

Dialogues in The Bhagavad Gita and the Pedagogical Implications

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Abstract

The Bhagavad Gita, revered as the essence of Vedic philosophy and a central text within the Mahabharata epic, offers great insights for contemporary educational theory and practice. It offers deep insights that directly apply to modern educational theory and practice. The research uses a hermeneutic analysis of key verses from the Bhagavad Gita, focusing on the layered meanings of the pedagogical dialogues between Shree Krishna and Arjun. On a surface level, these dialogues show a friendly relationship that builds trust. At a deeper level, they create a mentoring dynamic that facilitates the smooth transfer of knowledge. The deepest meaning uncovers a divine conversation that provides transformative wisdom. The findings indicate that the dialogues of the Bhagavad Gita represent a comprehensive framework for understanding the teacher-student bond. These dialogues go beyond time and culture, relevant to both Eastern and Western educational practices. This study adds to educational scholarship by showing how this ancient Vedic text relates to modern teaching methods.

Keywords: *Dialogue, pedagogy, hermeneutics, Karma Yog, teacher-student relationship, Sthita Prajña*

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Introduction

A dialogue is a conversation between two or more people that centers on a specific subject or topic. It is an integral part of many communication forms, including several literary genres, film, and theater. It also plays a vital role in our everyday interactions with other people. Genuine dialogue is not just a series of statements that one person makes to another. It is interactive, with all parties involved listening very closely to what the others are saying

(Bohm, 2004). Dialogue is a vital aspect of communication that encourages the exchange of ideas, fosters a deeper understanding, and strengthens relationships. Modern research shows that genuine dialogue is an interaction that takes place in a kind of social space where the participants listen closely to one another and, as a result, come to some kind of new understanding (Wright, 2017). Etymologically, the word dialogue comes from the Greek *dia* and *logos*, where *dia* means through and *logos* means speech or discourse. Thus, when we say dialogue, we are really talking about a kind of discourse that happens in a safe space where all the participants exchange ideas.

Dialogue in Ancient Traditions

The dialogue has existed since the dawn of Vedic philosophy. The hymns of the Rigveda, reputedly the earliest surviving forms of dialogue (Dharmawiki, 2022), set the stage for a tradition of question and answer, a foundation of Vedic knowledge. Recent research confirms that Vedic philosophy emphasizes the dialogical nature of knowledge transmission and cultural understanding (Pandey, 2024). Dialogues, in the form of questions and answers, have been the foundation of our Vedic knowledge system. The Upanishads are well-known for their dialogic construction. The renowned dialogues between Nachiketa and Yamraj in the Kathopanishad can be a good example. Similarly, the conversations between Shwetaketu and Uddalaka in the Chhandogya Upanishad are well known. Likewise, the dialogues between Pippalada and his disciples in the Prashnopanishad represent another famous example.

The Bhagavatam itself features five important dialogues: between Suta and Saunaka, between Shukadeva and Parikshit, between Jadabharata and Rahugana, between Maitreya and Vidura, and between Shree Krishna and Uddhava (known as the Uddhava Gita). This inquiry-and-response mode of imparting knowledge is also characteristic of Western philosophy. Socrates, for instance, was fond of using it with his students. His most famous student, Plato, took up the same method and even went so far as to use it in the construction of his philosophical system. In modern times, the German philosopher Hegel has often been credited with developing a dialectical method that not only examines the ideas of various historical figures but also takes the time to use it in the construction of his own philosophical system.

Dialogue as Transformation

Contemporary scholars have acknowledged the transformative power of dialogue. Recent educational research indicates that dialogic teaching and learning have gained prominence over the past four decades across various age groups, cultures, and settings, resulting in enhanced critical thinking, social inclusion, and democratic values (García-Carrión, 2020). Freire (1970) asserts that dialogue is essential for personal transformation, as it empowers individuals to engage in respectful and open-ended conversations that challenge their assumptions and deepen their understanding of the world. His concept of "dialogical love" is defined by humility, faith in people, hope, critical thinking, and solidarity (Miller et al., 2011). People may learn from one another and understand how wider social, political, and economic forces form their individual understandings. Modern analysis confirms that Freire's transformative dialogue adheres to five key conditions: equality, humility, self-confidence, hope, and critical thinking (Widodo, 2021).

Similarly, Schein (1993) perceives dialogue as a mechanism for shared learning, through which we come to a more profound recognition of our own identities and the global milieu in which we exist. He counters the notion that dialogue is an ineffective means of achieving anything, instead insisting that it lies "at the root of all effective group action" and that it enables groups to "achieve levels of creative thought that no one would have

accomplished on their own" (Schein, 1993). Recent scholarship has underscored that dialogue does something very special: it opens up a social space and thereby catalyzes organizational transformation. In doing so, it bridges the gap between what is and what could be (Johannessen, 2014).

The Bhagavad Gita as Supreme Dialogue

The Bhagavad Gita is one of the most powerful examples of spiritual conversation. Contemporary psychological research recognizes the Bhagavad Gita as a critical analysis of psychological concepts that remain relevant to modern understanding (Singh, 2024). To and fro, it examines and reexamines the nature of the psyche from the angles that are presumably still relevant to modern understandings (Singh, 2024). With all the principles laid down by dialogue scholars, it converses. Genuine listening occurs. Assumptions are challenged. A more profound understanding is facilitated. It leads somewhere, and that somewhere is personal transformation.

The Bhagavad Gita is the song of God. Divided into 18 chapters, it contains 700 verses and forms part of the Bhishma Parva of the epic Mahabharata (chapters 23-40, Book 6). The dialogue unfolds at the beginning of the battle of Kurukshetra, which brought together the entire Pandava and Kaurava armies. It begins when the mighty warrior Arjun, one of the protagonists, is struck with compassion and despair upon seeing the warriors on both sides, as well as the sins that would arise from battle. So, he turns to Shree Krishna, his charioteer, for guidance. It shows that the Bhagavad Gita adopts the dialogue as a process of unfolding the relational enigmas of truthful action, which leads to goal-directed life.

The Bhagavad Gita represents the essence of all Vedas and Upanishads. In this regard, the Gita Mahatmya presents the metaphor that captures this essence (Prabhupada, 1972, p. 30):

सर्वोपनिषदो गावो, दोग्धा गोपाल नन्दनः|

पार्थो वत्सः सुधीर्भोक्ता, दुग्धं गीतामृतं महत् ||

sarvopanishado gaavo, dogdhaa gopaala nandana:

paartha vatsa: sudheerbhoktaa, dugdham gitaamrutam mahat

(Gita Mahatmya 5)

"All the Upanishads are like cows, and the milker is Shree Krishna, the cowherd boy. Arjun is like the calf, and the wise person is the drinker of the supreme nectar of the Gita." This metaphor illustrates how the Bhagavad Gita distills the wisdom of all Upanishads through the divine dialogue between Shree Krishna and Arjun.

The Four Paths as Dialogue

The Bhagavad Gita primarily focuses on four paths (yogs), each of which involves a form of dialogue—whether with action, knowledge, the divine, or one's inner self. The dialogues relate with action, knowledge, meditateness, and devotion, which are essential pedagogical values in educational practices.

- i. Karma Yog (The path of action): It advocates performing one's duty through selfless action without attachment to results. This very ancient practice has been shown by recent research to enhance mental well-being in the workplace. It enables people to thrive, feel more positive, and be much more motivated in the workplace (Navare & Pandey, 2022).
- ii. Jnana Yog (The path of knowledge): This path is about connecting with the ultimate truth through judgment between the eternal and the temporary, the real

and the unreal. It highlights the use of the mind in examining its own nature and transcending the ego, an important recommendation in today's world, where the ego so often gets in the way of true understanding (Larkin, 2024)

- iii. Raja Yog (The path of meditation): It pertains to the engagement with one's inner consciousness via the mediums of meditation and contemplation of the divine. Contemporary investigations validate its strength in boosting the sharpness of thought, stability of emotion, and wellness in general (Choudhary et al., 2025).
- iv. Bhakti Yog (The path of devotion): It centers on forming a close relationship with the divine through love, surrender, and devotional acts. Recent research underscores its importance in cultivating unconditional love, profound inner peace, and significant spiritual transformation

Through these paths, the Bhagavad Gita shows how truly transformative dialogue works on several levels at once (Bansal & Srivastava, 2024).

Purpose of the Study

This research delves into the dialogues of the Bhagavad Gita from an educational angle. It seeks to uncover how the back-and-forths between Shree Krishna and Arjun in this ancient text can inform our modern understanding of pedagogy. In doing so, this study underscores the relevance of the Bhagavad Gita not just as a spiritual or philosophical document but as a text that holds extremely pertinent insights for contemporary education.

Research Question

This study attempts to answer the following question:

1. What insights do the dialogues of the Bhagavad Gita offer concerning educational values and their implications?

Literature Review

The cross-cultural interpretations of the Bhagavad Gita date back to the 19th century. Its appeal is broad and, importantly, global. The Bhagavad Gita has been taken seriously by German and French philosophers, by British and American intellectuals, and by figures in the world religious movement (Frauwallner, 1973). Its current translators and commentators, like those before them, come from various fields (philosophy, religious studies, literature, psychology, etc.) and reflect many different cultural viewpoints (Malakoff & Singh, 2022).

Tilak (1959) described the Bhagavad Gita as "the brightest and purest diamond among all religious scriptures," noting its crystalline clarity in discussing complex philosophical issues. In much the same way, Shivananda (1999) characterized it as "a wonderful message of hope, consolation, peace, and above all, the divinity of man." To Shivananda, the Gita not only solved all the problems of life but also endowed everyone with a kind of fearlessness that allowed individuals to lift themselves from the depths of misery to the heights of "immortality and eternal bliss." These classic reviews are supported by recent analyses recognizing the Bhagavad Gita's psychosocial and spiritual relevance for personal development and education (Bhogal, 2021).

Philosophically, Bhawuk (2011) stresses that the Bhagavad Gita "defines the purpose of work as it is to be performed for its own sake, not for its outcomes" (p. 148). This principle has influenced contemporary ethical pedagogy that promotes intrinsic motivation and purposeful engagement. Adhikari (2044 B.S.) notes the text's democratic accessibility. He states that the Upanishads are for approved individuals, the Brahma-sutras are for academics (because others might not understand them easily), but the Bhagavad Gita is suitable for all.

It is not for some specific community, caste, creed, sex, or country but is a common asset of all human beings." Recent studies resonate with this comprehensive characterization, highlighting the potential of the Bhagavad Gita as a cross-cultural educational resource (Subedi, 2024).

Basu (2012) presents the Bhagavad Gita from a psychological angle. His interpretation is that the text chronicles the mental journey of the prince Arjun, who was in a state of moral confusion and whose path was made clear by Krishna, who is both mentor and God. The real significance of the Gita lies not in any religious revelations it contains but in the way it maps the mind and shows how to use the mind to reach a state beyond itself (p. 2). This psychological dimension renders the text especially relevant to educational settings focused on mental and emotional transformation, resilience, and ethical decision-making (Chatterjee, 2024).

Methodology

This study uses hermeneutic analysis as its main methodological framework. Hermeneutics, which comes from the Greek verb *hermeneuein*, is "the theory of the operations of understanding in relation to the interpretation of texts" (Young, 2004). When it comes to the philosophy of interpreting meaning, hermeneutics is often referred to as the "art of interpretation," with the understanding that giving meaning to something is tantamount to understanding reality (Thompson, 1990, as cited in Gillio, 2021). This study's hermeneutic approach facilitates the uncovering of several layered meanings embedded within the complex text, like the Bhagavad Gita.

The hermeneutic approach is well-suited to this research because it explores multiple layers of meaning within the dialogues of the Bhagavad Gita. The verses are analyzed in their pedagogical context, focusing on their relevance to contemporary teaching and learning scenarios. Indeed, Shree Krishna's counseling of Arjun presents us with a most profound and challenging dialogue. Thus, hermeneutic textual analysis allows the uncovering of deeper pedagogical principles embedded within (Jiménez & Sánchez, 2023).

Analysis and Interpretation

The following section examines the conversations in the Bhagavad Gita closely and highlights important pedagogical principles found in the dialogues between Shree Krishna and Arjun. It especially brings to light how Shree Krishna adopts different teaching roles and adjusts his approach so that Arjun can learn better. This flexible style of teaching fits well with modern ideas about how teachers should adjust to meet their students' needs.

Effective Teaching and Role Flexibility

Effective teaching requires adaptability and role flexibility. Contemporary educational research emphasizes that teachers must assume multiple roles depending on the subject matter, student demographics, and contextual needs. As Darling-Hammond and Hyler (2017) noted, educators should function as friends, mentors, facilitators, philosophers, assessors, nurturers, disciplinarians, and content experts, among other things.

In the dialogue between Shree Krishna and Arjun, Shree Krishna demonstrates his pedagogical versatility by taking on multiple roles to effectively guide his student. The layered nature of their conversation offers important pedagogical insights relevant to contemporary education (Verma, 2023).

The Layered Structure of Dialogue

The Bhagavad Gita presents a sophisticated narrative through the conversation between Shree Krishna and Arjun. A critical scrutiny of the text reveals three distinct layers of dialogue that serve different pedagogical functions:

Friendly Dialogue (Peer-to-Peer Communication)

The outer layer establishes rapport through friendly interaction. Shree Krishna and Arjun are cousins of similar age, creating a foundation of trust and openness that is essential for effective and proficient learning. This peer-like dynamic is evident throughout the early chapters and contributes to what organizational theorist Edmondson (2018) describes as a "psychologically safe" learning environment. A prime example is verse 4.3, in which Shree Krishna addresses Arjun as both friend and devotee:

स एवायं मया तेऽद्य योगः प्रोक्तः पुरातनः |
भक्तोऽसि मे सखा चेति रहस्यं ह्येतदुत्तमम् || 4:3||

sa evāyaṁ mayā te 'dya yogḥ proktaḥ purātanaḥ
bhakto 'si me sakhā cheti rahasyaṁ hyetad uttamam

"The same ancient knowledge of Yog, which is the supreme secret, I am today revealing unto you, because you are My friend as well as My devotee, who can understand this transcendental wisdom."

This verse demonstrates how Shree Krishna influences friendship (sakhā) to create psychological safety conducive to sharing profound teachings. Contemporary research agrees that students learn best when they feel valued and trusted by their educators.

Mentoring Dialogue (Master-Disciple Relationship)

The second layer transforms the relationship into a formal instructional dynamic. This occurs when Arjun explicitly requests guidance, acknowledging his confusion and surrendering his ego. Verse 2.7 marks this pivotal transition:

कार्पण्यदोषोपहतस्वभावः
पृच्छामि त्वां धर्मसम्मूढचेताः |
यच्छ्रेयः स्यान्निश्चितं ब्रूहि तन्मे
शिष्यस्तेऽहं शाधि मां त्वां प्रपन्नम् || 2:7||

kārpanya-doṣhopahata-svabhāvaḥ
prichchhāmi tvāṁ dharma-sammūḍha-chetāḥ
yach-chhreyaḥ syānniśchitaṁ brūhi tanme
śiṣhyaste 'haṁ śhādhi māṁ tvāṁ prapannam

"I am confused about my duty, and am besieged with anxiety and faintheartedness. I am Your disciple, and am surrendered to You. Please instruct me for certain what is best for me."

This verse illustrates central pedagogical principles:

- i. Acknowledgment of confusion: Arjun openly admits his mental state, which aligns with research on the importance of learners' metacognitive awareness (Zimmerman, 1989).
- ii. Active request for guidance: This shows learner agency, an important aspect of effective education.

- iii. Formal submission and role clarity: The declaration "I am your disciple" establishes categorical teacher-student roles, which are the basis of any structured learning experience (Bransford et al., 2000).
- iv. Surrender of ego and openness: Necessary for learning to be receptive and for education to be transformative (Mezirow, 2009).

Much of the Bhagavad Gita's verses are taken up with dialogue between mentor and mentee. This dialogue provides systematic guidance through a diverse array of knowledge domains, illustrating scaffolded instruction (Vygotsky, 1978) and cognitive apprenticeship (Collins et al., 1989).

Divine Dialogue (Transcendent Teacher-Devoted Student)

The third layer arises as Arjun's awareness broadens to encompass Shree Krishna's divine essence. This expansion reaches its peak during the cosmic unveiling (Viśvarūpa-darśana) in chapter 11, after which the conversation takes on an even loftier tone. Arjun acknowledges his past presumption as he states:

सखेति मत्वा प्रसभं यदुक्तं

हे कृष्ण हे यादव हे सखेति |

अज्ञानता महिमानं तवेदं

मया प्रमादात्प्रणयेन वापि || 11:41||

sakheti matvā prasabham yad uktam

he kṛiṣṇa he yādava he sakheti

ajānatā mahimānam tavedam

mayā pramādāt praṇayena vāpi

"Thinking of You as my friend, I presumptuously addressed You as, "O Krishna," "O Yadav," "O my dear Friend." I was ignorant of Your majesty, showing negligence and undue affection."

This verse imparts the insight that the learning that happens at the deepest level occurs when the student holds the teacher in the highest regard and when the knowledge that has been transmitted is treated with the utmost reverence (Palmer, 2007). This matches up nicely with what we understand about transformative learning. At that stage, our conscious awareness is expanded, and we now carry a sense of wisdom and an even greater sense of ethical responsibility (Taylor, 2017).

At its core, the Bhagavad Gita's multilayered conversation shows us three kinds of dialogue. The first is friendly dialogue, which builds trust and creates a safe space for learning. The next is mentoring dialogue, which occurs when clear knowledge is shared in a more formal setting and when students are taught to develop the kinds of skills that allow them to function in society (Bransford et al., 2000). Finally, there is divine dialogue, which brings into line with scaffolded learning theories, where responsibility is slowly transferred to the learners (Wood et al., 1976). This is the kind of conversation that goes on among deeply spiritual people and that usually results in the kind of wisdom and ethical understanding that helps societies function better. Still better, it is the kind of conversation that leads to the understanding and better functioning of the self (Mezirow, 2009).

Dialogues and Pedagogical Implications

The next section discusses the ways in which Shree Krishna exemplifies the ideal teacher through the fundamental pedagogical principles that are expounded in the layered dialogue of the Bhagavad Gita. His performance in the roles of mentor, guide, and leader

reflects not only effective teaching but also the professionalism, dedication, and emotional intelligence that constitute the teacher's art and remain highly relevant to modern education.

Shree Krishna as the Archetypal Teacher

The Bhagavad Gita holds profound instructional knowledge that is still highly pertinent to contemporary educational practices. Shree Krishna embodies the qualities of a superb educator, showing professionalism, adaptability, and a deep understanding of human psychology. He presents himself as an astoundingly qualified teacher, embodying the notion that educators are the bedrock of any educational system. As true Karma Yogis, they must withstand both internal and external motivation while supporting composure through the ups and downs of life. They must fulfill their commitments to manage diverse classrooms with full dedication and with the overflowing enthusiasm that makes one a "Teacher" in the true sense of the word. Verse 4.41 is illustrative of this teaching.

योगसंन्यस्तकर्माणं ज्ञानसंछिन्नसंशयम् |

आत्मवन्तं न कर्माणि निबध्नन्ति धनञ्जय ||4:41||

*yog-sannyasta-karmāṇaṁ jñāna-saṅchhinna-sanśhayam
ātmavantam na karmāṇi nibadhnanti dhanañjaya*

“O Arjun, actions do not bind those who have renounced karm in the fire of Yog, whose doubts have been dispelled by knowledge, and who are situated in knowledge of the self.”

This verse emphasizes that teachers who know the nature of action, inaction, and the power of knowledge teach without bondage. They can teach with full dedication and commitment, while maintaining both internal and external motivation even in perplexing states (Mukundananda, 2013; Pallathadka & Roy, 2025).

Professional Dedication and Duty-Consciousness

Teachers should consistently focus on their professional duties with the understanding of “duty for duty’s sake.” The principles of Karma Yog inspire educators to accept outcomes gracefully, maintaining faith that all challenges can be met. Shree Krishna’s guidance in verse 2.37 serves as encouragement:

In the Teaching Profession, Educators ought to maintain a focus on their professional responsibilities, always understanding the concept of “duty for duty’s sake.” Karma Yog motivates the educators to strive to teach with faith and accept, as gracefully as possible, whatever outcomes may come. Verse 2.37 motivates us in this regard:

हतो वा प्राप्स्यसि स्वर्गं जित्वा वा भोक्ष्यसे महीम् |

तस्मादुत्तिष्ठ कौन्तेय युद्धाय कृतनिश्चयः || 2:37||

*hato vā prāpsyasi swargam jitvā vā bhokṣhyase mahīm
tasmād uttiṣṭha kaunteya yuddhāya kṛita-niśchayaḥ*

“If you fight, you will either be slain on the battlefield and go to the celestial abodes, or you will gain victory and enjoy the kingdom on earth. Therefore arise with determination, O son of Kunti, and be prepared to fight.”

This verse underscores the struggle we all face in life and the call for steadfast determination (Dasgupta, 2023; García-Carrión, 2020). It pushes us educators and our students to confront the hurdles that life throws in our paths and to do so with brave hearts, knowing we’re upholding the very tenets of righteousness in the classroom and beyond.

Cultivating Equanimity and Patience

Maintaining calm in demanding situations is an essential part of being a good teacher. The Bhagavad Gita offers powerful advice on just how to do this. Here is verse 2.38:

सुखदुःखे समे कृत्वा लाभालाभौ जयाजयौ |
ततो युद्धाय युज्यस्व नैवं पापमवाप्स्यसि ||2:38||

*sukha-duhkhe same kṛtvā lābhālābhau jayājayau
tato yuddhāya yujyasva naivam pāpam avāpsyasi*

“Fight for the sake of duty, treating alike happiness and distress, loss and gain, victory and defeat. Fulfilling your responsibility in this way, you will never incur sin.”

This motivates teachers to rise above personal responses to the ups and downs of the educational world and keep a laser-like focus on what matters most, their students (Freire, 1970; Miller et al., 2011).

The Role of the Mind in Teaching and Learning

The mind plays a crucial role in teaching and learning processes. Modern research indicates that students learn best when they feel psychologically safe and fear-free, when there are no mental roadblocks to the flow of ideas (Freeman, 2000, p. 73; Jarvis et al., 1998, p. 65). Shree Krishna illustrates this in verse 6.5, highlighting personal responsibility for mental growth.

उद्धरेदात्मनात्मानं नात्मानमवसादयेत् |
आत्मैव ह्यात्मनो बन्धुरात्मैव रिपुरात्मनः || 6:5||

*uddhared ātmanātmānam nātmānam avasādayet
ātmaiva hyātmāno bandhur ātmaiva ripur ātmanah*

“Elevate yourself through the power of your mind, and not degrade yourself, for the mind can be the friend and also the enemy of the self.”

This teaching corresponds with the cognitive-behavioral perspective on self-regulation and mental well-being (Singh, 2024). It also resonates with Milton's insight in *Paradise Lost* about the power of the mind to make "a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven." (Milton, 2003).

Mental Wellbeing and Educational Success

Mental afflictions such as anger, greed, envy, and pride damage the brain and impede the learning process just as physical illnesses do. Buddha taught that controlling the mind is essential not only for righteous conduct but also for attaining enlightenment (Kuan, 2007). Mental well-being is a prerequisite for Nishkama Karma, the karma of action without attachment to the fruits of the action. Teachers and students in a learning environment where Nishkama Karma prevails can engage in the smooth interpersonal process that promotes learning (Bhawuk, 2011; Widodo, 2021).

Confronting Academic Anxiety and Performance Pressure

Students face severe academic stress and performance anxiety that can lead to different psychological distress, including depression and suicidal thoughts (Chatterjee, 2024). In these life-threatening situations, the ideologies of Karma Yog can offer a lifesaving standpoint. Verse 2.55 expresses this state of transcendental equanimity:

प्रजहाति यदा कामान्सर्वान्पार्थ मनोगतान् |
आत्मन्येवात्मना तुष्टः स्थितप्रज्ञस्तदोच्यते || 2:55||

*prajahāti yadā kāmān sarvān pārtha mano-gatān
ātmany-evātmanā tuṣṭaḥ sthita-prajñas tadochyate*

“O Parth, when one discards all selfish desires and cravings of the senses that torment the mind, and becomes satisfied in the realization of the self, such a person is said to be transcendently situated.”

Here, the *Sthita Prajña* ideal encourages teachers and students to develop control over the senses and stay calm during the challenges (Subedi, 2024).

Teaching Through Example: The Power of Role Modeling

In his effort to inspire Arjun, Shree Krishna points out that the real essence of freedom and perfection lies in action, not in inaction. As Arjun's charioteer, Shree Krishna incarnates a living illustration of the teacher's duty to model perfect behavior. Verse 3.21 highlights this:

यद्यदाचरति श्रेष्ठस्तत्तदेवेतरो जनः |
स यत्प्रमाणं कुरुते लोकस्तदनुवर्तते || 3:21||

*yad yad ācharati śhreṣṭhas tat tad evetaro janah
sa yat pramāṇam kurute lokas tad anuvartate*

“Whatever actions great persons perform, common people follow. Whatever standards they set, all the world pursues.”

This teaching reminds teachers that self-discipline and embodying virtues are essential components of their professional role (Verma, 2023).

The Art of Skillful Action in Education

Shree Krishna reveals the essence of Yog as the art of working skillfully with proper awareness and detachment. Verse 2.50 conveys this:

बुद्धियुक्तो जहातीह उभे सुकृतदुष्कृते |
तस्माद्योगाय युज्यस्व योगः कर्मसु कौशलम् || 2:50||

*buddhi-yukto jahātīha ubhe sukruta-duṣhkṛite
tasmād yogāya yujyasva yogḥ karmasu kauśhalam*

“One who prudently practices the science of work without attachment can get rid of both good and bad reactions in this life itself. Therefore, strive for Yog, which is the art of working skillfully (in proper consciousness).”

This verse highlights the significance of attentive engagement balanced by detachment from results to attain optimum educational success (Pallathadka & Roy, 2025).

Encouragement and Confidence Building

Throughout the Bhagavad Gita, Shree Krishna encourages Arjun to reinforce his potential and build his confidence, which are key pedagogical techniques. The following verses illustrate this approach:

मयि सर्वाणि कर्माणि संन्यस्याध्यात्मचेतसा |
निराशीर्निर्ममो भूत्वा युध्यस्व विगतज्वरः || 3:30||

*mayi sarvāṇi karmāṇi sannyasyādhyātma-chetasā
nirāśhīr nirmamo bhūtvā yudhyasva vigata-jvaraḥ*

“Performing all works as an offering unto Me, constantly meditate on Me as the Supreme. Become free from desire and selfishness, and with your mental grief departed, fight!”

तस्मादज्ञानसम्भूतं हृत्स्थं ज्ञानासिनात्मनः |

छित्त्वेन संशयं योगमातिष्ठोत्तिष्ठ भारत || 4:42||

*tasmād ajñāna-sambhūtaṁ hṛit-sthaṁ jñānāsinātmanaḥ
chhittvainaṁ sanśhayaṁ yogm ātiṣṭhotttiṣṭha bhārata*

“Therefore, with the sword of knowledge, cut asunder the doubts that have arisen in your heart. O scion of Bharat, establish yourself in karm yog. Arise, stand up, and take action!”

These affirmations foster resilience, single-mindedness, and audacity in students and teachers (Bhagal, 2021).

Inclusivity and Non-Discrimination in Education

The Bhagavad Gita speaks poignantly of social justice and equity, as mentioned in verse 9.32:

मां हि पार्थ व्यपाश्रित्य येऽपि स्युः पापयोनयः |

स्त्रियो वैश्यास्तथा शूद्रास्तेऽपि यान्ति परां गतिम् || 9:32||

*mām hi pārtha vyapāśhritya ye 'pi syuḥ pāpa-yonayaḥ
striyo vaiśhyās tathā śhūdrās te 'pi yānti parām gatim*

“All those who take refuge in Me, whatever their birth, race, gender, or caste, even those whom society scorns, will attain the supreme destination.”

This message particularly emphasizes teachers because they are the ones who must be fair and compassionate in teaching practice. They must ensure that everyone has been given an equal opportunity (Freeman, 2000).

Empowering Student Autonomy

A model educator discerns the inherent possibilities of students, gives them ample freedom, and urges them to assume the responsibility of their learning and choices. Shree Krishna illustrates this by permitting Arjun to determine his own path after bestowing complete counsel.

इति ते ज्ञानमाख्यातं गुह्याद्गुह्यतरं मया |

विमृश्यैतदशेषेण यथेच्छसि तथा कुरु || 18:63||

*iti te jñānam ākhyātaṁ guhyād guhyataraṁ mayā
vimṛśhyaitad aśheṣheṇa yathecchhasi tathā kuru*

“Thus, I have explained to you this knowledge that is more secret than all secrets. Ponder over it deeply, and then do as you wish.”

This verse portrays the highest pedagogical wisdom. The teacher admires the student's autonomy, empowering them with faith, assistance, and self-respect (Santos & Moreira, 2024).

Findings

This study demonstrates that the Bhagavad Gita is a text rich in meaning and teaching. Its dialogues between Shree Krishna and Arjun offer great insights into contemporary pedagogical theory and practice.

First, the Bhagavad Gita's multilayered dialogue structure discloses three critical dimensions of pedagogy that have a close affinity with Shree Krishna's teachings. Initially, it underscores the significance of a well-functioning teacher-student relationship, which serves as the vital underpinning of all learning that occurs within the Bhagavad Gita's framework. Next, the text exhibits a very thoughtful and careful arrangement of knowledge whereby components of very big ideas are delivered in a manner that makes them accessible for meaningful conversation (Darling-Hammond & Hyler, 2017; Verma, 2023), dialogue being the divine habitat in which all forms of life thrive inside the Bhagavad Gita. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the Bhagavad Gita is all about learner empowerment. Teaching occurs in the context of power relationships, and the Bhagavad Gita reveals to us that knowledge is a form of power.

Second, the Bhagavad Gita teaches about the four paths of yog: Karma (the yog of action), Jnana (the yog of knowledge), Raja (the yog of meditation), and Bhakti (the yog of devotion). These paths foster holistic development through ethical action, clear thinking, and mindful awareness (Yoga Easy, 2025). Modern study agrees that these pathways offer emotional and social advantages for well-being, cognitive clarity, and spiritual transformation (Choudhary et al., 2025; Navare & Pandey, 2022).

The Bhagavad Gita teaches about the four paths of yog: Karma (the yog of action), Jnana (the yog of knowledge), Raja (the yog of meditation), and Bhakti (the yog of devotion). All these paths lead to the same place, which is to say they are equally valid.

Third, the Bhagavad Gita emphasizes equanimity, duty-consciousness, mind mastery, and role modeling. These qualities give teachers sustainable motivation and resilience to handle modern educational challenges such as stress, anxiety, and social dynamics (Pallathadka & Roy, 2025). Shree Krishna's encouragement of learner autonomy and inclusive acceptance highlights the ethical values essential for fairness and empowerment in education (Singh, 2024).

Finally, this hermeneutic analysis shows that the Bhagavad Gita, though an ancient spiritual text, remains highly relevant as a model for pedagogical discourse. It values both deep knowledge and human dignity through respectful, dialogic interaction between teacher and student (Jiménez & Sánchez, 2023).

Conclusion

The Bhagavad Gita may have been composed thousands of years ago, but the dialogues that form the core of its text remain alive and relevant to contemporary education. Notions embedded in the Gita can be extracted and used as a framework for transforming both the act and the art of teaching into something that moves, breathes, and builds a living, organic community of learners (Dasgupta, 2023; Santos & Moreira, 2024).

The multilayered pedagogical methodology of Shree Krishna can be called a blend of friendship, mentorship, and spiritual guidance. It exemplifies the adaptable excellence and emotional intelligence that modern education demands to meet the complex realities of classroom life. The Bhagavad Gita's synthesis of responsibility, wisdom, meditation, and dedication gives teachers and students tools for mental and emotional well-being, enabling them to face the pressures of school with strength and composure.

The Bhagavad Gita's message of respect for learner autonomy and inclusiveness aligns with present-day values of equity and learner-centered pedagogy. It encourages us to work skillfully, to act with detachment, and to teach with our whole hearts. This study highlights that the rich pedagogical wisdom of the Bhagavad Gita connects with modern educational theory. Its dialogic pedagogy invites us to see teaching as a transformative conversation, with the acts of knowing and the growth of consciousness, character, and compassion being its most reliable indicators.

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