

An Interface between Bhagvad Gita and work life balance**Co- Authors:****Mitu Agarwal****Research Scholar****School of Management,****KIIT University, Bhubaneswar, Odisha****&****Dr. Ipseeta Satpathy, D.Litt.****Professor, School of Management****KIIT University, Bhubaneswar; Odisha*****Abstract***

The justice of universe says that all components should be in consonance of the law of universe. Any imbalance in even one of the component can cause imbalance to the universe. Universe is full of activities, movements, change and therefore transformation and so is organization. Organization is everywhere, right from the smallest particle atom to the solar system. And so is a family which may be considered as a first organization of human beings. The dynamics of family are changing, from sole male bread winner families to dual earner families where husband and wife both are working. Just like an atom is not a chaos as there is a balance maintained by the constituents of the atom, the electrons getting conditioned and ruled by a central nucleus, and the solar system working beautifully by the power of the Sun who organizes the systems similarly individuals are also governed by power of organizing their lives in a more harmonious manner. Individuals have the capacity to think consistently, logically, and in an organized manner and so creating a balance between their married life and professional life. By keeping beside the distraction, egoism, individualization and differences, man and woman can together have a balance between work and life.

Key words: Bhagavad-Gita, Balance, Work life balance, Married couples.

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Management is art as well as science. And in the modern era, management is an all pervasive function, either home, organizations, schools, NGOs or any other establishment. Management is done through group of human beings assembled together to achieve a common purpose or a common goal. Management is about balance of all the functions like finance, engineering, human resource, production, marketing etc. departments in the organization. Here balance does not mean that each function has equal contribution towards an organization. Balance, here means that, each function does its own work with utmost grit and passion as required or demanded by the management.

Balance does not every time mean equality. Balance means proper prioritizing between two or more acts or people or needs. And so work life balance is about proper prioritizing between the work that gives monetary benefits and the work that is for society benefits. Balance is an age old concept or to say it is all pervasive and inevitable part of nature. Nature has uncannily balanced the cycles in it. To begin with day and nights are balanced and not equal in amount and so are our seasons. If summers have, longer days and shorter nights than winters have longer nights and shorter days. When mother earth is burning because of scorching sun, than there are rains following to cool down and satiate mother earth with pure water.

Learning from Bhagavad-Gita

Bhagavad-Gita is delivered on the field of war in the context of Mahabharata. And the intention of Bhagavad-Gita is not to be read as a story but a handbook for the salvation of soul of humans, solving their inner conflicts and letting go ego which sometimes lead to hampered relationship with near and dear ones, stress during work and misbalancing of work and life. Bhagavad-Gita is a scripture of yoga which means that the teachings of Bhagavad-Gita can be practiced when one finds oneself at a conflict situation in one's life. Mahabharata is a story of war, or to say, conflicts of emotions arising because of relatives, friends and course of life and Bhagavad-Gita has helped overcome this conflict by practice of yoga and balancing of purposes (priorities) in life and thus is also helpful in attaining work life balance.

As human beings, everyone has an external urge towards action, societal relationship and contacts of various kinds, and at the same time they also have a dominant impulse to maintain our integrity and status. The societal status is gained through the paid work that one does and the internal status and integrity is earned through our leisure activities, friends and relatives. But due to present complexities,

challenges in personal and work life, individuals are unable to balance between work and life. And so to balance work and life the internal independence and status of an individual should be harmonised with the external world. In our pursuit to balance our life, we are also compelled to perform well at our work front so that there is balanced relationship.

According to Indian philosophy, especially the Vedanta, the original substance of all types of creation is 'Prakriti'. Prakriti is classified into three gunas known as *sattava*, *rajas* and *tamas*. For the harmony and sound health of the body it is important that all three gunas are aligned, because an imbalance can make human being sick physically or psychologically. Hence there is a necessity to have an inner balance between the personalities which would also be also seen external health. But inward peace will only be attained when our external relationships are balanced. A balance between individual and his external elements like nature (fire, earth, water, air and ether), climatic conditions, relationship with other individuals, work and many other such things which constitutes the external environment of individual. Bhagavad-Gita says that life is always a battle, where there is a constant battle between cosmic energy and individual energy. Life is a fight from birth to death. It is a course of tackling something or the other every day, an obligation that we undergo every moment of time to resolve a situation that may have arisen in front of us. The moment an individual wakes up in the morning, he or she is face to face with many realities that have the potential to cause imbalance in our lives. A higher level of Sattava guna – the balancing guna of an individual- ensures that we are balanced in an inner level as well as outer level to the extent that we are delighted, joyful and happy. On the other hand a higher level of Tamas guna leads to upsetting of individual with the outer world. And this may lead to absence of joy, grief and sorrow. The third guna, Tamas means indifference. It means resistance to action which gives many evil effects like death, destruction and loss. In the first verse of the Bhagavad-Gita we come across two important words, 'Dharmakshetra' and 'Kurukshestra'. Dharmakshetra is derived from the word dharma which means justice and the law of nature which abides all human beings. 'Kurukshestra', literally means war field. But in this context it means our day to day conflict with work, attitudes of people, perceptions and society pressures. Bhagavad-Gita teaches us the ways to balance; samatva-equanimity i.e. putting things in order and reaching ; between 'Dharmakshetra' and 'Kurukshestra' so that we neither become busy-bodies who have lost their souls nor we are like hibernating frogs deep in our individualities and disconnected from the outer world. There is struggle everywhere, in everything, at all times, a struggle, to maintain a balance. This entire struggle is an attempt towards the maintenance of equilibrium in any field of life, in any plane of existence. For example, when there is a lack of balance in any part of our body then anxiety

creeps in our body. Even a single incoherent element is sufficient to disturb the entire balance, just as an ear-ache is enough to make us grieve the whole day. Similarly imbalance in any part of human society, leads to anxiousness. And to curb this anxiousness, we have various kinds of law – government laws, state laws, society laws etc. Just like we are unhappy if even a little thorn pricks the sole of our foot, similarly small intractable element in society, which disturbs the peace of the mind of people has the power to create disharmony and so we are obliged to be conscious of its existence and are also compelled to see what means can be adopted in setting right the situation. The aim is that there should not be any instance for misbalance even in the least manner, and so the whole of yoga is an all-inclusive approach to the situation of cosmic conflict which sympathetically reflects itself in every individual, also.

Traditionally, the work was divided between man and woman based on the convenience and work complexity. Man of the house was always the bread earner for the house. And woman took care of household activities like taking care of children, elders, cooking etc. But with changing dynamics, the working scenario of the households is changing. With the increase in education and professionalism in women, the income and living standards of individuals also improved. Now every married couple wants a better standard of living and quality education for their children. And so husband and wife are working for a double income and to give better facilities to their dependent. But this change has also brought with it certain set of problems. Now that women have also started earning, also she is burdened with more responsibilities. She has to go out to earn and she also has to take care of the family members and do household chores.

The Bhagavadgita says that just like Arjuna individuals are faced with warring situations everyday and our activities are our efforts to face the battle. The work that individuals do in office, the labour that is put forth in a factory, or any other work that women do at homes or in any walk of life, is the effort individuals put forth to resolve a conflict and solve a situation. Man and woman have to tactfully do their work, without thinking about their results, in order to maintain a balance between their work and life. There are various strategies, derived from the Vedas and Gita that can be adopted by both man and woman to have a balanced life.

(i) Focusing on work regardless of result

Bhagavad-Gita has always advocated that we should focus on our work and do work with complete honesty regardless of result. And when couples work with utmost honesty and are productive for the organization then they get support from the organization to balance their family life, working hours and family friendly parties etc.

(ii) Work is God

We are always taught that work is worship. And so we should always value our work. When we derive meaning from work, we enjoy our work and feel a sense of purpose which propels our life in correct decision.

(iii) Valuing family and partnership

Married and working couples should view everything at large and strive for a larger purpose. The purpose is to give quality life to their family members. But in the run for making more money couples should not forget to value their family. Husband and wife should support each other in both family and career life. And especially husband should take pride in their partners who support them financially, emotionally and physically.

(iv) Simple living and prioritizing family

For couples it is important that they should give priority to family first and try to spend more and more time with family. Simple living means spending less time watching TV or on internet and parties and trying to play family fun games for a more engaging family. Controlling unnecessary expenditures can help couples to save money and give quality education to children.

(v) Valuing time

Time is an important element which can never be gained back. And married couples should focus on spending more and more quality time together. In this fast paced life, husband and wife get very less time to spend with each other and their children. So couples should make strategies to make optimum utilisation of their time.

(vi) Making proactive decisions

In order to make important decisions about their finances and life couple should spend time together and so should make proactive decisions. Decision making for couples should be a joint effort rather than one influencing the other.

Conclusion

There has been a boom in dual earner families or working couples in the present business environment. The families are shifting from male breadwinner to working couples or parents which denote that there has also an increase in mothers with children under the age 18 years of age. This significant shift of demography is of two reasons. Firstly, the economic changes and desire for better life requires for double income for economic feasibility and viability. Secondly, there is also an intimate desire of women to have more satisfying and fulfilling family life as well as professional life. With the upsurge in dual career couples, the complexity in career progressions and maintaining work and life balance has increased. As the career choices and decisions of a spouse have a direct influence on the career decisions of the partner. In such scenario, the working couples have to face many challenges and struggles every day. The whole of life is an arena of such a difference. If we read the Ramayana of Valmiki or if we read the Mahabharata, we shall find that we are thrown in the situation of conflict unwittingly. But these ancient scriptures also give us wisdom to handle an imbalance in a calmer way. Bhagavad-Gita and other scriptures are made available to human beings as these are the individuals in who is planted a light of reason and a flash of insight. And so these ancient scriptures also help couples to balance between work life and family life through very simple and fruitful strategies which we tend to forget at times .

References

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