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ROLE OF BHAGAVAD GITA IN CURRENT BUSINESS ENVIRONMENT

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Abstract:-Today's business environment is becoming very dynamic and organisations are facing the problems of fulfilling their responsibilities towards various stakeholders. In such situation, principles of Bhagavad Gita act as a guide to deal and survive in such environment. This study focuses on the growing importance of philosophy of Gita in solving current business problems and their relevance in current business environment. This is a conceptual study based on secondary sources of data like journals, articles, books, web sites etc. This study highlighted the contribution of philosophy of Gita in modern business environment and its prospects in future. Decreasing ethical values among employees and depressed and frustrating work environment in the organisation act as a motivator for the study.

Keywords: Bhagavad Gita, Gita's philosophy, Business environment.

INTRODUCTION

Today in 21st century, business environment is becoming very complicated and disturbed. Every organisation is facing the problem of employees' dissatisfaction, poor productivity, stressed work environment, conflicts between management and workers etc. Now, in such type of work environment management is looking towards the Indian scriptures like Srimad Bhagavad Gita, Ramayana, Mahabharata, Vedas, Vedanta, Upanishad etc. for the lessons of leadership, character development and to solve the business problems (Parekh, S., 2008). Not only India but other nations like US also taking interest in Indian culture and scripture along with Indian economy. Many of top business schools of United States also started self-mastery classes by using Indian Philosophy to help students to improve the leadership styles and developing better managerial skills (Engardio and McGregor, 2006).

Among various Indian scriptures Srimad Bhagavad Gita has the greatest contributions of India to the world. It is Hindu scripture that is part of the Hindu epic Mahabharata and a literature of humanity. It is a 5000 years old scripture. The Gita is set in a narrative framework of a dialogue between Pandava prince Arjuna and his guide and charioteer Shri Krishna. Arjuna became sad and surrenders his weapons in the battle field of Kurukshetra when he saw his relatives in the battlefield against him. At that time, Arjuna was counselled by Krishna to fulfil his duty as a Kshatriya (warrior) and fight the Dharma Yudha or righteous war between Pandavas and Kauravas for establishing Dharma. The Bhagavad Gita gives the synthesis of the concepts of gyan (Knowledge), karma (action), bhakti (devotion). Through Gita Shri Krishna motivated Arjun to establish peace again by avoiding self-interest. It focuses on establishing peace at any cost. The basic principle of Gita is lokasangraha (welfare of the mass) means those persons who are in supreme position act in such a way that they will be models for others to follow. Gita at that time gives the direction to Arjuna and provide a way to fulfil his duties without expecting any reward.

Now, with the passage of time the philosophy of Gita is becoming old but still they have great relevance even in today's social environment and for business. Gita teaches the lessons of spirituality, leadership, efficient use of management principles, resolving conflicts among workers and management etc. This study deals with the growing importance of Gita's principles in modern business context and the relevance of those principles to solve employees and management problems. The modern management tools were actually originated and tested in our ancient scripture.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

Although Bhagavad Gita is an ancient Scripture but little work has been done to test its relevance in business. Jayan K. Thaker (2013) concluded that Indian scriptures like Ramayana, Mahabharata, Bhagavad Gita, Ved etc. have a great significance for the application of management functions and they provide a strong base for spirituality. They act a base to teach self-management, division of work, planning, controlling, communication, leadership, decision making etc. Chakravarty (2013) highlighted that principles and doctrines of Indian scriptures have relevance in global mind set development specially related to the quality development, leadership skills, setting up a better future, increasing productivity etc. Our ancient ideal values have a great role in potential skill development. Bhagavad Gita has greatest relevance of self-development.

In Gita Lord Krishna gives the lesson of Karmanyevadhikarasthe. According to this principle one should work with utmost devotion. Efforts towards the goal are most important and results have least importance and supposed to be provided by the God (Menon, 1997).

Bhattathiri (2004) concluded that Bhagavad Gita is a powerful catalyst for transformation. It provides the management tactics for mental equilibrium and to overcome crisis situation. Gita teach the lessons of utilization of resources optimally, work commitment, self-motivation, Daivi work culture where everyone is selfless, cooperative, calm etc. Bhagavad Gita focuses on sound mental health this principle helps manager to develop better decision making. Rarick and Nickerson (2009) studied that Gita provides strong leadership lessons to modern leaders. It offers advice of humanistic and inclusive leadership and suggested that to influence others one should have higher level of consciousness. It provides leadership advice on various areas like maintaining one's proper role, being proactive and acting with wisdom, engaging with self-sacrifice, working with the greater good etc. Bharadwaj (2013) highlighted that Bhagavad Gita helps the management in knowledge management. Knowledge management has two major responsibilities that is the creation of knowledge base and converting conceptual knowledge into skills and competencies. Principles of Gita guide to manage knowledge within the organisation through their principles of

- ❖ Synergy of core competence;
- ❖ Synergy of actions and processes;
- ❖ Synergy of knowledge;
- ❖ Synergy of dedication and involvement.

Satpathy and Muniapan, 2008 concluded that Bhagavad Gita helps the individuals in self-knowledge and human resource development. Gita not only works as a source of spiritual development but overall personality of human resource. Self-knowledge helps in self-observation, self-examination and self-evaluation that develop certain qualities in the individual that helps in self-development. Shreyans Parekh (2008) highlighted the role of Gita's leadership style for fulfilling corporate social responsibility. A businessman has not only responsible for its shareholders but all the stakeholders. They focused on the sattvic style of leadership. Company executives can succeed in their CSR only when they understand the intersection of business and society and shape their strategies to deliver business values that are viable for the firm and the society.

RELEVANCE OF PHILOSOPHY OF BHAGAVAD GITA TO BUSINESS:

Bhagavad Gita acts as a management guru for today's managers. Because situation of today's businessman is similar to the situation of prince Arjuna (Parekh, S. 2008). Some of the principles of Gita and their relevance in modern era are discussed here.

1. Work with utmost devotion

As per this principle a person should always focus on their work and should have non attachment attitude towards the results. Because a person have only right to work and its rewards are in the hand of God. This principle helps in business to work individuals with utmost devotion. This improves the quality of work in the business, increases work commitment.

2. Utilisation of Available Resources

Gita provides the lesson to managers to choose their resources wisely and utilise them optimally. Success does not depend upon the availability of resources but on the utilisation of resources. In the battle of Mahabharata, Duryodhana chose Shri Krishna's large army for his help while Arjuna selected Shri Krishna's wisdom for his support. This episode gives us a clue as to who is an effective manager. This gives the lesson of wise and optimum selection of resources.

3. Visionary attitude towards work:

Every person has different views towards their work. Gita guides to the persons to have a visionary attitude towards their work. E.g. three stone cutters are working their work then somebody asked them what they are doing. Then he got very surprising answer of this question.

- First person said that I am a poor man and I have to maintain my family. So, I am making my living here.
- Second person who have a sense of pride replied that I work because I want to show that I am the best stone-cutter in the country.
- Third person who have visionary perspective replied that I want to build the most beautiful temple in the country.

All the three persons are working the same work but with different views. Gita advices whatever work you do you should have visionary perspective.

4. Managers/ Leaders mental health:

Sound mental health means that state of mind which can maintain calm, and regain calmness again if it unsettled because of external situations. Sound mental health develops internal constancy. Internal constancy and peace are the pre-requisites for a healthy stress-free mind. Sound mental health of managers and leaders makes them more enthusiastic, positive and goal directed.

5. Corporate social responsibility:

Through the principle of lokasangraha Bhagavad Gita focus on welfare of mass that is based on the philosophy that such as God perform his duty to serve humanity, similarly those who have power and have in supreme position should work for the welfare of others. A businessman who is at supreme position should work for the betterment of all the parties of business rather than focusing on shareholders. Its motto should not be to maximize profit but it should be to serve the entire society and to fulfil its corporate social responsibility.

In Gita Shri Krishna said to Arjuna, "Work for the common good without self-interests; the rewards of selfless work will take you to a supreme state."

6. Developing leadership skills:

Bhagavad Gita provides various essential leadership qualities for influencing employees and workers within the organisation. In the war of Mahabharata, when Arjuna drop his weapons by seeing his relatives in the battlefield then Shri Krishna like a good leader change his mind set and motivated him to fight for the dharma. That time leadership qualities are very significant in today's modern environment also. The leadership qualities like self-sacrifice for the greater good, being proactive, maintain proper role etc. have a greater relevance in business success.

7. Self-management and self-control:

If we want to manage or lead any group then firstly we should to learn to manage and control ourselves. A self-managed person can better manage the group. So the basic focus is on managing and controlling self. A karma yogi manages and control himself in a better way. Bhagavad Gita advices the persons to become Karma Yogi. Such persons work fearlessly and perform their duties with enjoyment. The basic quality comes in self-management is control over anger.

PROSPECTS OF GITA IN BUSINESS:

Decreasing ethical practices in corporate world created a need of spiritual environment at workplace for showing a way wrong to right (Giacalone, R.A. and Jurkiewicz, C.L., 2003). Business manager in this era also faces the same situation as faced by the prince Arjuna in the war of Mahabharata. In that situation a need arises for a business man to use the philosophy of Gita and consider Gita as their management guru and behave accordingly. It teaches the lesson of wellbeing of all the parties of the business rather than focusing only on the shareholders because to survive in long run a business man should have to focus on all the stakeholders. Identifying the need of philosophy of Gita various institutions started to teach Gita as a subject. Not only in India but in other countries like US also started to teach Gita philosophy in their intuitions.

Corporate organisations also started various sessions and programme to teach their employees art of living and taking decisions in critical situations. Organisations like Procter and Gamble, Wipro started programs to make their employees spiritual. In this era Gita's principles acts like a management guide for the managers and teach them

the lessons to become self-managed, goal directed, karma yogi etc. Thus Hindus ancient scripture “The holy Gita” have a great relevance in today and future and corporate world also identified its need and working according to the principles for taking critical decisions. It is a universal scripture applicable to people of all temperaments and for all times. Sushma Swaraj (2014) the external affairs minister of India said on the occasion of Gita Jayanti celebration that Gita contains the solution for all the problems of human life and advised to counsellors and psychiatrists to suggest their patient to read Gita in case of depression.

CONCLUSION:

Today’s competitive environment where corporate world is facing the problem of diminishing ethical standards, then main problem faced by the businessman to take right decision by avoiding unethical practices. In that situation Bhagavad Gita provides the direction to the managers. It teaches the lesson of spirituality to the individuals and directs managers to create a spiritual work environment in the organisation. This will enhance the employees’ strength, loyalty and peaceful environment in the organisation.

Bhagavad Gita teaches the lessons of commitment, self-development, leadership skills, fulfilling corporate social responsibility and management principles. Gita guides the managers in application of managerial skills and performing their functions in a good way. Battle of Mahabharata is a good example of effective and efficient management where Pandavas with limited resources win the war of Mahabharata.

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