



## **VALUES EDUCATION FOR TODAY'S GENERATION IN THE CONTEXT OF BHAGAVAD- GITA**

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### ***Abstract***

*The present generation and definitely the generations to come are in extreme crisis of values. Mostly media and technological advancements are responsible for the erosion of values. There is a number of Holy Scriptures of Indian origin which can bring back the lost values to our present generation and Bhagavad-Gita is the best choice, in my opinion. The ancient Indian education system was very much based on reading and memorizing the Holy Scriptures which were simultaneously practiced by the students in the Gurukuls. Nowadays modern thoughts of child-centred education have been incorporated with less attention to values. Only cognition, emotion and skill development is not a comprehensive form of education. Values are the foundation of any child or person. Of course values have been taught to students at home and school or institutions but how far they create an impact is more important. It may be considered that holy scriptures are too lengthy and difficult to understand but it is not so. These had been composed by the great sages for the reading of the common man to bring positive changes in our lives. It has to be planned by the authorities as to how to convey the message of Bhagavad-Gita in the simplest form and by daily recitations with translations and interpretations done by the teachers or parents or elderly people who have studied the text fully and has a clear understanding of it with its implementation in the form of different curricular and co-curricular activities. This paper is an attempt based on completely my own ideas and experiences to relate the significance of values education in the context of Bhagavad-Gita for today's generation who can bring about civilized instincts among themselves and the world.*

**Keywords:** *crisis, erosion, values, Bhagavad-Gita, civilized*

### **Introduction:**

Values education has always been a priority in Indian society and culture. Our country India is known for ancient heritage, culture, tradition and values. In spite of the problems occurring every fine day like poverty, illiteracy, unemployment, violence, corruption and environmental hazards. Most of the values have been inherited from our ancestors and forefathers in the family. These are fast disappearing today because of lack of proper guidance at home, school and society. It has been a subject in school curriculum but many schools do not implement the lessons through activities and learning experiences which can make the students aware of the values and good behavior. Also it is said that one should practice what one preaches. So students or children consider their grandparents, parents and teachers as their role models. If good values are practiced by the elders surely the younger ones will be conditioned to follow them without any compulsion. One example of activities in school and institutions can be the practice of the educational philosophies of any one great personality of our country like the

freedom fighters, social workers, researchers, educationists and those who are successful in life by their values.

Bhagavad-Gita describes all those values which help a person to be devoted and committed and following right conduct in life by knowing oneself and the society one lives in.

**Meaning of Education and Values:** Education means all-round development of the personality of an individual. It has been described in different ways by different educationists but the idea behind all these is same. Education helps to achieve all-round development and values have to be cultivated through education to achieve this development. Values are the assets of an individual which will remain forever unlike any material wealth. An educated (literate) person may not have values and a person having values may not be sufficiently educated or qualified. The highest goal of life and education is to understand one self and to live in harmony with others. Education should be for self-realisation as mentioned in Bhagavad-Gita. It is the attainment of values and not only qualifications. So education means the value-inculcation and internalization. Without learning of values there cannot be education. Apart from this also the subject of values education is given in curriculum because of the aim of minimum level of knowledge of values among the children and adolescents who will lead our country in future. The moral lessons in the form of short stories can motivate the students and change their behaviour in future. But this form of education should continue even throughout life under the guidance of teachers and parents so that the student's mind is always focused on the right path constantly. It is a challenge today and all should work as a team to bring back these values.

**Significance of Values and Values Education:** Values start from home and in fact from the mother's womb. Every care should be taken so that the child is brought up in a pious way with a healthy environment enriched with culture and values. Parents can be role models by keeping their own relations healthy and committed, showing mutual respect and maintaining love, care and peace in the family. The child from there onwards learns the importance of values. Also parents' behavior in the society can teach the child to be responsible or not as a grown-up in future. Values do not come in a day. It is attained with great care from the infancy to childhood and so on. Without values a person is only made of blood and flesh who can contribute nothing for his/her family and society. Bhagavad-Gita says that we have been sent on earth to fulfil our duties to maintain the balance in nature and society and duties can be fulfilled only with values these being devotion and faith to the Supreme Soul (Creator), dedication to service, concentration and meditation to be focused on work, knowledge about

who we are and for what we have come and also to be a virtuous person with no bad habits which can give inner peace and happiness and to protect the world.

**Values in Bhagavad –Gita:** The Bhagavad-Gita talks about values like faith in God, selfless devotion and dedication to service with no expectations of positive or negative outcomes, fearlessness, no anger, no lust, tolerance, patience, meditation, no sorrow but a peaceful and happy person, no attachment to material objects, self-control/ self-restraint, no greed, following a pious life, non-violence, love and compassion for all the creatures, honesty and dutiful. It is really difficult to possess all these values as said by Lord Krishna but it can be practised in simple forms to a little extent. One who attains all these values becomes the wisest and reaches the level of self-realisation and emancipation and liberation and becomes one with the Supreme Soul.

**Values Degradation:** Man is man's enemy. For God all are equal. No one realize this and fights with each other in the name of wealth, material possessions, fame, selfish desires, religion, caste, gender, community, place or habitat. This has become a part of society and no one takes a bold step to wipe out all this. Values degradation had started according to the Bhagaved-Gita in the Kurukshetra war of Mahabharata and still continues in some other form today. War has always led to destruction and if need be, war is also required but if without war, problems can be solved then why go for all this violence which brings pain and death. Lord Krishna tells Arjuna to fight for the cause of good and to establish the good without having attachment to close ones which gives only pain. Whenever there is extreme values degradation the Lord has to come in some form to bring peace and balance on earth and one who helps Him in keeping this order is the purified soul and dearest to the Lord.

**Role of Family and Society:** The family and society has to be equally active in establishing good values for the younger generation. If the child being sensitive finds that there is no compatibility between the role play by family and society s/he will be diverted from the maintenance of values in his/her life. First of all the behaviour of parents, family members and society should be modified enough to give right direction to the child otherwise the child is intelligent enough not to follow the words or rather disobey not finding any good cause behind the initiatives. The family being actively involved in looking after the needs of the poor and doing social services for the deprived and unprivileged will definitely create a deep impact of love and compassion for the people around including animals and all creatures because Bhagavad-Gita includes the Lord's message to the world to sustain the humans and all living creatures.

**Role of School and Educational Institutions:** The school and all the higher level educational institutions are the temples of learning which should themselves be particular in their academic and administration and management practices which the child can sense deeply. If a child not satisfied with the teacher's teaching in the class and finds it rude and half-hearted and also a lifeless teaching then his/her values like devotion and dedication may not be created in his/her personality. Even s/he will do things half-heartedly. Also if his/her peers are involved in dishonest behavior, s/he will be attracted towards the vice and not the virtues. So a teacher should be very careful to control all the children and observe if no child suffers from peer pressure or bully or violence among peers. The learning experiences in values education should not be limited to classrooms but also the field activities, extempore, debates, cultural programmes, games, meditation, music and creative-writing for a holistic development of the child. Even though schools and institutions organize activities but attention should be given to all the children with their self-interest and self-motivation and no outward so called compulsions. Every little endeavour of the child should be appreciated because the greatest of responsibilities may even be carried out by the slowest of learners in their future lives with guidance and real-life examples.

**Appreciation by the Famous Personalities:** The Bhagavad-Gita is such a text which has been appreciated and influenced maximum number of people round the globe. The famous personalities like Henry David Thoreau, Aldoux Huxley, Annie Besant, Albert Einstein, Carl Jung, Jawaharlal Nehru, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, Sri Aurobindo, Swami Vivekananda , Sunita Williams, and many more have been thoroughly influenced by this text. And it can be understood that these personalities have become successful not only for fame but for the national and global concern. They had their own will power as well as the wisdom and values gained from Bhagavad-Gita. We should realize that they are our source of inspiration and their inspiration was Gita. So, we can imagine its impact on people's lives.

**Educational Practices:** Educational practices are not necessarily a part of school or home in particular, it can be carried out in any form through healthy positive discussions at home, watching a television serial on a great personality, reading motivational stories in books and newspapers by parents, developing good habits by following parents like hard-work, sincerity, honesty, punctuality, good use of intellect, co-operation in the family and community, responsibilities taken by parents, care for aged people in the house, treating the servant well, teachers teaching lessons efficiently and effectively, outdoor school and college activities in the form of educational trips to appreciate nature and all it's living creatures and

non-living matter as well. All these practices will contribute towards values education and development of good qualities or virtues in the child and the young generation.

**Values in a world of Stress:** Stress is unavoidable in our fast lives where we are competing to be better than one another. Our efforts are always inclined towards immediate results which give us dissatisfaction and stress. We lose peace of mind on trying to be the best among all others and to create our identity among billions of people in the world. It is not acceptable to anyone to give the best inspite of no results. The false ego is a hindrance to peace. Expecting the situations to be always in favour is the ego. To look beyond ourselves and work for the welfare of society and those in need is really difficult when it comes to our own concern and benefits. Sometimes working for society also is an ego to get fame. So since there is 'Me' and 'Myself' everywhere every time then stress is the result without any good effects. The reason of our existence should be realized through our self and this can be possible through the values practiced everyday as mentioned in the Bhagavad-Gita.

**Values in a world of Technology:** Nowadays we all have become so many dependants on technology that the hard work and selfless service seems to have disappeared. We try to get good outcomes without even applying our own ideas and creativity which means we are not in a position to use our sense-organs and our intelligence. Our brains have become conditioned with the bad effects of technology like no time management, lack of concentration and thinking power, becoming impatient with minor problems, restless mind, becoming popular on social media by imitating others and losing faith on oneself and one's identity, developing false ego and becoming isolates, less social involvement, losing communication with own family and close ones, losing emotions and humanity to be the best by using the technology. We should know the good and bad effects of technology and not forgetting that our own wise decisions in life can make our lives better with the help of technology but not allowing it to control us as to that we start losing our identity.

**Conclusion:** Man always is a combination of animal and human instincts. The Bhagavad-Gita can be a great source of inspiration to those who have conflict in their minds about all the worldly activities and their effects, those who have lost their peace of mind and those who are in search of the divine and to become good human beings to sustain humanity. Values cannot be compromised because everything will leave us, are temporary but values will be part of our existence from birth till death and transferred to our next generation through us. Values education with reference to the Bhagavad-Gita is the utmost need and should be dealt with as early as possible for humanity, world peace, harmony and natural balance.

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