

Bridging Faith and Mind: A Psychological Perspective on Sacred Scriptures

Dr. Archana Satsangi¹, Pragati Singh^{2*}

ABSTRACT

The psychological insight is derived from the selected Bhagavad Gita verses covered along with their applicability to modern psychological theories and practices. Five essential shlokas that provide the means to understand behavior and well-being in human life are examined. This corresponds to concepts such as intrinsic motivation, mindfulness, and Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT), the first verse being a reminder of the imperative to act in chapter 2, verse 47. This underlines the effort to reduce the performance anxiety and evolve into a strong personality. Chapter 2, Verse 63 describes how anger, a much more serious trap, grows from doubt and forgetfulness to a lowered intelligence and self-ruin once heated. This is also in line with cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT), according to which anger may give rise to cognitive distortions, such as all-or-nothing thinking and overgeneralization, exacerbating emotional dysregulation (Beck, 1979). And it reinforces the importance of emotion regulation tactics like cognitive restructuring and mindfulness. Inspired by social learning theory, transformational leadership, and social norms theory, the third verse, Chapter 3, Verse 21, focuses on role modeling and leadership. It underscores the moral responsibilities of public figures on the grounds that their behaviors affect those around them. The nature of the self is described as a metaphor in meaning, reaching resilience, inner strength ideas, Existential psychology, and wellness theories via fourth verse (Chapter 2 / Verse 23). It tells us that one needs to develop a more significant, solid self, that is unyielding when faced with struggles. It helps, in particular, to specify the fifth verse (Chapter 6:5) regarding self-empowerment and self-regulation (and apply it to cognitive-behavioral theory such as the idea of self-efficacy; or self-determination theory). Viewed with Psychological lens, this paper demonstrates how the sacred shlokas illustrate contemporary interpretations of ancient lessons to address and improve human well-being through action, meaning, and change, echoing via Bhagavad Gita.

Keywords: *Scriptures, verses, Psychological Perspective, Bhagavad Gita*

Aim: To analyze the Psychological perspective found in certain chosen verses of the Bhagavad Gita and try to demonstrate how they align with various psychological approaches and theories.

¹Assistant Professor, Dayalbagh Educational Institute Agra

²Research Scholar, Dayalbagh Educational Institute Agra

*Corresponding Author

Received: August 31, 2025; Revision Received: October 25, 2025; Accepted: October 28, 2025

Sacred Scriptures and Psychological Perspective: A Concept

A philosophical conversation between Lord Krishna and Arjuna in the revered Hindu book, the Bhagavad Gita, is revered within the Mahabharata. From the psychological perspective, it is a significant work since it provides an insight into human behaviour and thought process, and emotional regulation. Basic psychological queries like desire, self-control, and emotional strength are touched upon, which form topics of common concern. From the perspective of cognitive, positive, and existential psychology, another way of studying the Gita can be suggested. The predicament faced by Arjuna on the battlefield of Kurukshetra encapsulates the essence of struggles that people face within themselves while confronting a choice. Both current psychological theories (learned helplessness [Seligman, 1975]; cognitive dissonance [Festinger, 1957] and research agree with these emotional experiences: fear and uncertainty. Krishna's ancient teaching of self-awareness (atma-jnana), non-attachment to consequences (nishkama karma), and presence of mind are congruent with today's psychological models such as cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) and mindfulness-based stress reduction; the latter was introduced by another fine scholar, Jon Kabat-Zinn, in 1990. Moreover, the sthitaprajna, a flowering man of steady wisdom of chapter two, embodies psychological constructs of emotional intelligence (Goleman 1995) and resilience (Bonanno 2004). It helps in maintaining composure not only when success is accomplished but also eventual failure, reflecting modern psychological flexibility and acceptance (Hayes, Strosahl & Wilson 1999). Further, the psychological techniques for facilitating well-being, self-actualization and self-improvement are found within those teachings on this sacred text of Bhakti (devotion), karma (action), and Jnana (knowledge). When psychological contents and the wisdom of the Bhagavad Gita are harmoniously merged, it becomes quite clear that this book provides a perennial system to ascend the self, make moral choices in life, and maintain mental health. The implications are far-reaching beyond spiritual discourse and guide us in dealing with mental issues and fostering mental well-being. In the present study, Verses from the Bhagavad Gita selected for psychological analysis are as follows:

1. कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन।

मा कर्मफलहेतुर्भूर्मा ते सङ्गोऽस्त्वकर्मणि॥ (द्वितीय अध्याय, श्लोक 47)

"Karmanyevadhikaraste, maphaleshkadachana;

Ma karmaphala-hetur bhur, ma te sango 'stvakarmani."

“You have a right to do the work, not the reward. Let not the fruits of action be your motive, nor let your attachment be to inaction.”

Psychological Perspective

This passage outlines an overview of motivation, mindfulness, self-determination, and resilience in the context of psychological (a cognitive-behavioral) and humanistic view. It emphasizes the importance of motivation, presence, flow, and stress resilience strategies based on acceptance.

Intrinsic Extrinsic Motivation and Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985)

The emphasis is on the action process and the essence of Self-Determination Theory (SDT) is that fulfilling chores in return for external rewards (e.g., extrinsic motivation) may deteriorate one's overall well-being as it causes more stress and less satisfaction than other activities completed out of pure personal enjoyment or interest without any particular outside reward (i.e., intrinsic motivation). Allowing the outcomes of better self-efficacy, natural motivation, and emotional sanity.

According to Flow theory (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990), high-quality performance will be done when people are absorbed by an interesting and challenging task itself, and not by the

Sacred Scriptures and Psychological Perspective: A Concept

results. Flow, this special focus (often with creativity and satisfaction) clearly requires working for the enjoyment of the activity alone. This theory actively promotes that people in flow sometimes say that they feel more fulfilled and competent.

Operant Conditioning (Skinner, 1953) According to the principles of behavioral psychology, placing too high a premium on external rewards can change intrinsic motivation. Skinner's operant conditioning theory states that rewards lead people to lose their passion after those rewards start, even if they are too numerous for a job. The poem drives towards action, asks us to be active and inspired on an everyday basis without obsession with results.

2. क्रोधाद्भवति संमोहः संमोहात्स्मृतिविभ्रमः।

स्मृतिभ्रंशाद्बुद्धिनाशो बुद्धिनाशात्प्रणश्यति॥ (द्वितीय अध्याय, श्लोक 63)

"Krodhad bhavati sammoha, sammohat smrti-vibhramah, Smrti-bhramsad buddhi-naso, buddhi-nasat pranasyati."

"From anger, complete delusion arises, and from delusion, bewilderment of memory occurs. When memory is bewildered, intelligence is lost, and when intelligence is lost, one falls down again into the material pool."

Psychological Perspective

This verse gives us a Psychological construct behind how anger blocks or disturbs one's cognitive and emotional event processes. These ideas fit well with modern psychological research, as the chapter offers a psychodynamic model to illuminate how anger can disrupt psychological and cognitive functions. Unchecked anger can therefore result in inappropriate behavior.

Neuroscience of Anger and Impulse Control (LeDoux, 1996; Siegel, 2012)

Joseph LeDoux (1996) explained the neurology of anger and impulse control as a process whereby anger engages the amygdala, which has us operating in an emotional hijack mode that suspends rational thought. The prefrontal cortex, which facilitates more cognitive and rational thought processes, Daniel Siegel (2012) described the concept of flipping the id, under extreme anger, overwhelms. Similarly, the above a verse from the Bhagavad Gita, states anger can delude one's memory, intelligence, and judgment, that lead to harmful outputs.

Delusion and Impaired Memory Function:

This verse also sounds like it, suggests anger increases the likelihood that one will "fall into delusion" (sammoha), that connotes something akin to being emotionally captured and kidnapped, so that an individual can be motivated by strong emotions which disrupt or disable logical thought processes, interfere with working memory, as well as the recall of past events necessary for decision making (Schacter, 1999).

Memory dysfunction and loss of wisdom

Chronic anger can impact (smrti-Vibram), disrupt memory, leading to poor judgment and impulsive decision-making. This principle is consistent with neuroscientific literature on the role of brain areas, especially the prefrontal cortex, in controlling executive functions (Davidson, 2000). Different modes due to the permanency of anger can have a negative

impact on memory (smrti-Vibram) that leads to stupid and premature behavior. This can exacerbate the psychological distress caused by intrusive thoughts and poor coping methods.

Investigation into Rational Thinking & Self-Subversion:

The verse implies that those emotional problems will manifest themselves by destructive tendencies, social creations that are difficult to bear, and even psychological issues in the form of depressive symptoms and anxiety (Gross, 2002). A life devoid of wisdom (buddhi-nasa) will inevitably result in self-destructive behavior (pranasyati).

3. यद्यदाचरति श्रेष्ठस्तत्तदेवेतरो जनः।

स यत्प्रमाणं कुरुते लोकस्तदनुवर्तते॥

*“Yadyad acarati shresthas tattad evetaro janah,
Sa yat pramanam kurute lokas tad anuvartate.”*

“Other people follow in the footsteps of someone who does it differently. They set benchmarks that the world wants to compete in”

Psychological Perspective

It is one of the most important verses dealing with social dynamics, leadership, and behavior modeling for current psychology. It demonstrates that prominent figures, whether leaders, politicians, parents, professors, or other well-known public personalities, are used as standards for behaviour, and people tend to model themselves after these standards.

Social Learning Theory

However, social cognitive theory is an interactive perspective that supposes a person learns through enacting on other people's behaviour—observing such —and into the imitation of individuals thereby redesigned and re-defined as specific roles with certain peer changes or being deliberately able to follow another likely guiding head person, community leader etc., particularly anyone who has the confidence and dignity in their view or advice (Albert Bandura, 1977). As a perspective, this relates to the observation by Bandura that humans tend to follow local powerful leaders in their values and activities. When leaders engage in this behaviour, they reinforce the norms and group activities of society. What Bandura argued here is in line with his theory of vicarious reinforcement: people are more likely to model behavior if they see the perpetrator being reinforced or rewarded for it. Authority in Behavioural Compliance: Milgram, 1963. The psychological literature on authority compliance shows that even without right coercion, people will often submit to those in power or in leadership positions. This highlights the natural tendency for citizens to follow the lead of those they admire as a general rule.

Transformational Leadership (Bass, 1985):

According to the transformational leadership paradigm great leaders are able to excite workers with their own behavior, as well as their fundamental values. This is the example of how leaders, who embody moral principles and personal integrity, encourage the same ethics in both their followers and throughout reference material/representations.

Social Norms Theory (Cialdini & Trost, 1998)

This theory illustrates how individuals are prone to conform based on the behaviors of others. A leader with positive values and ethical behaviors establishes a norm that impacts the ways in which these values are adopted over time.

4. नैनं छिद्रन्ति शस्त्राणि नैनं दहति पावकः।

न चैनं क्लेदयन्त्यापो न शोषयति मारुता॥ (Chapter 2, Verse 23)

*"Na enam chindanti shastrani, na enam dahati pavakah,
Na chainam kledayantyapo, na shoshayati marutah."*

"Offensive weapons do not destroy it; fire does not burn it, water does not wet it, and wind does not dry it.

Psychological Perspective

Here, the verse employs symbolism that illustrates the invincible nature of the self (atman), a term that can be understood to be characteristic of certain psychological ideas related to resistance, resilience and inner strength as well as the core self. It suggests the core self is undamaged by external difficulties and disruptions, consistent with contemporary psychological views of resilience and selfhood.

Self-Concept and Inner Strength (Rogers, 1959): Carl Rogers theory of self-concept stated that people have an underlying core personality structure which relies on a nonchanging essence. This perception stresses how an individual's real self is more than anything material or superficial and therefore triggers self-awareness via rekindling of intrinsic values. Rogers says that emotional health, psychological adjustments will improve if there is a relationship between our true selves and what we would like to be.

Existential Psychology (Frankl, 1985): vigilant on the meaning-seeking function in human nature. This perspective aligns with the belief that unshakeable self-worth is part of a person's inherent state of being, allowing them to build resilience and immunity from external destructiveness.

Transpersonal Psychology – The Self over and above Ego (Maslow, 1969; Wilber, 1997)

Transpersonal psychology explores ego transcending states of consciousness that correspond to the Gita's description timeless self, unaffected by external events. According to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (1969), establishing self-actualization allows those who reach that stage to ascend from material needs and communicate with the spiritual, a higher form in people. According to Ken Wilber's Integral Theory (Wilber, 1997), people are on different paths on their way towards spiritual awakening, realizing who they really are beyond the body and mind.

5. उद्धरेदात्मनात्मानं नात्मानमवसादयेत् ।

आत्मैव ह्यात्मनो बन्धुरात्मैव रिपुरात्मनः ॥ 3 (षष्ठ अध्याय, श्लोक 5)

*"Uddhared atmanatmanam natmanam avasadayet,
Atmaiva hyatmano bandhur atmaiva ripur atmanah."*

"You must elevate your thinking of you: do not lower yourself! That the self is one's ally, or that the self alone can be one's adversary.

Psychological Perspective

It contains very much of what we might reasonably infer from the ideas presented as self-regulation, self-motivation, and personal accountability, all major themes associated loosely with some of the more modern psychological theories like self-efficacy (Bandura), self-determination (Deci and Ryan), and cognitive control functions (see The Cognitive Control

of Self-Regulation). It reveals that men have largely a say in their own plight and psychic reality, that they can create themselves positively or literally become destructive

Self-Efficacy and Self-Determination Theory

The excerpt fits into Albert Bandura's theory of self-efficacy, which is about a people believing in their ability to meet their goals and face challenges. The message of self-empowerment in the Gita stresses that individual controls over thoughts, action affects an individual's agency, which means confidence in the ability to shape future which plays a crucial role in psychological health. High levels of self-efficacy lead to personal control and can contribute to continued growth, while those low in self-efficacy could find themselves with no choice but remain in doubt. Self determination theory, creates an idea that suggests that humans have a natural inclination towards growth and require the autonomy to do so. The notion alludes to the liberty of personal initiative, and self-regulating one's life towards success and happiness. People can become their own best advocates by fostering self-awareness and intrinsic motivation, or worse enemies through negative self-talk and self-sabotaging behavior.

Emotional Regulation Theory – Self-Management (Gross, 1998, 2015)

The above couplet highlights the need to raise oneself up; this can be compared to Emotional Regulation Theory (Gross, 1998). James Gross (2015) describes this process as emotional control, and it requires us to use cognitive reappraisal on the event, which means reevaluating the interpretation of a situation which leads to an emotion. Healthy emotional management converts people from their enemies to their friends, thus they can experience mental health and self-improvement. Meanwhile, an inability to manage emotions results in self-sabotage, debilitating internal monologues, and harmful behaviours, transforming the person into their own worst enemy.

Self-Concept and Unconditional Positive Regard (Rogers, 1959)

The thoughts of Self-concept and congenial positive respect suggest that the person inspired must observe his self-respect, helping him to enhance himself by achieving his optimum ultimate potential. This type of philosophy is completely in line with the teachings of the Bhagavad Gita, which teaches self-empowerment and personal responsibility, telling people to seek their own path and not make themselves small or criticize themselves at all. People who treat themselves as their own ally rather than an enemy naturally enjoy greater levels of self-acceptance and personal emotional well-being according to Rogers.

Maslow (1943) contended that individuals pursue self-actualization, the pinnacle of human development. Maslow also insists on individual development, motivation, and personal growth as taught by the Gita- that man is responsible for his own self-improvement and mastery. As proposed by Maslow (1969), self-actualisation is the potentiality of all individuals to complete their individual awareness and capacities as they closely submit to interferences operating against themselves internally.

In conclusion, it can be confidently asserted that a diverse array of psychological techniques is available to help individuals to assess and cultivate the virtues they should embrace, while also identifying and eliminating the vices they must cast aside. These insights are thoughtfully delineated in the sacred shlokas referenced above, which serve as a profound guide for personal growth and moral development. By engaging with these teachings, individuals can embark on a transformative journey towards self-improvement and inner harmony.

Sacred Scriptures and Psychological Perspective: A Concept

- **Cognitive-behavioural therapy (CBT):** Assists patients in changing their thoughts to develop a sense of empowerment and self-determination in their emotional responses. It reframes the conversation to empower those involved, relying on their internal skills and emotional strength rather than having external circumstances shape their experience of events.
- **Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT):** focuses on maintaining a consistent sense of self despite life difficulties. It encourages people to take charge of their own growth by setting targets, reflecting on themselves and taking proactive steps.
- **Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR):** Which ensures being in this moment, helps prevent reactive responses. Deep breathing and progressive muscle relaxation, to decrease the physical symptoms of anger.
- **Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy (REBT):** Uses internal motivation and encourages this rather than seeking approval of others. REBT is used to help clients determine the irrational beliefs they have about success and failure.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In summary, the selected shlokas from the Bhagavad Gita also offer some serious psychological insights typical of modern psychological theories and practice. These shlokas emphasize on different good deeds and actions i.e. how to act and not care about the outcomes, the consequences of unresolved anger, leadership and role models, having a strong sense of self-worth, being empowered, and regulation. Thus, with the clear-cut association of these shlokas to established psychological frameworks such as Self-Determination Theory (SDT), Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), Social Learning theory, and Resilience; one tends to see how Gita can be marshaled for its ageless wisdom enlightening a path of reasoned living and conditioning hard facts of life. Through mindfulness, emotional regulation, self-examination, and taking responsibility for one's thoughts and actions, the Gita remains an enduring guide for us all in developing a moral character.

REFERENCES

- Bandura, A. (1977). Self-efficacy: Toward a unifying theory of behavioral change. *Psychological Review*, 84(2), 191–215.
- Bandura, A. (1977). *Social Learning Theory*. Prentice-Hall.
- Bandura, A. (1997). Self-efficacy: The exercise of control. W. H. Freeman.
- Bass, B. M. (1985). *Leadership and performance beyond expectations*. Free Press.
- Bonanno, G. A. (2004). Loss, trauma, and human resilience. *American Psychologist*, 59(1), 20–28.
- Cialdini, R. B., & Trost, M. R. (1998). Social influence: Social norms, conformity, and compliance. In.
- Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1990). *Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience*. Harper & Row.
- Davidson, R. J. (2000). Affective style, psychopathology, and resilience: Brain mechanisms and plasticity. *American Psychologist*, 55(11), 1196-1214
- Deci, E. L., & Ryan, R. M. (1985). *Intrinsic motivation and self-determination in human behavior*. Springer.
- Festinger, L. (1957). *A theory of cognitive dissonance*. Stanford University Press.
- Frankl, V. E. (1985). *Man's search for meaning*. Beacon Press
- Goleman, D. (1995). *Emotional intelligence: Why it can matter more than IQ*. Bantam Books.

Sacred Scriptures and Psychological Perspective: A Concept

- Gross, J. J. (1998). *The emerging field of emotion regulation: An integrative review*. Review of General Psychology, 2(3), 271-299.
- Gross, J. J. (2002). Emotion regulation: Affective, cognitive, and social consequences. *Psychophysiology*, 39(3), 281-291.
- Gross, J. J. (2015). *Emotion regulation: Current status and future prospects*. Psychological Inquiry, 26(1), 1-26.
- Hayes, S. C., Strosahl, K. D., & Wilson, K. G. (1999). *Acceptance and commitment therapy: An experiential approach to behavior change*. Guilford Press.
- Kabat-Zinn, J. (1990). *Full catastrophe living: Using the wisdom of your body and mind to face stress, pain, and illness*. Delacorte.
- LeDoux, J. E. (1996). *The emotional brain: The mysterious underpinnings of emotional life*. Simon & Schuster.
- Maslow, A. H. (1943). A theory of human motivation. *Psychological Review*, 50(4), 370–396.
- Maslow, A. H. (1969). *The farther reaches of human nature*. Journal of Transpersonal Psychology, 1(1), 1-9.
- Nolen-Hoeksema, S. (2000). *The role of rumination in depressive disorders and mixed anxiety/depressive symptoms*. Journal of Abnormal Psychology, 109(3), 504-51.
- Rogers, C. R. (1959). *A theory of therapy, personality, and interpersonal relationships as developed in the client-centered framework*. McGraw-Hill.
- Rogers, C. R. (1959). A theory of therapy, personality, and interpersonal relationships. In S. Koch (Ed.), *Psychology: A study of a science*.
- Schacter, D. L. (1999). The seven sins of memory: Insights from psychology and cognitive neuroscience. *American Psychologist*, 54(3), 182-203.
- Seligman, M. E. P. (1975). *Helplessness: On depression, development, and death*. W. H. Freeman.
- Siegel, D. J. (2012). *The whole-brain child: 12 revolutionary strategies to nurture your child's developing mind*. Delacorte Press.
- Skinner, B. F. (1953). *Science and Human Behavior*. Free Press.
- Vyasa. (1986). *Bhagavad-gītā as it is* (A. C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada, Trans. & Commentary). Bhaktivedanta Book Trust.
- Vyasa. (2003). *The Bhagavad Gita* (E. Easwaran, Trans.). Nilgiri Press.
- Wilber, K. (1997). *The Eye of Spirit: An Integral Vision for a World Gone Slightly Mad*. Shambhala Publications.

Acknowledgment

The author(s) appreciates all those who participated in the study and helped to facilitate the research process.

Conflict of Interest

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

How to cite this article: Satsangi, A. & Singh, P. (2025). Bridging Faith and Mind: A Psychological Perspective on Sacred Scriptures. *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, 13(4), 403-410. DIP:18.01.037.20251304, DOI:10.25215/1304.037