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AN OUTLINE OF SAMKHYA-YOGA IN SHRIMAD BHAGAVAD GITA: A REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

Samkhya-yoga is the combination of metaphysics and meditation, i.e., attachment and detachment, where the first is how the matter is connected to consciousness and the second is how the matter can be separated from consciousness. In its whole process, one dimension refers to Purusha (pure consciousness) and Prakruti (pure matter), and the second dimension is Jnana-yoga (meditation). On one hand, the mutual interaction of Purusha and Prakruti is the creation of the world (Srishti) that is emphasized by the Samkhya, and on the other hand, the mutual repulsion of both Purusha and Prakruti is the liberation of life (Moksha), which is emphasized by the Patanjali-yoga. So, the beautiful concept of Samkhya-yoga has been discussed in the Bhagavad Gita through Lord Krishna. As a unique feature of being theistic is the great concept of Samkhya-yoga in the Bhagavad Gita. The objective of this study is to explore both the theoretical and practical aspects of Samkhya-yoga's philosophical paradigm as it found in the Shrimad Bhagavad Gita.

Keywords: Samkhya-yoga, Jnana-yoga, Srishti, Purusha, Prakruti, Moksha

INTRODUCTION

The Bhagavad Gita is the most widely affiliated cults in south Asia. Over the years, read sacred text for Hindus and their it has served as a source of inspiration for

several individuals at various points in history. Literally, the Gita offers us a middle path in life that is moral, intellectual, religious, and philosophical. In the Indian subcontinent, the majority of Hindus regard Gita as the holy literature. Various followers, researchers, and commentators have authored numerous commentaries from the beginning to the present. The Bhishma-parva of the Mahabharata is identified as the Bhagavad Gita, which is considered the essence of the Upanishads and was compiled by the Maharshi Vedavyasa. In documented history, Gita is the most primitive Sanatana text. The Samkhya-yoga is the major teaching portion in the Bhagavad Gita [1].

The objective of this study is to explore both the theoretical and practical aspects of Samkhya-yoga's philosophical paradigm as it found in the Shrimad Bhagavad Gita. It explores how the synthesis of Samkhya's metaphysical dualism and Yoga's disciplined practice contributes to knowing the ultimate truth and self-realization (liberation). This review is critical for understanding Samkhya-yoga's on-going significance in Indian psychology and philosophy. By integrating classical interpretations with modern academic perspectives, the study highlights its impact on human consciousness and personal transformation. The study covers an organized assessment of its philosophical

depth and contemporary relevance using an in-depth study of the main texts, typical interpretations, and cross-disciplinary study.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This review examines main sources, which include important verses and traditional commentators, to critically analyse Samkhya-yoga in the Shrimad Bhagavad Gita. To understand its broad implications, additional sources from peer-reviewed research and philosophical perspectives were studied. Samkhya-yoga has been linked with classical Indian philosophical writings via a comparative method. For the purpose of evaluating its applicability in recent debate, the study also included diverse viewpoints. Our findings were combined to provide a methodical examination of its theoretical underpinnings and applications in reality.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Samkhya-yoga in the Gita:

The substantive teaching of the Bhagavad Gita is Samkhya-yoga, which was taught to Arjuna by Lord Shri Krishna. On one hand, the Triguna relationship between Atma (Purusha) and Prakruti is referred to as Samkhya; on the other hand, the Triguna relationship by practicing yoga (meditation) for liberation (Moksha) is referred to as Samkhya-yoga. In other words, Samkhya establishes relations between Purusha and Prakruti, while Yoga breaks relations between Purusha and Prakruti. The three

major issues have been discussed under the Samkhya-yoga in the Gita that is given as follows [1]:

- Purusha: Atma.
- Prakruti: Para and Aparā.
- Yoga: Karma, Bhakti-yoga, and particularly Samkhya-yoga or Jnana-yoga.

Atma, or Purusha (Spirit):

In the Bhagavad Gita, with a very beautiful manner, the Atma is described by Lord Shri Krishna. For the study's convenience, we study to divide into two parts as follows:

- **Nirapeksha Atma (Parmatma), or Akshara-purusha (absolute, or collective consciousness):** It is obsolete, atomic, transcendental, formless, and/or free from all that. A spirit who has no attachment to mind, body, or karma but is beyond all things. It has many synonyms like Uttam purusha, Purushottam, Parmatma purusha, Param purusha, Parapurusha, Sarvavyapi purusha, Sarvajnata-purusha, Gunatita and Sanatana-purusha, Adi-purusha, Para-brahma, and supreme consciousness [2].
- **Sapeskha Atma (Jivatma), or Avinashi-purusha (individual or personal soul):** A soul who is attached to the mind, body, and

karma is known as the 'Jivatma'. Truly, it is an empirical soul, i.e., a Purusha who is alive with body in existing, called Jivatma. There are many characteristics of this individual soul, "Atma," in the Gita [2].

- The soul is eternal and immortal.
- Taking rebirth.
- Substratum of all sensual organs.
- Consuming the Prakruti.

Prakruti (Matter, or Nature):

With too substantive manner, the Prakruti is emphasized by Shri Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita, which is divided into two parts as follows:

1. **Para/Avyakta Prakruti (unmanifested being):** This is called Adi-prakruti, Mula-prakruti, Chetana Prakruti, Mahata, and Brahma in the Gita, which means the initial form of Prakruti is 'Sanatana' (primitive) and 'Indriyatita' (transcendental), or atomic and invisible. The consciousness is its basic nature that transforms into Purusha (Atma), which are pure conscious elements.
2. **Apara/Vyakta Prakruti (Manifested Being):** This is called Ashtadha Prakruti or Jada-prakruti, which is basically matter, and it further

produces: Buddhi (intellect) > Ahakara (ego—Sattva, Raja, and Tama) > Manas with Dasha-indriya > Pancha-bhuta (ether, air, fire, water, and earth) [3].

So, the Bhagavad Gita explains the 24 elements of Prakruti under the Samkhya in the Gita couplet (13/5): Mula-prakruti (atma), Buddhi (intellect), Ahankara (ego), Manas (mind), Dasha Indriya (five knowledge and five action sense organs), Pancha-mahabhuta (five matter), and Pancha Indriya Vishaya (five sensory objects). So, through the mutual interaction of Purusha (Mula-prakruti) and Jada-prakruti, the world is made [4].

Jnana-yoga (or Samkhya-yoga):

In a very systematic manner, the Jnana-yoga (or Samkhya-yoga) is taught by Shri Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita's couplets: 3/3; 4/1-3, 26-30; 5/27, 28; 6/ 10-13, 36, 46; 8/ 10-13; 17/23 & 24. In couplet 3/3, Shri Krishna states about two-yoga first; following the Jnana-yoga is referred to as Samkhya-yoga and following the Karma-yoga is referred to as Nishkama Karma-yoga (Karma-yoga). But here, Gita's Samkhya-yoga can be understood into the following manners [5-9].

- **Dhyana-yoga:** According to Gita-sloka (6/13), we should be seated in the yoga posture, and meanwhile, our spinal cord, neck, and head must

be strongly remained in an erected and vertical position. Along with being taken back attention from all directions, the yogi should concentrate attention on the front point of his nose.

- **Prana-yoga:** According to Gita-sloka (4/26), some yogi sacrifices his entire sensory dispositions into the 'Fire of sensory discipline' and some other yogi sacrifices his entire sensory dispositions (like ideas, utterances, thoughts, lust, etc.) into the 'Fire of sensory dispositions'

According to Gita-sloka (4/27), Ishvara-kṛishṇa says further that some other yogi sacrifices his entire sensory and psychic activities into the 'Fire of self-discipline lighted with truth'. According to Gita-sloka (4/29), some other yogi takes the regular balancing diet and sacrifices the Praṇa (exhale breath), and such yogi, after burning out his previous Karma, becomes the knower of Yajna (truth). According to Gita-sloka (4/30), some yogi sacrifice Praṇa-vavu (exhale breath) into Apana-vavu (inhale breath), while others sacrifice Apana-vavu (inhale breath) into praṇa-vavu (exhale breath), and along with some yogi, they are involved in the practice of Pranayama for restraining Praṇa and Apana-vavu [5-9].

- **Tripiti-yoga:** According to Gita-sloka (5/27), Ishvara-kṛishṇa says to Arjuna not to be worried about the sensory desires or lusts of the outside that are to be left outside, while a yogi concentrates his attention between the pin point of the forehead (Bhriguti, Tripiti, or third eye) and to make balance at the circulating Praṇa-vavu into the nose.

According to Gita-sloka (8/10), Ishvara-kṛishṇa says that during the time of dying, even a well-devoted person toward God will establish their own 'Praṇas' with the force of yoga in the middle point of the third eye (Bhriguti, or Tripiti), along with who remembers God with a clean mind, and so the ultimate becomes the divine beauty of Brahman (the Lord of the world).

- **Omkara-yoga:** According to Gita-sloka (8/12), Ishvara-kṛishṇa says to be fingered to the 'Omkara' that the scholar of the Vedas calls to whom indestructible (Akshara), wherein the renouncer enters and the person wishing to whom follows the closed discipline code of conduct (Brahmacharaṇa), and right now I tell you that ultimate being (Parampada).

- **Mantra-yoga:** According to Gita-sloka (8/13), while an individual is chanting the Mantra 'Omkara' while at the same time thinking about the absolute Lord and, meanwhile, giving up the Prana (life) so that he goes beyond the life-death cycle forever (Paramgati), [5-9].

DISCUSSION

In the Upanishads, Samkhya and Yoga are found as joint thought, "Samkhya-yoga," and thus it was the two streams of the Samkhya system, wherein one stream identified 'Samkhya' and another stream 'Yoga'. It both can be seen in the Shvetashvatara-upanishad or elsewhere as scattered form. In later periods, this joint Samkhya thought was divided into 'Yoga-darshan', presented by the Patanjali-yoga-sutra (184–147 B.C.E.), 'Samkhya-darshana', presented by 'Ishvar-krishna-Samkhya-karika' (300 C.E.), and 'Samkhya-pravachan-sutra-bhashya' (15-16th C.E.). Traditionally, Adi-rishi Kapila was considered the originator of Samkhya thought [10].

Samkhya is the philosophy of metaphysics, while Yoga is the philosophy of epistemology, but both have accepted each other's theories. The two streams of Samkhya are the most acceptable, in which the first is 'Doctrinal samkhya', which explains the Trigunatmaka relationship

between Purusha and Prakṛuti and by whom the world is made. And the second is 'Practical samkhya', which is called Yoga, which breaks down the Trigunatmaka relationship between Purusha and Prakṛuti by using the yoga techniques, and consequently, the Purusha (self) becomes ultimately free from Prakṛuti and meets God. So, the Samkhya is divided into two sections from the actual point of view [10].

In an actual sense, Samkhya and yoga are both streams of a single ideology. Samkhya-yoga in the Gita is the best example of the ancient Samkhya system where Samkhya and yoga were joined, and it is also found in the Shvetashvatara Upanishad. Samkhya leads the theory of reality (metaphysics) - Purusha and Prakṛuti, and Yoga leads the theory of knowledge (epistemology) - Aṣṭāṅga-yoga. Samkhya emphasizes the Triguna relationship between Purusha and Prakṛuti; in other words, it explains the "Karma-bandhana"-Triguna-maya doctrine (Sattva, Raja, and Tama), whereas yoga provides the technique to break out the Karma-bandhana-Triguna-maya relationship between Purusha and Prakṛuti and push towards Moksha [11].

CONCLUSION

A comprehensive synthesis of metaphysical knowledge and yoga disciplined practice can be obtained by the metaphysical framework of Samkhya-yoga in the Shrimad Bhagavad Gita, which leads individuals

toward realization of oneself and the final truth. This study concentrated on looking at its theoretical underpinnings along with practical use, showing how the combination of yoga's transforming discipline and Samkhya's analytical perspective enables an extensive route to liberation. Samkhya-yoga keeps being very relevant today since it bridges the fields of philosophy, psychology, and spiritual practice to handle issues with self-awareness, mental health, and holistic life. The review's innovations enhance the scope of its key concepts while emphasizing its potential for broad investigation, including modern cognitive science, wellness studies, and philosophical debate. Additional research may investigate closer at the empirical benefits associated with Samkhya-yoga in fields including self-development, ethical decision-making, and psychological therapy, enhancing its significance in both academic and practical contexts.

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Conflicts of Interest:

Nil

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