

Educational Relevance of the Bhagavad Gita: Emotional Intelligence, Values and Social Harmony in the Context of NEP 2020

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Abstract: The Bhagavad Gita has long been read in India as a guide to right action, and the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 has renewed interest in its place in schools and teacher education. This paper reads the text alongside recent work on emotional intelligence, value education and the teacher-student relationship. Paper reflects Bhagavad Gita describes the person of steady mind (sthitaprajna), what the Gita expects of a teacher and of a learner, and how its paths of knowledge, devotion and action have been linked to the cognitive, affective and psychomotor domains of Bloom's taxonomy. The Gita separates passing pleasure from lasting happiness and names desire, anger and greed as the main sources of inner conflict; this gives teachers a practical vocabulary for discussing emotional regulation with students. Authors considers what the text offers for personality and leadership development, for a sense of responsibility towards nature, and for spirituality at the workplace. It also argues that inner well-being and outward achievement depend on each other, and that a classroom built on this idea can contribute to social harmony.

Keywords: *Bhagavad Gita, National Education Policy 2020, Intelligence, Education.*

Introduction-

The Bhagavad Gita forms part of the Bhishma Parva of the Mahabharata, a work traditionally attributed to Ved Vyasa. Its seven hundred verses, spread over eighteen chapters, take up philosophical and metaphysical questions about thought, feeling and action, what has been called the trinity of mind (Lamba et al., 2023). The text opens on the battlefield of Kurukshetra, where Arjuna, who stands for the ordinary person, turns to Krishna for guidance (Aithal & Ramanathan, 2026). Many readers treat the Gita less as a religious text than as practical advice on the problems of living, and its appeal has never been confined to one region or period (Vashishtha et al., 2023). Its teaching on duty (dharma), right conduct and self-knowledge has helped people think through moments of confusion and loss (Clarence, 2026). The Gita also asks a great deal of its reader. It calls for self-discipline, resilience and a balanced mind (Gayathri & Meenakshi, 2012). Some analysts go farther and claim that the problems it raises about purpose and conduct are universal rather than restricted to one culture (Gayathri & Meenakshi, 2015).

Implementation of the Bhagavad Gita in diverse ground-

NEP 2020 asks schools to draw on India's own knowledge traditions, and the Gita is one of the texts most often proposed for this. What the policy has in mind is not only the transfer of information but also life skills and emotional steadiness, and this changes what is expected of teachers and students alike (McCartney & Lourenço, 2023). Writers on the Gita have connected its ideas with management thinking and with Bloom's taxonomy, and teachers have used them to build calmer and more cooperative classrooms (Sapkota, 2025). Because the text is

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concerned with ethics at work and with living peacefully alongside others, its influence need not end at the school gate. Students can carry it into working life as a habit of ethical judgement and emotional control (Aithal & Ramanathan, 2026). Pleasure and happiness have a place here as well. When education attends to the learner's well-being, learning itself becomes more enjoyable, and it also serves the wider aim of a healthy society (Shuying et al., 2025).

In the Gita, real wisdom means seeing the same divine presence in every living being (Sharma & Ramachandran, 2015). On this view, education has to do more than pass on knowledge. It should help children find a purpose they can live by (Trevvarthen, 2011). The Gita draws together ideas from several schools of Indian thought, so many commentators treat it as a summary of those traditions and as a direct route to self-realisation (Sapkota, 2025).

In the Gita, a good teacher is marked above all by balance. Such a teacher does not only speak the truth but lives it, and cares for the student's health of body and mind as much as for their own. The student, in turn, is seen as a learner and not as a mere follower. What the Gita asks of the student first is humility. At the start of Chapter II, Arjuna openly says that he is confused about his duty and asks Krishna to teach him (Chapter II, Verse 7). His honest search for knowledge begins with that admission (Sharma & Ramachandran, 2015).

The essence of education lies in nurturing holistic development within individuals. This encompasses the cultivation of knowledge, skills, abilities, and wisdom, fostering a life that is both purposeful (Dharmik) and action-oriented (Karmic). Education (Vidya) is the pursuit of duties for peace, joy, satisfaction, and salvation, free from the three wraths (lust, anger, and fear), with a steady mind and wisdom (Ghimire, 2013).

क्षेत्रज्ञं चापि मां विद्धि सर्वक्षेत्रेषु भारत।
क्षेत्रक्षेत्रज्ञयोर्ज्ञानं यत्तज्ज्ञानं मतं मम ॥

Bharata! You should understand that I am also the knower in all bodies, and to understand that body and its knower is called knowledge. This is my opinion (Chinmayananda, 2022). Distinguishing between pleasure and happiness, it is evident that the former relies on external conditions, whereas the latter emanates from the internal state of the mind (Datta, 2021). Genuine happiness is rooted in a tranquil and purified mind, untethered by external influences (Rabindranath et al., 2024).

आपूर्यमाणमचलप्रतिष्ठं -समुद्रमापः प्रविशन्ति यद्वत्।
तद्वत्कामा यं प्रविशन्ति सर्वे स शान्तिमाप्नोति न कामकामी ॥

According to Lord Krishna, genuine happiness is found within oneself, presenting a stark contrast to the contemporary notion of an object-centered world. In this modern paradigm, individuals are often driven by external factors, attempting to find joy and happiness through the fulfillment of worldly desires (Swarupananda, 2016). It explored the true meaning of Happiness; 3 types named as Satvic (Pure), Rajasic (passionate), and Tamsic (Dull) based on individual actions, desires, perceptions and intellectual abilities.

The Bhagavad Gita offers a range of guidelines and insights that serve as valuable tools for modern managers and management (Juneja, 2022). These teachings not only serve as a foundation for addressing daily challenges but also function as catalysts for effective administrative practices. The Bhagavad Gita explores managerial concepts encompassing efficient resource utilization, work attitudes, commitment, organizational culture, outcomes, and the mental well-being of managers (Naragatti & Nagesh, 2023).

As per the Bhagavad Gita, every living being possesses an eternal soul that imparts life to the body. The soul, distinct and conscious, is the true self within every individual, coexisting with the mind and body (Lamba et al., 2023).

In the constantly evolving and dynamic world, emotions significantly influence individuals' attitudes and productivity, shaping their personality traits. The challenge lies in fostering positive emotions while mitigating the negative ones, a task that necessitates the skill of comprehending and regulating emotions, commonly referred to as emotional intelligence.

This intelligence is defined as an individual's capacity to recognize, comprehend, and effectively manage both their own emotions and those of others, enabling informed decision-making for positive outcomes (Mayer & Geher, 1996).

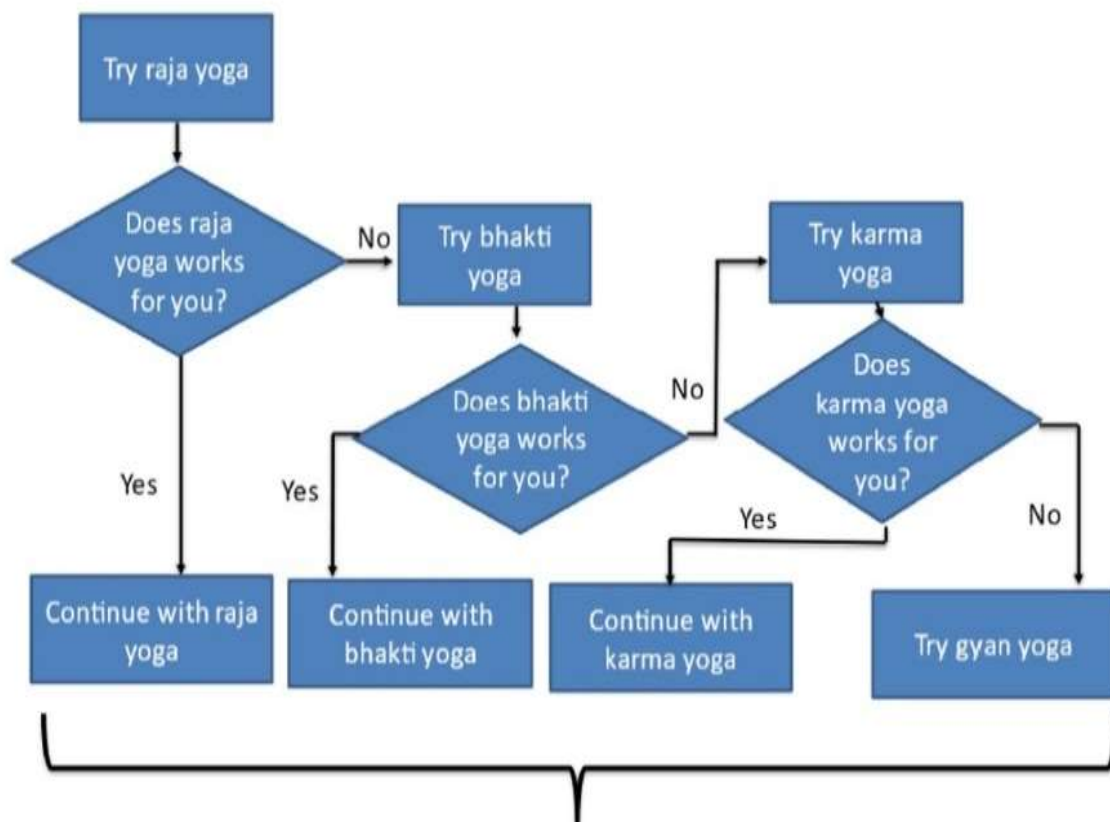
Highlighting the significance of emotional management, the Bhagavad Gita delineates the distinctive traits of individuals who embody emotionally stable wisdom, often referred to as those attaining a state of emotional stability (Sthitaprajna) (Sivakumar, 2021). Additionally, it scrutinizes the obstacles hindering this state and offers suitable solutions to attain emotional stability.

According to the Bhagavad Gita, an individual characterized by emotional stability is one who has relinquished all desires of the mind (Chapter II, Verse 55), remains unaffected by adversity and duality, is devoid of attachment, fear, and anger (Chapter II, Verse 56), and possesses complete mastery over attachment and detachment (Chapter II, Verse 57).

In essence, a person with stable wisdom maintains full control over their emotions in every circumstance (Aithal & Ramanathan, 2025). The Bhagavad Gita asserts that achieving emotional stability leads to experiences of immortality (Chapter II, Verse 15), peace (Chapter II, Verse 71), freedom from fear (Chapter II, Verse 56), and tranquility (Chapter II, Verse 52). The Bhagavad Gita asserts that emotional stability is attained through the adept management and control of (a) one's senses (Chapter II, Verse 58), (b) desires (Chapter II, Verse 55), (c) anger (Chapter II, Verse 56), and (d) the mind (Chapter II, Verse 57) (Pandey, 2025).

The Bhagavad Gita not only outlines the characteristics of emotional stability and intelligence but also offers guidance on attaining this intelligence (Lamba et al., 2023). It presents four paths, providing the flexibility for individuals to experiment and start with the path of their choosing to cultivate emotional intelligence i.e. Karma Yoga (path of selfless service); Gyan Yoga (path of knowledge); Raja Yoga (path of meditation); and Bhakti Yoga (path of devotion) (Chaurasia, 2026).

The Union Government's National Education Policy 2020 places a strong emphasis on integrating our history, culture, and diverse traditions into the education system. This approach is designed to instill a sense of pride among students and equip them with effective life skills. The Shrimad Bhagavad Gita is a guide for developing personality and leadership skills, offering principles for effective problem-solving and the pursuit of ultimate knowledge. In the psychological context, it nurtures personality traits and enhances leadership skills (Vashishtha et al., 2023). Learnings from the Gita can play a pivotal role in reconstructing and improving human society, fostering balance and peace through the disciplines of knowledge, action, and devotion.



All paths ultimately converge and help in self-realization and transcendence

Figure 1: Paths for Cultivating Intelligence(Lamba et al., 2023)

The dialogue between Arjuna and Lord Krishna not only emphasizes behavior and skills but also provides a path for individuals to live, act, and understand deeds, facilitating their transformation into Supreme Beings (Reddy, 2025). The Bhagavad Gita teaches students about their duties, emphasizing self-control and patience, transforming their perspective on life (Choudhary & Prabha, 2023).

It instills a spirit of sacrifice, encouraging students to establish an enduring connection with nature. Gita guides students to strive for giving back more than they receive in every endeavor, fostering a continuous innovative learning approach. Swami Mahamedhananda advocates connecting to nature through activities like gardening, tree plantation, water conservation, and resource optimization, promoting the spirit of sacrifice(Kelkar & Mahajan, 2021).

अथ चेतत्त्वमिमं धर्म्यं संग्रामं न करिष्यसि ।

ततः स्वधर्मं कीर्तिं च हित्वा पापमवाप्स्यसि ॥

Every student's foremost duty is to focus on their "Swadharma" (studies), making it a top priority. Strive for high goals, work hard, avoid wasting time, and refrain from unnecessary worries to achieve success(Srivastava, 2018). An ideal student embodies the divine teachings of the Bhagavad Gita, reflecting these principles in their personality and character. Students should prioritize enhancing wisdom along with memory power through the divine knowledge of the Gita. Degrees are not the ultimate destination; the Gita aims to make students "Jitendriya" (victorious over senses), enhancing the charm of youth.

अभयं सत्त्वसंशुद्धिर्ज्ञानयोगव्यवस्थितिः ।

दानं दमश्च यज्ञश्च स्वाध्यायस्तप आर्जवम् ॥

Gita instructs students to transform knowledge into "Gyan Yog." Its transformative power can change desires ("Vaasna") into spiritual practice ("Upasana")(Joshi, 2025).

The Bhagavad Gita, revealing that the essence of life skills lies in performing righteous duties with a composed mind and wisdom, leading to the attainment of joy, satisfaction, and salvation. The synergy between the teachings of modern education and the Gita is crucial for genuine human growth and healing. It underscores that true excellence in external actions stems from a healthy and tranquil inner world, emphasizing the interconnectedness of mental well-being and outer-world achievements(Bansal & Kapur, 2022). Social harmony is the promotion of love, trust, peace, respect, generosity, and equity in society, irrespective of differences in origin, ethnicity, gender, race, age, or occupation(Sharma, 2015).

विहाय कामान्यः सर्वान्मुमांश्चरति निःस्पृहः ।

निर्ममो निरहङ्कारः स शान्तिमधिगच्छति ॥

Inner peace radiates into global peace; By Relinquishing desires, greed, attachment, and egotism, one attains peace, as these factors lead to anger. The verse highlights the five destabilizing forces—kam, krodh, lobha, moha, and ahamkara—that disrupt personal harmony and peace. Inner peace is achieved through the control of these elements.

The Bhagwad Gita provides insights on workplace spirituality at individual, team, and organizational levels(Chandra, 2017). At the individual level, it encourages rising above fear, self-awareness, controlling the mind, developing spiritual intelligence, self-abnegation, abandoning desires for rewards, and fostering equanimity. At the team level, it emphasizes leading with conviction, interconnectedness, seeking welfare for all, sharing outcomes, and embodying transformational leadership qualities. At the organizational level, it promotes aligning personal and professional goals, taking responsibility, and cultivating a sense of responsibility for all actions.

Integrating Bloom's Taxonomy into teacher and school education is essential. Sri-Krishna, the divine cowherd, milks the wisdom of the self for the benefit of humanity. Arjuna, representing the calf, tastes this milk—the Bhagavad-Gita—solving not only his dilemmas but also addressing the world's and every individual's problems(Srivastava, 2016). Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives is highlighted through a dialogue between Arjuna and Lord Krishna, defining three disciplines: knowledge, devotion, and action.

Conclusion-

In conclusion, the implementation of the Bhagavad Gita in education, a cornerstone of the National Education Policy 2020, signifies a profound shift in the dynamics of teachers and student culture. Beyond the traditional transmission of knowledge, it incorporates managerial concepts, embraces Bloom's Taxonomy, and places a premium on life skills and emotional stability. This holistic approach doesn't merely aim at academic excellence; it strives to cultivate a harmonious learning environment where pleasure and happiness are integral to the educational journey. By fostering social harmony and integrating workplace spirituality, the Bhagavad Gita guides individuals toward a comprehensive understanding of themselves and their role in society. In this transformative educational landscape, the Gita's teachings resonate, providing a blueprint for not only academic success but also for the cultivation of holistic well-being and a sense of purpose in life.

In summary, the Bhagavad Gita in education offers a transformative approach, cultivating not only academic excellence but also holistic well-being and a sense of purpose in life.

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