

## Teachings of Bhagavad Gita for Marketing

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### Abstract

Contrary to the Indian philosophy of “Vasudhaiv Kutumbkam”, western design of management is based upon the Darwin's principle of the survival of the fittest which promoted the philosophy of 'dog eats dog'. Bulkiness of the bottom line of the balance sheet became the yardstick of the success of an organization and ethics, values and lifelong emotional bonding with people are pushed to the peripheral level where customers became 'consumer' and workers a 'hirable and replaceable commodity' and management professionals as 'tools to improvise the bottom line' without realizing that profit is not the sole motto as the purpose of organization is to create values to the society and profit is just a byproduct.

Ethics and values are different from rules/regulations because it provides criteria for evaluating action based upon certain desirable norms but has no legal binding. The management is expected to follow the highest ethical standards as management is not just accountable to shareholders but also responsible towards stakeholders and responsibility of management professionals from public work cannot be veiled behind the professionalism. Moreover, the great organization cannot be created without values and ethics. Only those organizations can survive till eternity that follow highest standard of ethics, moral values and create values for the society.

It is difficult to accept that an organization follows highest standard of ethics, values and emotions in its internal management but can afford to remain low in ethical standards with customers. Organizations have realized the importance of ethics in marketing for the benefits in long term. Adoptions of ethical practices in marketing create positive energy in the organization and generate interest of the customer in products/services, develop customer confidence in organization's brand and leads to loyalty. A loyal and satisfied customer and organization's brand value gives pride among employees who develops a sense of satisfaction and loyalty towards the organization which can be understood by the following flow chart:



**Keywords:** *Self-Management, Renunciation, Value-orientation, Stakeholders-orientation, Process-orientation, Karma-yogi*

## Introduction

Today, with the wave of globalization, the world has become a super market having cut throat competition. In contradiction to the Indian philosophy of '*Vasudhaiv Kutumbkam*', this super market is guided by the philosophy of 'survival of the fittest'. The excellence of business is centered on generating 'surplus' and fetching 'maximum profit'. The ceaseless desire of corporations for accumulation of unlimited wealth developed the tendency of horrible exploitation of natural and human resources and pushing the product in the market aggressively by hook or crook in which consumer became the ultimate victim of the process. In this process, marketing professionals are motivated to ensure to sell the product at any cost which prompted/ compelled them to use '*Sam, Dam, Dand, Bhed*' principles to push the product. With this emphasis on 'product' and not on 'person' and 'process', marketing professional lost the professional ethics.

Soon, the society realized that this way of earning prosperity has fuelled the greed and envy of the people and destroyed the wisdom and happiness. Therefore, the concept of humanity and ethics became the part of the brain storming sessions. Marketing ethics prima-facie appears to be complex but can be achieved through practice. What practices are ethical and what unethical and why organizations fall prey to non-ethical acts and how religious philosophy has become an important point of discussion are issues before the marketing Gurus. Unlike modern management practices, the Bhagavad Gita (Shree Mad Bhagavad Gita 2018) emphasizes upon 'managing self'. The Bhagavad Gita warns an individual against the greed and materialistic gain. It preaches that when a person is unable to control his mind, the man dwells sensual attachment with object and develops an undesirable desire to attain such materialistic objects. Failure to fulfill such undesirable desire breeds anger and anger induces delusion, and

delusion leads to frustration, confusion and loss of wisdom. Confusion and loss of wisdom shatter the reason and from loss of reason one goes to the stage of complete ruin but the self-managed Sadhakas enjoy the various sense objects in a disciplined manner and free from likes and dislikes and attain placidity of mind;

ध्यायतोवषियान्पुंसः  
सङ्गस्तेषूपजायते,सङ्गात्सन्त्यजयतेकामः  
कामात्क्रोधोऽभजियते (2.62)

क्रोधाद्भवतसिम्मोहः  
सम्मोहात्स्मृतविभ्रिमः, स्मृतभिरंशादबुद्धनिशोबु  
द्धनिशात्पूर्णशयति (2.63)

रागद्वेषवयुक्तैस्तुवषियान्निद्रीयैश्चरन, आत्मव  
श्यैवर्धियात्माप्रसादमधिगच्छति (2.64)

Chanakya also advocated that a person who can control his sense can achieve all worldly pleasure (जित्वात्मासर्वाथेसंयुज्यते). This principle applies on all part of life including organizations and its marketing strategy. Organizations have realized the importance of ethics in marketing for the benefits in long term. Ethical practices create a positive energy in the organization and organization will remain in existence for eternity as Bhagavad Gita says those who follow ethics in their life gets 'Avikary Satta' (which cannot be destroyed).

### Review of Literature

The Bhagavad Gita is one of the oldest texts which offer unique perceptions and prescriptions for leaders of the modern days. It provides learning on

humanistic and inclusive leadership and advices leaders to seek higher level of consciousness while influencing others. (Charles A.R, 2008). According to Mahadevan (2012), if we analyze various chapters of Gita, we shall find three interesting ideas about leadership:

- Strong need to lead by example;
- Importance of developing a high degree of equanimity;
- Understanding the principle of mutual dependence.”

Singh (2015) describes the following 5 lessons which an entrepreneur can learn from the Bhagavad Gita:

- (1) Every entrepreneur should focus on his work without attachment;
- (2) To adopt to change quickly;
- (3) Control the anger;
- (4) Inculcate the habit of being open to everything and being attached to nothing;
- (5) Every pure thing has a covering that can often mislead.

According to Mahadevan (2008), Gita provides a framework for stimulating high level of motivation which can transform a person like Arjuna who was passing through a state of fear, mental agony and confusion. Parekh S (2008) says that the modern corporate executive has to overcome both external and internal dilemma of whether to endlessly pursue for the bottom line and interest of shareholders or to broaden the scope and take care of all stakeholders. The Gita advises corporate leaders to accept the satvic frame of reference for morality and ethics in the larger interest of the stake holders to create sustainable business.

### Research Methodology

Primarily, Bhagavad Gita is a spiritual text and it's

preaching do not automatically get translated into organizational requirement because today's business scenario is different than that was in Kurukshetra but the comprehensive study and interpretation of *shlokas* mentioned and review of research papers prove that Bhagavad Gita is a model document useful for management professionals in various field of management provided it is understood in the right context and therefore, several scholars and professional have studied it since ante. Numbers of articles / research papers are available on the issue of leadership and management but not much could be found dealing with the application of principles of Bhagavad Gita upon marketing ethics. This paper is a descriptive study of Bhagavad Gita and of understanding the reason which creates temptation to keep ethics aside in the professional life and how the teaching of Bhagavad Gita can help the marketing professional in overcoming these dilemmas and adopt such principles which can strengthen ethics in marketing to make their brand as number one.

### **Ethics in Marketing**

When the marketers are marketing a product by keeping ethic in mind, he is not just generating interest of the customer in the product/ service but also developing strong bonding and building strong brand and creating value for stake holders. Therefore, marketing leaders are expected to embrace the ethical values and highest professional ethical norms to make balance with social, environmental and economic consideration as Gita says leaders must be resilient in actions and should not get weakened by pain or pleasure as their selfish desires and animosity obscure defeats the purpose of leadership.

Marketing ethics is the philosophical evaluation of the process of marketing from the angle of morality. It deals with the ethical/moral principles hidden behind the rules/ regulation and different

from legality. A lawful behavior does not mean an ethical behavior. Lawful behavior means observance of the law of land i.e. what is lawful and what is not lawful but ethical behavior means what is right and what is not right. For example, law may be that a mutual fund advertisement must contain disclaimers/ risk factor and the company highlights the advantage in bold letters and puts a star mark and writes the disclaimer/ risk factor at the bottom in such small letters that even reading by a person with 6 by 6 eyes may get headache if dares to read. Company has followed law but not ethics. All ethical decisions are lawful but all lawful decisions are not ethical. Ethical behavior in business is widely considered as good business practice.

Marketing ethics focuses on integrity, honesty, fairness and responsibility represented in action by the marketers towards stake holders instead of merely towards shareholders. Marketers need to follow certain set of principles like clear and transparent endorsement, maintaining truth in communications, maintaining consumers' privacy etc. The organization must inspire their marketing professional to adopt highest standard of ethics while marketing its product because they are not marketing the product but marketing the company. Remember, you get what you give. If you are ethical towards your customer, your customer will be ethical to you and will return loyalty and vice versa. Such thought process of the professionals is beneficial in long run for the organization and helps in development of a culturally sensitive organization. The teaching of Bhagavad Gita stipulates that marketers as leaders must give selfless service and should strive for the common good of the society as they are not mere employees of the organization but also acting as stewards of the community in creating, facilitating and executing transactions and has greater responsibility towards the society. This concept is more important in today's scenario as marketers are in general behaving shrewdly with dishonesty,

deceit and selfish acts. Marketers who are ready to sacrifice their position, authority and incentives for the common good of the society are very rare. Most of the marketing professionals give hefty promises but do not give heed to customers when they approach for post sales service resulting into loss of faith by the customer. Therefore, the Bhagavad Gita emphasizes upon practicing renunciation. Renunciation is defined by Krishna as situation in which one has courage to do '*Karma*' without selfish attachment. It is expected on the part of marketer as leader to acknowledge his responsibility and do everything upto the level of his capacity to fulfill the responsibility without worrying about the pleasantness/ unpleasantness of the nature of work.

Ethics is not only the job of marketer but is part of the culture of the organization. Before talking about marketing ethics, the organization must be clear that quality of product /service is good. If a product/ service may cause greater harm than good, the principle of marketing ethics cannot be succeeded even if the marketer bangs his head against the wall. According to the Bhagavad Gita, there are three gates of hell which destroy the self, i.e. lust, wrath, and avarice (greed) (16:21). Organizational leaders must be aware of harmful effects of these on themselves and their organization and must avoid them. Marketer as an organizational leader needs to emphasize upon following ethical framework to help the organization attain a higher level of sustained performance:

#### **A. Value-orientation:**

Value is the collective conception of the society which deals with what is desirable, what is morally proper and acceptable by the society and evaluates individual actions with the actions of others. Marketing professional as an organizational leader must follow values as it forms character of an

individual and character is the core to the effective leadership. The Gita says that a wise person who conquers his mind and is absorbed in the self is like a *deeya* (lamp) which does not flicker as he/ she stands sheltered from every will (6:19). The leader as a role model should express values through his behavior and whatever is done by him being true to himself and his values, others imitate and conform to the standard set by him (3:21). The marketing leaders require to handle following ethical issues that infringe values:

#### **(1) Honesty and integrity–**

Honesty is the best policy. Honesty is not a conclusion but an experience which can give great achievement and peaceful life. The marketing professional should offer value and integrity while dealing with customers and stake holders. He/ she needs to :

- Strive to be honest in his dealings in all situations and at all times;
- Be careful in offering *products of value*;
- Ensure that product/ service satisfies the need it promises to and stand behind it;

#### **(2) Transparency –**

Be open and fair in communication and develop a spirit of transparency. All disclosure must be in the language which can be understood easily and should be clear and easily readable. There is general tendency to highlight unique selling point of the product in bold letters but keep the disclosure in so small letters that hardly one can read with lens. Manipulation of facts and information ultimately harms the company like Enron and Satyam. The Marketing professional needs to :

- Communicate all its component / constituent clearly;
- Make disclosure of the price list and terms and

conditions clearly;

- Explain all kinds of risk involved with the products and service;
- Explain foreseeable eventualities which could affect customers perception and may affect his purchase decision;
- Be ready to accept constructive criticism as said by Sant Raheem, “*Nindakniyarerakhiye, aangankuty chhavayen* (critics should be allowed to stay nearby to get proper feedback)”.

### (3) Respect –

Acknowledge the human dignity of customer and other stake holders above all and protect their privacy. To achieve this, the marketers needs to:

- Listen the customers with open mind and make all efforts to provide customer satisfaction;
- Value the individual differences and avoid halo and stereo effect;
- Make all efforts to understand and respect customers and other stake holders irrespective of their race, gender, caste, creed and culture etc.;
- Develop empathetical attitude towards customers and other stake holder, which means treating others the way you would like to be treated by others;
- Acknowledge the contribution of others like customers, employees; suppliers etc., as Bhagavad Gita says about developing '*Parspar Sambhava*' (respect each other) which guarantees '*Param Shreyas*' (ultimate prosperity).

### (4) Fairness –

Means to balance justly between the customer interest and organizational interest, and to avoid manipulation of information/ data in favour of the

organization while keeping the customer in dark. Marketer needs to:

- Avoid tactics like predatory pricing, price fixing, price gouging/ “bait-and-switch”.
- Communicate true picture of the product and avoid misleading, deceptive and false promotion of the product;
- Avoid manipulations of data and use sales tactics in which customer may lose trust;
- Protect the privacy of the customers;
- In case of conflict of interest should be able to speak in favour of the customer.

Till the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century researchers and business professionals believed that profit is the sole factor that can allow organizational survival but now it is realized that this is a myth and earning profit by following ethics and values has become the subject of discussion by the researchers and industrialist. Marketer as a leader can't follow honesty, integrity, transparency and fairness in dealing unless he himself is disciplined and has good character. Krishna says that the most part on the part of leadership is to communicate with honesty and motivate followers to be honest so that they can guide towards common vision and goal. There are many business houses which were established by leaders whose vision and value can be compared with the philosophy of Gita's *jnanavijnanasamhitam* (wisdom fused with vision) because of which that business house could bear all if's and but's for more than a century and standing tall since more than 100 years.

### (B) Stakeholder-orientation:

The management is not only accountable to its shareholders but also towards its entire stakeholder because organization is inseparable part of the society, nation and the Universe. Teaching of Bhagavad Gita says that action should be holistic

and in harmony with the Universe so that ultimate goal *sarvabhuthahiteratha* (welfare of all) can be achieved. Accordingly, from stake holders orientation, the following ethical issues need to be analyzed by the marketing leaders:

#### (5) Responsibility –

Means accepting responsibility towards performance of the product and ensuring to provide post sales service including replacement of the product, if needed. The marketer needs to:

- Avoid using tactics where customer feel compelled to take products;
- Strive to provide post sales service to the customers;
- Recognize the sociological/ecological / environmental obligations and be committed towards stakeholders;
- Recognize the moral obligation of the company towards marginalized section of the society like senior citizens, children and economically weak people.

#### (6) Citizenship –

As a legal entity/ legal citizen, the company should strive to fulfill its legal, philanthropic and social responsibilities and behaves towards the society and other stakeholders. The company needs to :

- Return the part of earning to the society through CSR.
- Contribute towards healthy competition.

**(C) Process-orientation:** Means analysis of the ethical issues based on the process used by marketers as Gita emphasizes upon process not the result to get moksha in life

(उद्धरेदात्मनात्मानम6.5).

#### (7) Pricing strategies:

It is but obvious that sellers and buyers have different goal and hence different angle of looking at the product. If buyers desire to get products and services at the best possible price, seller is more concerned for generating more profit to make its business sustainable. Price, products, promotion and place are the factors affecting marketing strategies but preventing smaller companies from entering the market or to cannibalize the competitor or earning profit by deceiving consumers' companies use unethical practices like underpricing, price fixing, price collusion or predatory pricing techniques etc.

#### (8) Promotion strategy:

Making false claims through deceptive advertising is an unethical way of promotion strategy to gain profit and market share.

#### (9) Selecting Specific Market Audience:

To weed out such consumers who are vulnerable/ marginalized, companies use selective marketing technique to discourage demand from the unwanted group. It causes social disparity and unrest. For example, focusing banking with only industrialist and top level business men. Similarly, allowing admission in a school to student who speaks English to discourage children from rural and socially backward area though may be talented.

#### (10) Delivery Channel practices:

Using cold calling by telemarketing companies, email spam, direct mails etc. used to disturb the customer against his will causing annoyance. These practices are disruptive and untrustworthy and taint the reputation of the company.

**(11) Dealing with competitors:**

Companies sometimes advertise cheap prices as a “bait” to draw the customers but once it gets connected, company switches towards costly product on the ground that advertised good is exhausted and not available now or not of use for the customer.

**(12) Market Research:**

Market research deals with collection and analysis of data/ information about customers and competitors and prepares marketing strategy/ programmes based upon the responses of the market about how to modify/ adopt the business in the changed circumstances. Unethical marketing research may create undesirable beliefs and resultantly may adversely affect marketing behavior of customer, respondent and public at large. Ethical danger related with market research may include:

- Invasion of privacy: Personal information of the respondents that has to be kept confidential. Sharing of this information may put the respondent into business/ personal risk. The companies should not take advantage of critical information and use in an unethical way.
- Stereotyping: Stereotyping means portraying people based upon their colour, weight, physical appearance etc. which is unethical. Ethical marketing is about developing relationship with customers not on the basis of their colour, weight, physical appearance but on the basis of their positive attitude, loyalty and sustainable profit likely to get from them.

**Myths of marketing and Bhagavad Gita**

Marketing professional debate that marketing is

inherently evil. It is easy to say but difficult to follow ethics in marketing because businesses have to use some unethical marketing practices as even after the best intention marketing practices commit at least one of the following wrongs due to competition:

- In a saturated market, unethical marketing tactics have to be used to survive in excessively fierce competition.
- The marketer has to infringe the right of self-determination of the intended buyer by motivating him to purchase even if not required by him.
- The essential by product of marketing is to promote consumerism of the society and production of waste. Hence society and/ or the environment become victim of the marketing process.
- Though unjust but marketing has to target vulnerable groups like children and economically disadvantaged consumers as they can be easily manipulated in comparison to comparatively matured group.
- If you follow idealism, others may snatch your customers and you may lose the business.

But this philosophy is seemingly outdated as the society is wise enough to understand what ethical and unethical has taken place and ultimately rejects the product so brutally that not only the product is not able to bounce back but also other businesses of the group come under the cloud of suspicion. It is well established that businesses have to follow ethical practices for long term sustainability of the business. The following principles of Bhagavad Gita shall help in answering the dilemma:

- **Belief in Principle of Karma:** Karma is Supreme (*gahnakarmanogati* -4:17) but instead of doing karma we believe in specific outcome/ result of a specific karma. Hence try



to control the situation but if the outcome does not match the expectations, we become sad, upset, angry, unhappy and frightened. Being afraid of such situation, we withdraw our patience and loose peace. Gita says:

वह्नियकामानयः कर्त्वान्पुमाँश्च शरतनिस्सिपृहः  
नस्मिमोनरिहंकारसशांतमिधगिच्छति

(One who performs his duty without attachment (*mamata*), without ego (*ahankara*) by surrendering his wishes and karma gets peace).

Gita promotes to follow the principle of '*karmanyevadhikaraste ma phleshukadachinh*' (2:47) because due to tendency to attach the result with *Karma*, failure to get result leads to demotivation or helplessness which further leads to *krodha* (loss of peace). The main drawback of marketing is that due fear of losing control and to get the desired result by any means, we manipulate the process. Remember that process is as important as result. Marketing needs patience and guts and readiness to accept the failure as Kabir, one of the greatest philosopher said, "*dheere- dheere re mana, dheere sab kuchh hoy*". In order to tackle it, marketer needs to be ready to accept the unexpected outcome and face it strongly without avoiding it.

- **Looking at the people from others point of view:** According to the Bhagavad Gita, there are people, one who see the world from their own point of view but wishes others to shape their views based upon on his view. This is ignorance and fear generated due to inertia and desire to control the result. This is the basic reason for non-following ethics in the marketing because marketer desires to control the situation for gain. But Gita talks about pure

wisdom that is generated from empathy in which one is able to see the universe from other's point of view. Marketer must understand his customers and market the product keeping in view their requirement and not on the requirement of company.

Traditional marketing focuses towards reduction of cost and increase in profits. But unlike traditional marketers, marketing leaders who follow the path of the Gita take feedback from their customers to understand their wants and continue to improve their goods and services in accordance with customers wants, always remain successful.

- **Appreciation of assistance of work:** Bhagavad Gita says, there are three types of people called *Karma-yogi*, *Bhakti-yogi* and *Gyan-yogi*. Those who do the task focusing on input and accepting the result whatever it may, are known as *Karma-yogi*. The second category of people who do the task having faith in the God that he will take care in all circumstances, are called *Bhakti-yogi*. Whereas *Gyan-yogi* does the task by appreciating the work force without being worried about input and output and believe that the rest will be taken care by the God. *Gyan-yogi* searches purpose of his life in his being and not in just doing. In doing person searches satisfaction outside the world but in being he searches purpose within self which radiates energy, love, compassion, healing and empathy. Like a *Gyan-yogi*, marketing leaders must understand and appreciate the work force and be empathetic towards the customer.
- **Principle of mutual dependence:** The whole universe is inter-connected and inter dependent. Even planets are so perfectly placed that they control each other and minor

mismatch may result into chaos. In Bhagavad Gita, Shri Krishna advises that in order to achieve success and achieve ultimate prosperity, we must honour the principle of mutual dependence. *Purushottama Yoga* emphasis upon the harmonious relationship between the individual and the universe and giving unconditional support (the virtue of Yajna) to others that is the basis on which the world is sustained as Bhagavad Gita preaches for fostering the God through sacrifice and letting the God be gracious enough to you as fostering the others selflessly will attain the highest good to you:

देवन्भावयतनेनतेदेवाभाव्यन्तुव :

परस्परमभावयन्तः श्रेयः परमावप्स्यथ (3. 11)

The marketing professionals need to understand the principles of mutual dependence. Can a marketing department imagine selling a product unless product is provided by the manufacturing department without defect? Can manufacturing department meet the emerging needs of the customer unless R&D department gives proper input? Marketers need to honour the principle of mutual dependence to be successful. The organization should not put the whole blame upon marketing, if the product could not be picked up in the market. An organization that is able to produce valuable products/ services and focuses on value for money and provides excellent pre and post sales service will not be required to resort to pushy sales techniques and gimmicks and people will be in queue to get the product like brand Apple for which people curiously wait in queue to get the product.

#### • Principle of adopting inspirational

**leadership:** In modern days, the best leadership style is inspirational leadership. Inspirational leadership includes:

- Developing vision from the narrow thinking of “what is in it for me”;
- An ability to transform people and make a difference in the life of the people who are associated with the leader which is possible only when the leader is motivated by the broader purpose rather than money;
- Do the job which is in the interest/ beneficial for all but don't do which is prohibited(*shrutismritimamaivagye*);
- Not afraid of anyone and works without fear (*yasmatnauddhijetlokah, lokatnauddhijet chah*);
- Leaving behind impression upon the people that guides them for a long time to come.

Gita helps the marketing leaders to broaden their vision, soften their heart and embolden themselves to take steps without fear of failures and increase their competence as leader.

- **Acceptance of the truth without judgments:** Lord Krishna in Bhagavad Gita appreciates all realities of life with love and affection but without judgment. This is what makes him GOD. This is the truth of the life whether be an ordinary person, a business man or a marketing leader. Business and marketing go hand in hand and successful persons who have excelled in life accept that default state of any business is a failure. Before launching new campaign, marketing leader must be ready to accept the bitter truth of the failure with open mind. Failure is the path of the success and marketing professionals must accept the truth with affection but without judgments.

#### • Innovation & creativity in professionalism:

Improving product/ service in innovative ways improves the experience of the customer. There is general perception that innovation and creativity in marketing depend upon the reward received in terms of cash or kind. It is a conditioned response which depends upon stimulus. This way, the modern management principles deals with the problem by controlling the factors and managing resources including human resources but the desire of the person to control the resources is endless and makes him blind like Dhritrashtra (the blind king) who in his desire to control the resources ultimately ended up with war of Maha Bharata and lost everything including his kingdom and 100 sons.

- **Know self and manage self:** Instead of managing the people (customer in case of marketing), the Bhagavad Gita suggests the need for realization of self and manage oneself through direct vision of truth. It is not possible to become effective unless the person understands his own self and understand his own potential and purpose. The Gita's teaching helps the individual self to find its true potential and transcend it from ego centricity to Supreme Self and expand towards the higher consciousness of the Eternal Self. This is called Purushottama, which means no action is good unless it is performed in the interest of the Supreme Consciousness. Such action is called 'akarma'(self-less action) in which person performing the task does not feel pressured of performing the task as he does the 'karma' with the help of 'vikarma' (action done with pleasure) and only those who can manage the self can manage the world.
- **Look at the long term goal/ purpose and not just the objectives:** The basic reason of using short cuts by the Marketing Managers is that

modern management principles measure the success in terms of achievement of the objectives measured in materialistic way, termed as Management by Objectives. There is difference between objectives and goals. Objective is short term achievement but Gita talk about the long term Goal of the life/ purpose of life, that is the final destination of human being i.e. *sarvabhuthahiteratha* (means welfare of all beings). The ultimate goal, welfare of all being should not be overlooked while setting the objectives by the management. The organization must clearly define its Corporate Mission which should be in tandem with welfare of all beings. The organization which make plans and objectives in accordance with such Corporate Mission and practice in letter and spirit are able to see an increase in the number of customers who are ready to pay premium prices for the products.

- **Planning in harmony with divine traits:** Planning involves preparing strategies, policies and procedure to be adopted for fulfillment of the mission. Mission of the organization is inseparable part of the bigger organization i.e. community, society, country, world and universe. The Bhagavad Gita teaches us that short and long term planning needs to be in harmony with divine traits or in other words, planning should be holistic and in harmony with the Universe.

जगतयौऽखलिजीवाहतिरतोव्रजतसिसुखदुःखवनिश  
तम।

नजिहतिमचयइच्छतकिवलंझटतनिष्यतनोअवविक  
ता॥(2:71)

Human beings have tendency to work for individual pleasure and individual welfare but they should work for welfare of all beings.

Chanakya says only Godliness can bring happiness (*sukhasymoolmdharmh*). In modern day, the world is a global village and whatever a company does is watched by all like customers, press, regulators etc. and organization can't effort to just look good but also be good for all the stake holders. Following marketing ethics will impress to all those who watch them.

- **Conquest the self:** The motivation and leadership style propounded by Bhagavad Gita shall always be a guiding factor for the humanity. In Maha Bharata, Arjun, one of the greatest warriors became intellectually and spiritually weak and upset by seeing his own people in the battle field and got so dejected that he refused to fight the war against his own people who were standing against him. Bhagavad Gita says a man is fighting against his own Kama (subtle ego centric desire) and Krodha (anger) which are hidden in senses, mind and reason. Kama is the reason for krodha and Krodha is born out of Rajoguna. Gita preaches to open '*gyanchakshu*' (broader vision) and look at *Viswarupa* (holistic world) so that sense, mind and reasons can be controlled and monitored to kill the Kama which destroys the wisdom and vision. Gita says life is Maha Bharata and individual is Arjuna who needs to fight against his own Kama and Krodha and person who fails to control Kama will not be able to make proper decision and will fail to lead as leader.

### Limitation of the Study and Future Directions

Bhagavad Gita is treasures of thoughts/ inspiration which are useful in the personal and professional life of all fields. The Marketing professionals too can follow these principles and can create value for their organization. The average level of understanding is the limitation of the study that it is

impossible for the scholar to explore all the treasure and derive all modern management principles from such a great book. There is a lot of scope to study the Bhagavad Gita from different angles of marketing principles and adoption of these in professional and personal life.

### Conclusion

An organization that follows ethically and socially responsible marketing strategy in letter and spirit will earn the respect and trust of its customers and in long run will be able to translate sustainable and greater benefits as it helps the organization to follow the principle of *atmanomorshramjagat-hitaya ca-* (develop the doer and to do good to the humanity) emancipated by Swami Vivekananda. It is clearly demonstrated by modern research that human and ethical values pay better results in profession and industry because profession is not just for earning money but for discovering the meaning of life. According to Swami Someshwarananda, great achievement and peace can be integrated in one's life when the life is based on Human Values, and the Goal is Harmony i.e. Personal interest and the interests of the society are synchronized. Marketing professionals as leader should learn the following qualities to win the war instead of concentrating to just win the battle:

- Maintain proper role
- Be true to one's values
- Be a good role model
- Self-sacrifice
- Be kind and compassionate
- Act without pride
- Forgiving
- Act with purity
- Act in the common good

Marketing professional as organizational leader, if needed, should be able to speak against the top management policy that do not reflect the ethical

profile of the organization so that customer can be provided the right product/ right service at the right time and value for the money and power balancing between service provider and customer can be maintained. Power balance is important to understand the reason of ethical dilemma because power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely. According to Bhagavad Gita, mind is restless like wind and very difficult to control but can be conquered by practice and detachment and those who are able to develop self-control like a tortoise to adjust with the environment and strive for the right means will be able to make power balance in the life and survive for longer duration like tortoise. Marketing leaders must emulate Krishna who stood with the truth to make the power balance between Pandavas and Kauravas. To make power balance and to become effective, the Gita also says a leader cannot balance and lead effectively unless knows his own self. Understanding self means not only understanding physical and psychological state but understanding to the deepest level of consciousness exemplified by our experience in the dream. When we dream or meditate, we hear voices and experience absolute stillness. These voices and experience are not tied with our physical sense and called “the state of nothingness”. Such state of experience will make the person Purshottam yogi. Marketing professionals and organization must create such culture because if the principles of Purshottam Yoga followed in the organization, it can produce enlightened leaders and management professionals who with their noble character will act fearlessly and selflessly where inner resources (vision,

courage and social awareness) will find better place than external resources (machine, materials, money) and the organization will get transformed.

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