

## Exploring Swadharma: An Overview

Kritika Rastogi<sup>1\*</sup>

### ABSTRACT

Persistent inquisitiveness of human mind has created many wonders of world but has often failed to find the basic answers of one's own existence and one's purpose of life which further led to the quest for every mind which tried to delve in finding these basic answers. Many Indian scriptures have very beautifully tried to give in-depth knowledge about one's real purpose of life and its existence. The concept of Swadharma as defined and explained in Shrimad Bhagwat Gita is the apt way to answer this quest. Swadharma means practicing own dharma which includes individual's unique duties, responsibilities and righteousness. It is unique because everyone is born with own innate traits, nature and capacities which is known as swabhav. Uniqueness of swabhav depicts that each one of us is born with a purpose which can be attained through our own journey. Journey of each individual is one of its own kinds and no other person can play our pre-assigned role in this universe. This paper attempts to comprehend the concept of Swadharma in an uncomplicated way, which is there in Bhagwat Gita and its relationship with other importance aspects of human existence. Swadharma is the term which elucidates the relationship of individual's individualism and his choice of action towards the healthy mind and society.

**Keywords:** *Swadharma, Basics of Swadharma, Swabhav, Bhagwat Gita.*

Legitimacy of the concept of Swadharma can be witnessed in verse number 35 Chapter 3 of Bhagwat Gita given by Lord Krishna.

*'sreyan sva-dharmo vigunah para-dharmat svanusthitat /  
sva-dharme nidhanam sreyah para-dharmo bhayavahah'//*

It says, it is far better to discharge one's prescribed duties (dharma), even though they may be faultily, than another's duties. Destruction in the course of performing one's own duty is better than engaging in another's duties, for to follow another's path (paradharma) is dangerous.

<sup>1</sup> Assistant Professor, Amity Institute of Behaviour and Allied Sciences, Amity University, Lucknow, India  
[\\*Responding Author](#)

Received: June 24, 2018; Revision Received: July 7, 2018; Accepted: July 30, 2018

## Exploring Swadharma: An Overview

The importance of Swadharma in one's life is clearly stated in the above mentioned verse by the Lord himself but he left the subjective understanding of its meaning to be explored and understood on humans in everyone's own unique way. While the Krishna puts forward about the conception of Swadharma, it is impossible to understand without understanding the concept of swabhava and dharma. Dharma is a pillar for an individual's life which is fundamental for everyone. It is a primitive key to live one's life morally by being conscientiously correct when accomplishing one's duties. Then all the other notions told by Lord Krishna can be taken into consideration and can be attempted for further understandings. Hence, when an individual gets aware of his dharma that is acting upon your duties by being morally correct then the question arises that what are these duties. When talked about one's duties then the conceptualization of Swadharma should be taken into consideration, as only after making an attempt to know this terminology "Swadharma" one can answer the above question raised.

For example:

The frog who tries to blow himself up in order to grow as big as a bull explodes itself to death because the *swadharma* of a frog is to remain a frog.

The *swadharma* of a fish is to live in water. Milk may be better than water, but a fish that insists on living in milk will die.

Sun is the source of the energy that the earth gets. But if we try to leave the earth to be closer to the source, we will be burnt to death because our *swadharma* is to live on earth.

A Brahmin's *swadharma* is to impart knowledge and education to the mankind without any personal gain and interest.

All the entities present in the universe are suppose to behave according to their unique Swadharma to maintain the right balance and flow. At the same time their Swadharma is not static or fixed. One entity may or may not have multiple Swadharma too, depending upon its journey and the purpose of existence. In view of mankind, Swadharma is closest to what Krishna said "karma one should do" and the knowledge about 'what I should' and 'what I should not' comes from inner self and its nature i.e. one's swabhav.

### SWADHARMA AND SWABHAV

Doing one's duty as per his inner conscience is a concept well illustrated by the Swadharma. Both the dharma and Swadharma work simultaneously with each other but the linking bridge between them is swabhav. According to the traditional views of Bhagwat Gita, swabhava is one's inner essence which composes his personality.

Be that as it may, when the legitimacy of the idea is recognized in context of the universe then swabhav isn't just confined to the inward embodiment but on the other hand is affected by one's temperament in which he is living and nature in which he's been sustained. Along

## Exploring Swadharma: An Overview

these lines, the swabhava is a casing of internal center which is contained in one's hereditary variables, socio-social components which makes one's mental attitudes. There is a generally acknowledged point of view which is a derivate from the previously mentioned writing that each individual is unique, as is there swabhava, the internal nature which makes one's Swadharma. However the dharma is a widespread and a consistent factor and when karma and swabhava cooperates with each other the result is Swadharma. In addition, every single one of us conveys our swabhav from past lives too. That swabhav is comprehensively arranged, in light of the gunas, as sattvic, rajasic and tamasic. In light of the swabhav, one has a specific vision of life. We can realize change through satsang and uncommon endeavours in our own identity. Be that as it may, on the off chance that we go in the negative course or no endeavors are advanced then we get increasingly bound to samsara (materialistic world).

## CONCLUSION

Swadharma is the part of Indian culture since ages and embrace an important role in the live of each individual, knowingly or unknowingly. Each individual needs to know one's purpose of being and in order to know the purpose one has to discover one's Swadharma. It is not a goal to achieve or a destination to reach while it is a course right actions which are to be taken during the journey of life and the degree of rightness of these actions and the path of journey will be decided by inner self guided only. No other person will be able to decide anyone's path or right actions and duties because as the word itself says Swa(own)+dharma so individual can know this only by discovering his nature of true inner self. Knowing oneself can lead to knowing Swadharma and it is state of being real and being true to oneself. Swadharma can be dynamic but this feeling of realness and trueness will be static and prolonged at every stage of life. Derailing from this state may be the root cause of numerous mental problems which is prevailing in today's world like low motivation, lack of passion, stress, depression and many more.

The true nature of an individual comprises of his gunas is his swabhav, his swabhav guides him to what karma he should perform while being righteous in his life and when he does that, he is towards the path of his Swadharma. It changes as the person moves forward on the life path. For example, Swadharma of a student is to study and learn but when that student becomes a teacher his Swadharma is to teach. If that teacher still behaves like a student, this person is derailing from the path of Swadharma and going towards paradharma which will become the root cause of many mental and physical problems of his day to day life as Krishna said in the above mentioned verse that paradharma leads to destruction. The only thing which can lead us to the path of Swadharma is the right karma; one should start focusing on that. There is an entire pioneering theory of karma which is very well stated and explained in various verses of Bhagwat Gita which will provide a complete novel perspective to see the life from different dimensions.

## REFERENCE

Ashtankar, O. M. (2016). Mind Management: Lessons from Bhagvad Gita. *International Journal of Advance Research*, 3 (4), 1-4.

## Exploring Swadharma: An Overview

- Auluck, S. (2004). *Swabhava & Swadharma of students and educators*. Psychology: The Indian Contribution National Conference on Indian Psychology, Pondicherry: Yoga and Consciousness.
- Bhavna Sharma, M. R. (2015). Need of Bhagavad Gita Concepts in the Present Scenario of Professional Education. *International Journal of Applied Engineering Research*, 10 (11), 10570-10574.
- Jally, S. (2015). Svadharma and Paradharma: A Review. *International Journal of Research in Humanities and Social Studies*, 2 (10), 35-37.
- Mahakul, P. (2013). Purpose of Spirituality on Performance. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Invention*, 2 (8), 53-57.
- Shankar, S. S. (2013, June 7). *What is Swadharma?* Retrieved June 2018, from The Art of living: <https://www.artofliving.org/what-swadharma>
- Sivananda, S. (2011). *What is Swadharma*. Retrieved June 2018, from The Divine Life Society: [http://sivanandaonline.org/public\\_html/?cmd=displaysection&section\\_id=1155](http://sivanandaonline.org/public_html/?cmd=displaysection&section_id=1155)

### **Acknowledgements**

The authors profoundly appreciate all the people who have successfully contributed in ensuring this paper is in place. Their contributions are acknowledged however their names cannot be able to be mentioned.

### **Conflict of Interest**

The authors colorfully declare this paper to bear not conflict of interests

**How to cite this article:** Rastogi, K. (2018). Exploring Swadharma: An Overview. *International Journal of Indian Psychology*, 6(3), 26-29. DIP:18.01.023/20180603, DOI:10.25215/0603.023