

**A STUDY ON ROLE OF MANAGEMENT LESSONS FROM ‘BHAGAVAD GITA’ AND
‘CHATRAPATI SHIVAJI MAHARAJ HISTORY’ AS OF IKS SUBJECT FOR
MANAGEMENT STUDENTS: A CRITICAL REVIEW**

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Abstract

The study critically examines the role of management lessons derived from the Bhagavad Gita and the leadership strategies of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj, emphasizing their relevance in modern management education. Rooted in the Indian Knowledge System (IKS), these teachings offer valuable insights into leadership, strategic decision-making, ethics, and resilience. The Bhagavad Gita provides profound philosophical and managerial wisdom, focusing on duty, self-discipline, and crisis management. Similarly, Shivaji Maharaj's governance model highlights visionary leadership, people-centric administration, and tactical excellence. This review explores their integration into management curricula, fostering ethical leadership and strategic acumen among future managers. The study aims to bridge traditional wisdom with contemporary management practices, making a case for an inclusive and value-driven approach in business education.

1. Introduction

Management education has evolved significantly, incorporating various theories and methodologies to develop future business leaders. However, the Indian Knowledge System (IKS) offers a unique perspective by integrating time-tested principles from scriptures and historical figures. The Bhagavad Gita and the leadership lessons of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj provide a robust framework for ethical leadership, crisis management, and strategic thinking. This study critically reviews their relevance in contemporary management education and discusses how they can be effectively integrated into business curricula. The Indian Knowledge System (IKS) encompasses a vast repository of ethnic wisdom, including ancient scriptures, historical leadership models, and traditional management practices. Incorporating IKS into management education can offer students a holistic perspective on leadership, organizational behavior, and strategic management, blending ethical values with modern business principles. These sources present profound lessons on leadership, ethics, resilience, and strategy that remain relevant in the modern context, particularly in management education. Modern management education should integrate ethical values, employee well-being, and responsible leadership to enhance work culture and commitment. By incorporating these principles, managers can foster motivation, led by example, and create a balanced approach to achieving professional and personal success. In today's rapidly changing world, strong leadership is crucial for organizations. Leaders with a clear vision of the future can effectively guide their organizations to adapt and thrive in times of change. This paper critically reviews these lessons and evaluates their applicability in higher education to enrich leadership and management practices.

2. Review of Literature:

Partha Chakraborty (2022) demonstrates that in the conversation, Krishna shows that he is the Supreme Being and teaches Arjuna how to live a meaningful life. The Bhagavad Gita shares many life lessons, but some key teachings are useful for business leaders. These include karma, detachment, and dharma. Karma means that every action has consequences, both good and bad. This teaches business leaders to be mindful of how their decisions affect others. Detachment is staying calm and focused during difficult times, helping leaders make better decisions under pressure. Dharma is our duty or purpose in life, reminding leaders to focus on what truly matters and make choices that benefit everyone. Being a powerful and timeless text Bhagavad Gita offers guidance to business leaders in all aspects of life. By understanding and applying the lessons of karma, detachment, and dharma, management students can make wiser decisions, create more positive outcomes, and ultimately lead more fulfilling lives.

Textile Value Chain, (2020) articulates that the Bhagavad Gita teaches important lessons about improving a person's efficiency and effectiveness in achieving goals. It helps overcome fear, transforms weaknesses into strengths, and emphasizes the need for responsible leadership. A good leader inspires, motivates, and guides their team with a clear understanding of reality. Management plays a key role when people come together to work toward a common goal. A manager's duty is to ensure tasks are completed effectively and efficiently by making the best use of available resources.

Prof. Jharna Lulla Management teaches us important skills like leadership, motivation, decision-making, teamwork, and planning to help individuals grow as effective managers. **Leadership** is about guiding and inspiring people toward a common goal, and the Bhagavad Gita emphasizes self-excellence and righteousness as key qualities of a good leader. **Motivation** is what drives people to achieve their goals, and it can be either internal (self-driven) or external (influenced by rewards or pressure); the Gita teaches that true motivation comes from doing one's duty without attachment to results. **Decision-making** is about making the right choices, and the Bhagavad Gita helps individuals navigate complex decisions by focusing on self-awareness and inner clarity. It encourages people to work with dedication, without worrying about rewards, which lead to greater efficiency and fulfillment. The Gita also highlights teamwork, cooperation, and trust as essential qualities for success in any organization. By applying these lessons, managers can lead with wisdom, motivate teams effectively, and make well-informed decisions for long-term success.

Sujit Kumar Acharya, , (2015), determines that, the Bhagavad Gita offers deep insights into people, material life, and overall existence. It also applies to management and business, helping leaders make better decisions. More than just a religious text, it serves as a practical guide for life. The Gita emphasizes wise living over purely spiritual teachings. Its lessons are valuable for both personal growth and professional success.

Chakraborty, A.E. (2006) , expresses that, a business is similar to a small kingdom, but with fewer people. Leading a company with strong values, ethics, and spirituality builds a strong foundation. When a business follows ethical and spiritual principles, it creates a positive and peaceful work environment that others can see. Employees will collaborate effectively and put in their best efforts. However, if individuals focus only on personal gain, the business will struggle and fail.

Cyrus M. Gonda and Dr. Nitin Parab (2013) studied the leadership lessons from Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj. They discussed his administrative skills, vision, and how he built a well-governed state. The authors also shared important events from his life and connected them to modern leadership principles.

Dennis Kincaid (1905-1937), in his book *Shivaji The Grand Rebel* (1928), was the first British author to refer to Shivaji as a "grand rebel." He introduced Shivaji as a great warrior with excellent management skills and described him as a brilliant strategist.

Khandbahale, Sunil and Pachorkar, Sachin, (2024), demonstrate that, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj's governance exemplifies strategic leadership, administrative innovation, and a commitment to justice and social welfare. His emphasis on decentralization and delegation of authority empowered local leaders, fostering grassroots governance and economic prosperity.

Shivaji's leadership style, marked by empathy, courage, and ethical conduct, earned him widespread admiration and loyalty. He established a strong kingdom by efficiently managing administration, military, and revenue systems. Shivaji promoted justice, religious harmony, and social welfare, ensuring a better life for his people. His leadership was defined by bravery, wisdom, and compassion, earning him immense respect. His principles of governance and leadership remain a source of inspiration even today. His policies on religious tolerance and cultural patronage strengthened the pluralistic fabric of Maratha society, promoting inclusivity and harmony. Shivaji's enduring legacy continues to inspire contemporary leaders, highlighting the relevance of ethical leadership, resilience, and strategic vision in modern governance.

Prof. Namdeo Jadhav (2012), in his book *Shivaji – The Management Guru*, highlights Shivaji's leadership qualities, administrative skills, and ability to manage resources. The book also explores his inspiring life, showing how his principles can guide today's managers.

Vivek S. Kanade, Preeti M Kulkarni, (2018), determines that, a leader becomes a true hero, role model, and icon only when they genuinely care about their people and their well-being. While management education today produces excellent managers and business professionals, it still struggles to develop socially responsible citizens. Many businesses contribute to social causes, but often only to a limited extent or due to legal obligations rather than genuine commitment. Why don't more business leaders build their identity as true social servants? Shivaji Maharaj set a powerful example of how an organization can grow while also earning goodwill in society through ethical leadership and social responsibility.

M. Satish, et al, (2020), their study focuses on leadership qualities and compares modern management approaches with ancient Indian scriptures like the Bhagavad Gita, Ramayana, and Arthashastra and says that, these scriptures address modern management theories with content that is still relevant to today's corporate challenges. The study also discusses the three Gunas (qualities) in detail and links them to three different leadership styles. Additionally, the paper proposes a new leadership model called "Mishra." And portrays that, a leader's success depends on how much they are influenced by these three Gunas. Each leadership style impacts various stakeholders in a business. And further determines that, by understanding the insights from Indian scriptures, leaders can overcome their fear of failure and improve their leadership skills, leading to greater success and competency.

Dr. Komal Raval, et al, (2025), explores the connection between the Indian Knowledge System (IKS) and modern management theories on personality, leadership, and motivation. A Bibliometric Analysis was conducted using 80 research papers on “Indian Knowledge System” and 30 on “Indian Ethos” and “Management,” analyzed through co-occurrence mapping. The study identified five main clusters: IKS and Vedic Mathematics, Ayurveda, Holism, Law, and Management. Additionally, six clusters were found for "Indian Ethos" and "Management," including Vision (Dharma), Business (Karma), Sustainability, Motivation & Leadership, Employee Diversity, and Vedantic Wisdom & Change. Other key themes observed include spirituality, culture, human values, Ramayana, and Bhagavad Gita, leading to the identification of three broader themes.

3. Research Objectives:

1. To analyze key management principles derived from the Bhagavad Gita and the leadership strategies of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj.
2. To explore the relevance of these principles in contemporary management education and practices.
3. To examine how Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) contribute to the development of leadership, decision-making, and ethical management skills.
4. To critically evaluate the applicability of Bhagavad Gita’s teachings and Shivaji Maharaj’s governance strategies in modern business and organizational contexts.
5. To provide insights into integrating these learnings into management curricula for holistic development of future managers.

4. Research Methodology:

The researcher has utilized a secondary research approach for this paper, drawing data from journals, magazines, various websites, and articles. The authors have thoroughly analyzed relevant literature and recorded data, ensuring a well-founded conclusion aligned with the topic.

5. Findings of the Study:

5.1 Management Lessons from the Bhagavad Gita:

Textile Value Chain, (2020); Dr. Vasistha A. Khodaskar (2024), displays that, The Bhagavad Gita, a sacred Hindu scripture, provides deep philosophical insights applicable to management and leadership. Some of its core teachings include:

1. **Dedication Towards Work:** The Gita advises focusing on the work itself rather than worrying about the outcome. Similarly, professionals should concentrate on completing their tasks rather than being overly concerned about results.
2. **Selfless Work:** Lord Krishna encouraged Arjuna to fight for righteousness (Dharma) rather than personal gain. Likewise, in an organization, employees should prioritize the company’s success over personal interests.
3. **Work as Identity:** According to the Gita, a person’s identity is shaped by their actions and behavior, not by their background. In management, an individual’s work ethic, skills, and interactions define their professional identity.

4. **Emotional Intelligence and Self-Management:** The Gita teaches that small victories should not lead to overconfidence, nor should failures cause despair. By addressing Arjuna's emotional struggles, the Gita emphasizes the value of self-awareness and emotional control. In the context of education, cultivating emotional intelligence among students and faculty helps in building resilience, managing stress, and maintaining focus on goals despite obstacles. Similarly, managers must stay focused on long-term goals and not be discouraged by challenges.
5. **Accepting Change:** Krishna teaches that fearing change can lead to poor decisions. In management, adaptability is essential for growth and success.
6. **Clear Intentions:** The Gita emphasizes that good intentions lead to meaningful success. A manager should have a clear vision and ethical approach to goal-setting.
7. **Stable Mind for Success:** Krishna advises maintaining a calm and focused mind during challenges. Managers should stay composed and make rational decisions to overcome obstacles effectively.
8. **Dharma (Duty) and Leadership:** Leaders must focus on their responsibilities without attachment to the outcomes, fostering a sense of purpose and ethical governance.
9. **Self-Discipline and Resilience:** Managers should cultivate self-awareness, emotional intelligence, and resilience to navigate challenges effectively.
10. **Decision-Making in Crisis:** The Gita emphasizes rational decision-making based on wisdom rather than emotions, which is critical for business leaders.
12. **Servant Leadership:** True leadership lies in serving others and ensuring the welfare of the team or organization.
- Vision and Strategic Thinking:** The scripture encourages long-term vision, adaptability, and moral integrity in leadership. Arjuna's dilemma highlights the importance of careful deliberation and ethical decision-making. Similarly, leaders in education often face complex challenges that require a balance of logic, values, and foresight. The Gita's teachings encourage thoughtful strategies that align with long-term objectives.
13. **Duty and Responsibility:** The Gita underscores the significance of focusing on one's responsibilities and tasks with unwavering dedication, irrespective of the outcomes. In higher education, this principle can inspire administrators, faculty, and students to commit to their roles with integrity and purpose, fostering a culture of accountability and excellence.
14. **Resilience and Adaptability:** The Gita's call for resilience in the face of adversity and its teachings on adaptability resonate deeply with the dynamic nature of higher education. Institutions must continuously evolve to meet the challenges posed by technological advancements, policy changes, and shifting societal needs.
15. **Inclusivity and Collaboration:** The Gita promotes the idea of interconnectedness and harmonious coexistence. In higher education, fostering inclusivity and collaboration among students, faculty, and staff not only enhances diversity but also drives innovation and collective achievement. This cultural shift can lead to a more supportive and enriching academic environment.

5.2. Leadership Strategies of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj

Ranajit Dey (2024) displays that, Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj was a visionary leader known for his strategic acumen, administrative skills, and people-centric governance. His leadership principles include:

1. **Strategic Warfare and Planning:** Shivaji Maharaj was a master strategist, using smart tactics like building forts in key locations, emphasizing innovation and adaptability and pioneered guerrilla warfare. This teaches the value of planning ahead and thinking creatively. Students can apply these skills to solve problems and achieve long-term goals in both academics and life.

2. **People-Centric Administration:** He established a just and efficient administrative system, emphasizing employee welfare and accountability.
3. **Decision-Making and Risk Management:** Shivaji Maharaj demonstrated exceptional decision-making abilities, balancing risk with strategic foresight.
4. **Leadership and Teamwork:** Shivaji Maharaj's governance was based on fairness, inclusion, and justice, setting an example for corporate ethics and responsibility. He inspired unity and loyalty among his people, showing the power of good leadership and teamwork. Students can learn to work together towards shared goals, value each other's roles, and lead with positivity and respect.
5. **Team Building and Motivation:** He inspired loyalty and commitment among his followers, highlighting the importance of leadership in fostering a strong organizational culture.
6. **Courage and Resilience:** Shivaji Maharaj's life showed unshakable courage and resilience. Despite facing tough challenges, he stood strong. Students can learn to face their struggles with courage and understand that bouncing back from setbacks is the key to success.
7. **Strategic Thinking:** Shivaji was a master strategist, using smart tactics like building forts in key locations and guerrilla warfare. This teaches the value of planning ahead and thinking creatively. Students can apply these skills to solve problems and achieve long-term goals in both academics and life.
8. **Integrity and Fairness:** Shivaji Maharaj ruled with justice and fairness, treating everyone equally regardless of their background. His example highlights the importance of being honest and fair in all dealings, showing how ethical leadership positively impacts others.
9. **Education and Self-Improvement:** Shivaji valued education and personal growth, promoting learning, literature, and the arts. This reminds students to keep learning and improving themselves, not just for academics but for personal growth and contributing to society.
10. **Lead by example:** Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj being a leader never asked his soldiers to do something he wouldn't do himself. He led his troops from the front and was never afraid to take risks.

5.3. Relevance in Modern Management Education

The principles derived from these historical and scriptural sources hold significant value in today's corporate world. Organizations face ethical dilemmas, leadership challenges, and strategic uncertainties that require wisdom from both contemporary and traditional sources. By incorporating these lessons into management curricula, students can develop:

- Strong ethical foundations
- Enhanced decision-making skills
- Resilient and adaptive leadership qualities
- Strategic thinking and innovation
- People-centric management approaches

6. Conclusion

The integration of the Bhagavad Gita and Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj's leadership principles into modern management education provides a holistic approach to leadership, ethics, and strategy. These teachings offer invaluable insights into resilience, strategic decision-making, ethical governance, and selfless leadership—qualities essential for navigating today's dynamic business environment. By embedding these time-tested principles into management curricula, institutions can cultivate leaders who balance professional success with ethical responsibility. The Bhagavad Gita's emphasis on self-discipline, emotional intelligence, and

purpose-driven leadership aligns with the evolving needs of corporate leadership, while Shivaji Maharaj's strategic acumen, people-centric governance, and courage serve as exemplary models for modern managers.

Incorporating the Indian Knowledge System (IKS) into management education fosters a unique blend of ancient wisdom and contemporary business practices, equipping future leaders with a strong moral compass and adaptive capabilities. As organizations increasingly recognize the value of ethical leadership and strategic foresight, these historical lessons remain profoundly relevant. By embracing this knowledge, management education can nurture visionary, ethical, and resilient leaders prepared to tackle the complexities of the modern world.

.7. Recommendations

1. Business schools should integrate these teachings into leadership and ethics courses.
2. Universities should develop case studies based on these principles for practical applications.
3. Regular seminars by industry leaders and scholars on IKS-based management principles.
4. Encouraging research comparing traditional Indian and Western management strategies to highlight their complementarities.

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