

From Anxiety to Alignment: Bhagavad Gita's Wisdom in HRD for Personal and Organizational Transformation

Dr. Mihir Pattnaik, Dr. Richa Patnaik

Human Resource Management and Spirituality, Environmental Science Research Laboratory, CEMC, Pahala, Bhubaneswar, Odisha

Human resources pertain to the collective abilities, skills, knowledge, and potentialities inherent in individuals within an organization or society. This perspective emphasizes the importance of understanding human behavior, cognition, and emotions within the context of work environments. Human resources psychologists often focus on aspects such as employee motivation, job satisfaction, leadership effectiveness, teamwork dynamics, and organizational culture. They utilize psychological principles and methodologies to assess, develop, and optimize the capabilities and well-being of individuals within the workforce, ultimately aiming to enhance both individual and organizational performance. It is known to be one of the superior resources compared to other resources like land and physical capital, which becomes useful because of the input by human resources; those cannot become useful on their own. The human factor is considered the focal point in the psychology of management as its essence and core.

Human Resource Management (HRM) is a process of bringing people and organizations together such that the goals of each are met. It involves the application of psychological principles and practices to manage and optimize the human capital within organizations effectively. It encompasses various aspects of personnel management, organizational behavior, and individual psychology to ensure the well-being, satisfaction, and productivity of employees. Overall, it seeks to leverage insights from psychological research and practice to effectively recruit, develop, motivate, and retain employees, ultimately contributing to organizational success and well-being. Therefore, human beings are crucial to the success of any organization and the well-being of employees leads to perfect work output. Without healthy workers, the organizations would not survive.

Human Resource Development (HRD) is a subset of Human Resource Management (HRM) with a strong focus on training and development. Its main goal is to enhance an organization's capabilities to meet present and future demands by sharpening employee skills and fostering a productive company culture through methods such as coaching, mentoring, performance management, and training. HRD is essential for organizations aiming to adapt to fast-changing environments, making it vital for both large and growing businesses. Over the years HRD has been subjected to various definitions, interpretations, and challenges since the 1960s when it was first introduced (Walton, 1999). As Lyon (1996) described, HRD is a process of encouraging people to develop and grow from interdependency to independence. The basic purpose of HRD is to contribute directly to the organizational goals through improved performance, revolving around learning, training, development, and education. In the broadest sense, it deals with development and change through learning; about how one acquires knowledge and what and how individuals learn to achieve development (Muniapan, 2021).

Bhagavad Gita provides knowledge for all concerned and every culture finds nurturing words for their philosophy. The teacher, the most highly esteemed religious prophet of the world, Lord Sri Krishna has taught the distilled spiritual essence of Vedas and Upanishads to Arjuna who was in a state of confusing tension in a fratricidal war field under the stress of some psychological maladjustments and lost his ability to work with true discrimination. In the present scenario, humanity is passing through a critical stage of transition. Most of the workforces are shattered in their mental equipoise. Bhagavad Gita provides spiritual treatment to those neurotic minds with Vedic truths towards the resolution of conflicts and successful resumption of

action from a state of acute anxiety and guilt-laden depression that precipitated inaction.

This review aims to explore the relevance and significance of human resource development (HRD) in managing and transforming the workforce, particularly in addressing psychological challenges and fostering personal growth and resilience. It seeks to draw insights from the teachings of the Bhagavad Gita to offer spiritual guidance and solutions for individuals and organizational leaders facing issues such as anxiety, depression, and maladjustment in the workplace. Ultimately, the goal is to highlight the role of HRD in promoting employee well-being, enhancing organizational effectiveness, and achieving holistic development.

Human Resource Development

Human Resource Development (HRD) encompasses training, career development, and organizational development within an HRM framework. It is rooted in the belief that organizations rely on human expertise to achieve their goals, with HRD professionals advocating for individual and group development. HRD optimizes workforce production and utilization, addressing staffing issues, education and training, performance management, and working conditions. It involves a systematic process to enrich employees' skills, knowledge, and experiences to meet current and future needs for goal achievement.

HRD aims to enhance individual performance and improve organizational effectiveness and productivity. It is viewed as crucial for higher productivity, better relations, and increased profitability. Key benefits include enhancing competence, commitment, trust, and problem-solving capabilities among employees. HRD also fosters an environment of acceptance toward change and creates goals for organizational development. These goals include achieving organizational proficiency, increasing quality and efficiency, promoting growth and individual development, and integrating people into the business. Overall, HRD's goals align with the organization's objectives and mission.

The Bhagavad Gita

The Bhagavad Gita is a sermon given by Lord Sri Krishna to Arjuna on the battlefield before the commencement of the war regarding the correct technique of life (Dharmaratnam, 1987). The traditional view of the Bhagavad Gita regards it as one of the *Prasthanas Trayi*, the three-fold scriptures of Hinduism, the other two being the *Upanishads* and the *Brahma Sutra* (Osborne and Kulkarni, (2016), which is most widely read and translated (Krishnan, 2022). It is said to have been spoken by Sri Krishna to Arjuna on the battlefield of Kurukshetra in 3102 B.C; before the Commencement of Mahabharata war and this date Corresponds to 1700 years before Moses, 2500 years before Buddha, 3000 years before Jesus, and 3808 years before Prophet Mohammed (Munipan, 2021)

The storyline of Mahabharata narrates the conflict between two groups of cousins, the diabolical *Kauravas*, and the virtuous *Pandavas*. The *Pandavas* and their supporters, with Sri Krishna (considered the incarnation of Lord Vishnu by the Hindus), vanquished the *Kauravas* confederation during the 18-day war fought on the battlefield of Kurukshetra. The context involves when the accomplished and astute archer Arjuna (the *Pandav* prince), on a chariot bearing the insignia of *Hanuman* (the monkey God) navigated by Sri Krishna (the Charioteer and the guide), getting ready to face the large army (11 divisions) of enemies consisting of his relatives, teachers, and mentors. Suddenly Arjuna is overwhelmed and is unwilling to fight, being a mighty warrior, as he fears the annihilation of many of his close ones. Arjuna contemplates withdrawing him from the battlefield because of guilt, doubt, and attachment towards his friends and family members. Sri Krishna by way of discourse guided his disciple Arjuna to the right course of action to help him fulfill his destiny in the war, a triumph of righteousness over evil (Bhatia *et al.*, 2013). The primary purpose of the Bhagavad Gita is to illuminate humanity with the realization of the true nature of divinity towards the highest spiritual conception and to attain the love of God (Munipan, 2021). Throughout the Bhagavad Gita, Sri Krishna urges Arjuna to perform his duty on the battlefield as he is confused regarding the nature of his duty and this is Arjuna's dilemma, which everyone often faces in everyday life.

This confusion of Arjuna is due to his attachment, egotism, and to some extent fear, observing the presence

of powerful combatants on the opposite side. Thus, Sri Krishna points out the imperative nature of duty and its usefulness to Arjuna as a spiritual disciple (Nikhilananda, 2008). Bhagavad Gita has opined that duty should be performed to please God alone and brooding over the result has nothing to do with the performance of duty. God is imminent in the universe and is the indwelling *soul* of all beings. Thus, the *Upanishad* speaks- "The husband is dear to the wife, not for the sake of the husband, but for the sake of the Lord in the husband. The wife is dear to husband, not for the sake of the wife, but for the sake of the Lord in the wife." Every duty is to be considered as an act of worship and the duty performed in this spirit confers joy upon the doer irrespective of success or failure. The doer is to experience joy in being made an Instrument of God and being used by Him as per His desire. Also, there is a joy in being set aside when the instrument is broken or has served its purpose. Hence all actions performed can be treated as *yoga* and therefore spiritual if the motive is to establish truth and justice. People suffer as they regard themselves as *doers*. Once they realize that Lord alone is the *doer*, then whatever may be the nature of duty, will bring them joy and satisfaction.

Bhagavad Gita contains 18 chapters, which explain *Karma Yoga* (selfless action), *Jnana Yoga* (self-knowledge), and *Bhakti Yoga* (unquestionable devotion). These *Yogas* are actions meant for detachment, to acquire transcendental wisdom, and to gather knowledge of Supreme (Chow, 2007). Some of the core values and principles of Dharma, Karma, Loka Sangraha, Kausalam, Vividhata, and Jigyasa have been described in the Bhagavad Gita (Basin, 2010).

The first word of the first verse of the Bhagavad Gita is dharma derived from the root *dhri*, which means to hold or sustain. This word is untranslatable. *Religion, duty, righteousness*, and other *English equivalents* represent only a partial meaning (Nikhilnanda, 2008). It is an important concept in Vedanta philosophy and means one's righteous duty (Muniapan, 2021)

Dharma is also translated as responsibilities, duties, thoughts, and actions that are appropriate for a person (Mukundananda, 2013). Karma as has been described in Bhagavad Gita is understood as action, duty, or ritualistic worship that regulates the cycle of cause and effect. It is a spiritually organized Law of nature. Karma

is not fating as human action with free will creates their destiny (Muniapan 2021). The law of Karma also known as the law of cause-and-effect states that whatever thoughts or energy one puts out, he gets back the same, either good or bad. It is just like sowing and reaping. If one sows goodness, he will reap goodness and if one sows evil, he will reap only evil. Human Resource Development has been developed based on the concept of Dharma and Karma which forms the core principle of Eastern ethical teaching.

Bhagavad Gita and Human Resource Development.

Bhagavad Gita, though filled with spiritual matters, provides some useful tools for HRD like dharma (responsibilities, occupational duties, thoughts, and actions), karma (work by the prescribed rules), *niskama karma* (selfless or desire less service, without expectation), equanimity (*Samatva bhava* or calm mental state in all situations whether favorable or unfavorable), *guna theory* (psychology or personality of an individual i.e. *sattvic, rajasic* and *tamasic*), *brahma-bhuta* (*Brahma* realized - the state wherein one experiences bliss, free from hankering and lamentation), renunciation (performing one's obligatory duties, without attachment to the fruit of action devoting it to God only).

The Bhagavad Gita was preached by Sri Krishna to boost the declining morale of Arjuna, who was a victim of moral paradox. On seeing the warriors who deserved his respect and veneration such as teacher Dronacharya, Grandfather Bhisma, and other close relatives as his foes, Arjuna lost his heart, threw down his bow, and refused to fight the war. The emotional dilemma and worries of Arjuna were to fight the war of righteousness being his duty as a warrior on the one hand and killing of his friends and relatives on the other during combat, which is a heinous act. Arjuna felt it was like a dilemma without any solution. Thus, being demolished, disappointed, dejected, and bewildered Anjuna surrendered before the Supreme Personality of Godhead Sri Krishna and supplicated for guidance about the proper course of action. Here Sri Krishna took the roles of a mentor, guide, and coach in HRD and set out to enlighten him delivering His sermon. Some of the major highlights of Lord Sri Krishna's wisdom to Arjuna along with its implication in HRD have been discussed below:

Cast off weakness.

To rouse the dropping spirits of Arjuna Lord Sri Krishna
trice with the words of biting reproach.

*kalibyam ma sma gamach partha naitat
tvayyupapadyate
kshudram hridaya-daurbalyam tyaktvottishtha
parantapa*

(Verse – 2/ 3)

“O Partha, never yield to unmanliness. Give up faint-
heartedness and arise, O vanquisher of enemies”.

Sri Krishna is an intelligent and skillful teacher. He desired that Ariuna should be optimistic, enthusiastic, and energetic to overcome the dilemma of material mind like attachment, ignorance, and sloth. Being a great psychologist Sri Krishna knows very well that a soft expression of sympathy cannot invigorate a drooping soul and thus having reprimanded Arjuna, He enhances the internal strength needed to rouse his forgotten manliness. Not only with Arjuna, but also such feelings of despondency, dejection, and dilemma are very common with almost all people while performing social and occupational duties. The feeling of Arjuna is neither moral duty nor true compassion; rather, its root lies in the weakness of the mind. Thus, the leaders, managers, and administrators while performing duties should cast off the weakness of the heart. Their mental state must be very firm while driving the organizational resources (HR) to meet the vision and mission of the organization as mental weakness can never attain organizational goals. If their behavior is based truly on wisdom, then there would be no experience of confusion or grief. In any organization Managers or Administrators must confront so many opposing elements and it is certainly very difficult to regulate the mind while making any even decision. Thus, to achieve even-mindedness they need to use their intelligence effectively.

Tame the mind.

To achieve the organizational goal, the manager must try to subdue his senses by giving up desires for the self. He needs to focus on the objectives and mission of the organization with an unwavering mind looking toward every individual with equal vision. But none of these can be accomplished without having good control over the mind, which is very weak, unstable, and restless unless it is trained. In this context, Arjuna frankly expressed

before Lord Krishna that controlling the mind is more difficult than controlling the wind.

*chanchalam hi manah krishna pramathi balavad
dridham
tasyāham nigrāham manye, vayor iva su-dushkaram*
(Verse – 6/34)

“O Krishna, the mind is very restless, turbulent, powerful, and obstinate. It seems to me that it is more difficult to control than the wind.”

The mind is restless as it keeps flitting in different directions from one subject to another. Being turbulent it creates upheavals in one's consciousness, in the form of lust, anger, greed, envy, hatred, anxiety, attachment, fear, etc. It is powerful as it overpowers the intellect and cannot be easily subdued by reasoning. It is also obstinate, as when the mind accepts a harmful thought, it ruminates over that again and again and dismays the intellect. Thus, the unwholesome characteristic of the mind is that it is harder and more difficult to captivate it than the wind as no one can ever think to control the fury of wind in space.

Lord Krishna agreed that the mind is not easy to control and has indicated the way to control it (Verse-6/5).

*asanshayam maha-baho mano durnigrāham chalam
abhyasena tu kounteya vairagyena cha grihhyate*
(Verse – 6/35)

“Doubtless, O mighty-armed Arjuna, the mind is restless and very difficult to control; but through practice and renunciation /detachment, O son of Kunti, it can be restrained.”

Practice and detachment are the key factors that open the doors to mastery and excellence in all walks of human endeavor. Thus, the practice of tending the mind to rest on the objectives of the organization in the context of HRD is training an internal development of self. This emphasizes the importance of training and development of Individual employees leading to the overall development of the organization in achieving its goal in the world of competition.

A tamed mind can accomplish any kind of beneficial endeavor, but an untamed mind degrades the consciousness with the most ignoble thoughts. When the mind identifies with bodily identification and becomes

proud of beauty, learning, status, and wealth, it is called ego, that entangled one in material desires. Thus, people having everything favorable in the material world, lead very miserable lives as their minds tormented Them through tension, stress, anxiety, and depression. Thus, Sri Krishna has asserted (verse 6/6) that for one who has conquered the mind, it is his best friend, but for one who has failed to control his mind, the mind functions like an enemy. Lust, greed, anger, envy, and illusion are the internal enemies that reside in one's mind and they can make one live in constant wretchedness.

*bandhur atmatmanas tasya yenātmaivātmanā jitah
anatmanas tu shatrutve vartetatmaiva shatru-vat*

(Verse – 6/6)

"One who is self-controlled and has brought his mind under control of his own friend, whereas mind one who has no control over himself, his self-injures him."

Perform allotted duty without attachment.

Bhagavad Gita has laid great emphasis on the concept of duty (allotted action), which means occupational duties and responsibilities which is termed as dharma. To maintain harmonious industrial relations and to cater to good working relationships both management and workers (employer and employees) need to understand and be aware of their duties. The supreme personality of Godhead Lord Krishna motivates and encourages Arjuna to perform his prescribed Vedic duties and not to flee away from the battlefield (Verse-3/8).

*niyatam kuru karma tvam karma jyayo hyakarmanah
sharira-yatrapi cha te na prasiddhyed akarmanah*

(Verse-3/8)

You should thus perform your allotted action/duty (karma) as action is superior to inaction. If one remains inactive, bare maintenance of his body will not be possible. Here allotted action implies the action allotted by the Vedic scriptures to different categories of persons by their inherited tendencies. The state of inactiveness does not lead itself either to spiritual or material achievement. Thus, in any organization, for any incumbent, the performance of prescribed action/ duty is imperative. However, one is entitled to perform his prescribed duties alone without any expectation (Verse - 2/47)

*karmany-evādhikāras te ma phaleshu kadachana
ma karma-phala-hetur bhur ma te sango stvakarmani*

(Verse - 2/47)

One has the right to perform his prescribed duties, but he is not entitled to the fruits of his actions. Duty performed without the expectation of rewards is known as *niskama karma*. One should never consider himself to be the cause of the results of his activities, nor be attached to inaction. Lord Krishna further stressed that one needs to perform his duties he has to do without attachment, for one who does his work without attachment to the fruits/ results, attains the Supreme- the supreme goal (Verse-3/19)

*tasmād asaktah satatam kāryam karma samāchara
asakto hyacharan karma param apnoti purushah*

(Verse-3/19)

Here Lord Krishna has put forth the example of King Janaka (father of Sita and father-in-law of Ramachandra, who ruled over Mithila in the age of *Treta* as stated in *Ramayana*), who verily by performing his duties attained perfection. Even after being elevated to the transcendental platform, he continued to perform his kingly duties, purely to set a good example to guide the people along the right path. (Verse -3/20). Thus, Arjuna too, should set a good example of righteous living for the world to follow by performing the prescribed duties of *Kshatriya*. Sri Krishna, therefore directed Arjuna to perform his work (occupational duties) to become a shining beacon for the world to follow and for the sake of HRD in general as whatever actions a great person performs, that common people follow, and whatever he sets up as a standard, that all the world pursues (Verse-3/21).

*kormaṇaiva hi sandiddhim āsthetā janakādayah
loka-sangraham evapi sampashyan kartum arhasi
yad yad acharati shreshthas tat tat evetaro janah*

sa yat pramānam kurute lokas tat anuvartate

(Verse - 3/20-21)

Be a successful leader.

The issue of leadership is one of the major issues of great interest as well as concern in Government sectors, Business organizations, and society. Leadership is such a powerful enabler that can leverage an organization to great heights, fame, and a credible position among the stakeholders on one hand whereas if the quality of leadership is poor, the same organization experiences a downward slide leading to its eventual destruction on the other (Mahadevan, 2012). Thus, there should be a continuous effort in all organizations, irrespective of Government, public, and private sectors to understand

how great leaders are identified, created, and nurtured. Leaving apart the modern concept, research, and practice, different perspectives of leadership have been outlined in the ancient Indian scriptures like *the Ramayana, Mahabharata, and Srimad Bhagavad Gita*, which depicts the quality of leadership- what leadership is and what it can do to an organization. In the context of an organization, a leader may not necessarily be a manager but always a manager is a leader and leadership is a process of influencing the group of employees/workers, by their actions to achieve a common shared goal. A leader has the moral responsibility to set lofty examples to inspire the people by their words, deeds, and character. When a noble leader leads at the forefront, people naturally get uplifted in morality and selflessness. On the contrary, when there is a vacuum of principled leadership, people have no standard to pursue and slump into self-centeredness and moral bankruptcy. Common people are more influenced by the living examples of their leader than by abstract teaching of the scriptures and whatever standard the leader sets people in general abide by that (Verse -3/21). If a manager/leader tries to create a healthy work environment by leading *a no smoking campaign, no polythene campaign, or clean and green environment campaign* in his organization, first, he should learn to give up smoking, using polythene, to clean his surroundings and to make the environment green, he should encourage plantation of suitable plant species to set the example. The manager should not only be just but also appear to be just and must not preach what he will not or cannot practice in daily work of life. A manager should sever his emotional links with others if required to establish his credentials before his subordinates as well as higher-ups and set an example for his successors to follow in the future. Sri Ramachandra in *Ramayana* has exhibited such an example for all generations to follow by taking a harsh/painful decision to banish queen Sita even if she was conceived from the royal palace of Ayodhya as an ideal king to uphold the honor of his dynasty and implementing it (Muniapan 2021) has stated that Henri Fayol, a French management writer, after thousands of year later, in the early 20th century developed his fourteen principles of management and his sixth principle of management is the subordination of individual interest to the organizational interest as above.

Self-awareness

The Bhagavad Gita has laid down emphasis on self-development, which includes all aspects of development of oneself and starts with awareness of the self. The real self (soul) is eternal imperishable and incomprehensible, but the material body in which the soul indwells is perishable.

*antavanta ime deha nityasyoktah sharirinah
anashino ' prameyasya tasmad yudhyasva bharata*
(verse 2/18)

“Only the material bodies, of which this eternal, imperishable, incomprehensible soul is the indweller, are perishable. Therefore, fight, O descendant of Bharat.”

na jayate mriyate va kadachin
The soul is never born, nor does it ever die, nor having once existed, does it again cease to be. It is unborn, eternal, permanent, and ageless. It is not destroyed when the body is destroyed.

*nayam bhutva bhavita van a bhuyah
ajo nityah shashvato 'yam purano
na hanyate hanyamane sharire*
(Verse-2/20).

“The soul is never born, nor it ever dies, nor having once existed, does it again cease to be. The soul is unborn, eternal, permanent, and primeval. It does not slain/destroyed when the body is slain/destroyed.”

Here Lord Krishna has expounded the indestructibility of the soul through an illustration. He has stated that as a person casts off worn-out clothes and puts on new ones, likewise at the time of death the embodied soul casts off its worn-out body and enters a new one. By doing so the person does not change himself.

*vasansi jirnani yatha vihaya
navani grihnnati naro parani
tatha sharirani vihaya jirnanya
nyani sanyati navani dehi*
(verse 2/22)

“Even as a person caste off worn-out garments and puts on another that is new, likewise, the embodied soul casts off worn-out body and enters into another that is new.”

Weapons shred it not, fire burns it not, water wits it not, and the wind wither it not.

*nainam chhindanti shastrani nainam dahati pavakah
na chainam kledayantyapo na shoshayati marutah*
(verse 2/23)

“Weapons cut it not, fire burns it not, water wets it not, the wind dries it not.”

For this reason, the soul cannot be cut (unbreakable), burnt (incombustible), dampened, or withered. It is eternal, all-pervading, unchanging, immovable, and primordial.

*achchedya yam adahyo yam akledyo shoshya eva cha
nityah sarva-gatah sthanur achalo yam sanatanah*
(verse 2/24)

“The soul cannot be cut, burnt, dampened, or dried. It is eternal, all-pervading, unalterable, immovable, and primordial.”

Furthermore, the soul is unmanifest, incomprehensible, and unchangeable. Thus, knowing this to be so one should not grieve for the body.

*avyakto 'yam achintyo 'yam avikaryo 'yam uchyate
tasmadevam vidivainam nanushochitum arhasi*
(Verse 2/25)

“The soul is set to be unmanifest, incomprehensible, and unchangeable. Therefore, knowing this to be so, you should not grieve for the body.”

The soul being the fragmental part of God is amazing and thus, the true nature of the soul is a great mystery, the science of which is beyond understanding. Lord Krishna concludes this topic of self by stating that, the soul that dwells within the body is immortal; therefore, one should not mourn for anyone.

*dehi nityam avadhyo 'yam dehe sarvasya bharata
tasmāt sarvani bhutani na tvam shochitum arhasi*
(verse 2/30)

“The soul, which dwells within the body, can never be slain (is immortal), O descendent of Bharat. Wherefore you should not mourn for anyone.”

Acquiring and understanding the knowledge of self is especially important to understanding the inner and outer world of human beings. Without realizing, the self within there will be no end to the sorrows and sufferings. According to Vedas, the social duties are called karma and are based on occupation and position in life. Fulfillment of the norms of occupational duties helps the

organization to function in a harmonious manner allowing every employee to perform their respective prescribed duties. The self of employees in any organization are in different states of consciousness. Performance of work under the prescribed rules (karma) keeping the mission of the organization in mind, helps to regulate the mind and gradually elevate it to the mode of goodness. The principle of karma (work/duly) as Yog (to unit with God) has been explained in Bhagavad Gita.

*tasmāt sarveshu kaleshu mam anusmara yudhya cha
mayyarpita-mano-buddhirmam evishyasyasanshayam*
(verse 8/7)

“Therefore, you should at all times remember Me constantly in the form of Krishna and at the same time carry out your prescribed duty of fighting the war with your mind and intellect surrendered to Me, you will surely attain Me without doubt.”

The Lord said, "Do your duty but constantly remember Me." This means one should do his worldly duty with his body, but at the same time, he should always keep his mind attached to Sri Krishna. This principle applies to persons in all professions like students, engineers, doctors, advocates, company executives, housewives, etc. The best example of this is a cow as described in *Srimad Bhagavatam*. It grazes grasses and green leaves all day long in the fields, but its mind remains attached to its calf in the cowshed.

Self-management is an integral part of the characteristics of a manager/administrator and the position of a self-realized manager has been elaborated in Bhagavad Gita.

*buddhyā vishuddhayā yukto dhrityātmānam niyamyā
cha*

*shabdādīn vishayāns tyaktvā rāga-dveṣhau vyudasyā
cha*

*vivikta-sevī laghv-āśhī yata-vāk-kāya-mānasah
dhyāna-yoga-paro nityam vairāgyam samupāshritah
ahankāram balam darpam kāmam krodham
parigraham*

vimuchya nirmamah shānto brahma-bhūyāya kalpate
(verse 18/51 - 53)

“One becomes fit to attain *Brahman* when he is endowed with pure understanding, restraining the senses with firmness, turning away from the sound and other objects, abandoning love and hatred; such a person dwells in solitude, eating but little, controls body, mind, and speech, ever engaged in meditation and

concentration and cultivating freedom from passion; who is without false ego, false strength, false pride, lust, anger and who does not accept material things such a person is elevated for union with *Brahman* (elevated to the state of self-realization)“

The manager needs to imbibe certain qualities to attain a stage of self-realization such as:

- he/she should possess a purified intellect,
- controlling the mind with determination/fortitude,
- giving up the objects of sense gratification,
- casting aside attachment and hatred, likes and dislikes,
- dwelling in solitude (a spot where there is least disturbance),
- eating but little (temperance),
- controlling body, mind, and power of speech,
- always remaining in trans, spirit of dispassion and detached,
- free from egoism, power, violence, arrogance, anger, lust, desire, possessiveness of property and selfishness aggrandizement,
- situated in tranquility (remain peaceful),

The essential aspects of self-management

While explaining the qualities of Brahmans (verse 18/42) and Kshatriyas (verse 18/43) to Arjuna Sri Krishna has stressed the qualities of intelligent managers and warrior managers, respectively. These qualities if rightly cultivated bring happiness to the managers and make them fit for higher knowledge. The managers who possess a predominantly *sattvic* nature (who remain always in the mode of goodness) are called intelligent managers. Their duties as enumerated in Bhagavad Gita include-

*shamo damas tapah shaucham kshāntir ārjavam eva
cha
jñānam vijñānam āstikyam brahma-karma svabhāva-
jam*
(verse-18/42)

“Tranquility, self-restraint, austerity, purity, forbearance, uprightness, knowledge, wisdom, and faith- these are the intrinsic qualities of a *Brahmin*, born of his nature.”

Shamah (*serenity/tranquility*) - control of mind,

Damah (*self-restraint*) - control of the senses (self-control),

Tapah (*austerity*) - Spiritual practice that purifies body and mind,

Shaucham (*purity*) - external cleanliness and internal parity,

Kshanti (*forbearance*) - to be patient and forgiving,

Arjavam (*uprightness*)- straightforward in all his dealings and maintains absolute integrity,

Jnanam (*Knowledge*) - love for knowledge (theoretical knowledge),

Vijnanam (*wisdom*) personal experience (realization),

Aastikyam (*faith*) - intellectual honesty.

Likewise, the natures of Kshatriyas are predominantly *rajasik* along with a mixture of *sattvic* qualities, which make them perform duties like-

*shauryam tejo dhritir dākshyam yuddhe chāpy
apalāyanam
dānam īshvara-bhāvaś cha kshātram karma
svabhāva-jam*

(verse 18/43)

” Heroism, strength, fortitude, promptitude, not fleeing from the battle, generosity, and lordliness- these are the natural qualities of *Kshatriya*, born of his nature.”

Shauryam (*heroism*) – valor/vigor to meet the challenges in life,

Tejah (*strength*) – high spirit,

Dhriti (*fortitude*) – powerful will of personality,

Dakshyam (*promptitude*) – skill in weaponry,

Yuddhe chapy apalayanam (*not fleeing from the battle*) – never to retreat from the battle,

Danam (*generosity*) – large-heartedness in charity,

Ishvara-bhavah (*lordliness*) – leadership abilities (temperament of ruler and leader or sovereignty).

To cultivate, maintain, and express these traits in oneself is the duty of a true individual of action which is needed for self-development. Leaders of people and affairs in any society cannot claim to be the spiritual leaders of the people at once. Secular heads at once cannot be the spiritual master to guide society. However, a perfect leader is one, who has the subtle ability to incorporate spiritual ideas into the work-a-day life and maintain the same in all fields of activity. These qualities are not only auspicious for the journey on the way to liberation but also are considered essential for a good manager to lead the organization toward fulfilling its mission.

Cultivate a sense of equanimity.

The word equanimity, an important virtue in ancient wisdom has been derived from the combination of two Latin terms- *Aequus* (meaning *even* or *level*) and *animus* (meaning *mind* or *spirit*), which signifies a state of psychological balance and stability. It is characterized by the ability to remain in a state of calmness, non-reactive, composed, and open in the forefront of distressing or challenging situations. Equanimity is not just a psychological trait with which one is born, but a state of mind that one can actively cultivate to enhance the inner sense of peace in the face of adverse external stimuli. Bhagavad Gita defines this stage as *brahma-bhūta*. At this state one becomes joyful and he does not lament nor desire anything. A manager cannot be successful in his endeavor without developing a sense of equanimity.

*brahma-bhūta prasannātmā na śhochati na kāṅkshati
samah sarveshu bhuteshu mad-bhaktim labhate parām*
(verse 18/54)

“One who is transcendently situated at once realizes the Supreme *Brahman*. He never grieves nor desires to have anything; he is equally disposed towards all living beings; such a yogi attains pure devotional service onto Me.”

One of the important critical problems that the managers of an organization very often confront is their impotence to accept unhealthy outcomes as they unfold at times. The moment when some unexpected situation arises, they lose their balance and remain unstable apprehending the future outcome. However, this dilemma requires a solution to manage the *world within* the manager instead of managing the *outside world*. Though this important issue has not even been recognized by modern leadership theories (Mahadevan, 2012), the first instruction that Arjuna received from Supreme Godhead Lord Krishna on this issue to wipe out his mental stress of extreme confusion and bewilderment that signifies the importance of this aspect of mind management. Sri Krishna emphasized that change alone is the changeless law in this world of objects, as the relative universe is full of dualities like heat and cold, success and failure, good and evil, pain and pleasure, virtue and vice, life and death, happiness and same unpleasant moments.

*mātrā-sparshās tu kaunteya śhītoshṇa-sukha-dukkha-
dāḥ*

āgamāpāyino 'nityās tans-titikshasva bhārata

(verse 2/14)

“Notions of heat and cold, of pain and pleasure, arise, O son of Kunti, only from contact of senses with sense objects. These are non-permanent and come and go like winter and summer seasons. O scion of Bharat, one must learn to endure them without being disturbed.”

Those are like two sides of the same coin. These are the realities of life which will come and go like the changing seasons and none of these are permanent. If one fails to endure them, he will sway like a pendulum from side to side and will be unable to exhibit true leadership traits. He will never be able to become a good manager working in true spirit following the prescribed rules of the organization. Now, what good comes to a person of discrimination who endures the sensation of material happiness and material distress without being disturbed by them? Sri Krishna explains that a calm man alone can rise above the dualities of pain and pleasure and the material energy will no longer bind him (verse - 2/14).

The concept of equanimity is critical to becoming a good HRD manager as developing a sense of equanimity enables him to master the art of handling the outside world by managing the *world within* very well and calmly. The genesis of today's emerging problems does not lie in the external environment of an individual but lies within him as he is unable to understand and live by this profound truth of right knowledge. People are not able to accept the fact that life has both aspects and a perfect world with goodness or happiness alone is a contradiction. They pressure that everything good will happen to them as per their desire and hence they build huge expectations. But when something bad happens, they express their inability to accept them and feel worthless, which leads them towards mental depression, getting into various health problems, going to psychological counseling, and in some extreme cases they also venture to commit suicide. The leadership quality of a manager critically rests on this aspect of wisdom to accept the dualities of nature meekly with the knowledge that every experience is transitory and hence will pass away.

Mutual dependence

Despite the existence of pairs of opposites, the whole universe is interconnected. Physical systems like rivers, Lakes, mountains, and glaciers have a profound influence on biological diversity in general and human beings in particular. The plant kingdom and animal kingdom too have profound effects on the lives of individuals. Thus, to achieve ultimate success and prosperity in every work of life the principle of mutual dependence, as advised by Sri Krishna needs to be duly honored. Everything in the world sustains based on unconditional giving (the virtue of *yajan*) and the spirit of sharing. Human beings have been blessed by God with this virtue and in turn human beings give back to God following this principle. People working under the leadership of the manager are as important as the manager. Thus, the first lesson a manager in an organization needs to learn is the value and importance of mutual dependence as has been explained in Bhagavad Gita.

*devān bhāvayatānena te devā bhāvayantu vah
parasparam bhāvayantah shreyah param avāpsyatha*
(verse 3 / 11)

“By your sacrifices, the celestial gods will be pleased, and will also please you; thus nourishing one another you will often highest good.”

“With sacrifices, the celestial Gods will be nourished and by cooperation between humans and celestial Gods, prosperity will reign for all by nourishing one another.” All celestial Gods, in charge of the administration of the universe, are but functional names of the one Supreme creative power manifesting in myriad forms. When *yajna* (the universal law of sacrifice) is performed for the satisfaction of the Supreme Lord, the celestial Gods are automatically appeased and create favorable material conditions for all the desired necessities of life. In a democratic country like India government (the elected representatives) and the society (people) have to honor the principle of mutual dependence, failing which some forces will come into play and that will remind them of the need for this as has been witnessed in case of Lokpal bill related movement launched by Anna Hazare. In any family, a successful married life revolves around the understanding of mutual dependence between husband and wife. In the domain of Particle Physics, it has been established that both at the sub-atomic level and at the cosmos everything works in

perfect harmony following the universal principle of mutual dependence.

Win over anger.

The total material substance (*prakriti* or *maya*) is the womb and the Lord impregnates it with the individual souls (spirit) and thus the living beings are born. Material energy creates various life forms (bodies) and the Lord casts the souls into appropriate bodies, determined by their karmas of past lives. Lord not only unites matter and spirit at the beginning of the cycle to cause the birth of created beings but also is the ultimate cause of every birth that takes place on the earth. The soul (spirit) gets entangled in the world by its contact with the material body, created from material energy consisting of three *gunas* (modes) like *sattva* (goodness) *rajas* (passion), and *tamas* (ignorance). Body, mind, and intellect are made from matter (*prakriti* or *maya*) and possess these three modes of material nature.

*sattvam rajas tama iti gunah prakriti-sambhavāh
nibadhanti mahā-bāho dehe dehinam avyayam*

(verse 14/5)

“The material energy consists of three *gunas* (modes)-*sattva* (goodness), *rajas* (passion) and *tamas* (ignorance). These *gunas* bind the immortal, embodied soul to the perishable body, O mighty-armed Arjuna.”

The term *guna* also means rope, which binds the spiritual beauty of life with the inert and insentient matter for which every human mind must oscillate in endless different manners at different moments of its changing environments under three different influences. Thus, everyone is an embodiment of all three modes of material nature (*gunas*) and when one of these is dominant, that person is characterized by that mode (*guna*). This is just like the case of three-color printing in which if one of the colors is released in excess on the paper through the machine then the picture is characterized by the hue of that color. Mode of goodness is expressed through qualities like purity, luminosity, happiness, fineness, bliss, and love for knowledge. The characteristic marks of the mode of passion are greed, egoism, lust, exertion for worldly gain, unrest, and craving. The dominant signs of the mode of ignorance are nescience, indolence, delusion, procrastination, heedlessness, and perversion in thought and action.

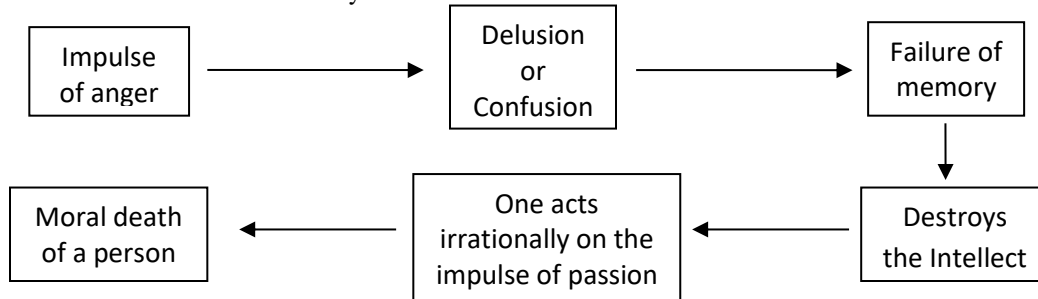
Sometimes one of the modes (*guna*) prevails over the other two and thus produces its effect

*rajas tamash chābhibhūya sattvam bhavati bhārata
rajah sattvam tamash chaiva tamah sattvam rajas
tathā*

(Verse- 14/10)

“O scion of Bharat, sometimes *sattva* (goodness) asserts itself by prevailing over *rajas* (passion) and *tamas* (ignorance), *rajas* assert itself by prevailing over *sattva* and *tamas*, and *tamas* asserts itself by prevailing over *sattva* and *rajas*.”

A manager who is in the mode of goodness effectively manages his staff as he spends his time and energy cultivating knowledge and not easily falls prey to ignorance, greed, lust, desire, and anger. Desire originates from attachment and breeds anger. Management of anger is most vital for any managers, and they should not let anger rule over them. Sri Krishna explains that from anger comes complete delusion; from delusion the bewilderment of memory, from the bewilderment of memory the ruin of



Abstaining from selfish acts.

Bhagavad Gita in Chapter XVIII culminates with an important HRD lesson that deals with renunciation defined as abstaining from selfish acts (*sanyasa*-renunciation of actions) and detachment from the fruits of action (*tyaga* - renunciation of the desire for the result of action) (Roka, 2006). *Sanyasa* is the renunciation practiced by *sanyasies* (monks) in the form of giving up all desires for progeny, wealth and happiness on earth and in heaven after death (Nikhilananda, 2008). On the other hand, *tyaga* is the renunciation practiced by *tyagi*

discrimination, and from the ruin of discrimination the man perishes.

*krodhād bhavati sammohah sammohāt smriti-
vibhramah
smriti-bhranshād buddhi-nāśho buddhi-nāshāt
pranaśhyati*

(Verse 2/63)

“From anger comes delusion; from delusion the failure of memory; from failure of memory the intellect gets destroyed and when the intellect is destroyed, the man is ruined due to his moral death.”

Effective control and management of anger is a vital aspect of human relations. It is not only important in organizations, but also in everyday life as anger leads to one’s moral death. Then anger as has been pointed out by Sivananda (1990) resides in the astral body (*Linga Sarira*), but percolates into the physical body just like water that percolates through the pores to the outer surface of an earthen pot and just as heat melts lead, so also the anger melts the individual.

who engages himself in various activities but gives up selfish desires for enjoying the rewards of action (Mukundananda, 2013). Sri Krishna recommends the second kind of renunciation and pointed out some specific fields in which true renunciation need to be practiced (Table – 1). Every real renunciation hauls up into a nobler status of fulfillment and renunciation of action (*sanyasa*) without the spirit of renunciation of results of action (*tyaga*) is but an empty show; it is a false crown with no kingdom of joy within for it to lord over (Chinmayananda, 2019).

Table-1: Actions need to be renounced and cultivated to practice true renunciation:

Actions to be renounced	Actions to be cultivated
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I (the false ego)	We (universal brotherhood)
Causing harm to self and others through body (actions), mind (thoughts) and speech (words)	Express positivity through words actions and thoughts
Selfishness	Selfless service
Ignorance	Open-mindedness
Inertia, Dishonesty and Indiscipline	Pro-activeness and integrity
Transitory happiness (sensual pleasure)	Seek for <i>Ananda</i> , (a superior ecstasy form within which is a non-dualistic state of awareness)
Inequality	Equanimity

The concept of renunciation from the Bhagavad Gita suggests that the managers/leaders need to cultivate the actions furnished in Table – 1 and should strive for the common good focusing their attention on people exhibiting a sense of compassion and fellow-feeling towards them. Nowadays *servant leadership* is a popular leadership concept, like the concept of renunciation built on the belief that most effective leaders strive to serve others, rather than accrue power looking toward the needs, growth, and well-being of followers first.

CONCLUSION

Bhagavad Gita stresses many scientific, philosophical, and ethical issues that go around the war and even beyond. War is not taking place on the battlefield of Kurukshetra, it never took place, and it is not going to take place in any country; rather it is a complicated situation into which one has to go deep to solve the problem. The wisest charioteer and the mastermind behind Bhagavad Gita, speaks that even a little event of daily life - it may be a small event in the kitchen or a complicated issue in a large administrative setup, must be understood in its proper perspective with relation to the whole working environment by a manager or leader, that reflects upon the quality of leadership. Current-day leadership theories do not address several attributes of inspirational leadership which include-

- outgrow the vision from the narrow perspective to an opportunity to make a difference with a strong current of spirituality.
- not generating a sense of fear in others and not to be afraid of anyone.

*yasmān nodvijate loko lokān nodvijate cha yah
harshāmarsha-bhayodvegair mukto yah sa cha me
priyah*

(verse-12/15)

“He by whom the world is not afflicted and whom in turn the world cannot afflict, he who is equal in pleasure and pain, and free from fear and anxiety, such devotee of mine is very dear to Me.”

- developing an ability to transform people who come to their contact in a sustained fashion.
- to leave behind an impression that guides the people and organizations for a long time to come.

After hearing the Bhagavad Gita, the delusion of Arjuna was dispelled. He had regained his memory through the grace of Sri Krishna, remained free from doubt, and got ready to fight carrying out his command.

*nashto mohah smritir labdhā tvat-prasādān
mayāchyuta*

sthito 'smi gata-sandehah karishye vachanam tava
(verse 18/73)

“Arjuna said: O infallible one, through your grace may delusion be gone, and I have regained my memory, I am firm, free from doubts. I shall act according to Your instructions.”

This is the transformation of Arjuna after listening to Bhagavad Gita. Managers and leaders can use the philosophy of the Bhagavad Gita and demonstrate transformational HRD in developing and guiding the employees/followers. Besides material knowledge, this teaching will help them to enhance their spiritual knowledge and also attract the grace of Lord Krishna.

The core of every business function from financial transactions to operational decisions and beyond relies on the greatest asset of an organization- its human resources as human resources boast significant responsibility for the success or failure of an organization (de Waal, 2007; Haslinda, 2009). HRM is the process of managing human talents to achieve the

desired objective of the organization, whereas HRD is a series of activities that support behavioral change and learning opportunities for employees to enhance skills and resilience of employee to meet the current and future demands of the organization to achieve high performance (Hashinela, 2009) The purpose of HRD is fundamentally concerned with training and development of the personnel proactively to address the change (de Wall, 2007; Stewart and Sambrook, 2012). HRD lessons through the lens of the Bhagavad Gita will broaden the vision of individuals, melt their hearts, and embolden them to take great steps to overcome the fear of failure, which will significantly contribute towards the high performance of the organization on a sustainable basis.

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