



Teaching Beyond the Classroom: The Bhagavad Gita as My Signature Pedagogy

Sudan Prasad Dotel

Abstract

This article explores the concept of signature pedagogy and highlights the author's distinctive teaching approach that centers around the teachings of the Bhagavad Gita, a treasure chest of knowledge. It describes how the author discovered the transformative power of the Bhagavad Gita and its ability to inspire and motivate students. This study employs a qualitative, narrative inquiry approach to explore the integration of the Bhagavad Gita into the author's signature pedagogy. The methodology is grounded in autoethnography, which combines personal reflection and professional practice to provide an in-depth understanding of how philosophical teachings can shape educational experiences (Ellis et al.). By incorporating verses and insights from the Bhagavad Gita into teaching, the author creates an environment that nurtures intellectual growth, emotional well-being, and spiritual awareness. To further elucidate, the article includes a narrative and a letter as data, illustrating how the author's signature pedagogy influenced and supported a troubled student struggling with addiction in overcoming his challenges and transforming his life.

Keywords: Bhagavad Gita, signature pedagogy, value-based education, autoethnography, teacher transformation, ELT

Introduction

Signature pedagogy refers to special teaching and learning practices. It represents the core methods, strategies, and activities that are widely recognized and accepted within a field as the most effective ways of teaching. The concept of signature pedagogy was first introduced by Lee Shulman, an educational scholar, to describe the unique ways professionals are trained in different fields. According to Shulman, these professions not only require specialized knowledge but also demand specific ways of thinking, problem-solving, and engaging with the subject matter (52). Every teacher has a unique pedagogical approach that shapes their

teaching style and philosophy. My signature pedagogy is rooted in the profound teachings of the Bhagavad Gita, an ancient Hindu scripture that serves as a guiding light in my educational journey. It enables me to inspire, motivate, counsel, and transform my students. By incorporating its verses and insights, I cultivate an environment that fosters intellectual growth, emotional well-being, and spiritual awareness.

Background

For the past 20 years, I have dedicated myself to teaching English, a profession I consider noble. One of my greatest challenges has been motivating students and igniting their passion for meaningful learning. In recent years, I have observed that their attention is increasingly divided due to social media and other modern distractions. My goal has always been to create an environment where students remain enthusiastic, dedicated, and focused—one that empowers them to reach their full potential in meaningful English learning (Aryal). In my search, I found the Bhagavad Gita, the essence of all the Vedas and the Upanishads:

सर्वोपनिषिदो गावो , दोग्धा गोपाल नन्दन :|

पार्थो वत्स : सुधीर्भोक्ता , दुग्धं गीतामृतं महत् ||

sarvopnishado gaavo, dogdhaa gopaala nandana:|

paarthovatsa: sudheerbhoktaa, dugdham gitaamrutam mahat | (Prabhupada 30)

I realized that it could provide valuable guidance for both me and my students. With great enthusiasm, I introduced the teachings of the Bhagavad Gita to a selected group of students who were struggling with various issues. To my delight, the results exceeded my expectations. The Bhagavad Gita seemed to have a transformative impact on their English language learning and, subsequently, on their lives. This brought joy not only to them but also to me. This experience ignited a new passion in me to incorporate this powerful tool into my teaching profession.

The Bhagavad Gita: My Resource to Nurture the Students

The Bhagavad Gita is a sacred text that offers timeless wisdom, blending spirituality, ethics, and self-reflection (Radhakrishnan). Its verses provide profound insights into various aspects of life, including personal growth, decision-making, resilience, and emotional intelligence (Poongundran). By incorporating these verses into my pedagogy, I strive to ignite curiosity and encourage students to explore their own status quo, beliefs, values, and life purpose. The Bhagavad Gita offers a wealth of wisdom that can inspire and uplift learners during times of doubt, difficulty, and self-inquiry (Dahal). It encourages critical reflection and fosters an empowering vision for personal growth (Luitel and Taylor).

As a teacher, I use its teachings to motivate and encourage my students to em-

brace challenges and pursue their goals with unwavering determination (Adair). By sharing insights from the Bhagavad Gita and reflecting on its lessons, I instill resilience and self-belief, empowering my students to overcome obstacles and reach their full potential. Education extends beyond academics; it nurtures students' overall well-being. The Bhagavad Gita offers valuable guidance on managing emotions, finding inner peace, and achieving balance in life. When my students experience emotional turmoil or display erratic behavior, I turn to its teachings as a source of solace and counsel (Ghosh). By discussing relevant verses and encouraging self-reflection, I help them navigate their emotions, overcome challenges, and make choices aligned with their higher selves (Vermani and Chauhan).

One of the most transformative aspects of my signature pedagogy is its ability to foster self-discovery and self-realization among students (Dewey, "Self-Realization"). The Bhagavad Gita highlights introspection and self-awareness as essential to personal growth and fulfillment. Through guided discussions, reflective exercises, and personal engagement with its verses, I create a space where students can explore their values, beliefs, and identities (Choudhary and Prabha). This process not only deepens their academic understanding but also nurtures their emotional intelligence, helping them develop into well-rounded individuals.

Additionally, my signature pedagogy extends beyond the student-teacher relationship to foster a sense of community and interconnectedness. The Bhagavad Gita emphasizes the unity of all beings and the interdependence of life (Joshi et al.). By incorporating its teachings into my classroom, I encourage students to support and learn from one another through collaborative activities (Littleton and Mercer 45–50), group discussions, and shared reflections (Minnett). This approach cultivates a vibrant, inclusive learning environment where students can freely explore and grow.

Incorporating the Bhagavad Gita into my teaching as my signature pedagogy has profoundly impacted both my students and me. Its timeless wisdom serves as a guiding force, empowering students to navigate life's complexities with wisdom, courage, and compassion while learning a foreign language. By integrating its verses and insights, I inspire students to embrace learning, overcome challenges, and realize their true potential. Through this pedagogy, I nurture their intellectual growth while also fostering emotional well-being and spiritual awareness, preparing them to become compassionate, mindful individuals in the ever-changing 21st century (Choudhary and Prabha).

Purpose of the Study

Through this study, I intend to explore how the insights from the Bhagavad Gita have become my signature pedagogy as an ELT teacher.

Research Question

My research work will explore the following broad question: How can the Bhagavad Gita shape and influence the teaching approach of an English Language teacher?

Literature Review

Scholars worldwide have extensively explored the Bhagavad Gita's philosophical, psychological, and educational implications. Frauwallner notes that it "has exercised an influence on the widest circle more than any other religion," while Tilak describes it as the "brightest and purest diamond among all religious scriptures," emphasizing its universal appeal. Shivananda highlights its transformative potential, calling it "a wonderful message of hope, consolation, peace, and above all, the divinity of man"—one that "solves all problems of life, gives fearlessness, and lifts individuals from penury to internal bliss" (174). Bhawuk further underscores the Bhagavad Gita's unique perspective on work, emphasizing that "work is to be performed for its own sake, not for its outcomes" (148). Similarly, Adhikari contends that while the Upanishads and Brahma Sutras demand scholarly understanding, the Bhagavad Gita is accessible to all, transcending caste, creed, gender, and nationality. Basu reinforces this view, portraying the Bhagavad Gita as "a psychological odyssey to transcendental wisdom" that guides learners toward clarity (2).

Despite its philosophical depth, the Bhagavad Gita's application as a pedagogical framework in English language and literature teaching has received limited attention. Most studies emphasize its philosophical or managerial relevance, overlooking how its value-based principles can shape a teacher's professional transformation and influence student learning outcomes. This study addresses this gap by exploring how the Bhagavad Gita can inform an English teacher's signature pedagogy, fostering not only academic achievement but also emotional resilience, ethical development, and holistic well-being among learners. Through an autoethnographic lens, this research illustrates how the Bhagavad Gita bridges the divide between materialistic and value-based pedagogies, offering a transformative model for contemporary education.

Methodology

This study employs a qualitative, narrative inquiry approach to explore the integration of the Bhagavad Gita into my signature pedagogy. The methodology

is grounded in autoethnography, which combines personal reflection and professional practice to provide an in-depth understanding of how philosophical teachings can shape educational experiences (Ellis et al. 273). The qualitative nature of this research focuses on capturing the transformative impact of incorporating the Bhagavad Gita into teaching practices. Through reflective writing, narratives, and real-life anecdotes, I document the integration of this sacred text into my teaching philosophy and its influence on students' academic and personal growth (Clandinin and Connelly).

Analysis and Interpretation

In the next section, I present a motivating narrative that illustrates how the Bhagavad Gita shapes my signature pedagogy. This methodology allows me to go beyond the traditional role of an English teacher. Through this unique methodology, I have likely become a source of inspiration and guidance for my students, leading them toward growth and enlightenment.

An English Teacher's Fight for a Troubled Student

Once in a small town, there lived a dedicated English teacher named Madhu. His passion for education and his genuine concern for his students made him a beloved figure in the school community. However, one fateful day in September 2017, Madhu received the distressing news that one of his grade eleven students was experimenting with marijuana. The news deeply saddened and concerned Madhu, as he couldn't bear the thought of a young life being consumed by addiction. Determined to make a difference, he decided to take it upon himself to save this boy and guide him back to the right path.

The boy was from a distant village nestled in the hills, and his parents were hardworking peasants. They belonged to a humble, middle-class family. Madhu had given his word to the boy's father that he would take care of his son, and he intended to fulfill that promise. With a heavy heart, he called the boy to his office, accepting a challenging journey of guidance and transformation. The addicted boy walked into Madhu's office, looking both defiant and scared. Madhu understood the importance of taking a comprehensive approach to heal the boy's troubled mind and began his counseling sessions. He knew it wouldn't be an easy task, considering the depth of the boy's addiction, but he was determined.

Madhu had always been a studious teacher, and his vast knowledge of Vedic philosophy, particularly the teachings of the Bhagavad Gita, became his guiding light. Madhu made a plan to implement the teachings of the Bhagavad Gita in a way that would resonate with the young boy. He understood that the addiction

stemmed from a void in the boy's life, a lack of purpose and direction. Madhu recognized that the first step was to establish a strong bond of trust and empathy with the boy. He spent countless hours engaging in heartfelt conversations, listening to the boy's struggles, and offering words of encouragement.

With this in mind, Madhu began imparting the wisdom of the Bhagavad Gita, drawing parallels between its teachings and the challenges the boy faced. First and foremost, Madhu emphasized the importance of self-discipline and self-control. He explained to the boy how addiction is a result of a weak mind giving in to its desires.

"Dear, listen," Madhu started, "The Bhagavad Gita teaches us how to find enlightenment and understand our true selves. It shows us that we have the power to overcome obstacles and fulfill our potential. Like Arjuna on the battlefield, we must confront our inner struggles to bring about meaningful and lasting transformation."

Madhu believed by instilling discipline, the boy could regain control over his actions and thoughts. Drawing from the teachings of the Bhagavad Gita, Madhu guided the boy to focus on the present moment, urging him to detach from the past and the future. He taught him to practice mindfulness and to observe his thoughts and emotions without judgment. Through meditation and self-awareness exercises, the boy gradually learned to cultivate inner peace and a deeper connection with his true self.

Understanding the power of association, Madhu carefully selected the boy's friends, encouraging him to surround himself with individuals who shared his newfound aspirations. Together, they formed a support system rooted in moral values and mutual growth. They embarked on projects that benefitted the community, fostering a sense of purpose and fulfillment. Days turned into weeks and weeks into months as Madhu poured his heart and soul into helping the young boy break free from the clutches of addiction. Madhu became not just a teacher but also a mentor, guiding the boy toward a path of self-discovery and redemption.

As time passed, Madhu's efforts began to bear fruit. The boy slowly distanced himself from the harmful influences and temptations that once held him captive. With each passing day, he regained his strength and transformed into a determined individual. Years flew by, and the boy, now a young man, had grown into a remarkable gentleman. He pursued his studies diligently and graduated as an electrical engineer in the US. His talent and hard work earned him a job in a prestigious international company. The young man stayed in touch with Madhu throughout his journey, expressing his heartfelt gratitude for the support and care that had

shaped his life. He often reminisced about the transformation he had undergone under Madhu's guidance and the teachings of the Bhagavad Gita.

For Madhu, this success story became a source of immense joy. He thanked the divine for granting him the opportunity to save a life and guide a lost soul back onto the path of righteousness. It served as a testament to the transformative power of knowledge and compassion through the Bhagavad Gita. Madhu's experience with the boy reinforced his belief in the importance of education that extends beyond academic subjects. It highlighted the significance of mentorship, instilling values, and providing guidance to young minds. Madhu knew that by imparting wisdom and showing unwavering support, one could nurture the potential within each student and bring out the best in them. Whenever Madhu looks back on this incident, he feels a sense of pleasure and pride in being a teacher.

In the narrative, Madhu, an English teacher, adopts a unique teaching method that goes beyond traditional duties by incorporating the teachings of the Bhagavad Gita (Subedi 78–86). When confronted with a troubled student battling addiction, he takes on the role of a mentor and guide, committed to changing the young boy's life (Saranya, Dhuli, and Guduru). His comprehensive approach combines academic lessons, personal development, and moral values (Rukmini). Madhu's deep knowledge of Vedic philosophy, particularly the Bhagavad Gita, serves as his guiding light throughout the journey. Recognizing that the student's addiction stems from a void in his life, Madhu establishes a strong bond of trust and empathy. He spends countless hours in heartfelt conversations, attentively listening to the student's struggles and offering words of encouragement. Through this process, he imparts the wisdom of the Bhagavad Gita, drawing parallels between its teachings and the student's challenges (Agarwal and Rastogi 143–46).

At the core of Madhu's signature pedagogy is the emphasis on self-discipline and self-control as declared by Shree Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita verse 3.43:

एवं बुद्धे : परं बुद्ध्वा संस्तभ्यात्मानमात्मना |

जहि शत्रुं महाबाहो कामरूपं दुरासदम् ||3.43||

evam buddheḥ param buddhvā sanstabhyātmanam ātmanā

jahi śhatruṁ mahā-bāho kāma-rūpaṁ durāsadam (Bhagavad Gita 3.43)

Inspired by the Bhagavad Gita, he explains to the student that addiction is a result of a weak mind giving in to desires. By instilling discipline, Madhu believes the boy can regain control over his actions and thoughts. This highlights Madhu's commitment to academic success, nurturing moral values, and empowering students to overcome obstacles (Juneja 44). The teachings of the Bhagavad Gita also influence Madhu's guidance on mindfulness and self-awareness. He encourages

the student to focus on the present moment and detach from the past and future. Through meditation and self-awareness exercises, the boy gradually cultivates inner peace and a deeper connection with his true self. This aspect of Madhu's pedagogy demonstrates his commitment to holistic development and personal growth in his students (Kalia, Jaiswal, and Sharma 721–27).

Recognizing the power of association, Madhu carefully selects the student's friends, encouraging him to surround himself with individuals who share his new-found aspirations. Together, they form a support system rooted in moral values and mutual growth. This community further reinforces the student's transformation, fostering a sense of purpose and fulfillment (Dhakal 21–27). As the story unfolds, Madhu's efforts bear fruit as the boy breaks free from addiction and transforms into a determined individual. The student's successful academic journey and eventual career as an electrical engineer serve as a testament to the transformative power of knowledge and compassion. Madhu's experience with this student reinforces his belief in the importance of education that extends beyond academic subjects, highlighting the significance of mentorship, values, and guidance in shaping young minds (Subedi 78–86; Saranya, Dhuli, and Guduru).

The following heartfelt appreciation letter from the student to his teacher, Madhu, beautifully encapsulates the depth of gratitude and the transformative power of mentorship and values, drawing a poignant connection between Madhu's pedagogy and its real-world impact.

Appreciation Letter from the Student to his Teacher Madhu

Dear Madhu sir,

Greetings!

I hope this letter finds you in the best of health and happiness. I am thrilled to share some exciting news with you. Today, I am writing to inform you that I have been appointed as an electrical engineer at a highly prestigious multinational company. This moment of joy fills me with immense gratitude and appreciation for all that you have done for me during my time as your student. Without your guidance and support, I would not have achieved this remarkable success.

Today, I reflect on the challenging times I once had undergone. While I was lost in the darkness of uncertainty, you emerged as a guiding light that profoundly altered the course of my life. You saw the potential in me when I couldn't see it within myself. Sir, I am forever grateful for your invaluable guidance and mentorship. I cherish the countless hours we shared in heartfelt conversations. Your unwavering presence, attentive listening, and encouraging words were a source of great strength for me. Your teachings, inspired by the wisdom of the Bhagavad Gita,

underscored the importance of self-discipline and self-control. They served as a guiding light, enabling me to regain control over my actions and thoughts, ultimately leading me away from addiction.

Sir, your role in my life goes far beyond that of a teacher; you are a mentor, a guide, and a source of inspiration. Your mentorship and guidance helped me excel in my studies, leading me to graduate as an electrical engineer and secure a prestigious job in an international company.

Thank you, dear sir, for being the guiding light in my life. I am eternally grateful for your presence in my journey. I will forever cherish the lessons I've learned from you and the values you've instilled in me.

With heartfelt appreciation and warm regards,

Biru Kunwor

The George Washington University, Washington DC

The heartfelt appreciation letter beautifully resonates with the timeless wisdom of the Bhagavad Gita and the profound principles of transformative learning. It's a testament to the deep connections between the teachings of this sacred text and the real-life journey of the student. The letter opens with a genuine expression of gratitude and respect for Madhu sir, mirroring Arjuna's profound reverence for Shree Krishna's guidance in the Bhagavad Gita. The student acknowledges the invaluable guidance received with humility and respect just as Arjun humbly sought wisdom in verse 2.7:

कार्पण्यदोषोपहतस्वभाव : पृच्छामि त्वां धर्मसम्मूढचेता : |
यच्छ्रेयः : स्यान्नश्चितिं ब्रूहि तन्मे शिष्यस्तेऽहं शार्धमां त्वां प्रपन्नम्
||2.7||

kārpanya-doṣhopahata-svabhāvaḥ pṛichchhāmi tvām dharma-sammūḍha-chetāḥ
yach-chhreyaḥ syānniśchitaṁ brūhi tanme śhiṣhyaste 'haṁ śhādhi mām tvām
prapannam (Bhagavad Gita 2.7)

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

The letter vividly captures the student's personal transformation from a place of uncertainty and darkness to one illuminated by the guiding light of Madhu's mentorship as Arjun was guided by Shree Krishna as mentioned in verse 18.73:

अर्जुन उवाच |
नष्टो मोहः स्मृतिरिब्धा त्वत्प्रसादान्मयाच्युत |
स्थितोऽस्मि गतसन्देहः : करिष्ये वचनं तव || 18:73||

arjuna uvācha naṣṭo mohaḥ smṛitir labdhā tvat-prasādān mayāchyuta

sthito 'smi gata-sandehaḥ kariṣhye vachanaṁ tava (Bhagavad Gita 18.73)

"Arjun said: O Infallible One, by Your grace my illusion has been dispelled, and I am situated in knowledge. I am now free from doubts, and I shall act according to Your instructions."

This metamorphosis mirrors the central theme of the Bhagavad Gita, where Arjuna's inner journey is guided and transformed by Shree Krishna's teachings. The mention of Madhu's teachings leading the student away from addiction resonates deeply with the Bhagavad Gita's lessons on self-control, discipline, and the power to conquer inner challenges. This reflects the Bhagavad Gita's emphasis on mastering one's actions and thoughts as in verse 6.5:

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

uddhared ātmanātmānaṁ nātmānam avasādayet ātmaiva hyātmano bandhur ātmaiva ripur ātmanaḥ (Bhagavad Gita 6.5)

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

Madhu sir's teachings as a guiding light for the student's inner strength and self-control perfectly align with the Bhagavad Gita's emphasis on cultivating inner strength and mastering the mind and actions as in verse 6.6:

बन्धुरात्मात्मनस्तस्य येनात्मैवात्मना जतिः | अनात्मनस्तु शत्रुत्वे वर्ते
तात्मैव शत्रुवत् ||6.6||

bandhur ātmātmanas tasya yenātmavātmanā jitaḥ anātmanas tu śhatrutve vartetātmaiva śhatru-vat (Bhagavad Gita 6.6)

"For those who have conquered the mind, it is their friend. For those who have failed to do so, the mind works like an enemy."

Madhu's role in guiding the student towards purpose and direction mirrors the Bhagavad Gita's teachings on fulfilling one's duty with unwavering dedication and devotion, as expressed in verse 2.47:

कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन |
मा कर्मफलहेतुर्भूर्मा ते सङ्गोऽस्त्वकर्मणि | (2.47)

karmaṇy-evādhikāras te mā phaleṣhu kadāchana mā karma-phala-hetur bhūr mā te saṅgo 'stvakarmaṇi (Bhagavad Gita 2.47)

"You have a right to perform your prescribed duties, but you are not entitled to the fruits of your actions. Never consider yourself to be the cause of the results of your activities, nor be attached to inaction."

Both underscore the profound significance of a sense of purpose in life. The deeply grateful tone of the letter beautifully reflects the Bhagavad Gita's view of

gratitude as a virtuous quality. It aligns with the Bhagavad Gita's encouragement to perform one's duties with gratitude and offer the results to a higher purpose as in verse 3.9:

यज्ञार्थात्कर्मणोऽन्यत्र लोकोऽयं कर्मबन्धनः । तदर्थं कर्म कौन्तेय
मुक्तसङ्गः समाचर ॥3.9॥

yajñārthāt karmaṇo 'nyatra loko 'yaṁ karma-bandhanaḥ tad-arthaṁ karma kaunteya mukta-saṅgaḥ samāchara (Bhagavad Gita 3.9)

"Work must be done as a yajna to the Supreme Lord; otherwise, work causes bondage in this material world. Therefore, O son of Kunti, for the satisfaction of God, perform your prescribed duties, without being attached to the results."

The acknowledgment that Madhu sir's role transcends that of a conventional teacher, serving as a mentor and a wellspring of inspiration, echoes Arjuna's profound recognition of Shree Krishna's divine wisdom and guidance when he utters this verse in 11.43 in the Bhagavad Gita:

पतिसंलोकस्य चराचरस्य त्वमस्य पूज्यश्च गुरुरगरीयान् ।
न त्वत्समोऽस्त्यभ्यधिकिः कुतोऽन्यो लोकत्रयेऽप्यप्रतिप्रभावः ॥11.43॥

pitāsi lokasya charācharasya tvam asya pūjyaś cha gurur agriyān na tvat-samo 'sty abhyadhikaḥ kuto 'nyo loka-traye 'py apratima-prabhāva (Bhagavad Gita 11.43)

"You are the Father of the entire universe, of all moving and non-moving beings. You are the most deserving of worship and the Supreme Spiritual Master. When there is none equal to You in all the three worlds, then who can possibly be greater than You, O Possessor of incomparable power?"

Both mentors impart profound wisdom and serve as beacons of inspiration to their disciples. In a nutshell, this appreciation letter artfully demonstrates how the Bhagavad Gita's teachings, encompassing gratitude, guidance, self-discovery, inner strength, purpose, and the transformative role of a mentor, find profound resonance in the real world. It showcases the transformative power of these principles when applied to one's life journey, much like how Arjuna's life was profoundly transformed through the divine guidance of Shree Krishna in the Bhagavad Gita.

Educational Implications

The educational implications of Madhu's signature pedagogy, which is centered around the teachings of the Bhagavad Gita, are significant and far-reaching (Saranya, Dhuli, and Guduru). This unique approach goes beyond traditional teaching methods and embraces a holistic as well as spiritual perspective on education (Sharma). First and foremost, it highlights the transformative power of philosophy and spirituality in the educational process (Bhawuk). By incorporating

the timeless wisdom of the Bhagavad Gita into his teaching, Madhu not only imparts academic knowledge but also guides his students towards personal growth, self-awareness, and emotional well-being (Subedi 78–86). This underscores the idea that education should extend beyond the mere transmission of information and aim to nurture the overall well-being of students.

Moreover, Madhu's pedagogy emphasizes the importance of mentorship and guidance in the educational journey (Dewey, Educational Aims). His role as a mentor and guide for a troubled student struggling with addiction demonstrates the profound impact that a teacher can have on a student's life (Saranya, Dhuli, and Guduru). It highlights the need for educators to not only teach subjects but also serve as role models and sources of inspiration (Subedi 78–86). This aspect of the pedagogy underscores the value of forming strong teacher-student relationships that can provide emotional support and guidance to students facing challenges.

Additionally, the use of the Bhagavad Gita's teachings to instill values, self-discipline, and self-control in students has broader implications for character education (Bhawuk). Madhu's approach shows that education should not be limited to academic knowledge but should also focus on fostering moral values and virtues in students (Tilak). This aligns with the broader goal of education in developing well-rounded individuals who are not only academically proficient but also morally upright.

Furthermore, Madhu's pedagogy promotes the idea of creating a supportive and inclusive learning environment (Littleton and Mercer 45–50). By encouraging students to form a community that learns and grows together, he fosters a sense of interconnectedness and unity (Joshi et al. 1648–51). This aspect of the pedagogy recognizes the importance of collaborative learning and the idea that students can benefit from each other's experiences and perspectives. Overall, Madhu's signature pedagogy, centered around the Bhagavad Gita, has several educational implications. It highlights the transformative power of philosophy and spirituality in education, the importance of mentorship and guidance, the role of education in instilling values, and the value of creating a supportive learning community (Subedi 78–86). It serves as a reminder that education is not just about academic achievement but also about nurturing the holistic development of students.

Conclusion

This article has illustrated the profound impact of integrating the Bhagavad Gita into pedagogy, demonstrating how philosophy, spirituality, and mentorship can transform education. The narrative of Madhu, a dedicated teacher who guid-

ed a student from addiction to success, exemplifies the powerful role educators play in shaping lives beyond academics. Furthermore, this approach highlights the importance of instilling values, fostering self-discipline, and building inclusive learning communities that support holistic growth. Education should not merely be about knowledge transmission but about nurturing individuals who can navigate challenges with wisdom, courage, and integrity. In an era dominated by digital distractions and increasing uncertainty, the Bhagavad Gita offers timeless wisdom that remains profoundly relevant. By embracing its teachings, educators can cultivate compassionate, mindful individuals who are not only academically proficient but also ethically grounded and spiritually aware. Ultimately, this pedagogy serves as a guiding light, reminding us that true education is not just about preparing students for a career but about preparing them for life.

Works Cited

- Adair, John. *The Inspirational Leader: How to Motivate, Encourage, and Achieve Success*. Kogan Page, 2009.
- Agarwal, Himanshu, and Nitin Kumar Rastogi. "Management Leadership and Bhagwat Gita." Zenodo, July 2021, <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.5816498>.
- Aryal, Rameshwer. "Transformative Research Journey from Frustrated Learners to Critically Reflective Practitioners." *Journal of Transformative Praxis*, vol. 4, no. 1, 2023, pp. 9–28, <https://doi.org/10.51474/jrtp.v4i1.668>.
- Bhawuk, Dharma P.S. "Spirituality and Indian Psychology: Lessons from the Bhagavad-Gita." *The Human Being in Depth: A Scientific Approach to Religion*, edited by P. C. R. Choudhury and D. P. Bhawuk, Springer, 2011, pp. 139–52.
- Choudhary, Menka, and Geeta Prabha. "The Bhagavad Gita's Educational Philosophy: Nurturing Holistic Growth, Self-Realization, and Ethical Values." *Bhartiyam International Journal of Education & Research*, vol. 12, no. 4, 2023, pp. 23–33.
- Clandinin, D. Jean, and F. Michael Connelly. *Narrative Inquiry: Experience and Story in Qualitative Research*. Jossey-Bass, 2000.
- Dahal, Niroj. *Understanding and Usage of Questioning by Mathematics Teachers: A Narrative Inquiry*. Unpublished MPhil dissertation, Kathmandu University School of Education, 2017.
- Dewey, John. *Educational Aims*. H. Holt and Company, 1893.
- . "Self-Realization as the Moral Ideal." *The Philosophical Review*, vol. 2, no. 6, 1893, pp. 652–64.

- Dhakal, Iswori Sharma. "Bhagwat Gita and Education: Philosophical Premises and Educational Implication." *Sahayaatra सहायात्रा*, vol. 5, no. 1, May 2022, pp. 21–27, <https://doi.org/10.3126/sahayaatra.v5i1.56626>.
- Ellis, Carolyn, Tony E. Adams, and Arthur P. Bochner. "Autoethnography: An Overview." *Historical Social Research*, vol. 36, no. 4, 2011, pp. 273–90, <https://doi.org/10.12759/hsr.36.2011.4.273-290>.
- Ghosh, Priotosh. "The Bhagavad Gita's Views on Education." *The International Journal of Advanced Multidisciplinary Research and Studies*, vol. 4, no. 2, 2024, pp. 1389–91.
- Joshi, Amit, et al. "Scientific Philosophy: Exploring Existential, Metaphysical, and Ethical Research Philosophy Behind the Question 'Who Am I?'" *Journal of Pharmaceutical Negative Results*, vol. 14, no. 3, Feb. 2023, pp. 1648–71, <https://doi.org/10.47750/pnr.2023.14.03.215>.
- Juneja, Ritika. "Role of Bhagavad Gita in Management Principles." *Sambodhi*, vol. 43, no. 4(K), Oct.–Dec. 2020, pp. 44–48, www.researchgate.net/publication/360575375.
- Kalia, Neha, Chiya Jaiswal, and O. P. Sharma. "Integrating the Teachings of the Bhagavad Gita with Modern Psychology: A Review." *The International Journal of Indian Psychology*, vol. 13, no. 1, 2025, pp. 721–27, <https://doi.org/10.25215/1301.067>.
- Littleton, Karen, and Neil Mercer. *Interthinking: Putting Talk to Work*. Routledge, 2013, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203809433>.
- Luitel, Bal Chandra, and Peter Charles Taylor. "Introduction: Research as Transformative Learning for Sustainable Futures." *Research as Transformative Learning for Sustainable Futures*, edited by B. C. Luitel and P. C. Taylor, Brill, 2019, pp. 1–16, https://doi.org/10.1163/9789004393349_001.
- Minnett, A. M. "Collaboration and Shared Reflections in the Classroom." *Teachers and Teaching*, vol. 9, no. 3, 2003, pp. 279–85.
- Mukundananda, Swami. *Bhagavad Gita: The Song of God*. Radha Govind Dham, 2013.
- Poongundran. "The Bhagavad Gita: A Tool for Advancing Intellectual Growth Among Higher Education Students." *Bodhi International Journal of Research in Humanities, Arts and Science*, vol. 8, no. 3, Apr. 2024, pp. 101–05, [suspicious link removed].
- Rukmini. "Need for Integrating Holistic Education in Management Studies: A Model Curriculum Based on Bhagavad Gita Perspective." *International Journal of Indian Culture and Business Management*, vol. 27, 2022, pp.

270–85, <https://doi.org/10.1504/IJICBM.2022.126148>.

Saranya, C., Raju Dhuli, and Rajakumar Guduru. "The Role of a Mentor in Students' Personal Growth, Academic Success, and Professional Development." ResearchGate, Jan. 2023, www.researchgate.net/publication/367090752.

Sharma, P. "Teaching the Bhagavad Gita in an Education Program: A Pedagogical Perspective." *Journal of Education and Learning*, vol. 3, no. 3, 2014, pp. 28–38, <https://doi.org/10.5539/jel.v3n3p28>.

Shulman, Lee S. "Signature Pedagogies in the Professions." *Daedalus*, vol. 134, no. 3, 2005, pp. 52–59.

Subedi, Ram Prasad. "Teachings of Shrimad Bhagavad Gita to Modern Education: Exploring Life Lessons." *Prithvi Journal of Research and Innovation*, vol. 6, 15 Dec. 2024, pp. 78–86, <https://doi.org/10.3126/pjri.v6i1.72859>.

Tilak, Bal Gangadhar. *The Bhagavad Gita: Its Philosophy and Cultural Setting*. Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 1959.

Vermani, S., and S. Chauhan. "Bhagwad Gita: Need for Holistic Society." *Pedagogy of Learning*, vol. 7, no. 4, 2021, pp. 15–20, <http://pedagogyoflearning.com>.