection:

In a lucid sense, Dharma is a law which holds all creations. There are two facets of dharma, namely, the Sanathan Dharma and the Swadharma. The former is the universal and eternal dharma while the latter is the unique and specific dharma of the individual and collective self. The governing values of human conduct have to be procured from dharma as well as Swadharma (Rathod, 2012).



Perfection springs up from excellence. Perfection in one's work paves the way towards excellence. Actions facilitate man to attain perfection. Lord Krishna reiterates in Bhagavad Gita, "Yoga is excellence in action (Karma)". Thus, the simplest way to attain God is to induce excellence in all our actions (Sharma & Talwar, 2007).

Validity of the notion of *Swadharma* (call-of-character) can be witnessed in the Gita when Lord Krishna acclaims that it is way better to execute one's prescribed duties (dharma), even though they may be faulty, than another's duties (BG 3.35) (Rastogi, 2018). The notion of *Swadharma* is incomplete without understanding the vital aspects of *Swabhava* and *Dharma*. *Swabhava* is one's inner essence (inherent nature) which constitutes his personality. *Dharma* is derived from the word *dhri*, which means "*dharan karane yogya*", i.e., carrying out responsibilities, judgements, and actions that are appropriate and applicable for us." Amalgamating thoughts, words and deeds signifies acting in accordance with *Swabhava* which leads to an ideal conformity with one's own nature. When an individual attains a harmonious relationship with one's *Swabhava*, then it is called as *Swadharma* (Kumar, 2011: 25-33).

Krishna preaches the lesson of motivation by stating that a man should elevate himself by his own Self alone and not demean himself; for the self is both the friend as well as the enemy of oneself (BG: 6.5). The Lord discloses to Arjuna that every individual should accomplish his duty in alignment to his very nature in the proper spirit of detachment which would thus lead to perfection. Arjuna is advised to perform his indebted duty since action is superior to inaction. Further, the Gita highlights that even the sustenance of the body is not possible through inaction (BG:3.8). Individuals become eligible for the realization of Self-knowledge and perfection through the discharge of their own duty (Bhavanani, 2011:3-10).

The Gita teaches us that our innate lifework, *swadharma*, is a supreme means to discover who we are. To reach the goal of Self-knowledge, one needs to perform his bounden duties and service. To adhere to one's *swadharma* is the only accepted method of living in harmony and bliss, in success and contentment. Krishna's Gita calls upon man to make work in itself the greatest homage unto the Supreme; this is Spiritual Sadhana.

### 6.6. Gunas:

The inherent energy which necessitates the human mind to operate is known as *guna* (Modh, 2014). Every being is composed of three constitutional elements termed as the *gunas*. These *gunas* are born of Matter and they generate a feeling of attachment through which they chain the indwelling Self to the cycle of birth-and-death and thus result in a stream of constant change and pain. These three *gunas* are referred to as *Sattva* (awareness), *Rajas* (dynamism), and *Tamas* (inertness). A person is characterized by that *guna* which is highly dominant in him. Personality traits of an individual is the outcome of the interaction between the *gunas* and the environment (Kejriwal & Krishnan, 2004:29-40). *Sattva* attaches itself to happiness, *Rajas* to action while *Tamas* attaches to heedlessness (BG:14.9). All the physical, emotional and intellectual experiences that an individual encounters are due to the influence of these three *gunas*. At all given times, the human personality operates under the clout of one predominating *guna*. However, the other two *gunas* are not completely missing, but are only less important.

Virtue is engendered in one's personality through sattva guna which aids in illuminating the intellect with knowledge. The features of sattva guna include being calm, contented, philanthropic, helpful, tranquil, serene and possessing good health. Passion and lust are the principal manifestations of rajas guna. Individuals under the clout of rajas guna get captivated in worldly pursuits of status, prestige, career, family, and home. Tamas guna individuals are characterized by sleep, laziness, intoxication, violence, and gambling. They lack the discrimination power of what is right and what is wrong, and do not hesitate in resorting to immoral behavior for accomplishing their self-will.

The Gita declares that actions that are performed in the mode of goodness (Sattva) confer pure results while pain is the outcome of those actions which are done in the mode of passion (rajas). Ignorance is the consequence of actions performed in the mode of inertia (BG: 14.16). It further states that knowledge arises from Sattva, greed from Rajas and delusion arises from Tamas (BG: 14.17). In the ladder of evolution wherein evolution refers to the quantity of joy or happiness, peace or bliss experienced by the being, there are three stages of development. Those dwelling in Sattva proceed upwards, the ones who possess Rajasic features reside in the middle, while those inhabiting the lowest guna, that is, Tamasic move downwards (BG:14.18).

The three gunas are the expressions of ignorance which constitutes the very causal-body. Therefore, those individuals who have surpassed the gunas are no longer influenced by the tragedies of the subtlebodies. When individuals go beyond rajas and tamas, and attain a state full of sattva, their capacity to scrutinize, to comprehend and to become conscious of the external world and thereby assess it judiciously grows further. By transcending the domination of the three gunas a person can be established as a sthitaprajna who enjoys the momentariness of every situation. The concept of triguna that has its presence in the Gita is holistic in nature and thereby paves the way for constructing a factual and indigenous psychological theory which would aid in comprehending the human behaviour (Dhulla, 2014).

### **6.7. Prerequisite Traits for Attaining Wisdom:**

Faith, devotion and self-control are the three imperative necessities to be acquired in order to ascend the ladder of development and ultimately obtain wisdom. The Gita describes faith (*Shraddha*) as the very essence (*Svabhava*) of an embodied being and as the fuel required for the seeker to soar higher. The nature of a person determines his faith. Man consists of his faith; as a man's faith is, so is he (BG: 17.3). Faith is that dominant and actuating force which emanates from within, and compelled by which, all layers of personality in an individual act in their appointed fields. Faith has further been classified in three kinds, according to the nature of the temperament (gunas), namely, the divine, the undivine and the diabolic. Shraddha of an individual determines all his physical activities, psychological behaviours and his intellectual make-up. The Gita states that it is the nature of a person that determines his FAITH.

Wise are those who know the art of true living – the ones who undertake all work, maintaining in them the full evenness of the mind, and thus abandon all anxieties for the fruits of their actions. According to Sankaracarya, one of the preeminent classical commentators on the Gita, "A constant contemplation of one's own Real Nature is called devotion." The Gita declares that whatever be the path of divine self – development that a true devotee may be following, it is an unavoidable necessity that the seeker must

give his undivided attention to it, and must, in all circumstances, cultivate in his mind a constant knowledge of the Divine. In the absence of adherence to the model of action or knowledge, it is not conceivable to flourish in either the quest for action or Self-knowledge (Dhiman, 2019:157-177). The threefold acts of *Yajna* (sacrifice), *dan* (charity) and *tapa* (penance) help in the complete expansion and spiritual development of individuals and are therefore referred to as the “purifiers of the wise”.

The capacity within an individual to withdraw his senses at will from the fields-of-objects is called *Yoga Shastra Pratyahara*. The Bhagavad Gita acclaims that it is challenging but possible, to master and subjugate our senses by practice and detachment (Muralikrishna, 2019:1-8). By exposing the mind to the placid atmosphere of meditation (*Dhyana*), one can attain a complete command over his sense-organs. Abandoning all selfish desires for sense indulgence, without a sense of proprietorship and devoid of egotism, such a person accomplishes eternal peace.

Jeste & Vahia (2008:197-209) established certain domains of wisdom as described in the Gita which included knowledge of life, emotional regulation, control over desires, decisiveness, love and faith in God, duty and work, self-contentedness, compassion and sacrifice, insight/humility and yoga. This paper further acclaimed an important and noteworthy concept in the Gita that wisdom can be improved through teaching. This could be very effectively explained by the Gita itself which constitutes an example of how wisdom may be taught and learned, signifying the presence of Lord Krishna, the great orator and Arjuna, a fantastic listener.

A self-controlled person is mindful about each and every circumstance of the existing time. To such a person wisdom is steady and is not shaken by the adversity (Tiwari, 2020:1649-1652). On the contrary, those who lack self-control will find it arduous to progress in meditation. In Gita it is said that when a person sees the Lord dwelling in everything and in every place, then through his clear eye of wisdom, he is able to recognize perfection and bliss, divinity and sanctity in the very drab and dreary world of today, amidst its very sorrows and ugliness (BG:13.29). Desires do not disturb them who possess contentment which is the mark of a tranquil mind. Governing the objects and circumstances by oneself aids in the development of steady wisdom, forbearance and equanimity.

## 7. Conclusion:

According to the Gita, self-mastery is a prerequisite to accomplish anything in life. Self-mastery propagates that individual can achieve success only through self-effort (Hobfoll et. al., 2002). This ancient scripture is a preeminent source of knowledge and its message is for everyone who possesses a keen interest in attaining spiritual freedom. Salvation of mankind is the sole purpose of the Gita. Irrespective of one's caste, creed, race, religion, or philosophical orientation, everyone can achieve their spiritual well-being by adhering to its simple guidance. Self-awareness through self-discipline is the foundation stone to lead others which results in the attainment of self-transcendence by virtue of selfless service. Knowers of self are truly wise and ever free from grief as per the Gita. All our existential problems and sorrows spring up from self-ignorance—not knowing who we truly are. The Gita teaches that one who acts with knowledge and devotion, without desire and unattached, is liberated already. It is only through self-knowledge that an individual can liberate himself from all his selfish desires and self-

centred actions and thus work towards the welfare of the society. In the presence of self-knowledge, when actions are performed with mental lucidity and inherent generosity rooted in Dharma, then an individual succeeds to engage in the world strategically. Individuals through self-knowledge realize that the happiness they seek from the external world is present within themselves, in their very nature (BG: 2.71).

Lack of selfish intent and remaining equanimous in success and failure, pleasure and pain, joy and sorrow are the traits of a wise man who offer their work as a faithful service to the Supreme. Such a man-of-wisdom works for the inner purification (atmasuddhaye. BG: 5.11) and perform with a view to set an example to the masses, so that the ignorant do not go astray (BG: 3.26). The ultimate motive of a wise man is the welfare of the society (lokasangraham. BG: 3.20 & 3.21). As per the Gita, knowing oneself is the ultimate sign of being a wise man who then work selflessly and diligently for the welfare and unification of all beings. The message of the Gita promotes comprehensive improvement and development of human personality on all its dimensions (physical-psychological, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual) by unfolding the three major paths, namely, Path of Knowledge (Jnanayoga), the Path of Action (Karmayoga), and the Path of Devotion (Bhaktiyoga). If we are deficient to strike harmony between our vichara (thought process) and achara (conduct), no progress on the spiritual path is possible. Knowledge, devotion and action are the three paths that converge together to reach the highest goal of life, i.e., Nirvana (peace and ultimate bliss).

Our mind becomes the arena of internal conflicts which personifies the plight of Arjuna in our lives. In today's competitive world, we too have our own Mahabharat war in the form of emotional turmoil, fight with loved ones, dispute over property, etc, and like Arjuna, we too succumb to the situation and surrender. The war waging within us obscures our notion, drain our vigor and makes us agitated. We may not find Lord Krishna to counsel us but we certainly have his spiritual teachings in the form of this reservoir of knowledge, the Bhagavad Gita to which we can surrender all our dilemmas of life and find a way to solve all our problems. A solution to one's personal discord is offered by the Gita. Such holy scriptures serve as benchmarks for those who use it wisely. The Gita is beautifully summarized with the notion that whenever there is a convergence between the man of wisdom (*yogeshvarah*) and the man of action (*dhanur-dharah*), the result will always be prosperity (*sree*), success (*vijaya*), expansion (*bhooti*) and sound policy (*Dhruva-neeti*) (BG: 18.78). A perfect blend of the sacred and the secular is the desirable policy for man as counselled in the Bhagavad Gita.

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