

Appendices

Appendix A-	Verses from the Bhagavad Gita	1
Appendix B-	Survey Research Tool- English Version	4
Appendix C-	Survey Research Tool- Hindi Version	20
Appendix D-	Journal Publications from Ph.D. work	32
Appendix E-	Conference Presentation from Ph.D. work	67
Appendix F-	Workshops and Training Certificates attended for Ph.D.	71

Appendix A

List of Verses from the Bhagavad Gita

1. Verse 6.8- *jñāna-vijñāna-triptātmā kūṭa-stho vijitendriyaḥ yukta ityuchyate yogī sama-loṣṭāśhma-kāñchanah* A Yogin whose spirit has attained contentment through knowledge and experience who is unperturbed who has subdued his senses to whom a lump of earth and a bar of gold are alike such a yogi is said to have attained steadfastness in spiritual communion.
2. Verse 2.48- *yoga-sthaḥ kuru karmāṇi saṅgam tyaktvā dhanañjaya siddhy-siddhyoḥ samo bhūtvā Samatvaṁ yoga uchyate* Engage yourself in action with the mind steadfast in Yoga. Abandon attachments, O Arjuna and be unperturbed in success and failure. This unperturbed sameness in all conditions is Yoga.
3. Verse 6.29- *sarva-bhūta-stham ātmānam sarva-bhūtāni chātmani īkṣhate yogayuktātmā sarvatra sama-darśhanah* The man of spiritual insight established in same sightedness sees the Self as residing in all beings and all beings as resting in the Self.
4. Verse 5.19- *ihaiva tair jitaḥ sargo yeśhām sāmye sthitam manah nirdoṣham hi samam brahma tasmād brahmaṇi te sthitāḥ* Even here in this embodied state the cycle of births and deaths has been overcome by those who have this vision of sameness in all. Verily Brahman is the Unswerving and the Pure. Therefore, are those seers of sameness said to be established in the Brahman.
5. Verse 6.9- *suhṛin-mitrāryudāsīna-madhyastha-dveṣhya-bandhuṣhu sādhuṣhvapi cha pāpeshu sama-buddhir viśhiṣhyate* Special noteworthy in excellence is he who is even minded in his outlook on friend and foe on comrade and stranger on the neutral on the ally on the good and even on the evil ones.
6. Verse 2.14- *mātrā-sparśhās tu kaunteya śhītoṣhṇa-sukha-duḥkha-dāḥ āgamāpāyino*
'nityās tans-titikṣhasva bhārata Contact of the senses with their objects generates cold and heat pleasure and pain. They come and go being impermanent. Bear with them patiently O scion of the Bharata race.
7. Verse 12.13- *adveṣṭā sarva-bhūtānām maitraḥ karuṇa eva cha nirmamo nirahankārah sama-duḥkha-sukhaḥ kṣhamī* Friendly and compassionate to all and

without any touch of hatred, devoid of possessiveness and arrogance ever content and contemplative, alike in happiness and misery.

8. Verses 12.18-19- *samaḥ śhatrau cha mitre cha tathā mānāpamānayoḥ śhītoṣṇasukha-duḥkheṣhu samaḥ saṅga-vivarjitaḥ*

Tulya-nindā-stutir maunī santuṣṭo yena kenachit aniketaḥ sthira-matir bhaktimān me priyo naraḥ Alike to friend and foe alike in honour and insult alike in heat and cold alike in praise and blame unattached contented, steady in mind- dear to Me is a man who is thus devoted.

9. Verse 2.70- *āpūryamāṇam achala-pratiṣṭhaṁ samudram āpaḥ praviśhanti yadvat tadvat kāmā yaṁ praviśhanti sarve sa śhāntim āpnoti na kāmā-kāmī* He into whom all objects of desire enter unsought and causing no perturbation even like the ocean that is ever being filled by the rivers but still remains steady within its bounds such a person attains to peace not he who runs madly after objects of desire

10. Verse 2.51- *karma-jaṁ buddhi-yuktā hi phalaṁ tyaktvā manīṣhiṇaḥ janma-bandhavinirmuktāḥ padaṁ gachchhanty-anāmayaṁ* Wise men established thus in the unperturbed evenness of mind abandon the fruits of action, free themselves from entanglement in the cycle of births and deaths and attain to the state of freedom from all sorrow.

11. Verse 2.38- *sukha-duḥkhe same kṛtvā lābhālābhau jayājayau tato yuddhāya yujyasva naivam pāpam avāpsyasi* Treating alike pleasure and pain gain and loss victory and defeat be ready for battle. Thus, you will not incur any sin.

12. Verse 2.15- *yaṁ hi na vyathayantyete puruṣhaṁ puruṣharṣhabha sama-duḥkhasukhaṁ dhīraṁ so 'mṛitatvāya kalpate* O leader of men. That enlightened one who is unperturbed alike in pleasure and pain whom these do not distress he indeed is worthy of immortality.

13. Verse 5.3- *jñeyaḥ sa nitya-sannyāsī yo na dveṣṭi na kāṅkṣhati nirdvandvo hi mahābāho sukhaṁ bandhāt pramuchyate* O mighty armed one! Whoever hates not nor desires should be known as one established in renunciation. Indeed one who is above such contraries is easily liberated from bondage.

14. Verse 15.5- *nirmāna-mohā jīta-saṅga-doṣhā adhyātma-nityā vinivṛitta-kāmāḥ dvandvair vimuktāḥ sukha-duḥkha-sanjñair gachchhanty amūḍhāḥ padam avyayaṁ tat*
 They who are free from pride and delusion who have no attachments who are ever absorbed in spiritual pursuits who are free from all worldly desires who are unaffected by the varying situations of pleasurable and painful nature-such persons, free from ignorance attain to the Eternal state.

15. Verses 14.22-23- *śhrī-bhagavān uvācha prakāśhaṁ cha pravṛittim cha moham eva cha pāṇḍava na dveṣṭi sampravṛittāni na nivṛittāni kāṅkṣhati* O son of Pandu! He who shows no aversion to knowledge activity or delusion when any of them is dominant nor longs for them when absent.

Udāsīna-vad āsīno guṇair yo na vichālyate guṇā vartanta ity evaṁ yo 'vatiṣṭhati neṅgate Who remains like an unconcerned witness and is unperturbed by the Guna-born sense objects, who knows that it is only the Guna born senses and mind that act and enjoy who remains unwavering in all situations.

Appendix B

Survey Research Tool- English

(Attached herewith)



Equanimity & its Psycho-social Health Correlates

Dear Participant,

You are invited to take part in a research study titled Equanimity & it's Psycho-social Health Correlates. Equanimity (Samatva in Sanskrit) is the ability to be calm and balanced in all situations of life.

About the study: The aim of this study is to explore the concept of Equanimity and its relation with mental health and well-being. This study is being conducted for the degree of Ph. D. by Parisha Jijina under the guideship of Prof Urmi Nanda Biswas, at the Dept. of Psychology, The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda.

How will your participation help?

Your participation in this study will significantly contribute to understanding of the concept of equanimity and its relationship with other chosen variables which would contribute to research and therapeutic practices in mental health and well-being.

Participation in the study: You have been invited to take part in this study as you meet the participant criteria of the study, i.e. adult aged 18 and above. Your participation in this study is voluntary. If you agree to take part, you can withdraw at any time. There would be no risks involved in participation in the study. There are no monetary or other tangible benefits associated with participation in the study.

If you agree to take part in the study, you will be asked to complete a set of questionnaires related to the study. This may take approximately 20 to 25 minutes of your time.

Will my data be kept confidential?

The data in this study is collected anonymously (without your name). No individual's personal data will be shared and the data will be kept confidential. The final data of all individuals collected may be used in publications, reports and presentations, without the identity of any individual participants being revealed.

Please contact at jjijina.parisha-psy@msubaroda.ac.in if you have any further queries regarding the study.

Thank You for your participation in the study.

* Required

Please read the statements below & indicate your consent for participation in the study: I confirm I have read and understood all the information given above regarding the study. I understand that my participation is voluntary. *



regarding the study. I understand that my participation is voluntary.

6

- ☐ I agree to take part in the study.
- ☐ I do not agree to take part in the study.

Your age *

- ☐ 18-30
- ☐ 31-45
- ☐ 46-60
- ☐ 61 -75
- ☐ 76 and above

Your gender *

- ☐ Female
- ☐ Male
- ☐ Other: _____

Your last completed education *

- ☐ 10th standard/ 12th standard
- ☐ Graduation
- ☐ Post-graduation/ above post-graduation
- ☐ Other: _____

Do you identify with any religion? *

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Maybe



If yes, which religion do you identify with?

- ☐ Hinduism
- ☐ Islam
- ☐ Buddhism
- ☐ Sikhism
- ☐ Christianity
- ☐ Zoroastrianism
- ☐ Jain
- ☐ Other: _____

Have you been diagnosed with any mental disorder in the past six months? *

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No



Following are some items relating to your spiritual behaviors and practices. Indicate how much you practice these by marking in the appropriate column. (You may hold your phone horizontally to see all the five response columns). *

	Daily	Weekly (few times every week)	Monthly (few times in a month)	Occasionally (few times in a year)	Never
Meditation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Yoga	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Prayers/ Mantras	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Doing religious activities such as Seva/Satsang etc	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Writing a diary/ Journaling	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

The below questions aim to understand your general health. Please indicate the response which most applies to your health.

How would you evaluate your overall health? Would you say you are having: *

- ☐ Good physical health (No illness)
- ☐ Mild health problems or Minor illness
- ☐ Moderate health problems or illness
- ☐ Severe health problems or illness
- ☐ Total physical impairment



At what capacity/level can you perform work and the everyday activities of your life ? *

- ☐ Excellent capacity
- ☐ Good capacity
- ☐ Moderate capacity
- ☐ Impaired capacity
- ☐ Severely impaired capacity

Do you suffer from any chronic illness or diseases such as diabetes/ chronic pain/ hypertension/ heart disease etc *

- ☐ I do not suffer from any chronic diseases or illness.
- ☐ I suffer from mild level chronic illness or disease
- ☐ I suffer from moderate level chronic illness or disease
- ☐ I suffer from severe chronic illness or disease
- ☐ I suffer from very severe chronic illness or disease

The following items intend to measure your feelings and perceptions in a few situations. Please read through the statements carefully. There are no right or wrong answers. (You may hold your phone horizontally to see all the five response columns).



*

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often/Most of the times	Always
Whatever happens in any situation, I remain calm.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am not easily disturbed or upset by something unexpected.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It's difficult for me to tolerate uncomfortable emotions such as anxiety, anger , sadness.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I can easily get carried away when I feel annoyed.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel that I am a calm person even in the moments of stress and tension.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I get emotionally disturbed in stressful situations.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It's hard for me to remain calm during the difficult moments/situations of my life.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel that most of the problems in life are temporary and can be solved.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
When I expect to do something pleasant, I cannot stop	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



thinking about it.

When I anticipate a situation or something that I like, I get very excited.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

When I want something, I feel a strong desire to get it quickly.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

I get very excited when I am given something pleasant like a good gift or when something pleasant happens to me.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

I often wish to prolong/extend the moments when I have very pleasurable experiences.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

It's difficult for me to stop doing something that I like.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Please read through the statements carefully and indicate that which applies to you. There are no right or wrong answers. (You may hold your phone horizontally to see all the five response columns). *

Strongly disagree

Disagree

Neither agree nor disagree

Agree

Strongly agree

I cannot tolerate criticism

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

It's difficult for me to accept failure.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

I have a high need for success.

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

I feel overjoyed



when
someone
praises me.

☐☐☐☐☐

Please read the items below and indicate your opinion honestly. There are no right or wrong answers. (You may hold your phone horizontally to see all the five response columns). *

Strongly
disagree

Disagree

Neither agree
nor disagree

Agree

Strongly
Agree

I believe all
human beings
from different
religions,
gender,
economic
background are
essentially
equal.

☐☐☐☐☐

I believe all
living beings
are connected
to one another.

☐☐☐☐☐

I feel a sense
of oneness
with all other
individuals.

☐☐☐☐☐

I have strong
likes/dislikes
and
preferences
towards certain
individuals.

☐☐☐☐☐

I regard certain
people as my
enemies.

☐☐☐☐☐

Here are a few statements given below. Please indicate the extent to which the statement applies to you. (You may hold your phone horizontally to see all the five response columns).



I see myself as someone who *

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Is depressed, sad	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Is relaxed, handles stress well	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Can be tense	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Worries a lot	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Is emotionally stable and not easily upset	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Can be moody	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Remains calm in tense situation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Gets nervous easily	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Given below are a few statements. There are no right or wrong answers. Indicate how often each of the statements applies to you. (You may hold your phone horizontally to see all the five response columns). *

	I never feel this way	I rarely feel this way	I sometimes feel this way	I feel this way most of the times	I always feel this way
I lack friends/companionship.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel part of a group of friends.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel left out.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel isolated from others.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am unhappy being so withdrawn.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
People are around me, but not with me.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

These items below are designed to understand your experiences of emotional events. Please indicate how often the below statements apply to you. (You may hold your phone horizontally to see all the five response columns).



*

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
I tend to get happy very easily.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I tend to get upset very easily.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
When I am happy the feeling stays with me for quite a while.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
When I am upset it takes me quite a while to snap out of it.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
When I am joyful, I tend to feel it very deeply.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
If I am upset, I tend to feel it more deeply than everyone else.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I feel good about positive things in an instant.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I tend to get disappointed very easily.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
When I am feeling positive, I can stay like	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



that for a good/ large part of the day.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It's hard for me to recover from frustration.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I experience positive mood very strongly.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Normally when I am unhappy, I feel it very strongly.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I react to good news very quickly.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I tend to get hopeless about negative things very quickly.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I can remain enthusiastic for quite a while.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Once I am in a negative mood, its hard to come out of it.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
When I am enthusiastic about something, I feel it very powerfully.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My negative feelings feel very intense.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

The below questions are in regard to your use of social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc). Choose the response for each question that best describes your usage of social media. (You may hold your phone horizontally to see all the five response columns).



How often during the last year have you *

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
Spent a lot of time thinking about social media or your use of social media	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Felt an urge to use social media more and more	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Used social media in order to forget about personal problems	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Tried to cut down on the use of social media without success	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Become restless or troubled if you have been restricted from using social media	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Used social media so much that it had a negative impact on your studies/job/relationships	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



Please read the statements below and indicate how often during the past three months have you felt... (You may hold your phone horizontally to see all the five response columns). *

	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
Happy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Interested in life	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Satisfied with life	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
That you had something important to contribute to society	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
That you belonged to a community (like a social group, or your neighborhood)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
That our society is a good place or is becoming a better place for all people	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
That people are basically good	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
That the way our society works makes sense to you	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
That you liked most parts of your personality	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
That you felt					



good at
managing the
responsibilities
of your daily life

☐☐☐☐☐

That you had
warm and
trusting

☐☐☐☐☐

relations with
others

Felt that your life
has a sense of
direction or
meaning to it

☐☐☐☐☐

That you had
experiences that
challenged you
to grow and
become a better
person

☐☐☐☐☐

That you felt
confident to
express your
own ideas and
opinions

☐☐☐☐☐

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Google Forms



Appendix C

Survey Research Tool- Hindi

(Attached herewith)

समत्व और उसके मनोसामाजिक स्वास्थ्य सम्बन्धित पहलू

आदरणीय प्रतिभागी,

‘समत्व और उसके मनोसामाजिक स्वास्थ्य संबन्धित पहलू’ नामक इस रिसर्च / संशोधनात्मक अभ्यास में हिस्सा लेने के लिये आप सादर निमंत्रित हैं। ‘समत्व’ एक संस्कृत शब्द है और उसका अर्थ होता है कि जीवन की सभी परिस्थितियों में शांति एवं संतुलन बनाए रखना।

अभ्याससम्बन्धी जानकारी :

इस अभ्यास का उद्देश्य है समत्व की संकल्पना को सही माइने में समझना और यह हमारे मनोसामाजिक स्वास्थ्य एवं कल्याण के साथ किस तरह जुड़ा हुआ है, उसका अन्वेषण करना। यह अभ्यास पी.एच.डी. की उपाधि प्राप्त करने के आशय से महाराजा सयाजीराव यूनिवर्सिटी ऑफ बरोड़ा के साइकोलोजी विभाग की छात्रा परिशा जिजिना द्वारा प्रा. उर्मि नंदा बिस्वास के मार्गदर्शन के तहत किया जा रहा है।

आपकी हिस्सेदारी इस अभ्यास में किस प्रकार हमें सहायता करेगी?

आपके इस अभ्यास में हिस्सा लेने से समत्व की संकल्पना को समझने में सहायता मिलेगी, जो आगे चलकर मनोसामाजिक स्वास्थ्य एवं कल्याण के विषय में उपचार पद्धति सुनिश्चित करने में महत्वपूर्ण सिद्ध होगी।

इस अभ्यास में हिस्सेदारी : आपको इस अभ्यास का हिस्सा बनने के लिये आमंत्रित किया गया है, क्योंकि इस अभ्यास के लिये आवश्यक सभी मापदंडों के अनुसार आप उचित पाए गए हैं, जैसे कि आप बालिग हैं- आपकी उम्र १८ वर्ष से अधिक है। इस अभ्यास में हिस्सा लेना सम्पूर्ण रूप से आपकी इच्छा के अधीन है। यदि आप इस अभ्यास में हिस्सा लेते हैं, तब भी किसी भी समय बीच में से इसे छोड़ने के लिये मुक्त हैं। इस अभ्यास का हिस्सा बनने में आपको कोई खतरा नहीं है। साथ ही इस अभ्यास में हिस्सा लेने से आपको आर्थिक अथवा अन्य कोई लाभ होनेवाला हो, ऐसा भी नहीं है। यदि आप इस अभ्यास में हिस्सा लेने के लिये सहमत होते हैं, तो आपको इस अभ्यास से जुड़े कुछ सवालों के जवाब देने होंगे। जिसके लिये आपको २० से २५ मिनट का समय देना होगा।

क्या मेरे द्वारा दी गई जानकारी गोपनीय रखी जाएगी?

इस अभ्यास के लिये जो जानकारी एकत्रित की जाएगी, उसमें से किसी के भी ऊपर हिस्सा लेनेवाले का नाम नहीं होगा। किसी भी व्यक्ति की निजी जानकारी को किसी और के सुपुर्द नहीं किया जाएगा और यह जानकारी पूर्णतः गोपनीय रखी जाएगी। हिस्सा लेनेवालों से सभी

जानकारी एकत्रित करने के बाद उसका उपयोग रिपोर्ट, प्रेजेंटेशन अथवा प्रकाशित करने हेतु किया जाएगा, जिसमें कहीं भी हिस्सा लेनेवाले किसी भी व्यक्ति की पहचान प्रकट नहीं होगी।

यदि आपको इस अभ्यास के बारे में प्रश्न पूछने हों, तो इस ईमेल एड्रेस पर संपर्क करें।

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इस अभ्यास में हिस्सा लेने के लिये आपका बहुत बहुत धन्यवाद!

नीचे दिए गए वाक्यों को ध्यान से पढ़ें और इस अभ्यास का हिस्सा बनने के लिये आप सहमत हैं, यह बताएँ : मेरी ओर से इस बात कि पुष्टि दी जाती है कि मैंने इस अभ्यास के बारे में ऊपर दी गई सारी जानकारी पढ़ी है और ठीक से समझ ली है। मुझे यह भी पता है कि इस अभ्यास में हिस्सा लेना मेरे लिये सम्पूर्ण रूप से स्वैच्छिक है।

- ☐ मैं इस अभ्यास में हिस्सा लेने के लिये सहमत हूँ ।
- ☐ मैं इस अभ्यास में हिस्सा लेने के लिये सहमत नहीं हूँ ।

आपकी उम्र

- ☐ १८-३०
- ☐ ३१-४५
- ☐ ४६-६०
- ☐ ६१-७५
- ☐ ७६ अथवा उससे अधिक

आपका जेंडर

- ☐ पुरुष
- ☐ महिला
- ☐ अन्य

आपने कहाँ तक शिक्षा ली है?

- ☐ १०वीं कक्षा / १२वीं कक्षा
- ☐ स्नातक
- ☐ स्नातकोत्तर
- ☐ अन्य

क्या आप किसी धर्म का पालन करते हैं?

- ☐ हाँ

- ☐ ना
- ☐ शायद

यदि हाँ, तो आप कौन से धर्म में विश्वास करते हैं?

- ☐ हिन्दू धर्म
- ☐ इस्लाम धर्म
- ☐ बौद्ध धर्म
- ☐ सिक्ख धर्म
- ☐ ईसाई धर्म
- ☐ ज़ोरोस्ट्रियन धर्म (पारसी)
- ☐ जैन
- ☐ अन्य

क्या आप पिछले छः महीनों के दौरान किसी भी मानसिक बीमारी से पीड़ित हुए हैं?

- ☐ हाँ
- ☐ नहीं

नीचे कुछ आध्यात्मिक प्रवृत्तियाँ बताई गई हैं। योग्य जगह पर निशान लगाकर बताएँ कि आप इनमें से कौन सी प्रवृत्तियाँ कितने समयान्तराल पर करते हैं। (यदि आप अपना फोन टेढ़ा (लैंड स्केप व्यू में) पकड़ेंगे, तो एकसाथ सभी विकल्प पढ़ने में आपको सुविधा रहेगी।)

	प्रतिदिन	प्रति सप्ताह (अथवा सप्ताह में कुछ बार)	प्रति माह (अथवा महीने में कुछ बार)	कभीकभार (पूरे साल में कुछ बार)	कभी नहीं
ध्यान					
योग					
प्रार्थना / मंत्रजाप					
किसी प्रकार की धार्मिक प्रवृत्ति (सेवा / सत्संग)					
नियमित रूप से डायरी लिखना (आत्मनिरीक्षण)					

नीचे कुछ सवाल दिए गए हैं, जिनसे आपके सामान्य स्वास्थ्य के बारे में जानकारी मिलेगी। आपके स्वास्थ्य के बारे में जो सबसे उपयुक्त हो, वह विकल्प पसंद करें।

आप अपने स्वास्थ्य का मूल्यांकन किन शब्दों में करना चाहेंगे? क्या आप कहेंगे कि

- ☐ आपका शारीरिक स्वास्थ्य एकदम अच्छा है
- ☐ आपको स्वास्थ्यसंबन्धित छोटी समस्याएँ (छोटी बीमारियाँ) परेशान कर रही हैं
- ☐ आपको स्वास्थ्यसंबन्धित मध्यम प्रकार की समस्याएँ (मध्यम बीमारियाँ) परेशान कर रही हैं
- ☐ आपको स्वास्थ्यसंबन्धित गंभीर प्रकार की समस्याएँ (गंभीर बीमारियाँ) परेशान कर रही हैं
- ☐ आप शारीरिक रूप से सम्पूर्ण अस्वस्थ हैं

आप अपने दैनिक जीवन में सारा काम कितनी क्षमता से कर पाते हैं?

- ☐ अत्यधिक क्षमता से
- ☐ अच्छी खासी क्षमता से
- ☐ मध्यम प्रकार की क्षमता से
- ☐ कुछ खास क्षमता रही ही नहीं है
- ☐ बिलकुल ही क्षमताविहीन हूँ

क्या आप किसी दीर्घकालिक बीमारी (जैसे कि डायबिटिस, पुराना दर्द, भारी रक्तदाब अथवा हृदय की बीमारी) से पीड़ित हैं?

- ☐ मैं किसी भी दीर्घकालिक बीमारी से पीड़ित नहीं हूँ
- ☐ मैं दीर्घकालिक बीमारी से पीड़ित तो हूँ, पर यह बहुत ही कम मात्रा में है
- ☐ मैं दीर्घकालिक बीमारी से पीड़ित हूँ और यह बीमारी मध्यम मात्रा में है
- ☐ मैं दीर्घकालिक बीमारी से पीड़ित हूँ और यह बीमारी गंभीर मात्रा में है
- ☐ मैं दीर्घकालिक बीमारी से पीड़ित हूँ और यह बीमारी अत्यंत गंभीर रूप में है

नीचे कुछ ऐसी स्थितियाँ बताई गई हैं, जो किसी खास हालात में आपकी संवेदना एवं अनुभूति को प्रदर्शित करती हैं। कृपया इन वाक्यों को ध्यान से पढ़ें। इनके जवाब सही अथवा गलत प्रकार के नहीं हैं। [यदि आप अपना फोन टेढ़ा (लैंडस्केप व्यू में) पकड़ेंगे, तो एकसाथ सभी विकल्प पढ़ने में आपको सुविधा रहेगी।]

	कभी नहीं	शायद ही कभी	कभी कभार	कई बार	हमेशा
किसी भी परिस्थिति में कुछ भी हो जाए, मैं शांत रहता हूँ / रहती हूँ					
कुछ भी अनपेक्षित होने पर मैं आसानी से विचलित हो जानेवालों में से नहीं हूँ					
चिंता, गुस्सा अथवा दुःख जैसी तकलीफ़देह भावनाओं को सह पाना मेरे लिये मुश्किल है					
जब मुझे चिड़चिड़ापन महसूस होता है, तब मुझे गुस्सा आसानी से आ जाता है					
मुझे लगता है कि तनावभरी परिस्थितियों में भी मैं शांत रहता हूँ / रहती हूँ					
मैं तनाव से भरी स्थिति में भावनात्मक रूप से परेशान हो जाता हूँ / जाती हूँ					
अपने जीवन की मुश्किल परिस्थितियों के दौरान शांत रहना मेरे लिये कठिन है					
मेरा मानना है कि जीवन की लगभग सारी समस्याएँ अस्थायी होती हैं और हम उन्हें सुलझा सकते हैं					
जब मैं कुछ अच्छा करने की उम्मीद करता / करती हूँ, तब मैं उसके बारे में सोचना बंद नहीं कर सकता/ सकती					
मेरी पसंद की घटना बनने की संभावना नज़र आने पर मेरा मन अत्यंत रोमांचित हो उठता है					
यदि मुझे कुछ चाहिए, तो उसे जल्दी से पाने की तीव्र इच्छा मैं महसूस करता / करती हूँ					
यदि मेरे साथ कोई अच्छी घटना घटित होती है अथवा मेरे साथ कुछ भी अच्छा होता है (जैसे किसी से भेंट मिलना) तो मेरा मन अत्यंत रोमांचित हो उठता है					

जब भी मुझे कोई बहुत अच्छा अनुभव होता है, तब मैं अक्सर उन क्षणों को लंबा खींचना चाहता / चाहती हूँ					
अगर मुझे कुछ पसंद है, उसे करना बंद कर देना मेरे लिये मुश्किल है					

नीचे दिए गए वाक्यों को ध्यान से पढ़ें और योग्य जगह पर निशान लगाकर बताएँ कि आपको कौनसी बात लागू होती है। इनके जवाब सही अथवा गलत प्रकार के नहीं हैं। [यदि आप अपना फोन टेढ़ा (लैंडस्केप व्यू में) पकड़ेंगे, तो एकसाथ सभी विकल्प पढ़ने में आपको सुविधा रहेगी।]

	सम्पूर्ण असहमत	असहमत	सहमत नहीं, असहमत तभी नहीं	सहमत	सम्पूर्ण सहमत
मेरे लिये निंदा सहन करना कठिन है					
मेरे लिये असफलता स्वीकार करना कठिन है					
मेरे लिये सफलता अत्यंत आवश्यक है					
मुझे अत्यधिक खुशी होती है, जब कोई मेरी प्रशंसा करता है					

नीचे दिए गए वाक्यों को ध्यान से पढ़ें और पूर्ण निष्ठा से जवाब दें। इनके जवाब सही अथवा गलत प्रकार के नहीं हैं। [यदि आप अपना फोन टेढ़ा (लैंडस्केप व्यू में) पकड़ेंगे, तो एकसाथ सभी विकल्प पढ़ने में आपको सुविधा रहेगी।]

	सम्पूर्ण असहमत	असहमत	सहमत नहीं, असहमत भी नहीं	सहमत	सम्पूर्ण सहमत
मेरा मानना है कि मनुष्य चाहे किसी भी धर्म, जेंडर अथवा आर्थिक स्थिति का हो, अंततः सब समान है					

मेरा मानना है कि सभी जीव किसी न किसी तरह एकदूसरे से जुड़े हैं					
मुझे अन्य सभी व्यक्तियों के साथ एकात्मकता महसूस होती है					
कुछ लोग मुझे अत्यंत पसंद हैं और कुछ लोग अत्यंत नापसंद हैं।					
कुछ लोगों को मैं अपना शत्रु मानता/मानती हूँ					

नीचे दिए गए वाक्यों को ध्यान से पढ़ें और योग्य जगह पर निशान लगाकर बताएँ कि आपको कौनसी बात लागू होती है | इनके जवाब सही अथवा गलत प्रकार के नहीं हैं। [यदि आप अपना फोन टेढ़ा (लैंडस्केप व्यू में) पकड़ेंगे, तो एकसाथ सभी विकल्प पढ़ने में आपको सुविधा रहेगी।]

मैं खुदको ऐसे व्यक्ति के रूप में देखता / देखती हूँ,

	सम्पूर्ण असहमत	असहमत	सहमत नहीं, असहमत भी नहीं	सहमत	सम्पूर्ण सहमत
जो उदास है					
जो तनावमुक्त है और तनाव को अच्छी तरह से संभालता/संभालती है					
जो तनावग्रस्त हो सकता/सकती है					
जो बहुत चिंता करते हैं					
जो भावनात्मक रूप से स्थिर है और आसानी से परेशान नहीं होते हैं					
जो मनमौजी (मूडी) है					
जो तनावपूर्ण स्थिति में भी शांत ही रहता/रहती है					
जो आसानी से बेचैन हो जाता/जाती है					

नीचे कुछ वाक्य दिए गए हैं। इनके जवाब सही अथवा गलत प्रकार के नहीं हैं। [यदि आप अपना फोन टेढ़ा (लैंडस्केप व्यू में) पकड़ेंगे, तो एकसाथ सभी विकल्प पढ़ने में आपको सुविधा रहेगी।]

	मुझे कभी ऐसा महसूस नहीं होता	मुझे शायद ही कभी ऐसा महसूस होता है	मुझे कभीकभार ऐसा महसूस होता है	मुझे कई बार ऐसा महसूस होता है	मुझे हमेशा ऐसा महसूस होता है
मेरे पास दोस्तों / साथी की कमी है					
मुझे लगता है कि मैं दोस्तों की टोली का एक हिस्सा हूँ					
मुझे अकेलापन महसूस होता है					
मुझे लगता है कि मैं दूसरों से अलग-थलग हो गया हूँ					
मैं अपने आप में अकेला होने से दुःखी हूँ					
मेरे आसपास तो बहुत सारे लोग हैं, पर मेरे साथ कोई नहीं है					

नीचे कुछ ऐसे वाक्य दिए गए हैं, जो भावात्मक परिस्थिति के दौरान आपके अनुभव को समझने में सहायता करेंगे। कृपया बताएँ कि नीचे दिए गए वाक्य आपको कितनी बार लागू होते हैं। [यदि आप अपना फोन टेढ़ा (लैंडस्केप व्यू में) पकड़ेंगे, तो एकसाथ सभी विकल्प पढ़ने में आपको सुविधा रहेगी।]

	कभी नहीं	शायद ही कभी	कभीकभार	कई बार	हमेशा
मेरी प्रकृति ऐसी है कि मैं तुरंत खुश हो जाता/जाती हूँ					
मेरी प्रकृति ऐसी है कि मैं तुरंत परेशान हो जाता हूँ					
जब मैं खुश होता/होती हूँ, तब वह भावना मेरे साथ काफी समय तक रहती है					
जब मैं परेशान होता/होती हूँ, तब इससे बाहर निकलने में मुझे काफी समय लगता है					

अगर मैं खुश हूँ, तो मैं इसे बाकी सभीकी तुलना में अधिक /ज्यादा गहराई से महसूस करता /करती हूँ					
अगर मैं परेशान हूँ, तो मैं इसे बाकी सभीकी तुलना में अधिक /ज्यादा गहराई से महसूस करता /करती हूँ					
सकारात्मक चीजों के प्रति मुझे तुरंत ही अच्छा महसूस होता है					
मैं आसानी से निराश हो जाता/जाती हूँ					
जब मैं सकारात्मक भावों को महसूस करता/करती हूँ, तब ये भाव लगभग पूरे दिन के दौरान मेरे साथ बने रहते हैं					
हताशा से बाहर निकलने में मुझे कठिनाई महसूस होती है					
मैं पॉजिटिव (सकारात्मक) मूड को बहुत तीव्र भाव से महसूस करता/करती हूँ					
सामान्यतः जब मैं दुःखी होता/होती हूँ, तब बड़ी तीव्रता से उसे महसूस करता/करती हूँ					
अच्छे समाचार मिलने पर मैं तुरंत ही रिप्लेट करता/करती हूँ					
नकारात्मक चीजों के बारे में मैं तुरंत निराश हो जाता/जाती हूँ					
मैं लंबे समय तक उत्साहित रह सकता/सकती हूँ					
यदि मेरे मन में नकारात्मकता प्रवेश कर लेती तो है, तो उससे बाहर निकलने में मुझे काफी कठिनाई होती है					
यदि किसी बात को लेकर मैं अत्यंत उत्साहित हो जाता/जाती हूँ, तो यह उत्साह की अनुभूति मुझे तीव्र रूप से महसूस होती है					
मेरी नकारात्मक भावों की अनुभूति बड़ी तीव्र होती है					

नीचे कुछ ऐसे सवाल पूछे गए हैं, जो आपके सोशियल मीडिया (फेसबुक, ट्विटर, इन्स्टाग्राम इत्यादि...) के उपयोग पर आधारित हैं। नीचे दिए गए विकल्पों में से उस विकल्प को चुनें, जो इन मीडिया के आपके उपयोग में बारे में जानकारी देता हो। [यदि आप अपना फोन टेढ़ा (लैंडस्केप व्यू में) पकड़ेंगे, तो एकसाथ सभी विकल्प पढ़ने में आपको सुविधा रहेगी।]

पिछले साल आपने कितनी बार

	कभी नहीं	शायद ही कभी	कभीकभार	कई बार	हमेशा
सोशियल मीडिया के बारे में अथवा सोशियल मीडिया के आपके उपयोग के बारे में सोचने में अत्यधिक समय व्यतीत किया					
सोशियल मीडिया का उपयोग करने की आपको तीव्रतम इच्छा हुई					
आपकी निजी समस्याओं को भूलने के लिये सोशियल मीडिया का उपयोग किया					
सोशियल मीडिया के आपके द्वारा हो रहे उपयोग को कम करने की कोशिश की, जिसमें असफल रहे					
सोशियल मीडिया का इतना अधिक उपयोग किया, जिसका दुष्प्रभाव आपके अभ्यास / नौकरी / संबंधों पर हुआ					

नीचे दिए गए वाक्यों को ध्यान से पढ़ें और बताएँ कि पिछले तीन महीनों में कितनी बार आपने महसूस किया कि..... [यदि आप अपना फोन टेढ़ा (लैंडस्केप व्यू में) पकड़ेंगे, तो एकसाथ सभी विकल्प पढ़ने में आपको सुविधा रहेगी।]

पिछले तीन महीनों में कितनी बार आपने महसूस किया कि ...

	कभी नहीं	शायद ही कभी	कभीकभार	कई बार	हमेशा
आप खुश हैं					
आपको जीवन में रुचि है					
आपको अपने जीवन से संतोष है					
आप समाज में महत्वपूर्ण योगदान कर सकते हैं					

आप समाज का हिस्सा हैं (जैसे कि कोई सामाजिक समुदाय, पास पड़ोस इत्यादि)					
हमारा समाज अच्छा है अथवा सभी लोगों के लिये यह अधिक अच्छा बन रहा है					
आपने महसूस किया कि लोग मूलतः तो अच्छे ही हैं					
जिस तरह से हमारा समाज कार्य कर रहा है, आप इसे भली भाँति समझ रहे हैं					
आपको अपने व्यक्तित्व के बहुधा सभी पहलू पसंद हैं					
आप अपनी दिन प्रतिदिन की जिम्मेदारियों को निभाते समय आनंद का अनुभव करते हैं					
आपके अन्य लोगों के साथ संबंध विश्वास से भरे और उष्मापूर्ण हैं					
आपका जीवन सही दिशा में आगे बढ़ रहा है और वह अर्थपूर्ण है					
आपको महसूस हुआ कि आपको ऐसे अनुभव हुए हैं, जिसने आपकी क्षमताओं को चुनौती दी हो तथा आपको विकसित होने का एवं अधिक अच्छा बनने का अवसर दिया हो					
आप अपनी राय अथवा विचार प्रकट करते समय आत्मविश्वास से भरे रहें हो					

APPENDIX D

The following are the publications from the Ph.D. work.

1. Jijina, P. & Biswas, U. (2021). Understanding equanimity from a psychological perspective: Implications for holistic well-being during a global pandemic. *Mental Health, Religion and Culture*, 24(9), 873-886
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13674676.2021.1952970>
2. Jijina, P., Vasa, V., & Biswas, U. N. (2020). Construct description of Samatva from the Bhagavad Gita: Implications for holistic well-being. *PURUSHARTHA-A journal of Management, Ethics and Spirituality*, 13(1), 1-20.
<https://journals.smsvaranasi.com/index.php/purushartha/article/view/654>



Understanding equanimity from a psychological perspective: implications for holistic well-being during a global pandemic

Parisha Jijina & Urmi Nanda Biswas

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Understanding equanimity from a psychological perspective: implications for holistic well-being during a global pandemic

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ABSTRACT

The cultivation of equanimity has been emphasized in various indigenous philosophies and contemplative practices. This paper aims to develop an expansive understanding of equanimity as a distinct psychological construct. Thirty experts from various traditions such as Buddhism, Vedic studies, meditation, and yoga were interviewed on their understanding and insights into equanimity. The findings suggest equanimity as an even-mindedness towards the varied hedonic and affective experiences. The cognitive, affective, and conative mechanisms of equanimity such as increased distress tolerance, hedonic neutrality, and reduced reactivity are outlined. At the interpersonal level, equanimity entails impartiality and reduced bias towards others. The challenges one may face during the cultivation of equanimity have been suggested by the experts. The implications of cultivating equanimity have been examined in the context of adaptive coping and holistic wellbeing in the current pandemic situation, dealing with compassion fatigue, and the development of indigenous leadership practices.

ARTICLE HISTORY

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KEYWORDS

Cultivation of equanimity; holistic well-being; hedonic neutrality; even-mindedness; Samatva; health concomitants

Introduction

The construct of equanimity is historically rooted in various indigenous schools of thought and ancient scriptures. In Buddhism, equanimity is emphasised as a neutral, balanced mental experience that is neither pleasant nor unpleasant, and that involves neither intensifying nor dampening current mental states (Bodhi, 2000). Equanimity or *Upekkha* has been elaborated as one of the Four Immeasurables or divine qualities in Buddhism and is considered as a means for cultivating *Bodhicitta* or universal compassion (Wallace, 2010). Equanimity is also regarded as one of the fundamental teachings in the scriptures of the Bhagavad Gita wherein Shri Krishna elaborates on being even-minded and balanced in the dualities of life (Jijina et al., 2020). The traditional Yoga systems such as Ashtanga Yoga also regard equanimity as one of the significant spiritual goals (Bhavanani, 2011). Though the construct of equanimity has roots in ancient philosophies and faiths, it has only recently garnered attention in the psychological literature.

Recent research in Western psychology has turned towards the question of how and why mindfulness results in positive change. The established models of mindfulness

(Baer et al., 2008; Bishop et al., 2004; Shapiro et al., 2006) all have in common, a component corresponding to acceptance and openness. Desbordes et al. (2015) suggested that it is this specific component of mindfulness that corresponds with the classical description of equanimity and emphasised a need to articulate a conceptual benchmark for this construct.

Equanimity has been proposed as an even-minded mental state or dispositional tendency toward all experiences or objects regardless of their affective valence – pleasant, unpleasant, or neutral (Desbordes et al., 2015). Hadash et al. (2016) introduced the Decoupling model in which equanimity was conceptualised as the decoupling of desire (wanting and not wanting) from the hedonic tone of experience (pleasant and unpleasant). They further proposed that equanimity is manifested by an intentional attitude of acceptance and reduced automatic reactivity towards experience regardless of its hedonic tone. Shoham et al. (2018) described equanimity as elevated acceptance and decreased cognitive avoidance and reported that the cultivation of mindfulness was associated with increased equanimity. Recently, Juneau et al. (2020) developed a comprehensive scale of equanimity with two dimensions – Hedonic Independence and Even-minded state of mind component.

Equanimity has also been described in the context of a practice that allows a deeper level of discernment and greater insight into the construction of reality (Schonert-Reichl & Roeser, 2016). Farb et al. (2012) stated that equanimity is an important aspect of emotional regulation as it reduces automatic affective processing and evaluative reactions. Thus, equanimity enables one to alter both the quality and magnitude of emotional responses (Gross & Thompson, 2006) and maintain calmness in the face of provocative stimuli (Carmody & Baer, 2009).

The ideal form of equanimity embraced by Buddhism and also in the ancient scriptures of the Bhagavad Gita includes an even-mindedness towards not just experiences of life (such as joy-sorrow), but also towards all individuals (Desbordes et al., 2015; Tapasyananda, 1984). Weber (2019) suggested that equanimity is the key mediating factor in being non-judgmental and may generate compassion towards other individuals. Studies have reported that the cultivation of equanimity can positively impact social functioning and loneliness (Lindsay et al., 2018) and positively impact intimate relationships by facilitating an environment that is conducive to the partner's emotional needs (Maher & Cordova, 2019).

In a review of the research on equanimity in the psychological literature, it was found that there is a lack of qualitative studies outlining its subtle experiential aspects. This paper aims to develop a more expansive and experiential understanding of equanimity through the insights of experts across contemplative traditions that have emphasised its cultivation. Through the experiences of the experts, the study also aims to understand the various difficulties and challenges associated with the cultivation of equanimity.

Method

A qualitative research methodology was adopted to delineate the subtle and experiential aspects of equanimity through the insights of the experts.

Participants

The Expert sampling method was utilised which involves identifying key informants who can provide valuable insights into the topic being explored through their knowledge and experience (Frey, 2018).

The authors identified experts with vast expertise and experience in the fields of Buddhism, Vedic studies, Indian Psychology, Mindfulness, Meditation, Yoga, and practitioners of holistic mental health. The experts belonged to reputed institutes and universities majorly across India, and also Canada, and the USA. Twenty-seven experts were chosen considering their significant contributions, expertise, and having a minimum of ten years of experience in teaching, practice, or research in their field. Two Ph.D. scholars and one Post-Doctoral Fellow from academic institutes were also selected for the interview as their current research was very closely tied to equanimity and would add value to the study. Thus, the total sample constituted thirty experts. The sample comprised of highly educated experts consisting of 18 doctorates and three medical degree holders.

Interview Schedules

A semi-structured interview schedule was designed, which included a few exploratory and open-ended questions regarding the conceptualisation of equanimity, its underlying factors, and cultivation practices. Examples of a few of the exploratory questions include- What according to you is equanimity? How would you describe it? Participants were encouraged to bring in new and significant dimensions of equanimity and elaborate on their experiences during the interview.

Procedure

The study was passed for ethics through the Faculty Research Committee (FRC), and the Research and Consultancy Cell (RCC) of The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda. Thirty experts from various traditions were identified and requested for an interview. Informed consent was obtained from all the interviewees. The interviewees were assured of protecting the confidentiality of the information shared. The majority of the interviews were conducted in person with a prior appointment. However, few interviews were taken telephonically (with informed consent for audio recording) from the experts who were at a significant geographical distance. Data saturation was attained at thirty interviews and hence additional experts were not interviewed.

Analysis of the Data

The audio data consisted of 964 min of audio recording. All of the interviews were transcribed by the first author and totalled 117 pages of raw data. The Thematic Analysis method by Braun and Clarke (2006) was used in analysing the data. The analytic process was based on back-and-forth immersion in the data and repeated sorting coding and comparisons. The interview data was well suited to a Thematic Analysis approach, various categories and patterns in the data were identified around the core phenomena which are presented in the next section.

Results and Discussion

The findings from the thirty interviews have resulted in a thick description of equanimity and have been presented in two sections: Section A and Section B. Section A focuses on the elaboration of the key psychological facets of equanimity and the myths and misconceptions surrounding the construct. Section B focuses on the contextual pre-cursors, challenges, and suggested health concomitants related to the cultivation of equanimity.

The themes and sub-themes presented in Table 1 below focus on the significant cognitive, affective, and conative characteristics of equanimity. The experts further distinguished equanimity from seemingly similar states such as indifference, apathy, and passivity. The verbatims and illustrative quotes of the experts provide a rich description of equanimity.

Section A: Conceptualisation of equanimity

The themes and sub-themes delineating the psychological conceptualisation of equanimity are presented below.

Table 1. The Psychological Facets of Equanimity.

What Equanimity Is Theme	Sub-themes	Illustrative quotes
1. Widening perspective on experience	1.1. Hedonic neutrality	<i>You are not overly drawn towards one nor are you running away from one, you can experience different things as they are</i>
	1.2. Increased distress tolerance and openness to experience	<i>What happens is you are choiceless, you allow yourself to a range of emotions and experiences ...</i>
	1.3. Reduced reactivity	<i>In states of equanimity, the intensity of emotions will come down, the gap between major episodes will come down gradually and the time taken to come back to the regular state will decrease ...</i>
2. Broadening of one's perspective towards others	2.1. Reduced bias & preconceived notions	<i>Equanimity is treating everyone equally, it is Linked with universal love, we reduce our in-group out-group kind of biases</i>
	2.2. Increased empathy and compassion	<i>If you have equanimity, you would have the same response if your child falls or a stranger's child falls ...</i>
3. Rooted in wisdom and insight	3.1. Clarity in the interpretation of experiences	<i>Equanimity is the wisdom of being able to see things the way they truly are, you are present to the way things are ...</i>
	3.2. Insight into the transitory nature of experiences	<i>In equanimity we understand that friends turn into enemies, the enemy turns into a friend. Nothing is permanent ...</i>
	3.3. Role of conditioning in shaping our experiences	<i>It's an awareness of this particular introjection realizing that these things are part of conditioning and don't belong to me ...</i>
What Equanimity may be Misconstrued as (Myths/Misconceptions)		
4. Misconceptions of equanimity	4.1. Apathy	<i>Equanimity doesn't mean that you are not affected, indifferent, or uninterested ...</i>
	4.2. Reduced connection with people	<i>Many people can take equanimity to mean that you don't care and are not affected but that is not true ...</i>
	4.3. Passivity	<i>In the name of equanimity, many practitioners have slowed down their life and this slowing down is not an indicator of equanimity</i>
	4.4. Conflated with mindfulness	<i>Mindfulness may be one of the steps towards equanimity but it is not equanimity ...</i>

1. Widening perspective of experience

In states of equanimity, there is a broadening of the perspective towards various hedonic experiences facilitated through hedonic neutrality, acceptance, and enhanced tolerance for distress which is elaborated in detail below.

1.1. Hedonic neutrality

In states of equanimity, there is an even-mindedness towards the entire spectrum of varied hedonic and affective experiences; i.e., there is reduced craving for the pleasant and reduced aversion of the unpleasant. The experts suggested that in states of equanimity, there is less rigidity towards one's likes, dislikes, and preferences. In this process, acceptance increases. One expert who is a certified mindfulness practitioner and therapist elaborated,

For me equanimity is translated as a ground of stability where there is no fixed preference for one way or the other, or rigid likes or dislikes, equanimity is a stable welcoming ground of becoming.

Equanimity entails transcending the dualities. One expert who is an experienced practitioner of Vipassana and a Psychology professor shared,

We generally oscillate between negative and positive. Because of socialization, conditioning, and culture, this dichotomy was created. Beyond this dichotomy lies equanimity.

The recent conceptualisations of equanimity as being neutral in the various hedonic experiences by (2020) and Hadash et al. (2016) correspond with the above understandings of the experts. The next sub-theme focuses on enhanced distress tolerance and openness to experience as facets of equanimity.

1.2. Increased distress tolerance and openness to experience

In states of equanimity, one is more open to a range of experiences, and the capacity for tolerating distress increases. The experts also mentioned that avoidance strategies or defence mechanisms such as suppression, repression, denial are reduced with the cultivation of equanimity. In the view of a senior psychologist and professor having a vast background in Indian psychology and scriptures,

You allow your being to experience everything, not censoring and bearing the polarities alike, acceptance increases, and there is a metaphorical death of your preconceived notions.

When one is more open to new experiences, they may recognise the significance of dualities such as pleasure-pain, joy-sorrow. In this context, a professor of Sanskrit and the Indian scriptures mentioned the interesting analogy of *Chakra Parivartan*– the rotation of the spokes of the wheel from the Bhagavat Gita,

In equanimity we understand that Sukkah and dukkha (happiness and sorrow) are like the spokes of the wheel, they don't remain at the same point, they just keep on rotating. If there is no darkness, you would not value the light.

The psychological literature emphasises that while equanimity has some overlaps with the typical emotional regulation strategies, it could be quite different. For example, in the strategy of attention control, attention is guided away from the distressing stimulus.

However, in states of equanimity, distress tolerance is enhanced, and attention is guided instead towards the emotionally triggering stimulus and also towards our tendencies of wanting negative states to end (Chambers et al., 2009). Also, in states of equanimity, the cognitive reinterpretation of the situation is not attempted. Instead, the focus is on the transitory and conditioned nature of experiences which may indirectly promote cognitive flexibility (Desbordes et al., 2015). The next sub-theme elaborates on reduced reactivity as a facet of equanimity.

1.3. Reduced reactivity

The experts mentioned that in states of equanimity, there is decreased identification with our emotions and desires, and in provoking situations instead of immediately reacting, one may respond adaptively. One expert who is an academican, a clinical psychologist and researcher of the Indian Knowledge traditions elaborated,

There is a space like a synapse between your self-identity and the emotions that happen to you. The ebbs and flow happen, but you are not identifying very strongly with them.

This decreased identification with one's thoughts and emotions in the Western terminology may also be known as Psychological Distancing or Decentring. Decentring or psychological distancing is a crucial component of Cognitive Therapy. It is described as the ability to view one's thoughts as constructions of reality rather than as reality itself (Alford & Beck, 1997). Psychological distancing has been shown to decrease emotional and physiological reactivity, and reduce rumination over time (Kross & Ayduk, 2008). In the Indian thought traditions, there is a similar concept known as *Sakshi Bhava* (The Witness Consciousness) and has been emphasised in Aurobindo's Integral Yoga. In the practice of *Sakshi Bhava*, one stands back as a witness or observer of one's thoughts and feelings. This practice reduces identification with one's thoughts, and ruminative mental activities (Sivananda & Krishnananda, 1974).

The next theme focuses on the inter-personal dimension of equanimity i.e., broadening of one's perspective towards others.

2. Broadening of one's perspective towards others

The experts emphasised that equanimity can be extended towards all beings as an even-minded disposition of reduced bias, judgment, and preconceived notions. A sense of inter-connectedness, universal love, and compassion underlie the state of equanimity. A senior Buddhist monk who is the head of a monastery in Dharamshala, India elaborated,

Equanimity is treating everyone equally, most people have compassion and kindness towards their own, but you put them in a test in a children's park- when their child falls and a stranger's child falls. With equanimity, one would have the same response to both children.

McRae (2013) suggests that with the cultivation of equanimity, biases towards others are eliminated through the process of changing one's emotional reactive patterns. Weber (2020) suggests that equanimity is the key mediating factor in being non-judgmental and therefore can generate compassion and reduce the likelihood of compassion fatigue. It is significant to note that while the psychological literature focuses on equanimity towards other human beings, the Eastern traditions have emphasised the cultivation of equanimity towards all sentient beings. For example, in the Bhagavad Gita, Krishna suggests

that a person with equal vision does not discriminate between a Brahmin, a cow, and an elephant (Verse 5.18). From the physical perspective, these species are sharp contrasts, however, a person with equanimity has insight into the unity of the underlying consciousness and hence, views them all as eternal souls. Similarly, the ideal form of equanimity embraced by Buddhism includes having an equal attitude towards all sentient beings. In the Buddhist traditions, equanimity and compassion are closely linked. The cultivation of equanimity is the first step in the training for *Bodhicitta* (universal compassion) in the Seven-part cause and effect meditation (Tsong-Kha-Pa, 2004).

3. Rooted in wisdom and insight

Findings from the interviews suggested that the cultivation of equanimity is facilitated by a deep insight into the transient nature of experiences and into the inter-dependence among all beings. The experts also referred to the insight into non-duality underlying states of equanimity. The awareness of the conditioned nature of experiences that shape our biases and prejudices was also suggested by the experts as aiding in the cultivation of equanimity.

An expert also indicated that equanimity could be developed based on ego or pride but these are not true states of equanimity. In states of genuine equanimity, there is reduced egoism, as one expert who is an academician and senior meditation teacher elaborated,

Fritz Perl said that you should not allow anyone to push your buttons because then you give the person you do not like the power. So basically, he wanted equanimity based on pride or ego. However, these are not true states of equanimity.

The cultivation of insight plays an important role in Vipassana meditation, wherein equanimity is cultivated by leading the novice meditator through progressive stages of insight into the conditioned nature of all experiences. Wallace (2010) recommends the technique of cultivating equanimity by reflecting on the mind's arbitrary classification of friends, enemies and that these classifications are superficial and based on self-serving reasons.

4. Misconceptions and myths related to equanimity

The most significant point emphasised by the experts was the myths and misconceptions surrounding the construct of equanimity. The experts emphasised that equanimity may seem deceptively similar to apathy, indifference, or passivity. However, remaining indifferent to suffering is, in fact, contrary to states of equanimity where there is a high level of compassion and a sense of connectedness. Findings from the interviews also indicated that many people put on a mask of equanimity, and such people will have reduced authenticity. An experienced practitioner of Vipassana and a researcher of cognition in mindfulness elaborated,

Typically, what happens is most people maintain a façade of calmness, but this is not equanimity. I did some meditation camps where they would scold us if we got annoyed, so they used to force us to be equanimous. But this is not equanimity at all, this is suppressing.

The literature also emphasises that equanimity is not an attitude of cold indifference, or giving up the affective colouring of our life experiences but rather of mental imperturbability (Bhikkhu, 1996). Weber (2020) reiterates that equanimity does not mean indifference but a practice that connects from a point of genuine affection.

The experts also suggested that mindfulness and equanimity may often be conflated together but are distinct constructs. Most of the experts suggested that the practice of mindfulness could build the foundation on which equanimity may be cultivated. Few studies in the literature have reported that mindfulness practice is the base for cultivating equanimity, in which one can focus attention upon the flow of experience in the present moment without distraction (Machado & Costa, 2015; Shoham et al., 2018). Weber (2020) also suggests that the attitude of non-judgment, openness, and acceptance which are part of the classic definitions of Mindfulness may characterise equanimity. Mindfulness facilitates the ability to remain consciously aware of the experience, while equanimity allows this awareness to be even and unbiased by facilitating an attitude of acceptance (Weber, 2020). In summary, equanimity manifests itself in the functioning of the cognitive–affective evaluative systems, which broadens the perspective of an individual’s experience. Equanimity facilitates awareness to be even and unbiased such that there is reduced clinging of pleasant experiences and reduced avoidance of distressing experiences. With the cultivation of equanimity, openness and acceptance towards experiences (regardless of their hedonic value) enhances. An insight into the sublime nature of experiences such as impermanence and non-duality may facilitate states of equanimity. There may be reduced identification with one’s emotions, desires, and attachments. Distress tolerance may increase, and maladaptive responses such as avoidance/suppression/repression may reduce. With the cultivation of equanimity, impulsive habitual reactivity decreases and one may respond calmly. Most significantly, equanimity includes compassion as well as enhanced connectedness with others.

In the next section, the findings from the interviews regarding the key aspects of the cultivation of equanimity have been delineated.

Section B – cultivating equanimity: contextual pre-cursors, challenges and suggested health concomitants

The findings from the interviews related to the various facets of the cultivation of equanimity are elaborated in detail below.

Contextual pre-cursors for the cultivation of equanimity

The contextual precursors for the cultivation of equanimity suggested by the experts were related to the rising stress levels, increasing prevalence of anxiety, depression, and emotional instability. The experts also shared the concern that due to work-related stress, healthcare professionals such as doctors, nurses, and psychologists are increasingly reporting compassion fatigue and burnout. One expert, who is a senior psychologist with a background in contemplative practices shared the need particularly for psychologists to develop equanimity,

It is crucial for psychologists to develop equanimity; you cannot objectively observe if you get carried away by your likes and dislikes.

Increasing dominance, aggression, and competition in our volatile and complex world were the precursors suggested at the global level for cultivating equanimity. Few of the experts shared that in today’s world, the personal power to inflict damage has increased, and thus, there is a need to develop qualities like compassion and equanimity.

Currently, there is an emphasis on materialism, chasing happiness, and reducing distress. A shift in the orientation towards holistic well-being was suggested,

Equanimity is needed as Positive Psychology may not have a base of stability on which the whole edifice is standing. So, when the constant striving towards happiness fails, then the cultivation of equanimity may be the internal resource one can turn to ...

Given the volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous (VUCA) situation the world is passing through, learning to regulate our emotional responses could be the key to successful adaptation. As human life consists of both pain and pleasure, the cultivation of equanimity would significantly contribute to holistic well-being (Desbordes et al., 2015) and help adapt to the complex challenges and ebbs and flows of life. Studies on global prevalence rates of usage of illicit drugs and internet addiction report rising prevalence rates (Peacock et al., 2018). The cultivation of equanimity not only would help in dealing with unpleasant experiences but also help in responding adaptively to the craving for pleasant experiences.

Challenges faced in the cultivation of equanimity

The difficulties which may arise during the cultivation of equanimity were identified by the experts. The cultivation of equanimity is a process that takes time and regular practice. Sustaining one's practice towards the cultivation of equanimity was one of the most frequently reported challenges by the experts. They shared that letting go of one's attachments, desires, and rigid dichotomies is one of the most challenging aspects of the cultivation of equanimity. Cultivating equanimity without sufficient knowledge may also pose the danger of turning towards suppression or indifference. As one of the experts who has a vast experience of more than 30 years in teaching contemplative practices elaborated,

Anything you try to change becomes stronger at the beginning, which makes the cultivation of equanimity difficult initially. The power of the senses and appearances is so powerful, which makes it difficult for one to sustain this state of mind.

Similar challenges related to the cultivation of equanimity are reported in the psychological literature, which includes experiencing resistance as practice progressed (Machado & Costa, 2015), gradual reductions in equanimity and return of intense or disturbing thoughts (Pagis, 2015), and experiencing physical pain during extended periods of sitting for meditation (Ekici et al., 2020).

Suggested health concomitants associated with the cultivation of equanimity

The experts suggested a multitude of health concomitants associated with the cultivation of equanimity such as reduced emotional fluctuations and reactivity which in turn may lead to less stress and burnout. Peace, well-being, wiser decision-making, and enhanced interpersonal relationships were also a few of the suggested concomitants of equanimity. A few experts mentioned that cultivating equanimity may also help us get control over our senses, attachments, and desires. Hence, our dependence on the pursuit of external things would be significantly lessened. Below are some of the excerpts from the interviews with an academican researching *Anasakti* (Non-attachment).

Equanimity augments our ability to deal with life and increases our capacities that are often lost in useless agitation. With equanimity, you become aware that your happiness does not always depend on external factors, so it is a liberating experience.

The psychological literature also reports similar concomitants associated with the cultivation of equanimity. In a study by Pagis (2015), Goenka Vipassana meditators reported that they experienced equanimity as a self-transformation of mental calmness, being in the present, and reduction of emotions such as anger, sadness, and passion. Machado and Costa (2015) reported that with the cultivation of equanimity, meditators perceived emotional stimuli as more neutral instead of positive/negative which may help in reducing bias in decision making. Equanimity has also been studied in therapeutic settings and has shown improvements in eudemonic well-being and insights into the perception of reality (Ekici et al., 2020), and with experiencing a reduction in loneliness (Lindsay et al., 2018).

In summary, the findings from the interviews further encapsulate the need for equanimity, delineate the various challenges that one could come across during cultivation, and suggest the psycho-social health concomitants of equanimity. The increasing prevalence of anxiety, depression, and burnout in today's world suggests a need for the cultivation of equanimity. The challenges which one may face during the cultivation of equanimity include sustaining one's practice and letting go of one's attachments, desires, and rigid dichotomies. The psycho-social health concomitants of equanimity suggested were reduced emotional reactivity, well-being, wiser decision making, enhanced inter-personal relationships.

Key implications

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on public mental health leading to an increase in the levels of stress, depression, and anxiety across the globe (Salari et al., 2020).

The key implications of the cultivation of equanimity are outlined below in detail:

Adaptive coping during a Global Pandemic

The cultivation of equanimity may facilitate individuals to adaptively cope with the uncertainties and anxieties of living in a global pandemic. Equanimity increases one's distress tolerance and reduces avoidance or suppression of distressing experiences (Chambers et al., 2009). As equanimity is strengthened over time and integrated into one's practice of healthily responding to any situation, it may moderate the physiological response to stress and anxiety (Gard et al., 2012).

Balanced approach towards well-being

Desbordes et al. (2015) suggest that the current orientation around well-being seems to aim at sustaining happiness while ameliorating the effects of pain or discomfort. However, holistic well-being may be better served by learning to cultivate equanimity, as an effective state for responding skilfully to the present moment and as a trait that can be strengthened over time.

Dealing with addictive behaviours

The cultivation of equanimity may be useful in adaptively responding to instant gratification and satiation of desires. Studies have reported that during the global pandemic, internet use, substance abuse, and intake of high-calorie food are on the rise (Király et al., 2020; Rolland et al., 2020). The cultivation of equanimity may help in adaptively responding to these cravings. Juneau et al. (2020) in an empirical study reported that the Hedonic Independence component of the Equanimity Scale (EQUA-S) was negatively correlated with the frequency of addictive behaviours as well as sensitivity to reward which is a risk factor for addiction.

Dealing with compassion fatigue/burn-out

The cultivation of equanimity may also help therapists/frontline healthcare workers/healthcare leaders in reducing their compassion fatigue and burn-out. Weber (2019) suggests that equanimity is the key mediating factor in being non-judgmental and therefore may generate compassion towards other individuals.

Leadership and management

Connaughton (2016) elaborates in detail on the role of equanimity in leadership and management practices. Individuals who make decisions from a place of equanimity can see the larger picture, maybe guarded against reacting too quickly, and have a balanced approach to solving problems.

Indigenous therapeutic practices

Exploring the various cultivation methods of equanimity will also be useful for the development of indigenous techniques/skills which may be applied in therapeutic practice. Practitioners may also look into the challenges/barriers identified in the cultivation of equanimity and may design conducive strategies for effectively managing them.

Conclusions

The research presents an in-depth understanding of equanimity as a construct, by carefully delineating its unique characteristics, and differentiating it from apparently similar concepts (e.g., apathy, passivity, indifference), based on the insights from academicians and practitioners who are thickly engaged with the concept.

In states of equanimity, there is an even-mindedness towards the entire spectrum of varied hedonic and affective experiences; i.e., there is reduced craving for pleasant experiences and reduced avoidance of unpleasant experiences. With the cultivation of equanimity, one is more open to a range of experiences, and the capacity for tolerating distress increases. Impulsive habitual emotional reactivity decreases and the individual may respond more adaptively. The experts emphasised that equanimity also includes an even-minded disposition extended towards all beings in which there are reduced prejudices, bias, and preconceived notions. The experts emphasised that equanimity may seem

deceptively similar to apathy, indifference, or passivity. However, in states of equanimity, there is a high level of compassion and a sense of inter-connectedness.

The challenges which one may face during the cultivation of equanimity include sustaining one's practice and letting go of one's attachments, desires and rigid dichotomies. The research has indicated rich implications of the cultivation of equanimity for various contexts like adaptive coping during the pandemic, healthcare services, workplace behaviour, leadership practices, therapeutic interventions for addiction, and holistic well-being. As a whole, the paper has provided a platform for conceptual validation of equanimity as a psychological construct with all possible future applications.

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Construct description of *Samatva* from the Bhagavad Gita: Implications for Holistic Well-being

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Abstract

Western models and constructs have dominated research on well-being in India. There is a lacuna of indigenous constructs of well-being developed from our rich archival data and texts. Indigenous constructs are significant as being deeply embedded in the Indian ethos, they can be easily accepted and integrated into therapeutic practice. To fill this lacuna, the construct of *Samatva* (equanimity) as described in the Bhagavad Gita is examined. The analysis of the text resulted in the identification of 41 core verses referring to *Samatva*. The major themes extrapolated are i) *Samatva* as a state of even-mindedness and rising above the dualities ii) The inter-personal dimension of *Samatva* iii) *Samatva* and the understanding of the temporality of experience iv) Associated cognitive-affective cultivation practices of *Samatva* v) Suggested health and spiritual implications of *Samatva* vi) *Samatva* and transcendence of *Triguna*. With the increasing rates of Anxiety and Depression, the cultivation of *Samatva* has been discussed with implications for holistic well-being, leadership and management.

Keywords: *Samatva; equanimity; Indian model of well-being; indigenous construct*

Introduction

Psychology as a discipline has been heavily influenced by Western theories and models as most of the Indian academicians and researchers in the last century were trained and taught within the Western psychological framework. This Western model provided the basis for the teaching and research of Psychology in India for a long period. Our indigenous thought systems and texts which explained the human psyche remained neglected owing to the effects of colonization and questions regarding their scientific status and contemporary relevance. In 1965, Durganand Sinha emphasized the need for not blindly following Western models and focusing on the integration of modern

Psychology with the wisdom and depth of Indian thought traditions (Sinha et al., 2015). Bhawuk (2010) emphasized the nurturance of indigenous research through the exploration of cultural insights from folk wisdom, classical texts and scriptures, for the development of emic-embedded theories. Dalal & Misra (2010) have enumerated the significant contributions from prominent authors such as Paranjpe (1984, 1998), Chakraborty (1995), Rao (1988, 2002), Bhawuk (2003, 2008), Misra, (2004, 2005), and Dalal (1996) that have aimed to make Psychology culturally relevant with indigenous constructs and theories.

The psyche of an individual evolves in the background of culture and society. Cross-cultural

Psychology has consistently made researchers aware of the limits of taking ideas from the West and testing them in other parts of the world (Triandis, 1994). Western models of Psychology carry an implicit worldview that reflects and embodies their cultural context, values and priorities (Sloan, 1996) and may not necessarily explain the psychological processes and features within all cultures. Marsella (1998) emphasized the need to focus on multicultural traditions and the cultural determinants of human behaviour; recommending that many indigenous psychologies are well equipped to deal with varied dimensions of behavioural and societal contexts.

Misra (1996) observed that Western Psychological methods subscribe to an emphasis on individualism, mechanism, and objectivity. Studying non-Western cultures through this lens has a debilitating effect in terms of a pseudo-understanding of the people of non-Western cultures, misconstruing their realities and exoticizing or disregarding psychologies that are non-Western. Cross cultural researchers (Marsella, 1998; Tirandis 1994) have suggested since a long time that in order to come up with robust social science theories, research should be done on populations and cultures other than Western cultures and their world views should be taken into consideration

Psychology in India needs to find its roots in its native wisdom, instead of borrowing knowledge from the West. Indian scriptures dating back thousands of years extensively dealt with the rich and in-depth analysis of states of consciousness and the mind, to help individuals in their pursuit of self-realization. The emphasis of the scriptures was on exploring the 'world within' to alleviate suffering. Indian scriptures have been considered an essential part of *Svadhya* or self-learning and have successfully guided generations of knowledge seekers. They can be viewed as a

knowledge mine to guide the modern person through the ebbs and flows of life (Bhawuk, 2010). Thus, to explore indigenous constructs of well-being, the Indian scriptures constitute a natural place to start, and this paper attempts to make an effort in that direction.

***Samatva* or Equanimity**

In Sanskrit, the words *Sama*, *Samata* or *Samatvam* are translated as equanimity. The construct of equanimity is historically rooted in various indigenous schools of thought and ancient scriptures. It has been elaborated as one of the Four Immeasurables (Loving Kindness, Sympathetic Joy, Compassion and Equanimity) in Buddhism; and as one of the key teachings in the Shrimad Bhagavad Gita. Equanimity is also the central tenet in traditional Yoga systems. While the concept is historically rooted in scriptures and philosophies such as Hinduism and Buddhism, it has often been conflated within the construct of Mindfulness in the Western Psychological literature (Desbordes et al., 2015). In the Indian Psychology context, equanimity has often been studied as subsumed under Karma Yog (Rastogi & Pati, 2015; Mulla & Krishnan, 2014) or in relation to the construct of Anasakti (Singh & Raina, 2015). To address this gap, the paper attempts to explore in-depth the construct of Equanimity as a distinct construct as delineated in the Bhagavad Gita. The paper further attempts to integrate its developed models along with the existing Psychological literature, thereby expanding its scope and making it relevant for global Psychology, Leadership and Management.

Recent Conceptualisations of Equanimity in the Psychological Literature

Hadash et al. (2016) operationalized equanimity as the decoupling of desire from the hedonic tone of experience i.e. in states of equanimity there is reduced longing for pleasant experiences and

reduced avoidance of negative experiences. Desbordes et al. (2015) conceptualized equanimity as an even-minded state consisting of openness, and acceptance. Both the above conceptualizations had Buddhism as its base foundation. Mulla and Krishnan (2014) proposed a model of Karma Yoga in which equanimity was conceptualized as maintaining neutrality in success and failure. Rastogi and Pati (2015) in their conceptual model of Karma Yoga from the Bhagavad Gita, reported that sensory control leads to equanimity which further leads to service consciousness i.e. working for humanity.

As seen above, there have been few conceptualizations of equanimity with Buddhism as the base; and few studies describing Equanimity as part of the framework of Karma Yoga. This study aims to take it further by exploring *Samatva* as a distinct core construct as emphasized in the Bhagavad Gita.

Need to explore *Samatva* as discussed in the Bhagavad Gita:

With the increasing prevalence of Anxiety and Depression, there is an urgent need for emphasis on the cultivation of equanimity. Given the volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous (VUCA) situation the world is passing through, learning to cope with and regulate our emotional responses could be the key to successful adaptation. Also, with the advent of Positive Psychology, the recent emphasis has been on promoting and sustaining happiness and well-being rather than coping with pain or discomfort. As human life consists of both pain and pleasure, this one-sided approach may not have a strong base or foundation to endure in the long-run. The cultivation of *Samatva*, which focuses on both pain and pleasure would significantly contribute to holistic well-being and help adapt to the complex challenges and the ebbs and flows of life.

The Gita is a popular source of knowledge and wisdom for the global community and translation of this text is available in 80 languages of the world (Bhawuk, 2020). Scriptures such as the Gita constitute of archival knowledge and provide the deepest cultural roots of a construct. *Samatva* is the core of ancient scriptures such as the Bhagavad Gita. Hence, to understand it in its truest essence and origin, this paper will trace the construct of *Samatva* from the text of the Bhagavad Gita. The Bhagavad Gita is a narrative that is told through a dialogue between Arjuna, a warrior, and his charioteer, Lord Krishna. The Gita begins with an ethical problem set against the background of a fratricide battle and in resolving this problem, the philosophy is illustrated across 18 chapters consisting of around 700 verses.

Method

The Shrimad Bhagavad Gita was primarily read in the translations and commentaries by Swami Tapasyananda (1984). This text was chosen as the writing of the author is lucid and free from ambiguity, and has been cited in scholastic works related to Psychology (Singh et al., 2015; Adhia et al., 2010), and is much appreciated for its interpretation of *Vijnana* (Maharaj, 2015). Swami Tapasyananda is a prolific writer and has also translated classics like Shri Vishnu Sahasranama, Adyatma Ramayana and Sri Lalita Sahasranama.

The process for construct definition and model building was primarily referred from the work of Prof. Bhawuk spanning across one decade (Bhawuk, 2010, 2017, 2019 & 2020). Prof. Dharm Bhawuk's work is regarded as one of the major contributions to Indian Psychology (Dalal & Misra, 2010). Bhawuk (2010) has provided a methodological approach to mine models from the scriptures. Using variations of these methods, he has developed various indigenous constructs such

as *Lajja, Shraddha and Lokasamgraha* (Bhawuk, 2017, 2020 & 2019). The first author attended a one-day workshop by Prof Bhawuk on *Construct building in Indian Psychology* held in 2018. In the construct development of *Samatva* from the Bhagavad Gita, all the above references were referred to and the learnings from the workshop were amalgamated. The method followed is as below:

i) Linguistic Analysis

Austin (1964) suggested that words can be tools that sharpen our awareness and understanding of phenomena in this world. *Samatva* or Equanimity is examined linguistically in Sanskrit, Pali and English; along with analysis of its allied words and synonyms. The synonyms of a construct provide the basic framework to begin the search in the scriptures and provide the necessary depth to appreciate a construct.

ii) Content Analysis

A Content Analysis of the verses highlighting *Samatva* was carried out across the 700 verses in the 18 chapters of the Bhagavad Gita and 41 verses were identified which referred to *Samatva*.

iii) Analysing the context

To explore the construct in its fullest depth, the background and framework of the core 41 verses identified above was examined by reading the entire Bhagavad Gita and understanding the context in which the 41 verses were described.

iv) Analysis of the themes and mining models

From the analysis of the verses and their context, six themes were derived. Raw Models were mined from some of the verses. This entire process led to the development of emic-embedded models. The

emic perspective focuses on insights from and theoretical positions grounded in indigenous native culture, texts and folk wisdom.

v) Synthesizing of the emic- embedded models

The emic or 'inside' perspective follows in the tradition of psychological studies of folk beliefs and in cultural scientists' striving to understand culture from the native's point of view (Morris et al., 1999). In the next step, wherever possible, we attempt to synthesize the emic embedded models with existing Psychological data and constructs to have more global outreach. Doing so enables the development of universal theories within cultural contexts.

vi) Triangulation in the research process

To maintain rigor, the research followed two types of triangulation recommended for qualitative research by Patton (1999): Analyst triangulation and Theory triangulation.

Analyst triangulation is the process of utilizing two or more analysts. It is used to review the findings in order to converge multiple ways of selecting and interpreting the data and for keeping a check on selective bias and blind spots in the analysis (Patton, 1999). Two of the primary authors of this paper are Academicians in Psychology and the third author is an academician in Sanskrit with expertise in Bhagavad Gita. The expert in Sanskrit verified the selection of verses from the Bhagavad Gita and their correct interpretation carried out by the first author. The two primary authors reviewed themes and models to provide a check on selective perception and blind spots in the interpretive analysis.

Theory/perspective triangulation is using multiple theoretical perspectives to examine and interpret the data (Patton, 1999). The raw models mined

from the scriptures were synthesized with various theoretical perspectives from the field of Social Psychology and Cognitive Psychology.

The findings of the above six steps followed in the methodology of the construct definition of *Samatva* are presented below.

Findings

Following the above-described methodology, resulted in a rich and thick description of *Samatva* as elaborated below.

Linguistic Analysis of Samatva

In the Monier-Williams dictionary, the Sanskrit words *Sama*, *Samata* or *Samatva* are translated as equanimity. The root *Sam* (*union/equal*) is used as a prefix in various synonyms, for example, *Samabuddhi* is translated as esteeming all things alike; *Samabhava* refers to the equability of feelings; *Samadrishti* denotes even vision, and *Samadarshita*- denotes impartiality. In the sister

language of Sanskrit, the Pāli language, and the word for equanimity is *Upekkhā*, which is translated as gazing upon or observing without interference. In the English language, the origin of the word equanimity is from Latin *aequanimitas*: *aequus* 'equal' + *animus* 'mind'; that is translated as equal mind denoting a sense of fairness or impartiality.

Merriam-Webster dictionary defines equanimity as i) evenness of mind especially under stress and as ii) balance. The synonyms of Equanimity listed are composure, collectedness and equilibrium while antonyms listed were agitation, discomposure and perturbation (Webster, 2006). In summary, the connotations of equanimity in various languages are analogous. The major related concepts have been identified as evenness, neutrality and balance.

Content analysis of Samatva in the Bhagavad Gita: The Bhagavad Gita text consists of 700 verses spread out across 18 chapters. The Content Analysis presented 41 verses referring to *Samatva* in 12 of the chapters as shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Content Analysis of *Samatva* in the Bhagavad Gita

Chapter		Chapter		Chapter		Chapter		Chapter		Chapter	
II		III		IV		V		VI		X	
2.14	2.15	3.26	3.30	4.22		5.3	5.18	6.3	6.7	10.5	
2.38	2.45	3.34				5.19	5.20	6.8	6.9		
2.48	2.49							6.29	6.33		
2.50	2.51										
2.53	2.56										
2.57	2.64										
2.70											
Chapter		Chapter		Chapter		Chapter		Chapter		Chapter	
XII		XIII		XIV		XV		XVII		XVIII	
12.13		13.9		14.22		15.5		17.17		18.23	
12.15				14.23						18.26	
12.17											
12.18											

Thus, as we can see from the above content analysis, *Samatva* has been referred to around 41 times in the Bhagavad Gita which highlights its significance as a central tenet of the Bhagavad Gita.

Themes

From the analysis of the verses and their context, seven themes were derived which presented a thick description of *Samatva* as presented below:

1. *Samatva* as a state of even-mindedness and rising above the dualities
2. The inter-personal dimension of *Samatva*
3. *Samatva* and the understanding of the temporality of experience
4. Associated cognitive-affective cultivation practices of *Samatva*
5. Suggested health and spiritual implications of *Samatva*
6. *Samatva* and transcendence of *Trigunas*

Each of the themes is elaborated in detail below.

1) *Samatva: Even-mindedness and rising above the dualities*

Analysis of the 41 verses revealed that *Samatva* has been described in the context of even-mindedness and remaining steady in the dualities. The Bhagavad Gita elaborated on even-mindedness towards:

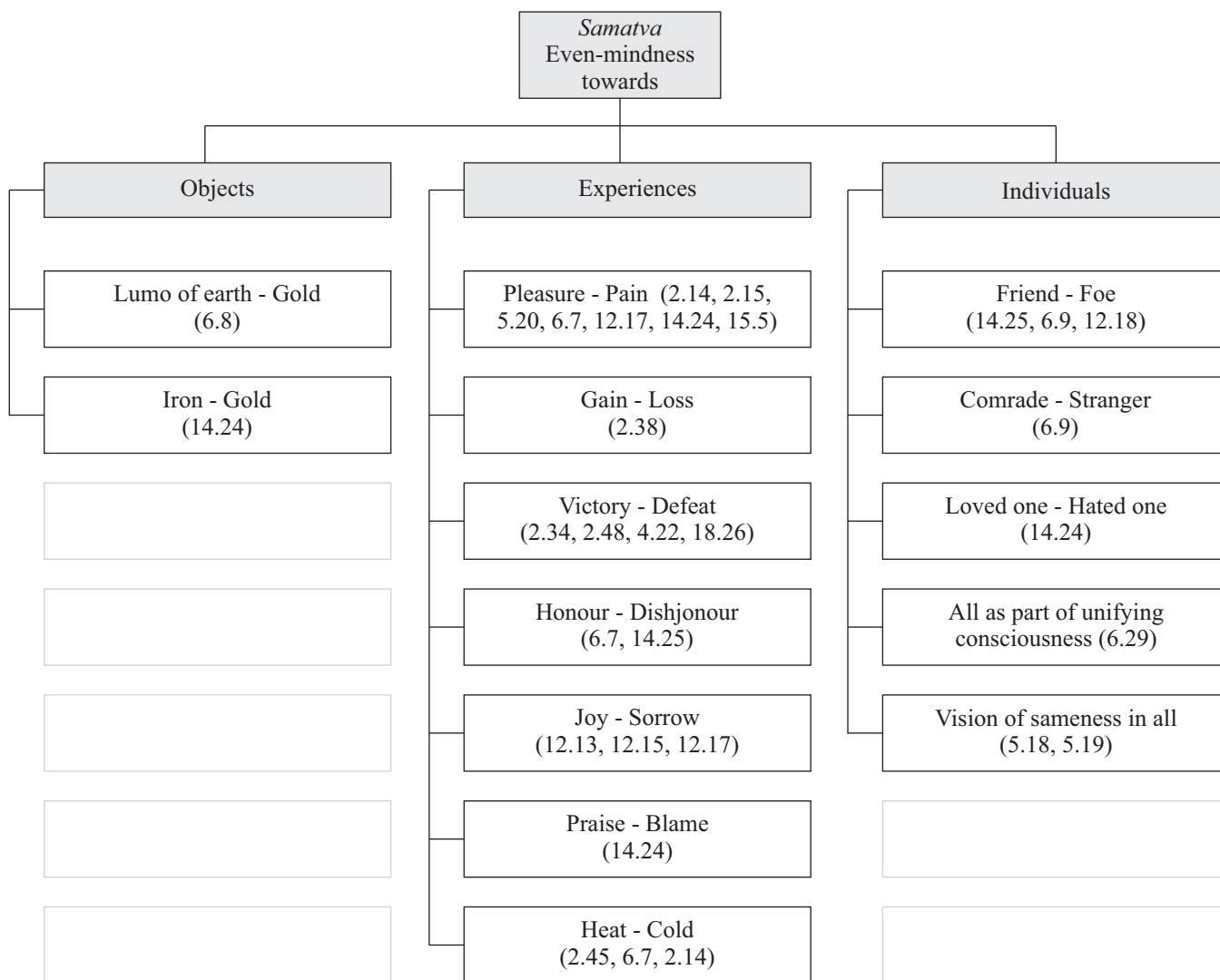
- Objects/things
- Experiences and
- Individuals

As shown in Figure 1 below, the Bhagavad Gita talks about being steady and indiscriminative

towards objects of vastly different value, such as a lump of earth and gold, iron and gold. Verse 6.8¹ elaborates on the processes behind it. The Yogi is not to just mechanically read the scriptures (*Jnana*) but needs to intuitively experience and gain wisdom from the same (*Vijyana*). Equipped with wisdom (*Vijyana*), the senses come under control, desires reduce and the Yogi does not differentiate between objects based on their attractiveness to the Self.

The most elaborated conceptualization of *Samatva* is related to being steady in the various experiences that we have in life such as Pleasure-Pain, Joy-Sorrow, Honour-Disgrace, Gain-Loss, and Victory-Defeat. This equipoise that enables us to be steady in dualities is so valued that Shree Krishna calls it Yog, or union with the Supreme in Verse 2.48². This verse is one of the most prominent verses referring to *Samatva* and is to be understood in the context of its previous verses. Which elaborate that we should concern ourselves with doing our duty and not get affected by our expectation of focus on the outcome.

Shri Krishna elaborates on the evenness of vision and treating everyone without prejudice, bias or discrimination. He emphasizes that the one with even vision will treat alike - a friend and foe, a comrade and a stranger. Verse 6.29³ illustrates that evenness of vision is facilitated by the knowledge and insight that all sentient beings irrespective of their form, shape, color are fragments of the underlying unifying consciousness and therefore divine. Hence, with this insight and understanding, a person with *Samatva* goes beyond the superficial outer appearances, does not discriminate, and sees all beings as part of a unifying consciousness.

Fig 1: Tripartite conceptualisation of *Samatva* in the Bhagavad Gita

2) The inter-personal dimension of *Samatva*

Shri Krishna emphasizes that the one with wisdom and even vision will treat alike - a friend and foe, a comrade and a stranger. A raw model has been mined from verses 5.19⁵, 6.9⁶ and 6.29⁷ to explain this progression as illustrated in Figure 2 below. With the insight and understanding that all sentient beings irrespective of their form, shape, color are fragments of the underlying unifying consciousness, a person has an unbiased and even vision towards all. Thus, in behaviour, he will be

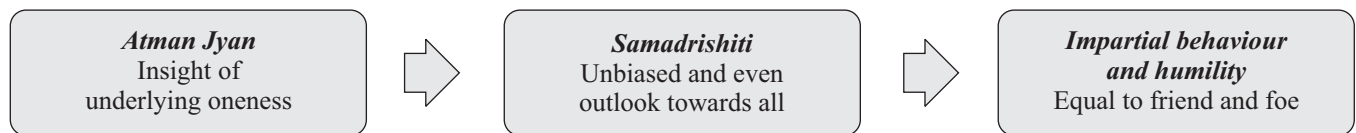
equal and unbiased towards friend and foe and treat every person with humility. This raw model has been polished with Psychological concepts as illustrated in the lower part of Figure 2 below. When one has an insight into the oneness underlying all sentient beings, one realizes that fundamentally we all are the same, sharing the same basic needs and concerns. With this understanding, the divisive borders between 'them' and 'us' reduce. It is proposed that at the cognitive level, in-group and out-group biases may reduce the process of othering (seeing others as different

from one self / own kin and clan) and using different standards for explaining others behaviour will reduce. At the affective level, prejudices, antagonism, and bigotry may reduce, further leading to reduced discriminatory behaviour across different level of social structure and categories. This is particularly very helpful for the organizational climate, as there may be a strong

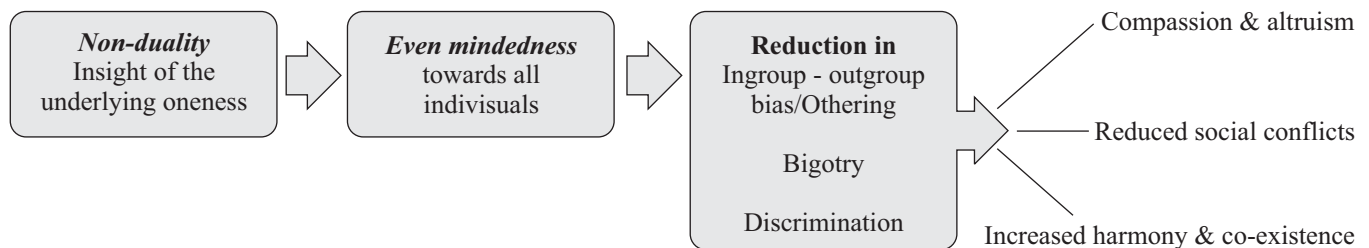
bonding among the employees as part of one organization. Also, alleviating the cognitive discrimination in practice and action, will enhance the employee engagement and commitment. Consequently, compassion and altruism for others may increase leading to reduced social conflicts and increased coexistence and harmony.

Fig 2: The interpersonal dimension of Samatva

Raw Model from B.G. (5.19, 6.9, 6.29))



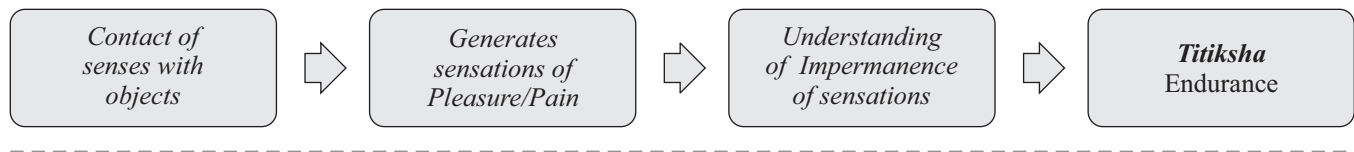
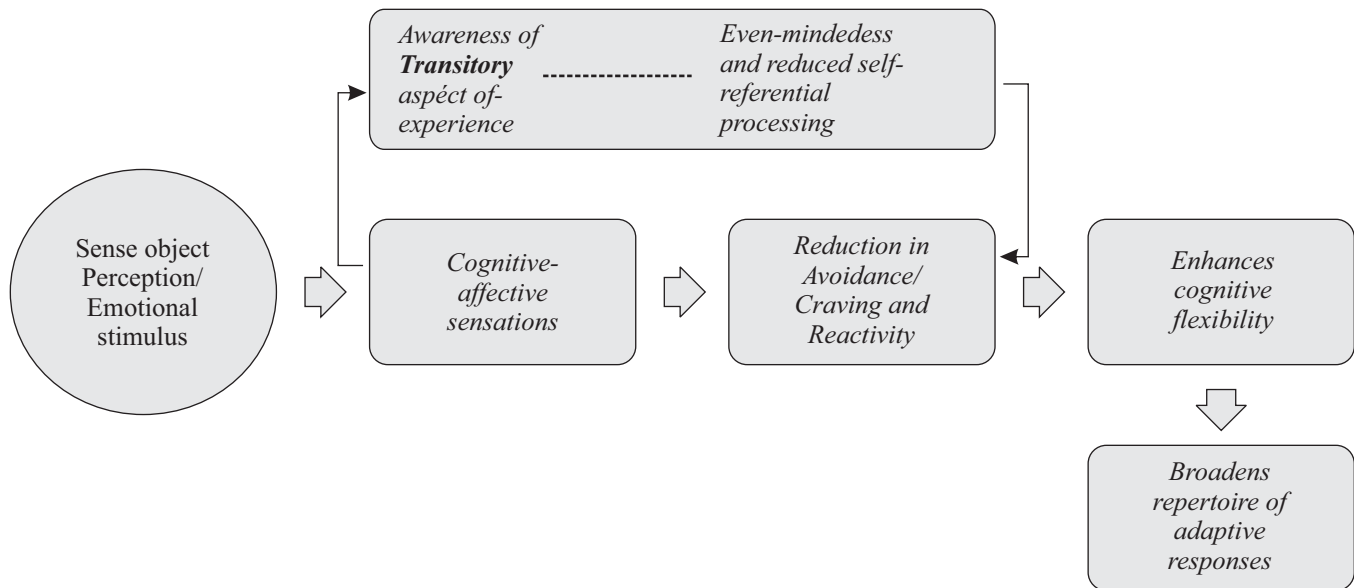
Model synthesized with Psychological concepts



3) *Samatva: Understanding of temporality of experience*

In Verse 2.14⁴, *Samatva* is illustrated with the word *Titiksha* which means the ability to endure the dualities. In this verse, the temporality and impermanence of sensations are highlighted. The human body has five primary senses. When these senses, perceive various objects, it gives rise to

sensations of happiness or distress. Krishna emphasizes that the sensations of happiness/distress experienced through the senses are transitory and impermanent, and hence one should not become too attached to them. For example, Chilled water provides pleasure in summer, the same water gives distress in the winter. Illustrated in Figure 3 below is the raw model mined from Verse 2.14⁴.

Fig 3: The understanding of the temporality of sensations and its relation to *Samatva***Raw model from the Bhagavad Gita (2.1)****Model Synthesized with Psychological literature**

The raw model has been synthesized with the Psychological literature in the lower part of Figure 3. In response to an emotionally triggering stimulus, when we perceive it with equanimity, we may become aware of the transitory nature of the stimulus. With this awareness, the relevance of the stimulus for oneself becomes less and the ruminative self-referential processing reduces. This further diminishes reactivity and instead may enhance one's cognitive flexibility and broaden the possibility of an adaptive behavioural response (Desbordes et al, 2015). To illustrate, let us suppose one morning at work, Nisha is criticized by her manager harshly. Initially, Nisha is hurt, but gradually Nisha becomes aware that this criticism is not fixed and permanent and understands that her manager had also praised her a few times earlier.

With this understanding, Nisha may not attach the criticism to her own ego very rigidly and ruminate over it endlessly. Instead of being defensive about the criticism, she may reflect on the intention behind the criticism and try to improve. Thus, the awareness of transience and impermanence is highlighted in the Bhagavad Gita.

4) Cognitive-affective cultivation practices associated with *Samatva*

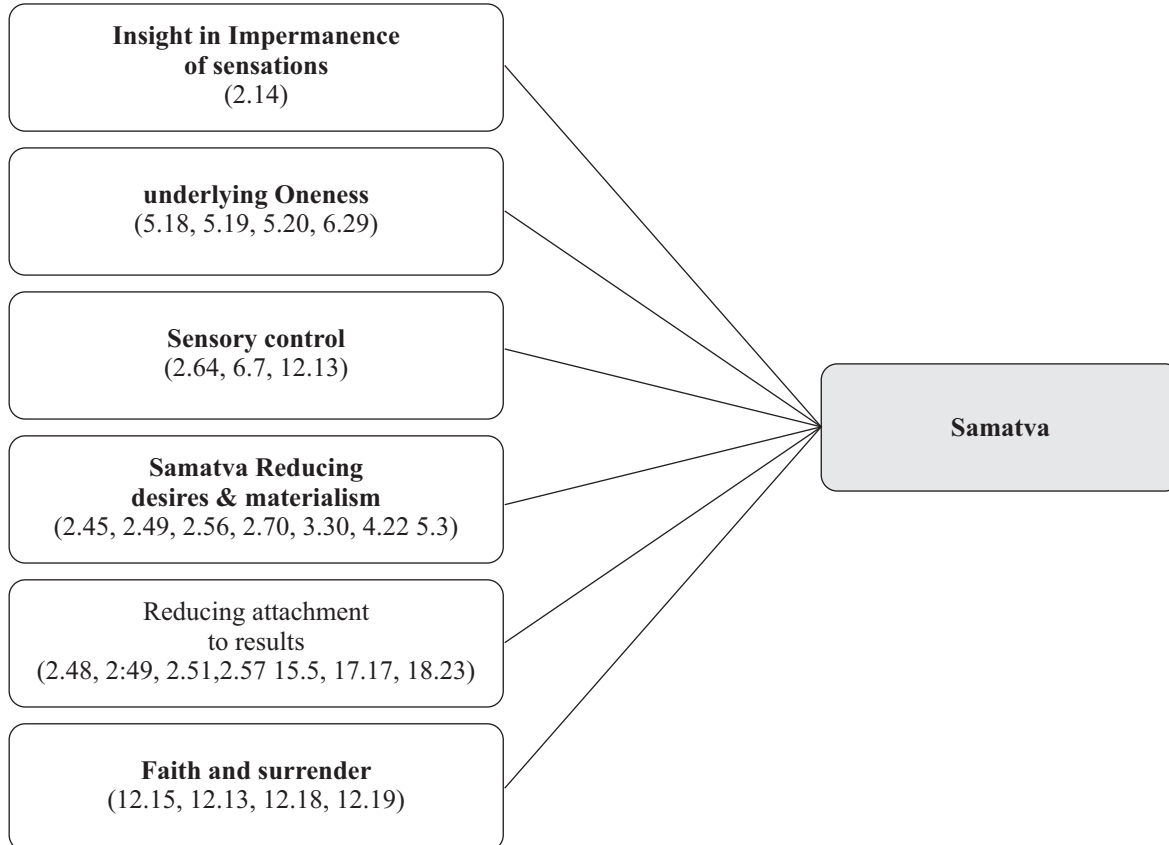
The Bhagavad Gita has elaborated on many cognitive-affective cultivation practices associated with *Samatva*. In chapter 2, the belief in Impermanence is highlighted. When one realizes the transient nature of experiences, one is not very attached and can endure both happiness and

distress with equanimity. The belief in impermanence may function as an anchor, to help us remain steady in the ebbs and flows of life. Another cognitive anchor that has been elaborated is the insight (*Vigyana*) in the underlying unity of consciousness. This insight enables us to develop an equal vision towards all being irrespective of their color, nationality, gender, and race. At the affective level, reducing desires and materialism has been strongly emphasized along with reducing attachments to the outcome or results of our actions. Shri Krishna suggests that we have right on the action but not on the fruit of the action. This is linked with carrying out our work in a detached manner and reducing the sense of agency or ego involvement in our actions. And lastly, Shri Krishna emphasizes sensory control. In today's world of hyper-stimulation, over-load of information and internet addiction, it is relevant

that we control the incoming information to our senses and can delay gratification to be in a state of equipoise.

Faith and surrender are other indirect pathways towards *Samatva* that have been highlighted in chapter 12. An ideal devotee is delineated as one who is equipoised in both happiness and sadness (Verse 12.13¹³), and in pleasure and pain (12.15¹⁰). Verses 12.18-19¹⁴ state that an ideal Bhakta is equal and unbiased towards all, alike to both a friend and an enemy, equipoised in honour-dishonour and favourable-unfavourable circumstances. A true devotee has deep conviction and faith and has surrendered his actions and their outcomes to a higher power. Hence, they are equipoised in any condition. Shri Krishna states that such devotees are very dear to Him. These practices are elaborated in Figure 4 below.

Figure 4: Cognitive-affective cultivation practices associated with *Samatva*



5) Suggested health and spiritual implications of *Samatva*

Various health and spiritual implications of cultivating *Samatva* have been specified. Verse 2.70⁷ highlights the peace, tranquillity and mental ease one may attain with *Samatva* with the metaphor of the ocean. The rivers and its tributaries constantly empty themselves into the ocean but it maintains its undisturbed state, despite being inundated by the flow of rivers into it. Likewise, the individual who is steady despite the flow of desirable objects all around him attains peace. The individual with equanimity abandons attachment to the fruits of actions and reduces the desire for selfish gains. By working in such consciousness, they have reduced suffering or transcend the state of suffering (Verse 2.51⁸). Arjun had expressed his fear that by participating in the fratricidal battle he would incur sin. In response, Shree Krishna advises Arjun to do his duty, without attachment to his actions and by doing so with equanimity would free him from any karmic reactions (verse 2.38⁹). The equanimity that enables us to accept all circumstances with calmness is so significant that in verse 2.48² Shree Krishna calls it *Yog*, or union with the Divine which may also be interpreted as Self-realisation. Many verses (2.15¹⁰, 2.51⁸, 5.3¹¹ and 5.19⁵, 15.5¹²), suggest that the person with equanimity may attain immortality i.e. liberation from the bondage of life and death. This is one of the highest spiritual aims of any aspirant which highlights the significance of *Samatva*. To summarize, the major implications of *Samatva* in the Bhagavad Gita have been enumerated as peace, reduced suffering, self-realization freedom from karmic reactions and liberation from bondage.

6) *Samatva* and transcendence of *Trigunas*

There are three forms through which *Prakriti* (*nature*) manifests itself in matter, known as *Trigunas* or three qualities of Nature. They are

Sattva, *Rajas* and *Tamas*. *Sattvic* state characteristics are wisdom, spirituality, calmness, compassion, and selflessness. *Rajas Guna* is known for activity and characteristics are desire, anxiety, excitement, ambition, chaos, and restlessness. *Tamas* is lowest in *trigunas* and signifies ignorance, dullness, laziness, greed, attachment, and heaviness.

Arjun asks Shri Krishna in chapter 14, what are the characteristics of a person who has transcended these three *gunas*? Being even-minded is emphasized as a quality of a *Trigunatita* (person who has transcended the three *Gunas*). Sri Krishna responds that a person who has transcended the *Gunas* is neither disturbed when they see the *gunas* functioning and their effects manifesting nor are they disturbed in their absence in people (Verse 14.22-23¹⁵). In bodily consciousness, we identify strongly with the pain and pleasures of the body and oscillate between joy and sorrow. But those who have transcended the *gunas*, do perceive the dualities of the world but remain unaffected by them. Thus, they are poised alike in pleasure pain, praise-blame and have an equal vision towards friend and foe alike. (Verse 14.24-25¹⁶).

Discussion

This article aimed to explore and define the construct of *Samatva* as explicated in the Bhagavad Gita text. In the Monier-Williams dictionary, the Sanskrit words *Sama*, *Samata* or *Samatva* are translated as equanimity. The connotations of equanimity in the English language have been identified as evenness, neutrality and balance. *Samatva* has been referred 41 times in the content analysis of Bhagavad Gita text which highlights its significance. From the analysis of the verses and their context, six themes were derived which have provided a thick and rich description. *Samatva* was proposed as a state of even-mindedness and rising above the dualities. A tripartite conceptualization

of *Samatva* was proposed wherein it has been described as even-mindedness towards i) objects, ii) experiences of life iii) and individuals.

Samatva towards objects/ things is elaborated in the context of reducing our endless desires, craving and materialism. Desire is intimately connected to pleasure and pain- we desire what is pleasurable and avoid what is painful. Our desires evolved to promote our survival and reproduction. Today, survival is no longer the most pressing issue, and yet our desires are stronger than ever. Once the desire is attained, people stop taking pleasure in its fulfilment and instead formulate new desires, because, in the course of evolution, contentedness did not promote survival (Burton, 2014). Thus, one is caught in the vicious cycle of endless desires.

Verse 2.62¹⁸ of the Bhagavad Gita, suggests that if desires are fulfilled, it leads to greed for more desires and if unfulfilled, leads to frustration and anger. Thus, all desires become the cause of unhappiness, even though they may bring some happiness early on (Bhawuk, 2008). To control our desires, regulating and controlling the incoming stimulus to our sense organs has been emphasized in the Bhagavad Gita. This is very relevant in today's context and we discuss it in the context of addiction, information overload and its implications on Mindfulness.

With the advancement of technology and consumerism, our craving for constant stimulation and excitement, pleasure experiences are also rising. Many a time, it could lead to addictive behaviours causing cognitive, psychological, and interpersonal disturbances. A review study by Eppler & Mengis (2004), reported that due to information over-load an individual may feel stressed, confused, cognitively strained, and decision effectiveness is lowered. Hence, nowadays, from time to time a digital detox from all social media and gadgets is suggested.

Most studies have reported that Mindfulness is the first stage of learning equanimity, in which one can focus attention upon the flow of experience in the present moment without distraction (Machada & Costa, 2015; Weber, 2017; Shoham et al., 2019). Being constantly distracted with mobile phones, computers, social media reduces our awareness and ability to be mindful which in turn has a bearing on equanimity. Hence, the need for moderating our exposure to the information overflow is very crucial.

In relation to experiences, *Samatva* has been emphasized as being steady in the dualities such as pleasure-pain, joy sorrow. We can understand equanimity in the context of emotional regulation as hedonic neutrality. In the emotional regulation processes related to equanimity there is increased acceptance, openness and our tolerance to distress increases, and with this unhealthy emotional processing such as avoidance, repression and suppression decreases (Hadash et al., 2016; Desbordes et al., 2015; Chambers et al., 2009). Thus, in states of equanimity, habitual maladaptive re-activity decreases (Shapiro et al., 2006).

The Bhagavat Gita also emphasizes even-mindedness towards not just individuals but all sentient beings. In verse 5.18¹⁷ Krishna emphasizes that a wise man will be even-minded to a human being, a cow, an elephant and a dog; these are contrasting species and life forms. However, a learned person goes beyond the outer forms and recognizes the similar underlying consciousness of all these beings. A raw model has been mined from the verses 5.19, 6.9, 6.29 elaborating this process. Further synthesis of the raw model is proposed that when one is even-minded towards others, prejudices, bigotry and discrimination reduces. Simultaneously compassion and altruism can increase. On a personal level, it can lead to more harmonious relationships and at the societal level,

it may lead to reduced social conflicts and more harmonious co-existence. Thus, we see that equanimity is a form of Emotional Intelligence or EQ (Emotional Quotient) which when cultivated may lead to benefits at the personal as well as societal level.

Drawing a parallel, it should be noted that the ideal form of equanimity embraced in Buddhism also includes having an equal attitude towards all dualities, experiences and sentient beings, and as a state of mind that cannot be swayed by biases and preferences (Desbordes et al. 2015; Bodhi, 2000). There are specific techniques in Buddhism for cultivating an impartial attitude of equanimity such as reflecting on the mind's automatic classification of 'other' people as friends, enemies and strangers and realizing that these categories are transient and based on superficial, self-serving attitudes (Desbordes et al., 2015).

Krishna emphasizes that the sensations of happiness/distress experienced through the senses are transitory and impermanent, and awareness of this leads to *Titiksha*. A raw model showcasing this has been mined from Verse 2.14⁴. and further synthesized with the Psychological literature. Desbordes et al.(2015) suggests that when we become aware of the transient nature of sensations and experiences then the importance of the stimulus in relation to the self reduces. This in turn, may lead to a different perspective and increase one's cognitive flexibility in perceiving the situation.

To draw a parallel, the technique of *Vipassanā* meditation, in Buddhism which is one of the prominent methods for cultivating equanimity, also focuses on Impermanence. One of the most important practice of *Vipassana* meditation is *Anicca* (principle of impermanence) in which meditators reflect on impermanence, realizing that they don't have any control over this phenomenon

and that any attempt to manipulate it creates suffering.

A key cultivation practice associated with *Samatva* which has been strongly emphasized is reducing our attachments to the outcome or results of our actions. Shri Krishna suggests that we should focus on the work and not on the results/outcome of work. We can understand this in the context of emotional regulation. When one is not very attached to the outcome, the intensity of the emotions related to the outcome (pleasant or unpleasant) go down, and avoidance and clinging to the outcome reduces. Even if the outcome is not up to one's expectations, one may become more open and, acceptance increases. Few studies have been carried out showing the inter-relationships between equanimity, attachment and duty orientation. Mulla and Krishnan (2014) proposed a model of Karma Yoga in which duty orientation was emphasized as a pre-cursor to developing equanimity. Another study by Banthand Talwar (2010) delineated the characteristics of *Anasakti* (non-attachment) as consisting of emotional equipoise in the face of success and failure, weak concern for extrinsic rewards and efforts to achieve excellence.

Another pathway which has been elaborated for the cultivation of *Samatva* is through faith, devotion and surrender. Devotees are equipped with the wisdom of the scriptures and have immense faith. They are aware that pleasure and pain are both inevitable in life and perceive the grace of God in any situation which increases their acceptance. Pargament et al. (2000) conceptualized surrender into two types: active surrender and passive surrender. Active surrender is an individual's attempt to manage what is possible, and the nrelinquish remaining control to a higher power. On the other hand, passive surrender is submissively waiting for a higher power to control the situation and pleading for intervention.

Research with cancer populations indicates that active religious surrender is associated with decrease in emotional distress and higher well-being, whereas passive surrender is associated with more distress and less active coping (McLaughlin et al., 2013; Gall et al., 2009). Thus, the major techniques elaborated in Bhagavad Gita to cultivate equanimity are through knowledge and insight into impermanence, the underlying unity of consciousness, regulating the information to one's senses, reducing attachments and desires and lastly through devotion, faith and surrender.

Various health and spirituals implications of cultivating *Samatva* have been enumerated in theme five, such as *peace, reduced suffering, self-realization freedom from karmic reactions and liberation from bondage*. Shri Krishna states that if one gives up all selfish motives and works merely for the sake of duty, such work does not create any karmic reactions. To illustrate, if a soldier kills an enemy in battle, he is not punished for it, as his action is performed as a matter of duty to the country and is not motivated by any personal gain. Equanimity has also been studied in therapeutic and meditation settings and has shown improvements in eudemonic well-being and insights into the perception of reality (Ekici et al., 2018); reduction in strong emotions such as anger, sadness and passion (Pagis, 2015) and perceiving emotional stimuli as more neutral instead of positive or negative (Machada & Costa, 2015) and experiencing a reduction in loneliness (Lindsay et al., 2018).

The last theme pertained to equanimity as a quality of a *Trigunatita* (person who has transcended the three Gunas). A *Trigunatita* ceases to identify himself with the movements of Prakriti and its gunas and instead identifies with the divine Consciousness. In this process, the sense of agency reduces and the self becomes a Witness to all that is happening without being severely affected. In

Western terminology, there is a parallel concept to 'Witnessing' known as Psychological Distancing or Decentring and is a crucial component of Cognitive Therapies. Alford and Beck (1997) describe distancing as the ability to view one's thoughts as constructions of 'reality' rather than as reality itself. Psychological distancing has been shown to decrease emotional and physiological reactivity, and reduce rumination over time (Kross & Ayduk, 2008) and developing decentring skills leads to greater equanimity in the presence of negative qualia (Lomas et al., 2015).

This paper is a contribution to the Indian ethos of well-being. The implications of equanimity for leadership, management and holistic well-being are elaborated below.

***Samatva* in the context of Leadership, Management & Holistic Well-being**

Over the years, the construct of equanimity has been conflated within Mindfulness and the terms have been used interchangeably by academicians and trainers who have been conducting trainings to promote holistic well-being, team-work and functionality in organizations (Zeng et al., 2015; Desbordes et al., 2015).

Dane and Brummel (2013) have examined the impact of work-place mindfulness and its positive relations to job performance and negative effect on turnover intention. Hunter and McCormic (2008) suggest that persons who practice mindfulness may be more accepting of their work situation and more adaptable; less concerned with material acquisition and wealth, more likely to derive meaning in life from more sources than just work and to experience work difficulties as challenges than threats, better able to cope and remain calm in difficult work situations and thus; have more positive interpersonal relations at work.

However, recently researchers have been more sensitive to the conceptual differences between equanimity and mindfulness. The various definitions of mindfulness have a common component corresponding to 'an attitude of openness and acceptance'. Desbordes et al., (2015) suggest that this specific component shares similarities and corresponds with the description of equanimity. Zeng et al. (2015) proposed that both awareness and equanimity are basic abilities shared by most common people even without the experience of meditation, and thus, teaching people to practice equanimity through reflective practices may be attainable and effective to accrue the positive consequences similar to mindfulness-based interventions. Particularly in India, *Samatva* may prove to have an emic embedded cultural competence that is accepted and practiced easily, to develop more effective employees and productive work environment.

Tomassini (2016) critiques that corporate mindfulness trainings such as MBSR (Mindfulness based Stress Reduction), largely serve organizational needs and may reinforce the individualized nature of modern corporate organizations. He suggests that mindfulness should be practiced in work-life as a more liberating practice and should be carried out in smaller groups, and simulates more reflective practices among participants. Taking this into consideration, reflective practices to develop equanimity or *samatva* may be developed in the context of work-life leading to more harmonious and co-operative relationships in small teams, culminating into a strong work-place culture.

Our engagement at workplace occupies almost half of our productive time during our working life, and it has very strong spill-over effect on our personal and social life. Moreover, it has been widely acknowledged that good interpersonal relationships at work place contribute to successful

careers. As equanimity is strengthened over time and integrated into one's practice of healthily responding to any situation, it may moderate the physiological response to stress and anxiety (Gard et al., 2012) and in turn contribute to a better working life. Maher et al. (2019) report that, cultivating equanimity promotes understanding and beneficially affects one's interpersonal relationships. Understanding equanimity as a distinct concept with its specific cognitive, affective and behavioural mechanisms will also be useful for the development of indigenous therapeutic models/skills for emotional regulation. Thus, equanimity-based training modules may sustain long term harmonious relationships in the teams, reducing interpersonal conflicts, and leading to high productivity. Simple ways of cultivating equanimity may also be integrated into the employees' wellness programs so that when faced with stress and failure at work, they are resilient and don't avoid pain or discomfort with unhealthy coping mechanisms.

Connaughton (2016) elaborates in detail on the impact and role of equanimity in leadership practice. Leaders who take decisions from a place of equanimity are able to see the wider perspective, and are able to correctly assess the situation; they may be more open to understand the perspectives of others and may be guarded from reacting too quickly to the situation. Cultivating equanimity may help leaders in truly being unbiased towards their employees. This is significant considering the negative role that bias may play in appraisals and promotions. Rather than being stuck in mal-adaptive ways of responding, cultivating equanimity may enable the leader to find flexible and creative solutions for the greater good. Leaders who practice equanimity may also be better at adapting to challenges and have a calm approach to solving problems, which offers reassurance to the employees and sub-ordinates that they are in the hands of a capable leader.

Thus, as seen above, the cultivation of equanimity or *Samatva* has significant implications for management, leadership and holistic well-being.

Summary

This paper aimed to define the construct of *Samatva* as delineated in the Bhagavad Gita. From the rigorous methodology employed it was found that *Samatva* consists of being even-minded towards objects, experiences and individuals. *Samatva* was defined as a state of even-mindedness and rising above the dualities. Various cognitive-affective pathways towards the cultivation of *Samatva* were elaborated such as reduced desires, and attachments to the outcomes or results of one's

work. Similarly, beliefs in the underlying oneness of consciousness and the awareness of transience play a significant in the cultivation of *Samatva*. The suggested health and spiritual implications of cultivating *Samatva* were peace, tranquillity and self-realization. The implications of *Samatva* for holistic well-being, leadership and management were elaborated in detail. With increasing stress, anxiety, and depression in personal and professional life of individuals, it is time to turn to our native wisdom for indigenous mental health techniques. It is hoped that the thick description of the construct of *Samatva* and the proposed nomological network will stimulate research in this direction.

Acknowledgements:

The authors would like to thank Prof. DharmBhawuk for his immense contribution on building methodologies for understanding indigenous texts and scriptures; and for his encouragement and inspiration in writing this paper.

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Notes:

1. Verse 6.8- *jñāna-vijñāna-triptātmākūṭa-sthovijitendriyaḥyuktaityuchyateyogīsama-loṣṭāśhma-kāñchanah*
2. Verse 2.48- *yoga-sthaḥkurukarmāṇisaṅgaṁtyaktvādhanañjaya siddhy-siddhyoḥsamobhūtvāSamatvaṁ yoga uchyaate*
3. Verse 6.29- *sarva-bhūta-sthamātmānam sarva-bhūtānīchātmaniḥkshateyogayuktātmāsarvatrasama-darśhanah*
4. Verse 2.14- *mātrā-*

sparśhāstukaunteyaśhītośhṇa-sukha-duḥkha-dāḥāgamāpāyino 'nityās tans-titikṣhasvabhārata

5. Verse 5.19- *ihavatairjitaḥsargoyeśhāmsāmyesthitammanāḥnirdoṣaṁ hi samam brahma tasmādbrahmaṇitesthitāḥ*
6. Verse 6.9- *suhṛin-mitrāryudāsīna-madhyastha-dveṣhya-bandhuṣhusādhushvapi cha pāpeṣhusama-buddhirviśhiṣhyate*
7. Verse 2.70- *āpūryamāṇamachala-pratiṣṭhāmsamudramāpaḥpraviśhantiyadva ttadvatkāmāyaṁpraviśhantisarvesaśhāntimā*

pnotinakāma-kāmī

8. Verse 2.51- *karma-jāmbuddhi-yuktā hi phalaṁtyaktvāmanīṣhīṇaḥjanma-bandhavinirmuktāḥpadaṁgachchhantyanāmayam*
9. Verse 2.38- *sukha-duḥkhe same kṛitvālābhālābhaujayājayautatoyuddhāyayuj yasvanaivaṁpāpamavāpsyasi*
10. Verse 2.15- *yam hi navyathayantyetepuruṣaṁpuruṣharṣhabhasama-duḥkhasukhaṁdhīraṁ so 'mṛitatvāyakalpate*
11. Verse 5.3- *jñeyasannyāsa-sannyāsīyonadveṣhṭīnakāṅkṣhatinirdvandvo hi mahābāhosukhaṁbandhātpramuchyate*
12. Verse 15.5- *nirmāna-mohājita-saṅga-doṣhādhyātma-nityāvinivṛitta-kāmāḥdvandvairvimuktāḥsukha-duḥkhasanjñairgachchhantyanūdhāḥpadamavyayaṁ tat*
13. Verse 12.13- *adveṣhṭāsarva-bhūtānāmmaitraḥkaruṇaeva cha nirmamonirahankāraḥsama-duḥkhasukhaḥkṣhamī*
14. Verses 12.18-19- *samaḥśhatrau cha mitre cha*

tathāmānāpamānayoḥśhītoṣhṇasukha-duḥkheṣhusamaḥsaṅga-vivarjitaḥ Tulya-nindā-stutirmaunīsantushṭoyenakenachitaniketahst hira-matirbhaktimān me priyonarah

15. Verses 14.22-23- *śhrī-bhagavānuvāchaprakāśham cha pravṛittim cha mohameva cha pāṇḍavanadveṣhṭīsampravṛittāninanivṛittānī kāṅkṣhati Udāsīna-vadāsīnoguṇairyonavichālyateguṇāvartantai tyevaṁyo 'vatiṣṭhatineṅgate*
16. Verses 14.24-25- *sama-duḥkha-sukhaḥsvasthaḥsama-loṣhṭāśhma-kāṅchanaḥtulyapriyāpriyodhīrastulya-nindātma-sanstutiḥ Mānāpamānayoṣtulyastulyomitṛāri-pakṣhayoḥsarvārambha-parityāgīguṇātītaḥsauchyate*
17. Verse 5.18- *vidyā-vinaya-sampannebrāhmaṇegavihastiniśhunichaivaś hva-pāke cha paṇḍitāḥsama-darśhinaḥ*
18. Verse 2.62- *dhyāyatoviṣhayānpuṁsaḥsaṅgasteshūpajāya tesāṅgātsaṅjāyatekāmaḥ kāmātkrodho 'bhijāyate*

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Appendix E

Conference & Symposium Presentations

(Certificates Attached)

The following is a list of paper presentations from the Ph.D work carried out.

Sr. No	Paper presentation	Date
1	Jijina P. & Biswas U. Paper presented on <i>Understanding Equanimity- An exploratory study</i> at the 28 th Annual Convention of NAOP & International conference on Building Inclusive Societies, New Delhi.	19 th December 2018
2	Jijina P. Paper presented on <i>Enhancing well-being in times of uncertainty through the cultivation of equanimity</i> at the Online International Conference Psychological Well-being in COVID Milieu: Futuristic Dynamics organized by the Titus Teachers College in collaboration with the Kerela State Higher Education Council.	13 th August 2020
3	Invited Speaker at the Online Symposium "Thriving in Difficult times with Bhagavad Gita" organised by the Vedic Indian Psychology Research & Application (VIPRA) Division of the National Institute of Mental Health & Allied Sciences (NIMHANS), Bengaluru. Have presented the topic <i>Understanding Samatva from the Bhagavad Gita</i> in the panel session on Recent Research on the Concepts from Gita.	25 th February 2021



XXVIII ANNUAL CONVENTION OF NATIONAL ACADEMY OF PSYCHOLOGY (NAOP 2018)

& International Conference on

Towards Building Inclusive Societies

Certificate of Presentation

This is to certify that Prof. /Dr./Mr./Ms. *Parisha Jijina & Urmi Nanda Biswas*.....
..... has participated and presented a paper titled ...*Understanding...Equanimity...*.....
...*An exploratory...study*..... in the 28th Annual Convention of NAOP 2018 held on 19th – 21st December 2018,
organized by the Department of Applied Psychology, Ramanujan College, University of Delhi, Delhi, India.

Dr. Dharmendra Nath Tiwari
Convener, NAOP 2018

Dr. S.P. Aggarwal
Principal, Ramanujan College

Prof. Mewa Singh
President, NAOP INDIA



TITUS II TEACHERS COLLEGE, TIRUVALLA, KERALA, INDIA

COUNCIL FOR EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT (CEAM)

In Collaboration with
THE KERALA STATE HIGHER EDUCATION COUNCIL (KSHEC)

ONLINE INTERNATIONAL MULTIDISCIPLINARY CONFERENCE
PSYCHOLOGICAL WELLBEING IN COVID MILIEU: FUTURISTIC DYNAMICS

Certificate of Participation

*This is to certify that Parisha Jijina
has participated and presented the paper titled Enhancing Well-being
.....in times of Uncertainty through the Cultivation of Equanimity..... in the
Online International Multidisciplinary Conference jointly organized by Titus II Teachers College,
Tiruvalla, Kerala, India and Council for Educational Administration and Management (CEAM)
in collaboration with The Kerala State Higher Education Council (KSHEC) on August 13-14, 2020.*

Dr. Anita Mathai
Principal & General Convener

Dr. M. S. Geetha
Conference Director

Dr. Rajan Varughese
Member Secretary, KSHEC

Dr. Sam Thomas Joy
Conference Coordinator

Dr. Sunila Thomas
Conference Coordinator

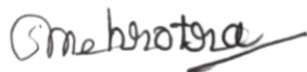
Dr. Nimmi Maria Oommen
Conference Secretary

Symposium on

Thriving in difficult times with Bhagavad Gita

Organised by VIPRA Division, Department of Clinical Psychology,
National Institute of Mental Health & Neurosciences, Bengaluru 560029
As a Webinar Series, February 2021

This is to certify that Dr./Mr./Ms. ...Parisha Jijina...
gave an invited talk/presentation during this symposium titled
Understanding Samatva from the Bhagavad Gita



Dr. Seema Mehrotra
Professor & Head
Department of Clinical Psychology, NIMHANS



Dr. Jyotsna Agrawal
Associate Professor & Symposium Coordinator
Department of Clinical Psychology, NIMHANS



WORKSHOPS ATTENDED

The following is a list of workshops attended connected to the Ph.D. topic.

Sr. No.	Workshop	Date
1	Attended workshop on <i>Construct building in Indian Psychology</i> conducted by Prof D Bhawuk organised at the 28 th Annual Convention of NAOP & International conference on Building Inclusive Societies, New Delhi.	17-18 th December 2018.
2	Attended the <i>Workshop on Mindfulness based Cognitive Behavioural Interventions</i> conducted at the National Institute of Mental Health & Neurosciences (NIMHANS), Bengaluru.	2-3 rd August 2019
3	Attended the six-day online course on <i>Samatvam – Understanding Yogic Equality as the Foundation for Inner Progress</i> organized by Sri Aurobindo Foundation for Indian Culture (SAFIC), Puducherry.	6 th -11 th July 2020
4	Attended the eight-week online <i>Mindfulness Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT)</i> program as a participant of the course to learn to support self through mindfulness based therapeutic approaches conducted by Just Being Centre for Mindfulness & Presence, Pune.	11 th June – 30 th July 2020



RAMANUJAN COLLEGE
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XXVIII ANNUAL CONVENTION OF NATIONAL ACADEMY OF PSYCHOLOGY (NAOP 2018)

& International Conference on *Towards Building Inclusive Societies* *Certificate of Participation*

This is to certify that Prof. /Dr./Mr./Ms. *Parisha Tizima*
..... has participated in the pre-conference workshop on *Developing a Program...*
of Research In Indian Psychology conducted by *Prof. D.P. Bhanuk* held on 17th – 18th
December 2018, organized by the Department of Applied Psychology, Ramon Manoj College, University of Delhi, Delhi, India.

Dr. Dharmendra Nath Tiwari
Convener, NAOP 2018

Dr. S.P. Aggarwal
Principal, Ramon Manoj College

Prof. Mewa Singh
President, NAOP INDIA



BEHAVIOURAL MEDICINE UNIT
DEPARTMENT OF CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF MENTAL HEALTH AND NEUROSCIENCES
 BENGALURU – 560029, INDIA

Workshop on Mindfulness–Based Cognitive Behavioural Interventions:
Applications in Clinical and Nonclinical Settings

2nd - 3rd August 2019

Certificate

Certified that Ms./~~Mr.~~/~~Dr.~~ *Parisha Tijina* has participated/ ~~was resource person~~ in the workshop titled “**Mindfulness–Based Cognitive Behavioural Interventions: Applications in Clinical and Nonclinical Settings**” conducted by the Behavioural Medicine Unit, Department of Clinical Psychology, NIMHANS, Bengaluru on 2nd - 3rd August 2019 at NIMHANS.

R. N. P. S. Chandra

Director/Vice-Chancellor
NIMHANS

D. N. Sharma
Professor & Head

Department of Clinical Psychology

Ajay Kumar

Workshop Co-ordinator



Sri Aurobindo Foundation for Indian Culture Foundation for Indian Culture Culture

Sri Aurobindo Society, Puducherry – 605001

Date: 04-08-2020

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(Chancellor, SVAYSA, Bangalore)

Prof. Ramachandra Bhatta

(Vice Chancellor, SVYASA, Bangalore)

Prof. Vishnu Potty

(Vice Chancellor, SCSVMV, Kanchi, Tamil Nadu)

Padmashri Prof. Ramakanta Shukla

(Founder, Devayani Parishad, Delhi & Editor, Aravachina Samskritam)

Prof. Abhiraj Rajendra Mishra

(Ex Vice Chancellor, SSVV, Varanasi)

Dr. Phani Kumar

(Director, Good Governance, AP Govt.)

Mr. Shashikant Joshi

(Senior Manager Software Engineering, Fidelity Investments)

Mrs. Vasundhara Das

(Film Actress and Playback Singer)

Dr. Aravind Rao

(DGP (Retd.), Andhra Pradesh)

Dr. Varalakshmi

(Deputy Director, Sanskrit Academy, Osmania University, AP)

International Members

Mr. Rajiv Malhotra

(Founder, Infinity Foundation, USA)

Prof. Subhash Kak

(Professor and Head of Computer Science Department at Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, USA)

Prof. Ashok Aklujkar

(Professor of Sanskrit, University of British Columbia, Canada)

Dr. David Frawley

(Founder, American Institute of Vedic Studies, USA)

Mr. Himanshu Pota

(Associate Professor of Electrical Engineering School of Engineering & IT, University of New South Wales, Australia)

Certificate of Attendance

Sub: To Whomsoever it May Concern

This is to certify that Parisha Jijina, Asst. Professor- Dept. of Psychology, Faculty of Education & Psychology, The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda, Gujarat attended the six day online course on Samatvam – Understanding Yogic Equality as the Foundation for Inner Progress organized by Sri Aurobindo Foundation for Indian Culture (SAFIC) from 6 to 11 July 2020.

Dr. Sampadananda Misra
Director, SAFIC
Sri Aurobindo Society
Puducherry

Sri Aurobindo Society, 11, Saint Martin Street, Puducherry – 605001

Telephone: +91 413 233 6396; M: +91 9952888350

Email: sampad@aurosociety.org

Website: www.aurosociety.org

Date: 05.08.2020

To,

WHOMSOEVER IT MAY CONCERN

This is to confirm that Parisha Jijina had attended the 8-week Mindfulness Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT) program from 11th June 2020 to 30th July 2020 as a participant of the course. This 8-week MBCT program is a group therapy program for individuals who want to learn to support themselves through mindfulness based therapeutic approaches. It was not a training program.

Wishing her all the best for her future endeavours.

Sincerely,



Sandy Dias Andrade
Facilitator of the 8-week MBCT Program
Founder-Director, Just Being Center for Mindfulness and Presence