

Educational objectives articulated in the Bhagwad Gita

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Abstract: *In this article, the significance of integrating the teachings of the Bhagavad Gita into education, specifically in values education, is discussed. The Bhagavad Gita stresses the importance of confronting life's challenges with courage and wisdom, as well as emphasizing the crucial role of harmonious child development. The article urges teachers to guide students towards self-discovery and to instill values that promote resilience and overall personal growth. The educational goals outlined in the Bhagavad Gita are ultimately emphasized in the article.*

Keywords: *Educational Objectives, Bharwad Gita*

Introduction:

The Bhagavad Gita offers a unique and significant contribution to the field of education, particularly in the realm of values education. The teachings contained within the text are fundamentally values that should be put into practice in daily life. To make education more meaningful and relevant, it is essential to apply the values and messages of the Bhagavad Gita to the field of education. According to the Bhagavad Gita, individuals should treat the ups and downs of life with equal acceptance and fortitude. Bravery and wisdom are the keys to facing the sorrows of life with a smile. Lamentation and worry are not effective in mitigating life's challenges. Rather, it is boldness and determination that enable one to overcome adversity. The primary goal of education should not be limited to knowledge acquisition, but should also focus on harmonious development of the child. Schools should provide ample opportunities for students to develop into well-rounded individuals, and teachers should play a crucial role in instilling human values in their students. They should guide students towards the ideals of self-realization and encourage them to reform themselves. As the Bhagavad Gita states, "One should elevate oneself by oneself, and not degrade oneself. The self alone is one's friend as well as one's enemy." The purpose of this article is to emphasize the educational objectives put forth in the Bhagavad Gita.

Bhagwad Gita and the objectives of Education:

The Indian tradition places great importance on education as a purposeful and dedicated endeavor. The Bhagavad Gita advocates for educators to not only focus on the present task at hand but also to have a clear vision for the future in order to effectively address life's challenges. Mahatma Gandhi was deeply moved by the teachings of the Bhagavad Gita, expressing the belief that education is the most valuable tool for developing students' abilities to solve problems in all aspects of their lives. In this way education is not purposeless and devoid of definite direction; that is why many objectives are in view, according to Shrimad Bhagavad Gita, the only objective of education is the all round development of the child, that is, the development of body, mind and soul, because the education which makes all these grow and blossom is the real education. All the physical, intellectual, moral and spiritual qualities of a man should be developed by education. That is why Shrimad Bhagavad Gita lays special emphasis on the education of three H- Hand,

Head, Heart instead of the three R's - Reading, Writing, Arithmetic in modern educational objectives. The Gita believes that the all-round development of a child is possible through the harmonious development of these three elements. The related statement in this sense has been expressed in Shrimad Bhagavad Gita as follows-

युञ्जन्नेवं सदात्मानं योगी नियतमानसः ।
शान्तिं निर्वाणपरमां मत्संस्थामधिगच्छति ॥ 6.15

The meaning of saying is that the body realizes the Supreme Brahman on the surface of this physical existence, that is, it becomes capable of self-realization. It has been said in the Gita that our life is related to both this material and the otherworldly world, so the aim of education should be both materialistic and spiritual. This is the reason that according to this book the following objectives of education seem to be

1. First - Immediate objective
2. Second - last objective, Best objective

1. **Immediate Objectives of Education** : According to Shrimad Bhagavad Gita, there must be unity and harmony of head, heart and hand in order to develop all the abilities of the student equally. The Karma Yoga of the Gita deals with the development of the hand, Gyana yoga is associated with the development of head and Bhakti Yoga is associated with the development of Heart. When there is a harmony between these three, only then the perfection of the nature of the perfect man is possible.

- Basic needs of human beings: This includes food, cloth and shelter. Without the fulfillment of these needs, thoughts towards high ideals will not be able to arise in the person. So if education does not fulfill our basic needs then it is useless for us. To some, this aim of education appears frivolous and materialistic; But we have to accept the goal that if we wish to progress materially, morally and mentally, we must first satisfy our basic needs.
- Medium of education is Karma: Every person should be self dependent. Every child should cooperate in the works of his parents. To generate this kind of feeling is the real meaning of education. In Shrimad Bhagavad Gita, emphasizing the necessity of doing work, it has been said that -

न कर्मणामनारम्भान्नैष्कर्म्यं पुरुषोऽश्नुते ।
न च संन्यसनादेव सिद्धिं समधिगच्छति ॥ 3.4

That is, one cannot get rid of the result of karma by turning away from karma and not only by renunciation success can be achieved. Further in the same chapter it has been said that every person has to act by compulsion according to the qualities acquired by nature. While teaching Arjuna, Shri Krishna says that -

कर्मणैव हि संसिद्धिमास्थिता जनकादयः ।
लोक संग्रहमेवापि सम्पश्यन्कर्तुमर्हसि ॥ 3.20

Means, "O Arjuna, kings like Janaka attained perfection only by performing prescribed duties. So you should work with a view to educate the common people." That is, such kind of work should be done which is useful for the self as well as the society and should be an example in front of others so that humans can follow it. In the year 1902, Dr. Zakir Hussain, in the second session of All India Nai Talim, has given the following explanation of 'karma' i.e 'Work' in education- "It is not only at the present time that we

consider 'Karma' as the medium of education, but...every human being has said this in his own way. 'Karma' is the principle for one individual....to be made a part of the syllabus. For the second person 'Karma' should remain a matter of syllabus; for the third person there should be production through 'Karma' and there are some people who consider 'Karma' as a gift of God." The Shrimad Bhagavad Gita has indicated the attainment of knowledge through 'Karma' action. According to this, education should be imparted only by those deeds, which can fulfill the personal, social, economic, national and international needs of the students. A productive 'karma' is a useful 'karma'.

Many thinkers have made concepts of giving knowledge through 'karma' and have also used them. Ever since the harmonious development of human personality has been talked about, then the emphasis has been on the development of these four aspects of human personality - body, mind and soul. The idea towards Karma according to the Education Council of England is - "Keeping in mind the well-being of the society of which the child is a member, the aim of education should be to develop the child's overall abilities in the school environment."

The aim of education in the Shrimad Bhagavad Gita is the development of the whole nature and not just intellectual development. Influenced by the philosophy of Shrimad Bhagavad Gita, Mahatma Gandhi had also emphasized on the unity of all threes-Body, Mind and Soul for complete human development. Shrimad Bhagavad Gita believes that man is the form of God, just as God creates, similarly man is also the creator. If education cannot develop the power or ability to create, then such education is useless. According to the Shrimad Bhagavad Gita, the development of this ability of the students is possible only through the education of karma or the education of physical work. Accepting this saying in the Gita, Mahatma Gandhiji has also explained his educational principle as follows- "I believe that true intellectual education can be achieved only through the intelligent use of physical elements. Pupil develop intelligence in the best and fastest way." It is clearly stated in the Shrimad Bhagavad Gita that nature has endowed human beings with intelligence, thought, memory, imagination, meditation, perception, conceptualization etc. for learning.

कार्य कारणकर्त्तुर्भौतिक प्रकृतिकथ्यते ।

पुरुषः दुःखानां भोक्तृत्वे हेतुरुच्यते ॥ 13.21

Means, Prakriti is said to be the cause of all material causes and actions, and the living entity is said to be the cause of the enjoyment of various pleasures and pains in this world. That is, human should work according to the laws of nature, it is further said in this chapter that

य एवं वेत्ति पुरुष प्रकृतिं च गुणैः सह ।

सर्वथा वर्तमानोऽपि न स भूयोऽभिजायते ॥ 13.24

One who understands this ideology related to the interaction of Prakriti, Jiva and the qualities of Prakriti is sure to attain self-realization or liberation. No matter what his present condition may be, he will not be reborn. That is, a person should get knowledge through nature. Prakriti is continuously functional, therefore, keeping relation with it, no living being can stay without doing work even for a moment in any situation. The creature uses knowledge to conduct its life's behavior in a timely manner. The meaning of knowledge is not narrow but broad. According to the cultural purpose it is best to have knowledge in addition to any material use. Those who believe in the cultural purpose of education talk about training the student to behave in new situations by engaging his mind in intellectual work, but it has to be kept in mind that

knowledge is not just culture. Dr. Radha Krishnan, while supporting the Srimad Bhagavad Gita, has said that- Knowledge that quenches curiosity, is different from culture, culture which sharpens personality. Remembering the birth dates of the world's heroes, remembering the names of the ships that made the fastest crossing of the Atlantic Ocean, and remembering the important figures of recent times is not culture. He has again written that Culture cannot be judged by the amount of tabular information available, but culture can be identified only by the mental qualities towards the facts of life.

तेषां सततयुक्तायां भजतां प्रीतिपूर्वकम् ।

ददामि बुद्धि योगं तं येन मामुपयन्ति ते ॥ 10.10

The meaning of saying is that those who are constantly engaged in serving me(God) with love, I(God) give them knowledge by which they attain me. It is said in the Shrimad Bhagavad Gita that knowledge greatly contributes to the cultivation of the heart. Knowledge of love and truth are complementary and helpful to each other. According to Shrimad Bhagavad Gita relative truth is not stable but the test of this truth and reform has always been happening. Gandhi ji himself being influenced by the philosophy of this book writes that in reality truth is that which- "It is your inner voice that tells you." That's why according to him, Following the truth is not harmful for any living being. Therefore, according to Shrimad Bhagavad Gita, considering the seriousness of relative truth, one should keep on trying to attain the Absolute Truth.

It has been said in the Shrimad Bhagavad Gita that a person who has the intention or desire to serve mankind must first of all accept voluntary misery. Their misery is renunciation which a person accepts as the golden door of happiness and peace. This is the cognitive and cultural aspect of Shrimad Bhagavad Gita. Self-control or sense control requires celibacy. Progressive re-planning of social, economic and political life is possible only on the basis of moral principles. Therefore, the aim of education should be such that the student can be able to overcome social evils.

- Objective of all round and harmonious development:

We have seen that according to the Shrimad Bhagavad Gita, the all round development of the child is the main aim of education. It wants to develop the physical, mental and spiritual powers of the child in such a way that they can have an all-round development and they can attain their ultimate goal of salvation. According to the Gita, True education is that which develops our emotions, feelings, innate abilities, mental, physical and spiritual and develops all aspects of life equally. The educational thoughts of Shrimad Bhagavad Gita are influenced by the call of the inner soul rather than the mind. According to the Shrimad Bhagavad Gita, our mind is covered with the fog of hatred and pride in such a way that we cannot see things in their true form. According to Mahatma Gandhi, the function of education is that it should not add to the burden of dirty thoughts clinging to our soul, but should remove them, this dark condition should be removed from the top of the soul so that the clean basic instincts of the students can get opportunities to rise up. According to Srimad Bhagavad Gita, Culture is not the result of mental work; Rather, it is the quality of the soul that human behavior is tested to be cultured or uncultured. That's why Geeta says a proper and harmonious mixture of these three 'H' hand, heart and head is necessary for the making of a complete man.

- Purpose of physical development: According to the yoga philosophy of Srimad Bhagavad Gita, the education of the mind and heart depends on proper exercise, yoga and training of the body parts. According to Shrimad Bhagavad Gita, the soul, mind and brain reside in the body itself. Therefore, if

the physical development is not done properly, then the actual assumption of other's development is baseless, because 'a healthy mind resides in a healthy body'. Therefore, it is necessary for the body which is the basis of life to be sturdy, strong and shapely. The method of physical education is very interesting and enjoyable. music is also interesting and enjoyable. According to Srimad Bhagavad Gita, Music education itself has an important place in physical training. Music balances and strengthens the internal organs of the body. There is a close relation between music and the heart. Both body and heart are educated and trained by music. Physical training should be compulsorily imparted through the education of music.

शमो दमस्तपः शौचं क्षान्तिरार्जवमेव च ।

ज्ञानं विज्ञानमास्तिक्यं ब्रह्मकर्म स्वभावजम् ॥ 18.42

This means restraining the conscience, suppressing the senses, suffering for the sake of religion, remaining pure from within and outside, forgiving the sins of others, keeping the mind, senses and body simple, studying and teaching the Vedas and experiencing the essence of God. With such qualities a student should become conscientious.

- Objective of development of moral, character and culture of heart:

According to Srimad Bhagavad Gita, the goal of education is moral development, character building and culture of the heart. Special importance has been given to character building. According to that the aim of all knowledge is to build character. The importance of one's own purity is for character building. Education without character and character without purity is useless. Mahatma Gandhi was greatly influenced by this idea. According to Shrimad Bhagavad Gita, the child becomes a man of character, virtuous, handsome by going to the Guru's ashram so that he can make his contribution in social activities. Similarly, humans send their children to school so that they become virtuous and characterful. Character is not built by others but by oneself. A person's character cannot be built from the pages of books. Such feelings should emerge from within the person. We know that a person can be a scholar, but it is not necessary that he must also be of good character. In order to become good in character, a person has to be able to have purity and honesty in all the three areas of heart, speech, thought and action. One has to know the ways of his behavior. Wherever the question of 'knowing' arose, there arose the individual's own productivity; This is the fundamentality of Shrimad Bhagavad Gita because a farmer who knows the methods of dealing in life very well is better than an illiterate person.

Educational philosophy has its roots in Indian life and culture. Moral training was more important than intellectual training in ancient Indian education. But we must not understand that the educational philosophy of the Gita is merely theoretical; Rather, it is also a practical philosophy, Once Patel ji has written "True education is not the training of literacy, but the formation of character". Therefore, according to the Gita, the main goal of educational implementation has been character building and serving and to develop the culture of the heart.

2. Last objective, Best objective of Education

According to the Srimad Bhagavad Gita, the main aim of education is the liberation of the individual –

"सा विद्या या विमुक्तये विद्या",

that which liberates. Mukti can have two meanings – freedom from all forms of slavery in present life, it may be economic, political or mental. As long as man is bound in any one of these bondages, his progress is impossible. Thus the aim of education is to free a person from the bondage of all kinds of slavery. In other sense liberation means spiritual freedom. It means the liberation of the soul from worldly bondages by education. Therefore, according to Shrimad Bhagavad Gita, the highest aim of education is to attain self-realization and divine knowledge. All other aims are subordinate to this aim. All the efforts of man should be for this purpose. Mahatma Gandhi has said that self-education is an independent subject of education. The development of the soul means the formation of character, receiving the knowledge of God and the knowledge of Self. Without that, other knowledge is useless and can also be harmful. According to Shrimad Bhagavad Gita, a student should base his life on a strong foundation of self-control. It has been said that-

यतन्तो योगिनश्चैनं पश्यन्त्यात्मन्यवस्थितम् ।

यतन्तोऽवतात्मानो नैनं पश्यत्यचेतसः ॥ 15.11

That is, the person striving for self-realization everything becomes clear to him. But those whose mind is not developed and who have not attained self realization, they cannot see what is happening even after trying. The self-realization objective of Shrimad Bhagavad Gita subsumes all immediate objectives and also presents a picture of a complete creative unity. This aim is also in line with the talents of our country, the education of great philosophers of all ages and places and our hereditary culture. The aim of self-realization is not imaginary but practical. Shrimad Bhagavad Gita does not talk about renouncing the world, but talks about moving towards self-realization while doing worldly work. If all the tasks of life are done by keeping the ideal of self-realization in front, then this world will become the best place for us to live and all the differences and conflicts prevailing in the modern society will end and the imagination of Ramrajya will come true. The ultimate aim of education is 'self-realization' to uplift mankind to attain high moral and spiritual values, achieving which they will be able to experience happiness forever. Self-purity is necessary for self-realization. According to Shrimad Bhagavad Gita, morality is very important for the life of both the individual and the society. Character is necessary for self-realization, the goal of self-realization can be achieved only through social service and self-sacrifice. The way of personal salvation and self-realization is the way of self-sacrifice and sacrifice. This is the purpose of life and education. In this way it is not impossible to include all the purposes propounded by the Gita in their ultimate purpose self-realization, but there has been an expression of the complete association of all other purposes.

Thus, the educational objectives of the Shrimad Bhagavad Gita are primarily based on hand(karma), the aims of the culture of the mind (Gyan) and the heart (bhakti) can be classified as the aim of self-realisation and the establishment of a social and non-violent democratic society. In short, the main educational objectives which have been expressed in the Shrimad Bhagavad Gita since Prakarantar are the following-

1. Hand Culture (Karma Yoga).
2. Culture of mind (Gyan Yoga).
3. Self Realization or aim of Salvation(Bhakti Yoga).
4. All round and harmonious development.
5. Establishment of a democratic society and the purpose of developing the qualities of citizenship.

Conclusion

The current educational system needs to prioritize teaching students a comprehensive global perspective, emphasizing their connection to the Divine within themselves and all other beings in the universe. This is necessary to counteract the manipulative influence of the media and promote a grounded sense of self.

Achieving this requires discipline, silence, and contemplation in the educational process. Education should also prioritize instilling moral and spiritual values, which are crucial for attaining self-knowledge and self-realization. The ultimate goal of education should be self-realization, and thus, moral and spiritual values cannot be neglected. These values should be integrated into the curriculum. As the preamble to the charter of UNESCO states that since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defense of peace must be constructed. To achieve real peace and happiness, education must prioritize universal values such as love, social service, compassion, and equality as emphasized in the Bhagavad Gita. Therefore, the values and teachings of the Bhagavad Gita must be given due importance and included in the national curriculum.

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