

## **A STUDY ON HOLISTIC CONCEPTS DESCRIBED IN BHAGWAD GITA**

**1 Bhaswati Dutta, 2 Dr. Sushma Rani**

**1 Research Scholar of OPJS University, Churu, Rajasthan**

**2 Associate Professor, OPJS University, Churu, Rajasthan**

### **ABSTRACT**

Holistic thought is an attempt to reclaim the sense of connection to the world. Holistic thinkers believe that essentially, by nature, the human being requires a sense of connection to the world. Human life is fulfilling and meaningful only when we experience ourselves as being connected to the world- connected to the land, to a cultural heritage, to a living, striving, community, to archetypal spirits and images, to the cosmos as a whole. Education is at its essence, is learning about life through participation and relationship in community, including not only people but also plants, animals, and the whole of nature.

In holistic education, spirituality implies a deep respect for diversity and the inner experience of each child or student. Holistic education is concerned with the creative evolution of new consciousness. It is education for spiritual evolution. It explicitly recognizes the spiritual dimension of human existence- the archetypal, non-rational, transpersonal, cosmic dimensions of being, the inherent purpose of evolution. It is a creative, transformative, self-transcending engagement between person and the world. There is a continuing element of uncertainty, novelty, and freedom in this process. To recognize the wholeness of the human being requires us to acknowledge that our minds, feelings, ambitions, and ideals, all express some living force that dwells mysteriously

within the core of our being. We cannot locate it physically; it is a non-material reality, an invisible reality.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Holistic education is essentially a response to the wholeness of experience as we live it in particular times and places. Holistic education should start with a spiritual conception of the human being in order to nourish the soul. It is a sense of awe in the presence of that which gives life. It is an attempt to return to the mysterious source of human creativity and authenticity for fresh inspiration. It seeks to enable the wholeness of the human being to emerge and develop as fully as possible.

Holistic education is a form of teaching and learning that would reconnect young people to their emotional, physical, intellectual, and spiritual wholeness. As the child grows out into the world, her/his experiences grow richer and deeper. Connections are made and become more meaningful. Education starts with this process of growth, it respects the quality of this experience; and it facilitates these meaningful connections.

Holistic education embodies the principles of unity and potentiality. The child should be viewed as the perpetuator of humanity, in whom rests the potential for positive global transformation. Teachers have the responsibility of helping each child to achieve her/his potential. This can be accomplished in an environment that fosters self-confidence and self-esteem, integrates academics with experience, and develops a sense of community among students and adults.

Education for interdependence means the development of holistic consciousness. According to Gallegos, 2000, interdependence is the emergence of a new rationality, based on the principle that everything is connected to everything else, that nothing in the universe exists alone in isolation, and that life is a dynamic web. Today we live in a globally connected world, in which biological, psychological, and social phenomena are

interdependent. Every event can affect the entire planet; economic or political decisions in one country affect the social life of the international community; survival of one species represents the survival of many others; the existence of natural resources is in interdependence with cultural norms. We co-evolve and depend upon one another for our development. Therein lies the great importance of interdependence, and to fully understand it, we need a holistic perspective.

The complex interdependence of the communities in our world calls for local action in its social dimension educates to build the capacity to think globally and act locally: a consciousness of the action that surpasses the location itself and integrates with the global context. This also involves a profound new awareness of responsibility, since any individual action can impact upon all other human beings. We must act locally but never lose sight of universal imperatives. To educate for interdependence is to develop an awareness that is holistic. It is an awareness that perceives the world as a network of relationships in flux, with the ability to focus on regional life while contextualizing within the world community. This development of planetary awareness necessitates new educational methods and experiences, as well as a new academic context where a socializing process using a new paradigm unfolds.

Holistic education emphasizes on human development goals. They are identity, inquiry, and interaction. Identity refers to the individual's talents and gifts, confidence, self-esteem, fitness. Inquiry refers to the thirst for knowledge and self-inquiry. Interaction refers to the way an individual connects with others through communication, cooperation, kindness, love, and respect. We need to develop our inner self, so that our emotions, imagination, and intellect mutually support and enrich one another.

Holistic education enables each person to fully, directly understand oneself and one's relationship to the world. It enables every child to grow towards wholeness and integration. Holistic education is a process of human engagement that awakens and

nourishes our wholeness. It is an education to honor and nurture human diversity- to respect each unique person. It seeks to expand the richness of meaning of all that we experience, by placing all knowledge within larger contexts.

Holistic educators recognise this social crisis and the need to educate people for world citizenship and participatory democracy. This implies a radical change in the social values and goals and the need to create a global society based on the values of sustainability, cooperation, peace, and balanced development.

### **HOLISTIC CONCEPTS DESCRIBED IN BHAGWAD GITA**

The holistic cosmos is the fifth and the last context of our lives and education. It is the ultimate and genuine source of our identity, the primary whole, the complete context that gives meaning to our being – the spiritual dimension of human existence. In holistic education, taking recourse in the cosmos is the most significant response to the serious crisis humanity is facing, since it is there that the individual is in touch with her/his universality and perennial human spiritual values.

The relation between thought and intuition is imperative. In holistic education spontaneous discernment is integrated with analytical processes, achieving a balance that allows each to work when most appropriate, without excluding the other from the process of attaining knowledge. The aim is to enable the student to make strategic use of both.

Holistic education perceives the mind and body as connected and interrelated. This relationship is assimilated into the entire academic culture and into resources such as yoga, gymnastics, dance, hiking, walks, and other movement-oriented activities. Holistic education focuses on the unity of knowledge rather than on a model of fragmented disciplines and isolated information. The relationship among various types of knowledge is achieved through a trans disciplinary foundation and a transcendental epistemology, which articulates human knowledge in a culture of wisdom. This makes it possible to bring together science, art, spirituality, and traditions in a network of balanced knowledge. In holistic schools, trans disciplinary is achieved through several resources like visual arts, drams, perspectives such as whole language, the study of mythology, newscience.

Holistic education focuses on how we relate responsibly to other human beings. In this

relationship, responsibility is fundamental. Our relationship starts with the family, then with the local community, then with the country where we live, and finally with the world community. In holistic education, the welfare of the community is the welfare of the individual and vice versa. There is a balance between these two interests. The relationship between the individual and society is achieved through living in a democratic, participatory academic culture, with cooperative learning and participation in the community's projects and activities. Holistic education emphasizes relation of the individual with self and the planet. Holistic education recognises that we need to restore the interrelationship with nature and see ourselves as a part of nature. We need to work to develop an ecological consciousness that will respect and conserve the environment. Holistic education uses resources such as deep ecology and eco-education to achieve this fundamental connection. Ecology camps and caring for other living things also help to achieve eco-educational objectives.

The relationship with oneself is extensively supported in holistic education. It calls for profound self-knowledge and attentiveness to inner life and to one's own interests, needs, and goals. Perennial philosophy indicates that the source of wisdom is also within us. Inappropriate relationship with oneself, leads to conflict and ignorance thus causing suffering. The relationship with our inner spiritual being brings peace and tranquility, allowing us to connect to our unlimited potential. Literature, mythology, and art, can be supportive in attaining this connection. Contemplation and reflection also helps in connecting with our inner being. Holism stands in stark opposition to the method of reductionism which holds analysis, dissection and strict definition as tools for understanding reality. Holism asserts that phenomena can never be fully understood in isolation; it asserts that reductionism can only give us a partial view of anything it dissects. The part may be useful for some limited purpose, but the more we manipulate the world to suit our limited purposes, the more unforeseen consequences our actions have on the larger contexts. Holism is a phenomenological approach; rather than identifying one perspective as true vision, it attempts to find a unity of meaning in multiple perspectives, each of which is valid and valuable in its own way. Holism honours unity within diversity. It emphasizes on ultimate unity, relatedness, and inherent meaningfulness of all existence. It draws upon newly emerging ecological and systems approaches in science as well as the perennial philosophy. Holism is not an ideology but a spiritual quest for compassion and peace.

Holistic vision is based on a certainty that everything is interconnected. We are united with all others and with the non-human forms surrounding us in a complex network of life. It acknowledges that spiritual, planetary, and social ecologies co-exist, and describes the multiple contexts of meaning within which human existence is situated from the raw physical and biological to the personal and psychological, to the social, cultural, planetary, and spiritual.

Holistic vision is vision of hope, beauty, love, and peace that calls to the highest and noblest qualities of the human spirit. It is a vision of alternative future, a redeemed humanity, and it touches a deep longing that is shared by numerous sensitive people today. Since our lives have a transcendental purpose beyond the ideological or the cultural, holistic vision is global. It is ecological, emphasizing our connection with all life. It leads us directly to the issue of tolerance, compassion, love, humility, fraternity, and freedom. Wisdom and devotion in the holistic vision form a unit. Knowledge is not detached from love, and love is not detached from knowledge. In its deepest sense, to know is to love and to love is to know. The awakening of the human consciousness is based on this unbreakable unity.

The new vision sees the human being as having unlimited potential, along with multidimensional intelligence and ethical content. The individual is a spiritual being who is oriented towards meaning and has an innate curiosity for learning. Holistic vision brings us back to a process of inquiry. It has hence opened the door for a renewed relation between science and spirituality. It is a relation that integrates and structures human experience in the universal flow of existence. Holistic vision is an appreciation of science and life at the same time. It is scientific and spiritual at the same time. It integrates human knowledge into a culture of wisdom. In this way, science, art, spirituality complement one another, human beings need all of them. It is based on an integration of knowledge. Science, art, spirituality, and traditions interface with one another to create a culture of wisdom that overcomes the fragmentation of knowledge manifested in academic disciplines. Holistic vision is transdisciplinary in nature.

It brings to light the proper role of science and technological within the emergent sustainable culture of the twenty-first century (Ramon, 2000). Holistic vision points out the limits, benefits, and dangers of science and technology when they are inadequately understood. It also proposes a scientific education that will stimulate and awaken the student's intelligence, shifting from the teaching of mechanistic science as official dogma unconsciously assimilated by the student, to learning the new science through a creative,

conscious, participatory act that leads to the comprehensive formation of a new-paradigm scientific awareness.

## **DISCUSSION**

Holistic vision is intelligence. It perceives reality independently of all rules. The holistic vision perceives with creativity, and has the capacity to penetrate the unknown. Here, there is no separation between the observer and the observed. The holistic vision can only come to a mind that is open, inquiring, and living; a mind that has space and is in silence. This holistic vision is a natural quality of consciousness. It reveals to us the dignity of being integral.

Our capacity for inner experience is what allows us to develop knowledge. Human beings are not mere information processors. We are reflective beings, capable of perceiving the mystery of our own existence. Learning and being are intimately interrelated, as knowledge is created by intelligence, which is an internal experience: the experience of being. Knowledge, in the holistic vision, is something more than mere information, as the act of acquiring knowledge is the act of awakening the conscience.

To know is not only to be informed but transformed, to be moved imaginatively, to dwell on ideas, and to let them lend their form to both our thinking and being. It is not enough to have ideas that rest in the head. They must activate energies within the soul. Knowledge is meaningful knowledge which is contextual knowledge.

Holistic education emphasizes the importance of each student having an individual network of meaning, and yet, because of its very subjective nature, this network cannot be discovered in isolation. Rather, the meaning should be shared and scrutinized by others, and revisions should be made as necessary in the light of this process.

Holistic intelligence is an intelligence based on principles that nurture the human spirit. From the holistic vision, genuine intelligence is based on the ability to distinguish between truth and falsehood. It is based on ethical principles that promote the common good. It is oriented towards developing the unlimited potential of humankind. Holistic intelligence is the ability to perceive our interdependence and to recognise actions that would break down such interdependence.

Holistic intelligence acknowledges the limitation of thought. This is the consequence of one's own conduct. It is creative process that has more in common with wisdom than with knowledge. It is the ability to make distinctions and in that way recognize responsible action. It is unconditionally connected to human values. It is not possible to separate intelligence from love, compassion, liberty, gratitude, respect, humility, solidarity, friendship, and honesty. Intelligence is the unfolding of one's comprehension of the value of all life and of all human beings. Intelligence is the ability to know oneself directly and creatively.

Holistic education also recognizes multiple avenues of learning and a myriad of learning styles. An acknowledgement of this diversity democratizes and enriches the learning

process. Students differ in significant aspects relating to their educational needs and learning styles. Students with various types of abilities learn through different avenues. Some students learn best deductively, while others learn best inductively. Some learn better indirectly than from direct experience and vice versa. Some learn best when they have the freedom to steer their own course, some learn best when they are criticized, others when they are praised. For these reasons, one must exercise care with students who learn slowly as being slow is another learning style.

The modes of learning recognized in holistic education do not imply differences in levels of intelligence. They are an expression of the importance of individuality in education and the inadequacy of a standardized education, such as is currently imparted in schools of all levels. Learning styles involve, for example, preferences to start with the general and move to the specific, or to start with either concrete examples or an abstract approach; preferences to work alone or in a group; to work with other students or with books; to work for long periods of time without rest or for short periods of time without rest or for short periods of time; in absolute silence or with noise. Each person has her/his own learning style, which is equally valid to all others.

### **CONCLUSION**

Holistic thought is developed as strategic, scientific thought, capable of understanding the complex dilemmas of today's culture. In this dimension, holistic education is especially nurtured by the new paradigms of science that show us a creative, non-linear manner to use thought.

With regard to social aspect of the students, holistic educators see people as sociable and community-oriented by nature. Living with others is another integral part both of an individual's development and of educational strategy. Sociability is stimulated through cooperative actions and teamwork. A sense is developed that there is a community of learning, whose members have a responsibility towards the local and global community of learning, whose members have a responsibility towards the local and global community. Learning to live in a community is vital for education and can be stimulated in any subject or topic of study.

### **REFERENCES**

1. Radhakrishnan, S. (2002). Indian Philosophy (eighth edition). Vol. 1. New Delhi: OxfordPublication House.
2. Radhakrishnan, S. (2003). The Bhagavad-Gita (eighteenth edition). New Delhi: Harper Collins.
3. Rama. (1996). Perennial Psychology of the Bhagavad-Gita Pennsylvania: The Himalayan International Institute.
4. Ranganathananda. (2000). Universal message of the Bhagavad-Gita. Vol. I. Kolkata: Advaita Ashrama.



5. Ranganathananda. (2002). Universal message of the Bhagavad-Gita. Vol. II. Kolkata: Advaita Ashrama.
6. Ranganathananda. (2003). Universal message of the Bhagavad-Gita. Vol. III. Kolkata: Advaita Ashrama.
7. Sathya Sai Baba. (1978). Geetha Vahini. Prashanti Nilayam: Sri Sathya Sai Books and Publications Trust.
8. Sathya Sai Baba. (2005). Bhagavad Gita: Discourses in the Gita (fifth edition). Part I. Prashanti Nilayam: Sri Sathya Sai Books and Publications Trust.
9. Sathya Sai Baba. (2005). Bhagavad Gita: Discourses in the Gita (fifth edition). Part II. Prashanti Nilayam: Sri Sathya Sai Books and Publications Trust.
10. Sharma, A. (1990). 'Nature and development of the personality in the Bhagwad Gita: educational relevance in the present society'. In Fifth Survey of research in education, National Council for Education research and training, New Delhi.