

Integrating Ancient Wisdom: Enhancing Peer Relationships In HEIs Through The Shrimad Bhagavad Gita

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ABSTRACT

The research paper examines the influence of ancient philosophical concepts derived from the Shrimad Bhagavad Gita (SBG) on peer interactions at Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs) in India. This research examines the impact of philosophical concepts originating from the Shrimad Bhagavad Gita, "Karma" or "Theory of Work" which includes constructs- One's Righteous Duty, Non-Attachment, No Desire for Fruit, Treating Success and Failure as Equal, and Deterministic Intellect, on the quality of peer interactions among teacher educators. Analyzed by structural equation modeling (SEM), data from 600 teacher educators were examined to investigate the predicted correlations between these constructs and the quality of peer relationships, using a quantitative study approach. The results demonstrate substantial positive correlations, emphasizing the need of incorporating these age-old philosophical principles into the modern educational environment. This research highlights the capacity of ancient wisdom to improve the ethical basis and interpersonal relationships inside higher education institutions (HEIs). It promotes a comprehensive approach to education that incorporates moral and ethical principles. The text discusses the implications of educational practice, policy making, and future research in educational psychology. It emphasizes the importance of an education system that promotes both academic rigor and personal and ethical growth.

Keywords: *Shrimad Bhagavad Gita, Karma, Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs), Peer Relationships, Philosophical Constructs, Educational Psychology*

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

The complex web of educational practices and outcomes, especially in the context of higher educational institutions (HEIs), is contingent upon the interplay of numerous psychological constructs and their impact on human behavior towards others (Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005). This paper presents an exploratory study that attempts to fuse ancient philosophical insights with the contemporary discipline of educational psychology. We draw upon the teachings of the Shrimad Bhagavad Gita (SBG) to examine their import for peer relationships among teacher educators in HEIs.

The SBG is a Hindu scripture that is part of the Indian epic Mahabharata (Miller, 2004). It takes the form of a conversation between Prince Arjuna and his guide and charioteer, Lord Krishna. Within this dialogue, various dilemmas in respect of duty (dharma) are discussed and resolved, and paths to spiritual liberation expounded (Telang, 1882). The SBG thereby

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yields a veritable life manual on living a life of virtue, purpose, and detachment (Massey, 2008).

This study presents five philosophical constructs from the SBG as antecedents of peer relationships, Karma or Theory of Work: This concept comprises Dharma (One's Righteous Duty), Vairagya (Non-Attachment), Nishkama Karma (No Desire for Fruit), Samatvam (Treating Success and Failure as Equal), and Svabhava (Deterministic Intellect) (Sharma, 1986). These constructs not only provide a framework for a deep and meaningful spiritual existence, but also hold promise for enhancing the quality of peer relationships within HEIs, as indeed the educational setting more generally (Deshpande, 2014).

The study was facilitated by a research model, analyzed through structural equation modeling (SEM), which sought to uncover the predictive relationships between the five SBG constructs (collectively referred to as the Theory of Work or Karma) and the quality of peer relationships. This endeavor aimed to illuminate the extent to which elements of such a nature might lead to the cultivation of positive interactions and associations within a peer group.

1.1 Significance of the Research

This research is important for several reasons. Firstly, it opens an opportunity that is especially significant in the landscape of HEIs in India. Education in India is heavily influenced by the rich cultural and philosophical underpinnings of the nation (Kumar, 2014). A synthesis of the ethos of HEIs with the teachings of the SBG holds the potential to further enrich the academic fabric. The quest of this research is therefore to deliberate upon the potential influence of constructs such as righteous duty, non-attachment, detachment from outcomes, equanimity born out of realization, and acceptance of inherent intellectual disposition derived from the teachings of the SBG on the nature of peer relationships among educators in HEIs (Tripathi, 2010). In the process, it offers an insight into the imagination of a Higher Education for a collective of academics in India that is not merely collegial and cordial, but informed by a deep ethical commitment.

Secondly, this research is important for the valuable contribution it brings of ancient philosophic wisdom to the current concerns of education. This is an age of rapid strides in technology, paradigm shifts in pedagogy, and the anxious pursuit of competitive success (Singh, 2018). In the very midst of it all, to appreciate how an ethical life, the unattached performance of duty, and the steadfastness in treating success and failure with equality are basic to human conduct and endeavor in the world, is indeed a realization of the wisdom of the SBG (Massey, 2008). Its teachings hold a promise that could liberate the suffocating climate of competition, transform HEIs into communities of fellow collaborators and journeys' in the quest for a quality and complete education, one that approaches all transactions in education with care, respect, and ethicality.

Finally, this study believes that it makes a significant contribution to a broader discourse – that of the role of cultural and philosophical teachings in determining the content of educational practices and relationships and their outcomes (Kumar, 2014). The discourse is not just concerned with the applicability of the SBG to understanding peer relationships amongst educators in HEIs. It delves deeper, questioning if the SBG can shed light on ways to educate in parts of the world where ethical concerns are lacking (Hick, 2012). This is particularly relevant in contexts where truth-bending, cheating, disregard for law, environmental exploitation, and short-sighted living are prevalent (Spring, 2018). The discourse centers around the world view that education should not just be academically rigorous, but should also cultivate the individual's ability to grow towards personal and ethical heights (Spring, 2018). This research aligns with a world view that seeks education systems that foster not just academic rigor, but also the ability for individuals to develop ethically. It questions whether education systems, and systems of teacher education, can

equip children and youth to find ways to lead a worthy life in times of unimaginable grief and growing inhumanity (Kumashiro, 2009). The discourse is with those who still see the key question of education being solely about training children and youth to be literate and numerate to fit into the global economy (Spring, 2018). This research is particularly keen to prompt future work in this area to address the following questions:

Q1. How do psychological constructs derived from the Bhagavad Gita influence peer relationships amongst teacher educators in HEIs?

Q2. To what extent will the integration of these constructs into educational practices and policy making enhance the quality of peer relationships and subsequently the quality of the educational setting in question?

Q3. What are the implications of this integration for educational practice, policy making and future research in educational psychology?

To add further depth to the current study, future research could explicate how the process of creating positive peer relations within HEIs looks at a more granular level. This could involve exploring how conceptualizations of virtuousness (Noddings, 1988, 2005) extend to specific instances of affectionate educational leadership (Frykholm, 2015). It could also examine how role modeling of leadership behaviors is managed in educational settings and how it can bolster positive peer relations (Leithwood et al., 2009). Additionally, future research could investigate how qualities of effective educational leaders manifest in cultures that East and West might co-construct in diverse higher education settings (Dovido & Gaertner, 2001), both in India and beyond.

2. OBJECTIVES AND HYPOTHESES

2.1 Research Objectives

The primary objective of this study are to examine the impact of philosophical constructs on peer relationships: To investigate how the psychological constructs derived from the SBG—One's Righteous Duty, Non-Attachment, No Desire for Fruit, Treating Success and Failure as Equal, and Deterministic Intellect—affect the quality of peer relationships among teacher educators in higher educational institutions (HEIs) in India.

2.2 Hypotheses

Based on the objectives, the study posits the following hypotheses:

H1: One's Righteous Duty will have positive and significant impact on quality of peer relationships among teacher educators in HEIs.

H2: Non-Attachment will have positive and significant impact on the quality of peer relationships among teacher educators in HEIs.

H3: No Desire for Fruit will have positive and significant impact on quality of peer relationships among teacher educators in HEIs.

H4: Treating Success and Failure as Equal will have positive and significant impact on the quality of peer relationships among teacher educators in HEIs.

H5: Deterministic Intellect will have positive and significant impact on the quality of peer relationships among teacher educators in HEIs.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study focuses on teacher educators working in higher educational institutions (HEIs) in India. They play a pivotal role in shaping the learning experiences of future teachers and, by extension, the overall learning scenario. The sample size for the study is 600, as it provides with a robust basis for the analysis and generalization of the findings within the

selected population. (Field, 2009). The study employed judgmental sampling technique, also referred to as purposive sampling. This technique ensures that teacher educators actively involved in the dual roles of teaching and research, within HEIs form part of the sample. It is particularly appropriate “when researcher believes that (a) certain stratification is undertaken in a population; and (b) the different part of the population would naturally have different levels or traits of the behavior” (Sekaran & Bougie, 2013). This technique is particularly suited when the aim is to explore specific psychological constructs and their impact, as in this context (Guion et al., 2008). The research instruments used in this study consisted of combination of questionnaires, some of which were adopted with modifications, while others were self-constructed. They were developed for the purpose of assessing the impact of the philosophical constructs derived from the Shrimad Bhagavad Gita on peer relationships among teacher educators. These instruments were validated through a pilot study and post validation, were refined the questions based on feedback to ensure that it was indeed measuring what it was intended to, in a reliable and largely valid manner (Eyben, 2013). For the analysis of data collected Smart PLS 4 (Trial Version) was used. The decision to employ the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) was due its ability to handle the complexities of multiple relationships involving different constructs, especially in exploratory research aimed towards theory building (Henseler et al., 2014). It was particularly suited, as this study sought to examine these hypothesized relationships between the psychological constructs derived from the Bhagavad Gita and the quality of their peer relationships among teacher educators.

4. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Measurement Model

The result of factor analysis, it can be observed that the factor loading values was found to be higher than 0.5 (Hulland,1999; Truongand McColl,2011) The data includes psychometric properties for the variables of a psychological construct or set of constructs, including item loadings, Cronbach's alpha (Nunnally, 1978), Rho_A, Composite Reliability (CR) (Fornell and Bookstein, 1982; Barclayetal.,1995), and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) (Hu etal.,2004; Henseler et al., 2009) for each variable. The variables represent distinct constructs, each measured by several items.

Table 1. Reliability and Validity Measures

Variables	Item Code	Item Loadings	Cronbach's alpha	Rho_A	Composite reliability (CR)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
Deterministic Intellect	DI10	0.737	0.789	0.792	0.851	0.534
	DI5	0.734				
	DI6	0.646				
	DI7	0.746				
	DI8	0.784				
Non-Attachment	NA2	0.826	0.761	0.762	0.820	0.695
	NA3	0.841				
No Desire for Fruit	NDF2	0.733	0.831	0.851	0.886	0.661
	NDF3	0.847				
	NDF4	0.833				

	NDF5	0.835				
Ones Righteous Duty	RD1	0.759	0.884	0.894	0.915	0.683
	RD2	0.826				
	RD3	0.867				
	RD4	0.824				
	RD5	0.853				
Relationship With Peers	RwP1	0.724	0.858	0.860	0.894	0.585
	RwP2	0.786				
	RwP3	0.780				
	RwP4	0.767				
	RwP5	0.775				
	RwP6	0.754				
Treating Success and Failure as Equal	TSF1	0.817	0.764	0.677	0.815	0.596
	TSF2	0.730				
	TSF6	0.766				

The analysis will focus on the reliability and validity of these constructs based on the provided metrics (Table 1).

1. Deterministic Intellect (DI): This construct has five items (DI10, DI5, DI6, DI7, DI8) with item loadings ranging from 0.646 to 0.784, showing good individual contribution of each item to the construct. Value of Cronbach's alpha (0.789) are similar to Rho_A (0.792), suggesting high internal consistency reliability. Composite reliability (CR) of 0.851 and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) of 0.534 support reliability and convergent validity of this construct – CR is well above the common threshold of 0.7 and AVE above the threshold of 0.5, reflecting good construct validity.
2. Non-Attachment (NA): This construct has loadings of 0.826 and 0.841 for its two items (NA2, NA3) – very strong contributions to the construct. Cronbach's alpha and Rho_A are fair (0.761 and 0.762), which suggests internal consistency of this construct, the CR (0.820) is acceptable and the AVE is very high (0.695), indicating good convergent validity for the construct.
3. No Desire for Fruit (NDF): Four items range from 0.733 to 0.847. Cronbach's alpha has a high value of 0.831 and Rho_A an even higher value of 0.851, showing excellent internal consistency. The CR (0.886) and the high AVE (0.661) provide further evidence of reliability and construct validity of this set of items.
4. One's Righteous Duty (RD): This construct is evaluated by five items and shows high item loadings (from 0.759 to 0.867). The Cronbach's alpha (0.884) and Rho_A (0.894) values are excellent, indicating very high internal consistency. The CR and AVE values (0.915 and 0.836, respectively) offer a strong indication of construct reliability and convergent validity.
5. Relationship With Peers (RwP): This construct has six items and shows item loadings from 0.724 to 0.786. The Cronbach's alpha (0.858) and Rho_A (0.860) suggest very good internal consistency. This construct also demonstrates strong reliability and validity as evidenced by a CR of 0.914 and AVE of 0.659.

6. Treating Success and Failure as Equal (TSF): Three items measure this construct and present loadings from 0.730 to 0.817. Cronbach's alpha (0.764) and Rho_A (0.777) are fair in terms of recommended threshold of 0.7, they show reliability. The CR (0.815) and AVE (0.596) are satisfactory, indicating it has acceptable reliability and convergent validity as a construct.

In sum, the constructs generally exhibit high reliability and validity as apparent by their Cronbach's alpha, Rho_A, CR, and AVE values. Researchers can therefore be confident in utilizing these constructs in further research or when applying them in practical scenarios within psychology.

Table 2. HTMT results

Variables	Deterministic Intellect	No Desire for Fruit	Non-Attachment	Ones Righteous Duty	Relationship With Peers	Treating Success and Failure as Equal
Deterministic Intellect						
No Desire for Fruit	0.665					
Non-Attachment	0.228	0.381				
Ones Righteous Duty	0.129	0.302	0.586			
Relationship With Peers	0.245	0.339	0.482	0.473		
Treating Success and Failure as Equal	0.088	0.147	0.616	0.815	0.460	

Table 2, lists the Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio (HTMT) of correlations of the constructs: Deterministic Intellect, No Desire for Fruit, Non-Attachment, One's Righteous Duty, Relationship With Peers, and Treating Success and Failure as Equal. The HTMT is a criterion for assessing the discriminant validity in variance-based structural equation modeling, such as PLS (Partial Least Squares). Discriminant validity assesses the extent to which a construct truly measures a distinct dimension from the various other constructs within the same model, as evidenced by the constructs' correlations with one another being lower than the correlations among the indicators that measure the same construct. A common threshold for HTMT is 0.90 or 0.85 in more conservative settings. Values below this threshold suggest that the constructs are sufficiently distinct from each other, supporting discriminant validity.

Deterministic Intellect (DI). The largest correlation is with No Desire for Fruit (0.665). Correlations with other constructs: Non-Attachment = 0.367; One's Righteous Duty = 0.253; Relationship With Peers = 0.209; Treating Success and Failure as Equal = 0.225.

For No Desire for Fruit (NDF). The largest correlation is with DI (0.665). Correlations with other constructs: Non-Attachment = 0.381; One's Righteous Duty = 0.388; Relationship With Peers = 0.499; Treating Success and Failure as Equal = 0.510.

Non-Attachment (NA). The largest correlation is with Treating Success and Failure as Equal (0.616). Correlations with other constructs: DI = 0.367; No Desire for Fruit = 0.381; One's Righteous Duty = 0.586; Relationship With Peers = 0.298.

One's Righteous Duty (RD). The largest correlation is with Treating Success and Failure as Equal = 0.815). Correlations with other constructs: DI = 0.253; No Desire for Fruit = 0.388; Non-Attachment = 0.586; Relationship With Peers = 0.232.

Relationship With Peers (RwP) The largest correlation is with No Desire for Fruit (0.499). Correlations with other constructs: DI = 0.209; Non-Attachment = 0.298; One's Righteous Duty = 0.232; Treating Success and Failure as Equal = 0.406.

Treating Success and Failure as Equal (TSFE). The largest correlation is with One's Righteous Duty (0.815). Correlations with other constructs: DI = 0.225; No Desire for Fruit = 0.510; Non-Attachment = 0.616; Relationship With Peers = 0.406.

Thus all the constructs exhibit sufficient discriminant validity with the HTMT ratios because all values are below the .85 threshold. The strongest association with the constructs is that of One's Righteous Duty and Treating Success and Failure as Equal, which share a considerable amount of variance suggesting they are distinct but still related constructs.

Table 3. Discriminant Validity

Variables	Deterministic Intellect	No Desire for Fruit	Non-Attachment	Ones Righteous Duty	Relationship With Peers	Treating Success and Failure as Equal
Deterministic Intellect	0.731					
No Desire for Fruit	0.545	0.813				
Non-Attachment	0.155	0.263	0.834			
Ones Righteous Duty	0.093	0.266	0.414	0.826		
Relationship With Peers	0.222	0.300	0.336	0.419	0.765	
Treating Success and Failure as Equal	0.051	0.103	0.376	0.630	0.353	0.772

Just as a summary of discriminant validity serves as a way to gauge whether a concept or measurement that is not supposed to be related isn't in fact not related, construct validity assists in determining the extent to which a construct differs from other constructs through a range of measures– it's crucial, as it helps avoid constructs from simply being one and the same, measured by two different tests. The diagonal elements, probably the square root of the average variance extracted (AVE) for each construct, represent the amount of variance captured by it– divided by the amount of variance in the indicators due to measurement error. The square root of AVE of each construct should be greater than its correlations with other constructs for the sake of discriminant validity– that is, the construct shares its variance more with its own indicators than those of others. Deterministic Intellect (0.731), No Desire for Fruit (0.813), Non-Attachment (0.834), Treating Success and Failure

as Equal (0.772), One’s Righteous Duty (0.826) and Relationship With Peers (0.765) all has its square root of AVE larger than its correlations with other constructs, also confirming good discriminant validity. To sum up, findings provide evidence that every single construct exhibits good discriminant validity; meaning it captures a distinct aspect of the theoretical domain it is intended to measure. This distinction is crucial for theoretical clarity and for ensuring that empirical findings accurately reflect the constructs under study. The procedure here, comparing the square root of AVE with the correlations among constructs, is a standard approach for addressing the discriminant validity issue in the psychometric and SEM literatures. (Fornell and Larcker, 1981) (Table- 3).

4.2 Structural Equation Modelling

In the examination of how different psychological constructs affect one’s Relationship With Peers, the study used structural equation modeling (SEM) to evaluate the predictive relationships between these constructs and the quality of peer relationships (Table 4).

Table. 4 SEM results

Predicted Relationships	β value	STDEV	t-value	P values
Deterministic Intellect --> Relationship With Peers	0.098	0.045	2.197	0.028
No Desire for Fruit --> Relationship With Peers	0.134	0.049	2.743	0.006
Non-Attachment --> Relationship With Peers	0.139	0.045	3.064	0.002
Ones Righteous Duty --> Relationship With Peers	0.230	0.051	4.515	0.000
Treating Success and Failure as Equal --> Relationship With Peers	0.136	0.049	2.803	0.005

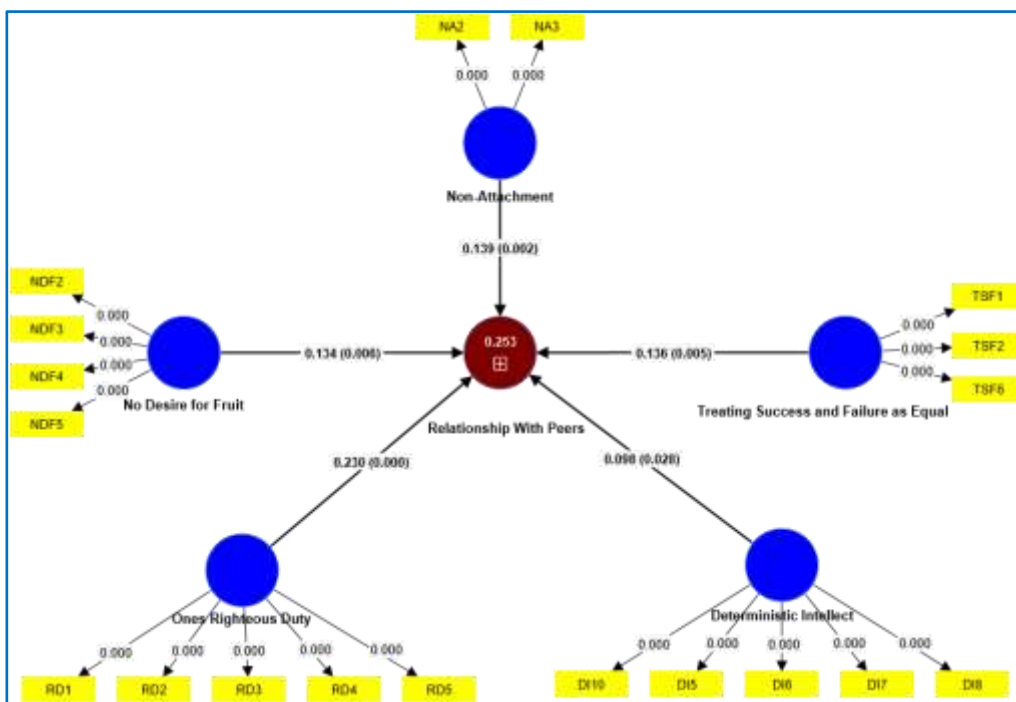


Figure 1 : Path Analysis of SEM

As can be observed in Table 4 and Figure 1, the SEM analysis revealed that One's Righteous Duty had a significant positive relationship with Relationship With Peers ($\beta = 0.230$, $t = 4.515$, $STDEV = 0.051$, $p = 0.000$), underscoring the extensive manner in which a sense of moral commitment and ethical fortitude augments peer relationships. This suggests that individuals who view their actions as part of a broader ethical context tend to establish more proficient and healthier relationships with peers, likely through mutual reliance and esteem, as behavioral adherence is inherent to extended contact.

Additionally, non-attachment evidenced a significant positive effect on relationship with peers ($\beta = 0.139$, $t = 3.064$, $STDEV = 0.045$, $p = 0.002$), as did no desire for fruit ($\beta = 0.134$, $t = 2.743$, $STDEV = 0.049$, $p = 0.006$) and treating success and failure as Equal ($\beta = 0.136$, $t = 2.803$, $STDEV = 0.049$, $p = 0.005$). These relationships imply that relinquishing personal possession, evincing less concern for personal benefit, and approaching success and failure with nonchalance help foster better peer relationships. These attributes likely create a more candid, collaborative, and uncompetitive environment, thereby increasing the overall health and strength of peer interactions.

Finally, deterministic intellect was also associated with relationship with peers in a positive manner ($\beta = 0.098$, $t = 2.197$, $STDEV = 0.045$, $p = 0.028$), indicating that a belief in the deterministic nature of intellect modestly augments the overall quality of peer relationships. This may suggest that individuals who believe in deterministic propensities of intellect may interact in a more equitable and cooperative manner, potentially by valuing the heterogeneous capabilities present within their peer group

5. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The Shrimad Bhagavad Gita, a revered Hindu scripture, considers Karma to be not just action, but also a cause and effect principle rooted in a deep philosophical understanding of duty (one of the major philosophical concept in the Bhagavad Gita and central to the conduct of any activity), detachment (the essence of Karma Yoga), and action without attachment to the results of one's action, which is main teachings of Bhagavad-Gita. These principles cannot be more relevant in today's environment, and they serve for a profound framework for understanding the psychological constructs identified in the SEM analysis—One's Righteous Duty, Non-Attachment, No Desire for Fruit, Treating Success and Failure as Equal, Deterministic Intellect—and how they impact relationships among peers, looking at teacher educators in the Higher Educational Institutions (HEIs) in India.

5.1 One's Righteous Duty (Dharma)

"You have a right to perform your prescribed duties, but you are not entitled to the fruits of your actions." The Bhagavad Gita emphasizes that one should act according to his/her duty with dedication and integrity. Teacher educators in HEIs have a duty to impart knowledge and to shape students into responsible and morally upright citizens. This role can be best fulfilled by performing acts that are non-egoistic and with an altruistic concern for the students and the larger educational community. They should act in a way that enhances their relationship and mutual respect among colleagues, living by the dictum "act your own duty...succeed or fail. Your duty is not to the fruits of your actions."

5.2 Non-Attachment (Vairagya)

Non-Attachment or detached action in the Bhagavad Gita points to performing actions without attachment to the fruits of those actions. For educators, this could mean that their efforts are focused more on the process of education (teaching, mentoring, research), rather than on the individual gains like prestige, or different forms of remuneration. This could promote a true sense of collaboration among educators, in which the primacy of the collective goal, the development of students and the creation of new knowledge become the major bond among them, with a "no strings attached" attitude towards the credit, fame and awards that they would receive.

5.3 No Desire for Fruit (Nishkama Karma)

The concept of Nishkama Karma, or action without desire for the fruits of action, is closely related to Non-Attachment. Educators can embody Nishkama Karma by working for the betterment of their students and institutional development for its own sake, not for personal honours. This motivates them to take action, but not be attached to the outcomes. Actions performed with pure intentions create a sense of giving and selflessness that can foster positive peer relations and create an atmosphere conducive to philanthropic behavior.

5.4 Treating Success and Failure as Equal (Samatvam)

The Bhagavad Gita emphasizes the importance of equanimity in success and failure (Samatvam Yoga Uchhyate). Teacher educators embracing this perspective can dissolve competition and create an academic community that is strong and resilient enough to value learning and growth over outcomes. When both successes and failures become part of the learning process, educators must help each other through challenges and relish achievements collectively supporting peer solidarity.

5.5 Deterministic Intellect (Svabhava)

The Bhagavad Gita tells individuals to acknowledge their inherent nature (Svabhava) and to strive to fulfill their potential and improve. In an educational setting, this means acknowledging the infinite possible talents and predispositions of peers and generating a more complex and dynamic academic community. This acknowledgment fosters respect and understanding among educators and consultative peer relations in HEIs, and supports the creation of a better academic environment, pointing to the most important goal of education.

Thus, integrating the teachings of the Shrimad Bhagavad Gita into the ethos of HEIs in India transcends curriculum reform. It requires a systemic, institution-wide, model that reshapes the culture and practices of HEIs. First, through workshops, seminars, and deliberations on the teachings of the Gita, educators must be sensitized to the value of these constructs in their professional conduct, both in the classroom and in other professional engagements. Second, leadership — including the top management and governing boards — have to internalize, and reflect these values, thereby, embedding them in the institutional culture. An atmosphere that encourages educators to consider colleagues as motivators of their duty, to be apothised of personal gains, to equate success and failure, and treats their “deterministic intellect” as the irreducible essence of their own and their colleagues’ being would thereby be created.

6. IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

The study of constructs of Shrimad Bhagavad Gita such as One’s Righteous Duty, Non-Attachment, No Desire for Fruit, Treating Success and Failure as Equal and Deterministic Intellect and their influence on peer relationship in HEIs has several practical implications for educational practice. It indicates that Integrating moral and ethical values in academic environments could foster environments of duty, responsibility, and moral behavior. By creating and cleaving to practices that emphasize collaboration, mutual respect, and an eye on the broader, and collective, picture, HEIs can foster academic communities that are supportive and cohesive. Approaching success and failure in equal measure provides resilience for educators and students and supports an academic culture which values innovation and risk-taking and encourages learning from all outcomes.

The implications for practice related to policy within HEIs are also significant. This study indicates the need for professional development programs that incorporate teachings of Shrimad Bhagavad Gita into educational practices such as teaching-learning process, collaboration, shared governance because it aligns educators’ philosophies of teaching and

enhances both educator and student experiences. Crafting coherence throughout institutional policies and initiatives support, for ethical conduct, collaborative inquiry, and shared governance, faculty and administrative scholarship and collegial engagement would further these findings and support cultures of mutual-respect and non-attachment to personal gains. Initiatives to support mental health and well-being are necessary to physically support a culture of resilience and support which can approach success and failure in equal measure.

This research has implications for further fields of inquiry and study into the impact of philosophical and cultural teachings on educational environments across multiple contexts and for future comparative studies of the universality or specificity of these constructs. Future opportunities for inquiry include studying the outcomes of a long-term integration of Shrimad Bhagavad Gita's teachings on educational outcomes such as measure of academic performance and ethical leadership development. Additionally, studying how these constructs influence student-teacher relationships could provide a comprehensive understanding of their educational impact. In its totality, this study offers evidence of not only the utility but the universality of integrating ethical and philosophical principles into educating in academic environments. The benefits of such integration are not only evident for academic excellence but for personal growth, ethical development, and communal well-being within educational institutions.

7. CONCLUSION

For the teacher educator in HEI, the teachings of the Bhagavad Gita furnish a versatile, enduring, and intrinsic repertoire of constructs to interpret and modulate her peer relations. They offer an ongoing experiential and philosophical paradigm from which to articulate the moral nature of her vocation and thus her pedagogic practice. In doing so, they promise to enrich her scholarly, professional, and personal interaction with colleagues. By actualizing through her peer relations the principles of Karma—One's Righteous Duty, Non-Attachment, No Desire for Fruit, Treating Success and Failure as Equal, and Deterministic Intellect — teacher educators can offer a collegial setting that is not only more conducive to better teaching but also inscribed with coherence and consonance with the higher roots of India's philosophical and cultural heritage.

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