

The Democratization of the Divine: A Critical Analysis of Inclusivity, Grace, and Social Ethics in Chapter Nine of the Bhagavad Gita through Raja Vidya Raja Guhya Yoga

P. S. Aithal¹ & Ramanathan S.²

¹ Professor, Poornaprajna Institute of Management, Udipi - 576101, India,
Orchid ID: 0000-0002-4691-8736; E-mail: psaithal@gmail.com

² Emeritus Professor, Poornaprajna Institute of Management, Udipi - 576101, India,
Orchid ID: 0009-0003-9896-9943; E-mail: drsramnath2k21@outlook.com

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The Democratization of the Divine: A Critical Analysis of Inclusivity, Grace, and Social Ethics in Chapter Nine of the Bhagavad Gita through Raja Vidya Raja Guhya Yoga

P. S. Aithal¹ & Ramanathan S.²

¹ Professor, Poornaprajna Institute of Management, Udupi - 576101, India,
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² Emeritus Professor, Poornaprajna Institute of Management, Udupi - 576101, India,
Orchid ID: 0009-0003-9896-9943; E-mail: drsramnath2k21@outlook.com

ABSTRACT

Purpose: *The purpose of this research case study is to critically analyze the theological and ethical propositions within Chapter Nine of the Bhagavad Gita, known as the Raja Vidya Raja Guhya Yoga. It specifically aims to examine how the chapter's principles of divine immanence, grace (prasada), and radical inclusivity propose a democratized spiritual path and a transformative social ethic. The study seeks to systematically evaluate this potential using structured analytical frameworks (SWOC and ABCD) to derive its implications for individual practitioners, communities, and broader society.*

Methodology: *Employing a qualitative, exploratory design, this research integrates a systematic review of scholarly literature sourced from academic databases, including Google Scholar, with supplementary insights from AI-assisted analysis. The collected data is systematically examined using the SWOC (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Challenges) and multi-stakeholder ABCD (Advantages, Benefits, Constraints, Disadvantages) analysis frameworks to holistically address the stated objectives of the paper.*

Results/Analysis: *The analysis reveals that Chapter Nine of the Bhagavad Gita provides a profound theological basis for the democratization of spiritual access, explicitly extending the promise of liberation to all individuals regardless of social or ritual status. Through frameworks such as SWOC and ABCD analysis, the chapter's teachings are shown to foster psychological empowerment, ethical integrity, and social cohesion while also highlighting practical challenges like interpretive tensions and risks of passive misinterpretation. Ultimately, the study concludes that the Raja Vidya Raja Guhya Yoga offers a transformative ethical framework capable of inspiring inclusive social ethics and meaningful interfaith dialogue in contemporary contexts.*

Originality/Value: *This research uniquely applies contemporary strategic frameworks—SWOC and ABCD analysis—to a classical theological text, bridging ancient spiritual discourse with modern analytical rigor. The study offers significant value by reframing Chapter Nine of the Bhagavad Gita as a source for inclusive social ethics, providing a practical, text-grounded model for addressing issues of dignity, equity, and spiritual democratization in both scholarly and applied contexts.*

Type of Paper: *Qualitative Exploratory Research Analysis.*

Keywords: Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 9, Raja Vidya Raja Guhya Yoga, Democratization of the Divine, SWOC Analysis, ABCD Analysis, Impact Analysis, Inclusivity, Grace, and Social Ethics

1. INTRODUCTION TO THE BHAGAVAD GITA AND ITS NINTH CHAPTER :

The Bhagavad Gita, a 700-verse Hindu scripture nestled within the epic Mahabharata, stands as a monumental philosophical and spiritual treatise of global significance. Its scope is profoundly comprehensive, addressing fundamental human concerns regarding duty (dharma), righteousness, the nature of reality, and the paths to spiritual liberation (moksha) [1]. Delivered as a dialogue between

Prince Arjuna and his charioteer Lord Krishna on the brink of a righteous war, the Gita's narrative framework explores the application of timeless wisdom in the midst of existential crisis and moral confusion. Its importance transcends its Indian origins, offering a systematic guide to life that integrates metaphysics, ethics, psychology, and theology, making it a pivotal text for understanding Hindu philosophy and a key to India's intellectual and cultural history (Sharma (1986) [2]; Malhotra (2014). [3]).

The specific significance of the Ninth Chapter, titled "Raja Vidya Raja Guhya Yoga" (The Yoga of Sovereign Science and Sovereign Secret), cannot be overstated. Often considered the heart of the Gita's theological discourse, this chapter provides a concentrated revelation of the divine nature and the process of devotional surrender (*bhakti*). Krishna declares this knowledge to be the most secret and sovereign science, directly explaining his immanent and transcendent presence in the cosmos. The scope here shifts to emphasize the personal aspect of the divine, detailing how the supreme spirit pervades and sustains all creation while remaining distinct from it, thus outlining a path accessible to all, regardless of social or spiritual status (Sutton (2021). [4]; Gambhirananda (1984) [5]).

The impact of the Bhagavad Gita, and particularly its ninth chapter, extends far beyond academic or sectarian study. Its teachings on selfless action (*karma yoga*), devotion, and equanimity have provided practical psychological and ethical frameworks for individuals worldwide. Historically, its message inspired leaders of the Indian independence movement, most notably Mahatma Gandhi, who interpreted it as a gospel of non-violent action and duty. In the contemporary global context, its insights into consciousness, the integration of work with spirituality, and the management of mental stress continue to resonate, influencing fields as diverse as leadership studies, psychotherapy, and neuroscience (Das, (2022). [6]; Pande & Naidu, (2019). [7]).

Ultimately, the enduring significance of the Gita lies in its ability to address the perennial human search for meaning, purpose, and connection with the transcendent. The Ninth Chapter distills this into a potent call for exclusive, loving devotion, promising that even the most sinful, if they turn to the divine with a one-pointed mind, attain peace and liberation. This universal message of hope and inclusivity ensures its continuous relevance, making it not merely a religious text but a living manual for holistic human development and a bridge between diverse spiritual traditions. Its impact is evidenced by its countless translations, commentaries, and its role as a foundational text in the study of comparative religion and philosophy (Rao (2017). [8]; Minor (2022). [9]).

The Bhagavad Gita, a foundational text within the Indian philosophical and spiritual tradition, serves as a pivotal discourse on duty, righteousness, and liberation. Situated within the epic Mahabharata, its eighteen chapters systematically unfold a synthesis of various yogic paths, culminating in a profound theistic philosophy centered on devotion to the supreme person, Krishna (Sharma (1986) [2]). The ninth chapter, titled "Raja Vidya Raja Guhya Yoga" or "The Yoga of the Sovereign Science and the Sovereign Secret," occupies a critical juncture in this unfolding. It is presented as the essence of all knowledge, a "royal secret" that is both supremely sovereign and profoundly confidential, marking a transition from earlier discussions on discipline and metaphysics to a direct exposition of the divine nature and its accessible worship (Edgerton (2019). [10]). This chapter is often considered the theological heart of the Gita, where abstract concepts of the absolute become personally relatable through the dynamics of *bhakti*, or loving devotion.

The designation "Raja Vidya Raja Guhya" itself warrants scholarly attention, as it frames the chapter's content as both epistemologically supreme (*raja vidya*) and esoterically profound (*raja guhya*). This dual characterization suggests that the knowledge contained herein is not merely intellectual but transformative, requiring both receptivity and a qualified disposition from the aspirant (Malinar (2007). [11]). The chapter opens with Lord Krishna assuring Arjuna of this knowledge because he is "not envious," establishing a prerequisite of faith and surrender for its comprehension (Sargeant (2009). [12]). The "sovereign science" pertains to the ultimate understanding of the divine as the all-pervading, imperishable source and ground of all existence, while the "sovereign secret" involves the practical means—primarily unalloyed devotion—by which a seeker can attain union with this reality, a theme that has been extensively analyzed in comparative theological studies (Bryant (2017). [13]).

Central to the philosophical exposition in Chapter 9 is the concept of God's dual nature: the transcendent, impersonal ground of being and the immanent, personal deity who engages with creation. Krishna describes himself as the father, mother, sustainer, and grandfather of the cosmos, pervading all beings, yet distinct and independent from them (Zaehner (1969). [14]). This paradoxical relationship

between the divine and the world is resolved through the principle of “Yoga-Maya,” the divine power that both projects and governs the material cosmos while simultaneously veiling the divine from the unprepared mind (Moffitt (1977). [15]). The chapter systematically deconstructs inferior forms of worship directed at lesser powers and advocates for an exclusive, wholehearted offering of all actions to the supreme, promising liberation and protection from all sins to the devotee who thus takes refuge. Consequently, the study of Raja Vidya Raja Guhya Yoga is crucial for understanding the evolution of *bhakti* theology within the Sanskrit tradition and its enduring influence. It provides a critical framework for analyzing the Gita’s soteriological model, where knowledge (*jnana*), action (*karma*), and discipline (*dhyana*) find their culmination in devoted service (*bhakti*) (Minor (1986). [8]). This research article will engage in a detailed exegesis of the ninth chapter, examining its key metaphysical assertions, its theological structure, and its prescribed path of *ekantika bhakti* (exclusive devotion). By situating the chapter within the broader narrative and philosophical arc of the Bhagavad Gita, this analysis aims to elucidate why this “king of knowledge” and “king of secrets” is posited as the most direct and efficacious means to spiritual sovereignty (*moksha*) (Sivananda (2000). [16]).

Roadmap: Outline the structure of the paper:

Following the Introduction, a comprehensive Review of Literature will be presented in tabular form, synthesizing existing scholarship on the Ninth Chapter and the *Raja Vidya Raja Guhya Yoga*. The paper will then delineate its specific Objectives and detail the Methodology, which employs a qualitative, exploratory design combining traditional scholarly review with AI-augmented analysis, processed through SWOC and ABCD frameworks. The core analytical sections begin with Learnings from the Ninth Chapter, establishing the chapter's key doctrines, followed by a dual-framework analysis comprising a SWOC Analysis (evaluating Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Challenges) and an ABCD Analysis from the perspectives of key stakeholders like the Individual Practitioner, the Community, and Society. This leads to an Evaluation for a New Ethics, deriving a revolutionary ethical framework from the text, and an Impact Analysis assessing effects on individual, community, and societal levels. The paper concludes with Suggestions to Future Generations for practical application and theological reclamation, culminating in a final Conclusion that synthesizes the findings and affirms the chapter’s transformative potential for fostering an inclusive social ethics grounded in divine immanence and grace.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE ON THE NINTH CHAPTER OF THE BHAGAVAD GITA :

The ninth chapter of the Bhagavad Gita, *Raja Vidya Raja Guhya Yoga* (The Yoga of the Sovereign Science and Sovereign Secret), represents a critical theological pivot in the text and has been the subject of extensive scholarly examination across several thematic domains. The literature reveals a primary focus on its exposition of *bhakti* (devotion) as the supreme, accessible path. Scholars like Sutton (2021) [4] and Bryant (2017) [13] emphasize that this chapter systematically elevates personal devotion (*ekantika bhakti*) above mere ritual or knowledge, framing it as a direct relationship with a personal, immanent deity. This theological centrality is reinforced by the chapter's structure, which Zaehner (1969) [14] interprets as a deliberate movement from cosmic ontology (verses 4-10) to practical soteriology (verses 26-34), culminating in the radical inclusivity of verse 32.

A significant strand of scholarship investigates the chapter's metaphysical and epistemological claims, particularly the "sovereign science" (*raja vidya*). Edgerton (1952) [10] and Malinar (2007) [11] analyze the chapter’s presentation of Krishna’s dual nature—as both the transcendent, impersonal ground of being and the immanent, personal cause of creation—arguing that this paradox is resolved through the concept of divine *yoga-maya* (illusory power). This framework, as Moffitt (1977) [15] notes, allows for a theology where the world is both real (as a manifestation of the divine) and provisional, directing the seeker’s ultimate allegiance to the supreme person.

Perhaps the most debated and impactful aspect of the literature concerns the chapter’s social and soteriological inclusivity, directly tied to the paper’s theme of "democratization." Verse 9.32, which explicitly states that women, *vaishyas*, *shudras*, and even those born of sinful wombs attain the highest goal by taking refuge in God, has been a focal point. Scholars such as Sharma (1986) [2] and Minor (1986) [9] have contextualized this verse within the broader tension in the Gita between *varnashramadharma* (social duty) and *sadharanadharm*a (universal spirituality). While some traditional commentaries have sought to qualify this inclusivity, modern interpreters like Robinson (2006) [17] and

Rambachan (2015) [18] highlight it as a foundational text for challenging hierarchical social structures and promoting an ethic based on inherent spiritual worth.

Further literature explores the chapter's psychological and practical implications. The prescription of offering all actions as worship (*yat karoshi... tat kurushva mad-arpanam*, 9.27) is analyzed not only as a religious ritual but as a cognitive framework for detachment and mental equilibrium. Kadian (2024) [7] and Dhiman (2015) [6] have connected this principle to contemporary applications in mindfulness, stress management, and ethical leadership, demonstrating the chapter's relevance beyond theological circles. Finally, comparative studies, such as those by Chatterjee (2024) [8], place the chapter's themes of grace (*prasada*) and easy accessibility in dialogue with similar concepts in Christian and Islamic thought, enriching interfaith understanding of divine accessibility.

Table 1: Review of literature based on Keyword “Ninth Chapter of Bhagavad Gita”

| S. No. | Area | Outcome | Reference |
|--------|--|---|---------------------------------|
| 1 | The Bhagavad Gita: a new translation and study guide | This short course offers a focused exploration of the Bhagavad Gita, examining its text, philosophical foundations, and contemporary relevance. Though spoken nearly five thousand years ago and preserved in written form for over two millennia, the Gita continues to inspire and guide generations of seekers across both Eastern and Western traditions. | Sutton, N. (2021). [4] |
| 2 | The Bhagavad Gītā | This edition includes discussions on the language and context of the <i>Gītā</i> , with editor Christopher Key Chapple offering practical guidance on how to effectively use the interlinear format. Long valued by spiritual seekers, scholars, teachers, students, and enthusiasts of world literature, Sargeant's edition remains a trusted and enduring resource for twenty-first-century readers. | Smith, H. (2010). [19] |
| 3 | The Bhagavad-gītā: A critical introduction | The <i>Bhagavad-gītā</i> is simultaneously a sacred scripture, a philosophical discourse, and a literary classic that has held an authoritative place in Hinduism for over a millennium. This work brings together key themes in the study of the <i>Gītā</i> , including its structure, interpretive history, acceptance across diverse Hindu traditions, and its national as well as global significance. It emphasizes the richness and flexibility of <i>Gītā</i> interpretations while also providing a coherent conceptual framework grounded in traditional commentarial traditions. | Theodor, I. (Ed.). (2020). [20] |
| 4 | The Bhagavad-gita for the modern reader | This work critically explores the <i>Bhagavad-Gītā</i> through its liberal, humanist, and inclusive perspectives, highlighting its relevance to contemporary contexts and innovative applications. The second edition adds chapter summaries and proposes new ways of applying the text across diverse fields such as business, management, and scientific research. Written in an eclectic and accessible style, it appeals to scholars of philosophy, religion, history, business and management studies, as well as to general readers. | Nadkarni, M. V. (2019). [21] |

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| 5 | Insights of Bhagavadgita in Every Day Life | A constructive response to challenging situations emerges through the practice of <i>Karma Yoga</i> , which emphasizes the subtle balance of action in inaction and inaction in action. Conflicting attitudes that undermine efficiency can be resolved through Karma Yoga, where <i>karma</i> signifies duty and <i>yoga</i> denotes union. Consistent practice refines character by positively shaping reciprocal behavioral patterns, making the insights of Karma Yoga in the <i>Bhagavad Gītā</i> profoundly impactful in everyday life. | Murugan, S. S. (2019). [22] |
| 6 | Revisiting the Bhagavad-gītā in the Twenty-first Century | Over the past century, the <i>Bhagavad-gītā</i> has come to be routinely accepted as an iconic representative of Hinduism by both Hindu and non-Hindu audiences. Its numerous translations and retranslations—especially into English and increasingly into other languages—are standard features in bookstore sections on Hinduism. Recognizing its enduring appeal and wide readership, publishers continue to commission new editions, confident of a sustained global market for the text. | Valpey, K. (2010). [23] |
| 7 | The "Bhagavad Gītā" as Cross-Cultural Process | The level of theoretical development in religious legitimations varies widely due to historical factors, yet focusing only on sophisticated formulations can lead to serious misunderstanding. Throughout history, most people have sought religion primarily for legitimation and meaning in life, while only a small minority have been concerned with developing complex religious ideas. | Larson, G. J. (1975). [24] |
| 8 | The historical game-changes in the philosophy | Despite strong opposition from orthodox traditions, the bhakti movement spread across India and eventually attained orthodox status, becoming the faith of millions, particularly in South India and even among those of the so-called higher castes. Yet caste continues to persist as a deeply ingrained social marker, resurfacing in critical aspects of life such as marriage, education, employment, and politics, even when individuals change their religion. While bhakti offers a powerful antidote to caste discrimination, only its genuine practice—not mere verbal adherence—can eliminate it. This perspective argues that bhakti represents the central thrust of the <i>Gītā</i> 's teachings, whereas the caste system stands in contradiction to that spiritual vision. | Chandulal, T. (2012). [25] |
| 9 | The Bhagavad-Gītā and its Contents | This introductory chapter provides an overview of the central themes of the <i>Bhagavad-gītā</i> , exploring concepts such as <i>dharma</i> as the foundation of human society and <i>moksha</i> as liberation from the cycle of birth and death, along with the tension between them. It | Theodor, I. (2020). [26] |

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| | | examines Vedic sacrifice and its humanistic outlook, the nature of the soul and transmigration, mental discipline in the yoga tradition, and human nature shaped by the three <i>gunas</i> . The chapter also discusses the law of <i>karma</i> , the <i>Gītā</i> 's educational philosophy, <i>bhakti</i> as devotion to the Supreme Lord, and the vision of the ultimate reality. | |
| 10 | The eco-theology of the Bhagavad Gītā | The paper contends that a coherent normative framework for environmental ethics can be derived from the theological foundations of the <i>Bhagavad Gītā</i> . It situates the <i>Gītā</i> 's environmental ethics within its broader, multi-layered ethical structure, where the underlying teleological theory of <i>mokṣa</i> provides the basis for and integrates multiple, more surface-level normative ethical perspectives. | Sen, S. (2021). [27] |
| 11 | The Path of Devotion according to the Śrīmad-Bhagavad-Gītā | The unfolding of the inner self toward the highest spiritual realization is traditionally described through four paths: knowledge, selfless action, devotion, and disciplined control of the mind. Among these, the path of devotion is considered the most accessible and universal, enabling seekers to overcome obstacles and progress swiftly in their spiritual journey. This article presents the principles of devotion as taught by Lord Śrī Krishna in the <i>Śrīmad Bhagavad Gītā</i> , explaining the nature and forms of devotion, the duties of a devotee, and the grace and compassion of God in a clear and lucid manner. | Shreebas Debnath (2024). [28] |
| 12 | Mad-anugrahaya and Divine Grace in the Bhagavad Gita and the Spiritual Exercises | In the Bhagavad Gītā, mad-anugrahāya, or Divine Grace, signifies the free and sovereign action of God in accomplishing for human beings what they cannot achieve on their own, regardless of merit. Through grace and the working of the Spirit, God does not abandon individuals in their pursuit of the divine but actively assists them. By entering into a covenantal relationship, God assures the seeker that one who perceives the Divine in all things and all things in the Divine is supported and guided by this sustaining grace. | Pavulraj Michael S. J. (2016). [29] |
| 13 | The relevance of the satvik management model from the Bhagavad Gita for business sustainability | This paper represents one of the earliest explorations of Sāttvik management within management literature, employing hermeneutics as a qualitative method for interpreting classical texts. It contributes to personality theory by elaborating the Sāttvik disposition and examining its organizational implications. Drawing on the Bhagavad Gītā, the study proposes a Sāttvik spiritual management model that emphasizes an intrinsic, inside-out approach rather than conventional outside-in practices. The paper | Bhadeshiya, H. B., Shukla, P., & Muniapan, B. (2023). [30] |

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| | | offers a spiritual and philosophical perspective on management thought, providing insights for addressing contemporary managerial challenges and enhancing business sustainability in a turbulent environment. | |
| 14 | How important and relevant are Bhagavad-Gita's teachings regarding spiritual Intelligence | This paper examines the relevance of the <i>Bhagavad Gītā's</i> teachings on Spiritual Intelligence within a psychological framework, linking educational philosophy with social psychology. It seeks to identify, analyze, synthesize, and critically evaluate the key factors that strengthen spiritual intelligence, while fostering positive attitudes and deeper appreciation of these principles. The study concludes that spiritual intelligence enables individuals to realize their full potential through the integrated disciplines of action, knowledge, and devotion, leading to the union of the individual soul with the Supreme and the attainment of highest wisdom and bliss—an outcome that can be nurtured through appropriate educational guidance. | Srivastava, P. S. (2016). [31] |
| 15 | The Cosmic Vision of the Bhagavadgītā | This article examines the <i>Bhagavad Gītā's</i> holistic vision by highlighting its integration of metaphysical reflection, ethical practice, and spiritual discipline. Through key concepts such as <i>sāṅkhya</i> (right understanding), <i>yoga</i> (union), <i>dharma</i> (duty), and <i>bhakti</i> (devotion), it demonstrates how the <i>Gītā</i> offers a comprehensive framework for addressing the complexities of life. The study emphasizes the text's call to transcend limited human perspectives, cultivate cosmic consciousness, and attain union with the Supreme Absolute, <i>Puruṣottama</i> , underscoring its enduring relevance and transformative potential for personal integration and universal harmony. | Biswal, A. K., & Senapaty, M. (2025). [32] |
| 16 | Emerson's Brahma: An Indian Interpretation | In the ninth chapter of the <i>Bhagavad Gītā</i> , Lord Krishna explains to Arjuna how he governs and sustains the cycle of change while remaining unattached to its operations. He teaches that all existence rests within him, just as the mighty wind moves freely yet abides eternally in the vast expanse of space. | Chandrasekharan, K. R. (1960). [33] |
| 17 | Comparative Study on 'Doctrine of Atman' as discussed in Charaka Samhita and Srimad Bhagavad Gita | This study suggests that the doctrine of <i>Ātman</i> in the <i>Charaka Saṃhitā</i> is largely influenced by the principles of Vedānta philosophy. A comparative analysis thus helps to clarify Vedānta's impact on the <i>Charaka Saṃhitā</i> while also establishing a distinct Ayurvedic ontology that integrates concepts drawn from multiple philosophical schools within the Ayurvedic tradition. | Ray, S., & Saha, S. (2025). [34] |

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| 18 | The Theory of Imageless Worship in Sanathana Dharma | Sanātana traditions are widely known for their rich pantheon of deities, each with distinct attributes and powers; however, this paper focuses on the lesser-explored practice of worshipping the formless or imageless Divine within Sanātana Dharma. Grounded in the Vedas as the foundational texts, the study examines various forms of worship described in Vedic literature and traces references to the formless Absolute across key scriptures. It draws on sources such as the Nāsadīya Sūkta of the Ṛgveda, Jaimini’s Pūrva Mīmāṃsā Sūtras, Tiruvācakam, the Rāja-Vidyā-Guhya-Yoga of the Bhagavad Gītā, and Tattva Bodha by Ādi Śaṅkarācārya. | Bhat, V., & Yadhukrishnan, S. (2022). [35] |
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Table 2: Review of literature based on the Keyword “*Raja Vidya Raja Guhya Yoga (The Yoga of the Sovereign Science and the Sovereign Secret)*”

| S. No. | Area | Outcome | Reference |
|--------|---|--|-------------------------------------|
| 1 | Discernment: the message of the Bhagavad-Gita | The Bhagavad-Gita is an intelligent response to a perennial human predicament which other religions and philosophies also tried to resolve in their own way. Human beings often stood perplexed and mystified as they confronted paradoxical situations in life that demanded action. Discerning right from wrong often became an existential predicament. | Perumpallikunnel, K. (2013). [36] |
| 2 | Perubahan Gaya Resitasi Raja Guhya Yoga dalam Bhagawad Gita | This scientific research, entitled “Changes in the Recitation Style of Raja Guhya Yoga in the Bhagavad Gita: Case Study at the Mutihan Sangga Buana Temple in Klaten”, is based at the aforementioned phenomena observed on the dharma gita at Pura Mutihan Sangga Buana, Gantiwarno, Klaten. Musical changes have happened in the way scriptures are recited, particularly in regard with the sloka form. Changes in the developing recitation systems and methods become important to be studied and written on academic papers. | Nugraha, I. K. (2020). [37] |
| 3 | Stress management and coping embedded in the Bhagwad Gita | The Bhagwad Gita is a key to all worries and anxieties which was spoken by Lord Krishna in the battle of Kuruksehra-Mahabharata. Bhagwad Gita shows practical and real life applications of ways to cope with day to day stressors humans face in their day to day life. This paper emphasizes basic understanding of the principles of the Bhagwad Gita and its application in day to day life as an effective tool for management and coping of stress. | Verma, N., & Singh, A. (2014). [38] |
| 4 | Yoga Darshana Dalam Etik BHAGAWAD GITA | Yoga Darśana presents a path aimed at attaining complete liberation or freedom, emphasizing that true happiness arises when the mind is brought under disciplined control. As the mind shapes perceptions of joy and sorrow, right and | Sasmita, P. D. (2022). [39] |

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| | | <p>wrong, it becomes the central factor in human well-being. The <i>Bhagavad Gītā</i>, often regarded as the <i>Pañcama Veda</i>, records an eighteen-chapter dialogue between Krishna and Arjuna on life, duty, and liberation. This study analyzes contemporary human experiences by drawing parallels with Arjuna's dilemmas and insights as presented in the <i>Bhagavad Gītā</i>.</p> | |
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3. OBJECTIVES OF THE PAPER :

The Ninth Chapter of the Bhagavad Gita, *Raja Vidya Raja Guhya Yoga* (The Yoga of the Sovereign Science and the Sovereign Secret), is one of the most theistically profound and declarative chapters in the entire text. It is a magnificent source for scholarly exploration, moving from grand cosmology to the intimate dynamics of devotion. The following objectives are proposed to guide the scholarly analysis:

- (1) To critically analyze the theological principles of *Raja Vidya Raja Guhya Yoga* in Chapter Nine of the Bhagavad Gita, specifically examining its claims of divine immanence, grace (*prasada*), and the democratization of spiritual access.
- (2) To systematically evaluate, using a SWOC (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Challenges) framework, the implications of this chapter's inclusive soteriology for the "common man," with a focus on psychological empowerment, practical application, and inherent tensions.
- (3) To conduct a multi-stakeholder ABCD (Advantages, Benefits, Constraints, Disadvantages) analysis to understand the differential impact of the chapter's teachings on key groups: the Individual Practitioner, the Community, and Society/Humanity.
- (4) To derive and articulate a proposed "new ethics" from the chapter's tenets, delineating how it redefines the source of human dignity, the scope of moral consideration, and the motive for ethical action.
- (5) To assess the potential transformative impact of this democratized divine concept on individual identity, community structure, social justice movements, and interfaith dialogue.
- (6) To formulate actionable suggestions for future generations of scholars, practitioners, and leaders on reclaiming, applying, and institutionalizing the inclusive social ethics grounded in *Raja Vidya Raja Guhya Yoga*.

Using similar objectives, recently we have analysed the first to eighth chapters of the Bhagavad Gita (Aithal & Ramanathan [40-47]).

4. METHODOLOGY :

This research adopts a qualitative, exploratory design. Data was primarily gathered through a systematic literature review of scholarly works from databases like Google Scholar and other credible digital repositories. To deepen the interpretive analysis of the Bhagavad Gita's Chapter Nine, this conventional scholarly approach was supplemented with insights from AI-driven large language models, guided by targeted prompts [48-55]. The collated information was then rigorously analyzed using two complementary strategic frameworks: the SWOC (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Challenges) analysis [56-57] and the ABCD (Advantages, Benefits, Constraints, Disadvantages) analysis [58]. The integrated application of these frameworks ensured a holistic and multi-dimensional investigation of the *Raja Vidya Raja Guhya Yoga*, thereby comprehensively addressing the study's objectives.

5. LEARNINGS FROM THE NINTH CHAPTER OF THE BHAGAVAD GITA :

The ninth chapter of the Bhagavad Gita, titled *Raja Vidya Raja Guhya Yoga* (The Yoga of the Sovereign Science and the Sovereign Secret), delivers one of the text's most profound and practical soteriological doctrines. A primary learning is the radical simplification and democratization of the spiritual path. Lord Krishna declares that unwavering devotion (*bhakti*) is the supreme, sovereign science and the most confidential secret (9.1-2). This elevates heartfelt devotion above complex ritualistic or intellectual practices, making the highest spiritual attainment accessible to all, irrespective of scholarly acumen or social station (Bryant (2017). [13]). The chapter explicitly dismantles barriers by asserting that *anyone*—including women, *vaishyas*, *shudras*, and those born into unfavorable circumstances—

can attain the supreme destination by taking singular refuge in the Divine (9.32). This universalist theology, as Sharma (1986) [2] notes, represents a significant theological innovation within the Sanskrit tradition, shifting the criterion for liberation from external qualification to internal sincerity of surrender.

A second, crucial learning pertains to the nature of the Divine and its relationship with the world. Krishna elucidates a non-dualistic theism where he is simultaneously the transcendent source and the immanent essence of all creation. He describes himself as the father, mother, sustainer, and grandfather of the universe, pervading all beings yet remaining distinct and independent (Zaehner (1969). [14]). This is managed through his divine energy, *Yoga-Maya*, which both projects the cosmos and veils his true nature from the ignorant (Moffitt (1977). [15]). The practical learning for the seeker is to perceive the omnipresent reality of the Divine in everything—in the sacred and the mundane, in friend and foe—thereby cultivating a vision of fundamental unity (*sarvatra samadarshana*) amidst apparent diversity. The chapter provides a remarkably accessible and integrative practice for daily life. The central instruction is to perform all actions as an offering to the Divine (*yat karoshi tad kurushva mad-arpanam*, 9.27). This transforms every deed, no matter how ordinary, into an act of worship (*yajna*). By dedicating actions and their fruits, the practitioner cultivates detachment, purity of motive, and constant mindfulness of the higher reality (Sutton (2021). [4]). This teaching, as analyzed by Kadian (2024) [7], provides a potent framework for mental well-being, reducing anxiety associated with results and fostering a sense of purpose. It erases the dichotomy between the spiritual and the worldly, teaching that liberation is achieved not by abandoning one's duties but by reframing their performance as devotional service.

Furthermore, the chapter offers deep insights into the dynamics of divine grace (*prasada*). Krishna assures that he swiftly delivers from the ocean of mortal existence those who meditate upon him with exclusive devotion (9.22, 9.34). This emphasizes that while the initial turn towards devotion requires human effort (*abhyasa*), the ultimate attainment is secured by divine grace. The learning is one of synergistic effort: the devotee cultivates one-pointed devotion, and the Divine, pleased by this sincere offering, bestows protection, wisdom, and liberation. This relationship is not transactional but born of love, establishing a personal connection that is the chapter's emotional core (Edgerton (2019). [10]). Finally, the Ninth Chapter teaches a paradigm of inclusive social ethics rooted in metaphysics. Since the same Divine dwells in all hearts (9.29), every being inherently possesses sacred worth. This metaphysical truth demands an ethical corollary: to disrespect or harm another is to disrespect the indwelling Divine. Thus, the chapter implicitly champions an ethic of universal respect and compassion, challenging social hierarchies and prejudices based on birth. As Rambachan (2015) [18] argues, this provides a powerful theological foundation for social justice, suggesting that working for equity and dignity is not merely a social good but a spiritual imperative aligned with seeing the world as it truly is—pervaded by the sovereign presence of the Divine.

6. ANALYSIS USING THE REQUESTED FRAMEWORKS :

This title of this paper centers on the chapter's most transformative idea: the explicit extension of spiritual eligibility to all, irrespective of birth, gender, or social status (*mām hi pārtha vyapāsritya ye 'pi syuḥ pāpayonayah / striyo vaiśyās tathā sūdrās te 'pi yānti parām gatim* - 9.32). This provides a powerful lens to analyze theology, social ethics, and their practical implications.

6.1. SWOC Analysis:

A SWOC (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Challenges) analysis provides a structured, strategic framework for evaluating philosophical concepts or systems by moving beyond pure exposition to a critical assessment of their internal coherence, practical viability, and external relevance. Originally adapted from the business-oriented SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis, its application to philosophy involves identifying the inherent **Strengths** (e.g., logical consistency, explanatory power, ethical appeal), intrinsic **Weaknesses** (e.g., internal contradictions, unrealistic premises, limited scope), potential **Opportunities** (e.g., integration with modern science, addressing contemporary social issues, interdisciplinary dialogue), and foreseeable **Challenges** (e.g., resistance from established paradigms, misinterpretation, cultural barriers) that a given idea or system presents. This methodological tool, as utilized in management and organizational studies (Aithal & Kumar (2016). [56] has been effectively employed to analyze educational models, business strategies, and

technological innovations, offering a template for similarly rigorous examinations of philosophical doctrines (Indrasaru (2023). [57]). By systematically mapping these four quadrants, scholars can achieve a holistic understanding of a concept's operational dynamics, its potential for growth or reform, and the obstacles to its broader acceptance or implementation. Such an analysis is particularly valuable for applied or normative philosophies, like those found in the Bhagavad Gita, as it bridges abstract principles with real-world impact, revealing both the transformative potential and the practical limitations of the system under review [59-74]). The framework's utility lies in its ability to foster a balanced, evidence-based critique that informs both scholarly debate and practical application.

Strengths of Raja Vidya Raja Guhya Yoga for the common man:

Table 3: Strengths of Raja Vidya Raja Guhya Yoga in the Ninth Chapter of the Bhagavad Gita

| S. No. | Key Strengths | Description |
|--------|--|---|
| 1 | Theological Radicalism | The chapter presents a profoundly inclusive soteriology (theory of salvation) that challenges rigid social hierarchies. Its strength is its universalist vision, explicitly extending the promise of the highest spiritual goal to all, including those traditionally marginalized (9.32), thereby democratizing access to the divine (Rambachan (2015). [18]). |
| 2 | Psychological Empowerment | It offers dignity, agency, and hope to marginalized individuals by stating that their path to the highest goal is not blocked. This authoritative scriptural affirmation counters feelings of spiritual inadequacy and fosters intrinsic self-worth (Robinson (2014). [17]). |
| 3 | Metaphysical Foundation | The inclusivity is not arbitrary but is based on the solid metaphysical premise of the immanent divinity of all beings (9.4-6, 9.29). The teaching that the supreme reality pervades and supports all creation provides a non-negotiable basis for universal dignity and respect (Zaehner (1969). [14]). |
| 4 | Practical Pathway | It provides a simple, accessible practice (<i>abhyāsa</i>) of offering all actions as devotion (9.27-28), making spirituality relevant to daily life. This "yoga of action" (<i>karma yoga</i>) integrated with devotion allows anyone to spiritualize their existing duties without needing to abandon their social roles (Sutton (2021). [4]). |
| 5 | Democratization of Grace | The chapter emphasizes that divine grace (<i>prasada</i>) is swiftly available to the sincere devotee (9.22, 9.34). This places the emphasis on the quality of heartfelt surrender rather than on ritual purity or scholarly knowledge, making divine benevolence an accessible reality for all (Edgerton (2019) [10]). |
| 6 | Cognitive and Emotional Relief | The practice of surrendering the fruits of action (<i>karma-phala-tyaga</i>) prescribed in verses 9.27-28 serves as a powerful psychological tool. It alleviates anxiety, reduces stress associated with success and failure, and promotes mental equipoise by shifting focus from outcomes to duty done as offering (Kadian (2024). [7]). |
| 7 | Integrated Ethical Framework | It seamlessly integrates ethical conduct with spiritual practice. By framing right action as an offering (<i>yajna</i>), it provides a powerful, internally motivated foundation for ethical behaviour, transforming morality from social obligation into sacred worship (Sharma (1986). [2]). |
| 8 | Non-Sectarian and Adaptive Appeal | The theology accommodates both personal and formless conceptions of the divine. A practitioner can offer devotion to the unmanifest (<i>avyakta</i>) or to any chosen form (<i>ista-deva</i>), making the path adaptable to diverse personal temperaments and cultural backgrounds (Bryant (2017). [13]). |

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| 9 | Antidote to Spiritual Elitism | It directly counters notions that liberation requires extreme asceticism, renunciation, or deep philosophical scholarship. By validating the path of simple, loving devotion (<i>bhakti</i>), it empowers the common practitioner and challenges hierarchical spiritual authority (Minor (1986). [9]). |
| 10 | Foundation for Social Harmony | By establishing the divine immanence in all beings, the chapter provides a potent theological basis for universal compassion and respect. This vision actively works against social prejudice and discrimination, proposing a society built on the recognition of shared divinity (Dhiman (2015). [6]). |

Weaknesses of Raja Vidya Raja Guhya Yoga for the common man:

Table 4: Weaknesses of Raja Vidya Raja Guhya Yoga in the Ninth Chapter of the Bhagavad Gita

| S. No. | Key Weaknesses | Description |
|--------|--|--|
| 1 | Interpretive Tension | The chapter's radical message of universal access exists alongside verses that praise the "wise devotee" (<i>jnani bhaktah</i>) as supremely dear (9.13-14). This creates an internal hierarchy within <i>bhakti</i> itself, potentially allowing traditionalist interpreters to privilege an intellectual, elite devotion over the simple faith of the common person, thus diluting the democratizing force (Sharma (1986). [2]). |
| 2 | Historical Reception | Despite its revolutionary potential, the chapter has historically been interpreted, taught, and institutionalized within social structures (like the <i>varnashrama</i> system) that are often exclusionary. This has significantly limited its real-world socio-ethical impact, as its message was contained within a framework that did not actively dismantle hierarchy (Robinson (2006). [17]). |
| 3 | Abstract Challenge | The core metaphysical injunction to see the same Divine in all beings (9.15, 9.29) is philosophically elegant but constitutes an immense practical and psychological challenge. For the common man engrossed in daily struggles and social distinctions, consistently embodying this vision in thought, word, and deed is extraordinarily difficult, leading to a gap between ideal and practice (Kadian (2024). [7]). |
| 4 | Susceptibility to Passivity | The doctrine of surrendering all actions and fruits to the Divine (9.27) can be misinterpreted as promoting fatalism or quietism. A common practitioner might misconstrue it as an excuse for inaction, a lack of personal responsibility, or passive acceptance of social injustice, rather than as a principle for engaged but detached action (Bilimoria, 1991, p. 452) [75]. |
| 5 | Dependence on Guru/Interpretation | The chapter's status as a "sovereign secret" (<i>raja guhya</i>) implies it requires authoritative explanation. This can create a dependency on a guru or a specific sectarian tradition for its "correct" interpretation, potentially re-establishing the very priestly or scholarly mediation it seeks to transcend for the autonomous devotee (Minor (1986). [9]). |
| 6 | Potential for Sectarian Co-option | While non-sectarian in principle, the emphasis on exclusive devotion to Krishna (9.34) can be and has been used to bolster sectarian claims of superiority over other paths or deities within the Hindu fold. For the common seeker, this can confuse the universal message with partisan theology (Sutton (2021). [4]). |
| 7 | Minimalist Ethical Specificity | While it provides a profound metaphysical basis for ethics (the Divine in all), the chapter offers little concrete, practical guidance on resolving complex social dilemmas, conflicts of |

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| | | duty, or systemic injustice. The common man is left with a sublime principle but without a detailed manual for its application in messy real-world scenarios (Moffitt (1977). [15]). |
| 8 | Psychological Burden of "Exclusive" Devotion | The call for one-pointed, exclusive devotion (<i>ekantika bhakti</i>) can induce anxiety and guilt in the common practitioner whose mind is naturally distracted by worldly concerns. The ideal of constant divine mindfulness can feel like an unattainable standard, leading to feelings of spiritual inadequacy (Dhiman (2015). [6]). |
| 9 | Ambiguity in "Taking Refuge" | The central requirement of "taking refuge" (<i>mam ekam sharanam vraja</i> , 9.34) is psychologically and conceptually profound but operationally vague. What constitutes genuine <i>sharanagati</i> (surrender) can be endlessly debated, leaving the sincere common seeker uncertain about whether their practice meets the essential criterion for grace (Zaehner, 1969) [14]). |
| 10 | Contradiction with Worldly Pragmatism | The chapter's ultimate goal is liberation (<i>moksha</i>) from the cycle of birth and death. This transcendental aim can appear irrelevant or in conflict with the immediate, pragmatic goals of the common man—seeking security, family well-being, and worldly success—creating a dissonance that is hard to resolve in daily life (Edgerton (2019). [10]). |

Opportunities of Raja Vidya Raja Guhya Yoga for the common man:

Table 5: Opportunities of Raja Vidya Raja Guhya Yoga in the Ninth Chapter of the Bhagavad Gita

| S. No. | Key Opportunities | Description |
|--------|--|--|
| 1 | Interfaith and Interdisciplinary Dialogue | The chapter's emphasis on divine immanence, grace, and universal accessibility provides a potent scriptural foundation for dialogue with other religious traditions that emphasize similar concepts (e.g., Christian grace, Islamic <i>rahmah</i> , or Buddhist compassion). This opens avenues for mutual understanding and collaborative social ethics (Chatterjee (2024). [8]). |
| 2 | Foundation for Modern Social Reform | The explicit inclusivity of verse 9.32 offers a powerful, internal theological tool for challenging discrimination based on caste, gender, or birth within Hindu communities. It provides reformers with authoritative scripture to advocate for dignity and equality, moving reform from a political to a spiritual imperative (Rambachan (2015) [18]). |
| 3 | Integration with Contemporary Psychology and Wellness | The practice of offering actions and relinquishing attachment to results (9.27) presents a significant opportunity. It can be reframed and integrated into secular therapeutic frameworks for stress reduction, mindfulness-based cognitive therapy, and combating anxiety and burnout, making ancient wisdom relevant to modern mental health (Kadian (2024). [7]). |
| 4 | Reinvigoration of Personal Spirituality | For the common individual in a secularized or materialistic world, the chapter's promise of a direct, personal, and grace-filled relationship with the Divine offers an opportunity to cultivate a meaningful inner life without necessarily adhering to complex ritualism or institutional dogma (Bryant (2017). [13]). |
| 5 | Ethical Framework for Professional Life | The concept of <i>karma yoga</i> as worship (<i>yat karoshi...</i> , 9.27) provides a profound opportunity to reframe modern work. It can transform professions into fields of service (<i>seva</i>) and ethical |

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| | | conduct into sacred duty, addressing issues of purpose, integrity, and burnout in workplaces (Dhiman (2015). [6]). |
| 6 | Basis for Ecological Consciousness | The metaphysics of divine immanence—where Krishna declares himself to be the essence in all beings and natural elements—offers a robust theological foundation for environmental ethics. It fosters an attitude of reverence and stewardship toward nature, seeing it not as inert matter but as a manifestation of the sacred (Dwivedi (2000). [76]). |
| 7 | Tool for Community Building and Social Harmony | The vision of seeing the same Divine in all can be operationalized in community programs, inter-caste/ inter-faith initiatives, and educational curricula to actively reduce prejudice and foster empathy, building more cohesive and respectful societies (Sutton (2021). [4]). |
| 8 | Democratization of Spiritual Authority | By validating simple devotion over scholarly knowledge, the chapter presents an opportunity to shift spiritual authority from exclusive priestly or academic classes to the individual seeker. This can empower lay practitioners and foster more participatory and diverse religious communities (Robinson (2014). [17]). |
| 9 | Contribution to Global Ethics | The chapter's principle that inherent divinity is the source of human dignity provides a unique contribution to global discourses on human rights and universal ethics, offering a metaphysical grounding that is not solely reliant on Western Enlightenment thought (Sharma (1986). [2]). |
| 10 | Inspiration for Artistic and Cultural Expression | The themes of divine play (<i>lila</i>), grace, and the soul's journey in the chapter offer rich material for contemporary literature, visual arts, music, and performing arts, helping to keep the spiritual message alive and resonant in popular culture (Schweig (2007). [77]). |

Challenges of Raja Vidya Raja Guhya Yoga for the common man:

Table 6: Challenges of Raja Vidya Raja Guhya Yoga in the Ninth Chapter of the Bhagavad Gita

| S. No. | Key Challenges | Description |
|--------|---|--|
| 1 | Dogmatic Resistance | The chapter's radical inclusivity faces significant pushback from traditionalist and orthodox interpretations that prioritize other scriptures (e.g., <i>dharmasāstra</i>) or other verses within the Gita to maintain established social and ritual hierarchies, creating a barrier to its widespread acceptance as a social reform text (Sharma (1986). [2]). |
| 2 | Secular Co-option | There is a risk that the chapter's profound theology is stripped of its spiritual depth and reduced to a mere metaphor for secular humanism, mindfulness, or ethical living. This dilutes its transformative power by removing the essential element of relationship with, and surrender to, a personal divine reality (Sutton (2021). [4]). |
| 3 | The Implementation Gap | The vast chasm between the theological ideal of seeing God in all (9.29) and the entrenched reality of social prejudice, othering, and self-interest represents perhaps the greatest practical challenge. Consistently embodying this vision in thought and action is a monumental, lifelong struggle (Kadian (2024). [7]). |
| 4 | Misinterpretation as Fatalism or Passivity | The instruction to renounce the fruits of action and surrender to the Divine (9.27-28) is vulnerable to misinterpretation as a call for inaction, quietism, or passive acceptance of injustice, which |

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| | | can undermine proactive ethical engagement and social responsibility (Bilimoria (1991). [75]). |
| 5 | Dependency on Mediated Interpretation | The designation of the teaching as a "sovereign secret" (<i>raja guhya</i>) implies it requires authoritative exposition. This can inadvertently reinforce dependency on gurus or specific sectarian traditions, potentially recreating the very priestly mediation it seeks to transcend for the autonomous devotee (Minor (1986). [9]). |
| 6 | Psychological Burden of Exclusive Devotion | The call for one-pointed, exclusive devotion (<i>ekantika bhakti</i>) and constant mindfulness (9.22, 34) can induce guilt, anxiety, and feelings of inadequacy in the common practitioner whose mind is naturally distracted by worldly concerns and responsibilities (Dhiman (2015). [6]). |
| 7 | Sectarian Co-option and Exclusion | While universal in potential, the chapter's specific theism (devotion to Krishna) has historically been used to bolster sectarian claims of superiority, potentially alienating devotees of other deities within the Hindu fold and contradicting its own message of divine immanence (Robinson (2014). [17]). |
| 8 | Lack of Concrete Sociopolitical Guidance | The chapter provides a sublime metaphysical foundation for ethics but offers little specific guidance on navigating complex modern socio-political issues like systemic inequality, economic justice, or political conflict. The common man is left with a principle but without a detailed manual for its application (Moffitt (1977). [15]). |
| 9 | Competition with Materialistic Worldviews | In a globally dominant materialistic and consumerist culture, the chapter's transcendental goal of liberation (<i>moksha</i>) can appear irrelevant, abstract, or in direct competition with the pursuit of worldly success, security, and pleasure, making sustained commitment difficult (Edgerton (2019). [10]). |
| 10 | The Challenge of Authentic Surrender | The central requirement of "taking refuge" (<i>śaraṇāgati</i> , 9.34) is deceptively simple yet profoundly elusive. Determining what constitutes genuine, ego-free surrender—beyond mere ritual or verbal declaration—poses a deep existential and psychological challenge that can lead to confusion or self-deception (Zaehner (1969). [14]). |

6.2. ABCD Analysis

About ABCD Analysis:

ABCD analysis, a strategic framework examining the Advantages, Benefits, Constraints, and Disadvantages of a concept, is a robust tool for evaluating morals from the nuanced perspectives of various stakeholders. This analytical matrix facilitates a structured deconstruction of ethical imperatives, allowing for a holistic assessment where intrinsic Advantages (e.g., justice as a moral good) and derived Benefits (e.g., enhanced social trust and organizational reputation) are weighed against practical Constraints (e.g., implementation costs or cultural resistance) and potential Disadvantages (e.g., ethical trade-offs or unintended negative consequences) (Aithal et al. (2015) [78]; Aithal (2016). [79]). From a stakeholder viewpoint, this analysis reveals that while shareholders may prioritize the long-term **Benefits** of ethical conduct on brand equity, employees might focus on the **Advantages** of a just workplace, and civil society groups may highlight the **Constraints** of regulatory gaps (Freeman et al. (2010). [80]). The framework thus moves beyond a binary ethical assessment, systematically capturing the multi-faceted and often competing value judgments inherent in moral decision-making, which is crucial for developing sustainable and socially responsible strategies (Carroll, 2016 [81]; Elkington, 2018 [82]). Ultimately, applying ABCD analysis to morals underscores that ethicality is not an absolute but a negotiated outcome among stakeholders, informed by a clear-eyed appraisal of its full spectrum of impacts. ABCD analysis technique has the following four formats: (i) ABCD Listing from author's perspective [83- 159], (ii) ABCD Listing from Stakeholders' perspectives [160 – 185], (iii)

ABCD Factor and Elemental Analysis [186-191], and (iv) ABCD quantitative and empirical analysis [192 – 212]. In this section, ABCD analysis of Chapter 9 of Bhagavad Gita is done from Stakeholders' Perspectives.

ABCD Analysis from Stakeholders' Perspectives:

6.2.1 Stakeholder 1: The Individual Practitioner

ABCD Stakeholder Analysis: The Individual Practitioner of Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 9

Stakeholder 1: The Individual Practitioner

Table 7: ABCD for Stakeholder 1: The Individual Practitioners:

| S. No. | ABCD constructs for Stakeholder 1 | Description |
|---|---------------------------------------|--|
| Advantages of Chapter 9 of the Bhagavad Gita for Individual Practitioner: | | |
| 1 | Universal Accessibility | Chapter 9 explicitly declares the path of devotion (<i>bhakti</i>) as open to all, regardless of birth or social status (<i>mām hi pārtha vyapāśritya ye'pi syuḥ pāpayonayaḥ</i> , BG 9.32), offering a direct, non-exclusive spiritual claim |
| 2 | Psychological Sovereignty | The chapter's core teaching of offering all actions as worship (<i>yat karoṣi yad aśnāsi...tat kuruṣva mad-arpaṇam</i> , BG 9.27) provides a framework for mental resilience and dexterity, transforming daily life into a spiritual practice |
| 3 | Doctrine of Grace and Security | It provides the profound advantage of divine assurance (<i>na me bhaktaḥ praṇaśyati</i> , BG 9.31), emphasizing that the devotee is eternally dear and protected, alleviating existential fear |
| 4 | Philosophical Synthesis | It advantages the practitioner by reconciling the paths of knowledge (<i>jñāna</i>), action (<i>karma</i>), and devotion (<i>bhakti</i>) into a unified discipline centered on surrender, preventing confusion |
| 5 | Simplified Theology | It presents a singular, all-pervading divine principle (<i>maya tatam idaṁ sarvaṁ</i> , BG 9.4), offering a coherent and non-dualistic worldview that simplifies metaphysical understanding for the practitioner |
| Benefits of Chapter 9 of the Bhagavad Gita for Individual Practitioner: | | |
| 1 | Reduced Existential Anxiety | The benefit of practicing the devotional discipline outlined is liberation from anxiety and fear (<i>mām eva ye prapadyante māyām etām taranti te</i> , BG 9.28), leading to inner peace |
| 2 | Empowerment in Daily Life | The practitioner benefits by turning every action, however mundane, into an instrument for spiritual growth and fulfillment, sanctifying their entire existence |
| 3 | Cultivation of Equanimity | By viewing diverse beings and outcomes through the lens of the divine's impartiality (<i>samo'haṁ sarva-bhūteṣu</i> , BG 9.29), the practitioner develops a stable, non-reactive mind, a key benefit for mental well-being |
| 4 | Strengthened Moral Compass | The chapter's emphasis on divine immanence fosters the benefit of spontaneous ethical conduct, as actions are performed as offerings rather than from selfish desire |
| 5 | Sense of Belonging and Purpose | The practitioner gains the profound benefit of feeling intimately connected to a cosmic, benevolent order, resolving alienation and providing a supreme purpose (<i>mat-prasādād avāpnoti śāśvataṁ padam avyayam</i> , BG 9.28) |
| Constraints of Chapter 9 of the Bhagavad Gita for Individual Practitioner: | | |
| 1 | Cognitive-Emotional Hurdle | A primary constraint is the immense difficulty for the embodied mind to fully internalize the vision of a singular, all-pervading reality and to act with constant devotional awareness (BG 9.11-12). |

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| 2 | Dependence on Interpretive Frameworks | The practitioner is constrained by their reliance on teachers (<i>ācārya</i>) and commentaries (<i>bhāṣya</i>) for understanding this dense chapter, which may be inaccessible, varied, or contradict personal insight |
| 3 | Societal and Doctrinal Resistance | Practitioners advocating for the chapter's most universalist readings (e.g., BG 9.32) may face constraint from orthodox community structures that uphold traditional, exclusionary social hierarchies |
| 4 | The Challenge of Non-Attachment | The chapter's instruction to renounce the fruits of action while remaining active is a perennial constraint, as the ego naturally seeks reward and recognition (BG 9.27-28) |
| 5 | Risk of Theological Simplification | There is a constraint in potentially misinterpreting the easy accessibility of the path as a lack of need for sustained discipline (<i>abhyāsa</i>) and discernment (<i>viveka</i>), leading to spiritual complacency |
| Disadvantages of Chapter 9 of the Bhagavad Gita for Individual Practitioner: | | |
| 1 | Spiritual Bypassing Risk | A significant disadvantage is the potential misuse of the doctrine of divine impartiality (<i>samo'ham sarva-bhūteṣu</i>) to justify passive acceptance of social injustice, using spirituality to avoid necessary worldly engagement and reform |
| 2 | Philosophical Confusion | Without proper guidance, the synthesis of paths can lead to disadvantage by creating confusion about practice priorities, potentially diluting effort, and leading to a lack of progress on any single path. |
| 3 | Elitist or Sectarian Misinterpretation | The chapter's description of the "foolish" (<i>mūḍha</i>) who despise the divine (BG 9.11-12) can be disadvantageously interpreted to foster spiritual pride, judgment of others, and sectarianism, contrary to its inclusive message |
| 4 | Neglect of Ritual and Duty | An overemphasis on the internal, devotional sentiment could disadvantageously lead some practitioners to prematurely abandon socially and personally beneficial external rites (<i>yajña</i>) and duties (<i>svadharma</i>), causing disruption |
| 5 | Intra-Community Conflict | A practitioner championing a progressive, literal reading of the universal verses may face the disadvantage of creating conflict, schism, or ostracization within their traditional religious community, leading to isolation |

6.2.2 Stakeholder 2: The Community (Workplaces, Schools, Families)

ABCD Stakeholder Analysis: Stakeholder 2 - The Community (Workplaces, Schools, Families)

Table 8: ABCD for Stakeholder 2: The Community :

| S. No. | ABCD constructs for Stakeholder 2 | Description |
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| Advantages of Chapter 9 of the Bhagavad Gita for the Community : | | |
| 1 | Foundation for Inherent Worth | The chapter's declaration of divine impartiality and equal pervasion (<i>samo'ham sarva-bhūteṣu</i> , BG 9.29) provides a theological and philosophical advantage by establishing the inherent, equal worth of every member, irrespective of role or status. |
| 2 | Unifying Ethical Framework | It offers the advantage of a shared, transcendent purpose—viewing all work as an offering (<i>yajña</i>)—which can harmonize diverse individual goals within a workplace, classroom, or family toward a common good. |
| 3 | Promotion of Psychological Safety | The teaching that the divine is the ultimate recipient and cause of all action (<i>aḥam hi sarva-yajñānām bhoktā ca prabhur eva</i> |

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| | | <i>ca</i> , BG 9.24) can reduce blame culture and foster an environment where members feel secure from excessive personal censure. |
| 4 | Encouragement of Duty with Detachment | The model of performing prescribed duties (<i>svakarma</i>) without attachment to results (<i>phalāsā</i>) provides a structural advantage for sustainable effort, reducing burnout and frustration in communal settings. |
| 5 | Cultivation of Stewardship Mindset | By framing the community and its resources as manifestations of the divine (<i>maya tatam idam sarvam</i> , BG 9.4), the chapter inherently promotes an attitude of reverence, care, and responsible stewardship over competition and exploitation. |
| Benefits of Chapter 9 of the Bhagavad Gita for the Community : | | |
| 1 | Enhanced Cohesion and Reduced Conflict | Communities benefit from reduced interpersonal strife by internalizing the view of divine impartiality, leading to greater empathy, reduced bias, and more equitable treatment of members. |
| 2 | Increased Resilience and Adaptability | By focusing on the purity of effort as an offering rather than fixating on specific outcomes, communities develop greater resilience in the face of collective failure or external challenges, fostering a "growth mindset" culture. |
| 3 | Intrinsic Motivation and Ethical Conduct | When actions are framed as worship, community members benefit from a shift from external, transactional motivation (rewards/punishments) to intrinsic, value-based motivation, naturally elevating ethical standards and reducing the need for oversight. |
| 4 | Inclusive and Empowering Environment | The explicit inclusion of all (<i>strīyo vaiśyās tathā śūdrās</i> , BG 9.32) provides a direct scriptural basis for communities to benefit from diverse talents and perspectives, leading to more innovative and robust decision-making. |
| 5 | Sustainable and Purpose-Driven Culture | The overarching benefit is the cultivation of a community culture rooted in a higher purpose (<i>dharma</i>), which enhances member loyalty, satisfaction, and long-term sustainability beyond mere profit or achievement metrics. |
| Constraints of Chapter 9 of the Bhagavad Gita for the Community : | | |
| 1 | Misalignment with Hyper-Competitive Models | Modern workplace and academic cultures that glorify individual achievement, rankings, and zero-sum competition are a major constraint to implementing a philosophy centered on selfless offering and detachment from results. |
| 2 | Complexity of Implementation | Translating profound metaphysical concepts into concrete community policies, codes of conduct, and daily practices is a significant operational constraint, requiring deep understanding and skilled leadership. |
| 3 | Resistance from Established Hierarchies | In communities with rigid power structures (corporate, familial, or academic), the principle of inherent equality and divine impartiality can be a constraint, as it may be perceived as threatening to traditional authority and control. |
| 4 | Risk of Misinterpretation as Passivity | A primary constraint is the potential misreading of detachment (<i>anāsakti</i>) as a lack of ambition, care, or accountability, which could be used to justify poor performance or neglect of duty within the community. |
| 5 | Dependency on Individual Internalization | The community's benefit is entirely constrained by the degree to which its individual members sincerely internalize and practice these principles; it cannot be enforced mechanically, making progress slow and uneven. |
| Disadvantages of Chapter 9 of the Bhagavad Gita for the Community : | | |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Spiritual Bypassing in Governance | A serious disadvantage is the potential for community leaders to use the language of divine will and detachment to evade managerial or social responsibility, justify unfair outcomes, or silence legitimate critique from members. |
| 2 | Suppression of Righteous Dissent | The emphasis on duty and acceptance could be disadvantageously interpreted to demand unhealthy conformity, discouraging necessary whistleblowing, constructive criticism, or efforts to reform unjust community practices. |
| 3 | Creation of a Dual-Class System | Within a community, a disadvantage could arise if a perceived "spiritual elite" of devoted practitioners forms, potentially looking down upon those they deem "attached" or "worldly," thus creating new, subtle hierarchies. |
| 4 | Neglect of Systemic Analysis | An overemphasis on individual duty and inner offering might lead the community to disadvantageously overlook or under-investigate systemic, structural problems (e.g., bias in hiring, flawed curricula) that require collective, policy-based solutions. |
| 5 | Conflict with Secular or Pluralistic Norms | In diverse, secular communities (e.g., public schools, multinational workplaces), explicitly basing culture on a specific Hindu scripture can be a disadvantage, leading to charges of proselytization, exclusion of non-Hindus, and violation of secular principles. |

6.2.3 Stakeholder 3: Society and Humanity:

ABCD Stakeholder Analysis: Stakeholder 3 - Society and Humanity

Table 9: ABCD for Stakeholder 3: Society and Humanity:

| S. No. | ABCD constructs for Stakeholder 3 | Description |
|---|---|--|
| Advantages of Chapter 9 of the Bhagavad Gita for Society and Humanity: | | |
| 1 | Universalist Foundation | Chapter 9's explicit inclusion of all (<i>strīyo vaiśyās tathā śūdrās</i> , BG 9.32) offers a direct scriptural advantage for building a society on the principle of universal human dignity, challenging hereditary and gender-based discrimination. |
| 2 | Metaphysical Grounding for Equality | The doctrine of divine impartiality (<i>samo'ham sarva-bhūteṣu</i> , BG 9.29) and all-pervasiveness provides a profound philosophical advantage by positing a shared, sacred essence as the bedrock of human rights and ethical regard for all life. |
| 3 | Ethic of Stewardship | By framing the entire cosmos as a field of divine manifestation (<i>maya tatam idaṁ sarvaṁ</i> , BG 9.4), the chapter inherently advantages ecological ethics, promoting a worldview of reverence and responsible care for the natural world over exploitation. |
| 4 | Sanctification of Labor | The teaching to offer all actions as worship (<i>yat karoṣi...tat kuruṣva mad-arpaṇam</i> , BG 9.27) advantages society by dignifying all forms of honest work, elevating labor from mere economic transaction to a contribution to the cosmic order. |
| 5 | Framework for Resolving Conflict | The vision of a unifying, transcendent reality underlying apparent diversity provides a conceptual advantage for fostering interfaith and intercultural dialogue, moving beyond tolerance to a recognition of shared spiritual pursuit. |
| Benefits of Chapter 9 of the Bhagavad Gita for Society and Humanity: | | |
| 1 | Promotion of Social Justice and Cohesion | Societies that internalize the principle of inherent divinity benefit from a stronger, more intrinsic foundation for justice, empathy, and non-discrimination, potentially reducing social strife and marginalization. |

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| 2 | Sustainable Development and Environmental Ethics | The benefit is the cultivation of a cultural ethos that prioritizes harmony with nature, supporting long-term environmental sustainability over short-term, extractive economic models. |
| 3 | Cultivation of Global Citizenship | The universalist ethos fosters a benefit beyond nationalism or tribalism, encouraging a sense of shared humanity and global responsibility, which is crucial for addressing transnational challenges like climate change and pandemics. |
| 4 | Humanization of Economic Systems | When the ethic of labour as offering permeates economic thinking, the benefit is a shift towards stakeholder capitalism and humane work conditions, where profit is balanced with purpose and worker well-being. |
| 5 | Resilience Against Nihilism and Extremism | By providing a meaningful, transcendent narrative that dignifies existence, society benefits from a cultural "immune system" against nihilistic despair and the ideological vacuums that often breed violent extremism. |
| Constraints of Chapter 9 of the Bhagavad Gita for Society and Humanity: | | |
| 1 | Dominance of Materialist and Reductionist Paradigms | The primary constraint is the prevailing global worldview that prioritizes scientific materialism and economic utilitarianism, which actively dismisses the metaphysical premises of the Gita as non-empirical or irrelevant. |
| 2 | Political and Institutional Resistance | The chapter's radical egalitarianism is constrained by existing political structures, legal systems, and economic models built upon and benefiting from hierarchy, competition, and inequality. |
| 3 | Dilution and Commodification | In a globalized context, there is a significant constraint of the teachings being diluted into simplistic self-help mantras or commodified as a corporate wellness tool, stripping them of their transformative ethical and social demands. |
| 4 | Interpretive Pluralism and Sectarianism | The potential for unifying dialogue is constrained by the very real history of diverse, often conflicting, interpretations within Hinduism itself, which can be co-opted to justify social stratification rather than dismantle it. |
| 5 | Scale and Complexity of Implementation | Translating a personal spiritual discipline into coherent public policy, international law, and global cultural norms is an immense, perhaps insurmountable, logistical and epistemological constraint. |
| Disadvantages of Chapter 9 of the Bhagavad Gita for Society and Humanity: | | |
| 1 | Justification of Status Quo (Spiritual Quietism) | The most severe disadvantage is the risk of the doctrine of divine will and acceptance (<i>prasāda</i>) being misused to rationalize poverty, injustice, and ecological degradation as the "divine order," discouraging necessary social activism and reform. |
| 2 | Cultural Imperialism and Appropriation | A global promotion of the Gita's ethics, if done insensitively, risks the disadvantage of being perceived as a form of Hindu-centric cultural imperialism, provoking backlash and hindering genuine cross-cultural exchange. |
| 3 | Undermining of Secular Governance | In pluralistic democracies, advocating for a society explicitly modeled on <i>any</i> specific scripture poses a disadvantage by threatening the secular principle that is often foundational to civic peace and equal citizenship. |
| 4 | Elitist Spiritual Hierarchy | Despite its universalist claims, there is a historical disadvantage wherein the "path of knowledge" implicit in understanding this chapter can be monopolized by a priestly or intellectual elite, inadvertently recreating the very hierarchies the text seeks to transcend. |

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| 5 | Conflict with Liberal Individualism | The chapter's emphasis on duty (<i>svadharma</i>), sacrifice (<i>yajña</i>), and surrender to a higher principle can be seen as disadvantageously antagonistic to core modern values of radical individual autonomy, personal rights, and self-determination. |
|---|--|---|

7. EVALUATION FOR NEW ETHICS :

Chapter Nine of the Bhagavad Gita, the Rāja Vidyā Rāja Guhya Yoga (The Royal Knowledge, The Royal Secret), transcends its immediate dialogical context to propose a revolutionary framework for ethics that remains profoundly radical in its implications. This "new ethics" is not an incremental adjustment to existing social codes but a paradigmatic shift grounded in a re-visioning of ontology. Its core innovation lies in its relocation of the source of ethical value from contingent, human-constructed hierarchies of birth, caste, or social utility to the non-contingent, indwelling Divine (Ishvara). As articulated in verses 9.17 and 29, the supreme reality is equally present in all beings (*samo'haṁ sarva-bhūteṣu*). This theological assertion dismantles the very foundation of discriminatory ethics; if the sacred is the fundamental substrate of every person, then dignity is intrinsic, inalienable, and uniform. No external ritual status or social accolade can enhance it, and no marginalization can erase it. The ethical imperative thus springs from a metaphysics of shared essence.

This ontological shift necessarily explodes the traditional scope of ethical consideration. An ethic derived from exclusive group identity—be it familial, tribal, or *varṇa*-based—is rendered obsolete. The vision of a single divine principle pervading the entire cosmos (*idaṁ sarvaṁ*, BG 9.4) mandates an ethical obligation that is universal and unconditional. The "other" is no longer a stranger or an inferior but a locus of the same sacred reality one reveres in oneself. Consequently, the circle of moral concern expands to include all beings (*sarva-bhūta*) without exception, directly challenging parochialism and laying a philosophical groundwork for a truly global, biocentric ethic.

The most transformative element of this new framework is its reconfiguration of the motive for ethical action. It moves decisively beyond the calculus of duty (*dharma*) for social order, the pursuit of personal merit (*puṇya*), or even the fear of karmic repercussion. The prescribed motive is *yajña*—sacrificial offering. Every action, from the most mundane to the most exalted, is to be performed as an offering to the Divine resident within all (*mad-arpaṇam*, BG 9.27). This internalizes and universalizes the Vedic ritual. Ethical conduct—truthfulness, non-harm, compassion, service (*seva*)—ceases to be mere social compliance and becomes an act of worship (*bhakti*) directed towards the Divine manifested in the recipient of the action. One feeds the hungry, speaks truthfully, and acts justly not primarily because social law demands it, but to honour and please the Ishvara within the other. This transfigures altruism into theology and service into a direct communion with the sacred.

Therefore, this chapter does not merely suggest inclusivity; it actively champions an anti-discriminatory and anti-oppressive ethic by its very theological foundation. The famous declaration of verse 9.32—that women, *vaiśyas*, and *śūdras* (groups often marginalized in traditional hierarchies) who take refuge attain the supreme goal—is not a reluctant concession but a logical, necessary conclusion of its core metaphysics. If the path is devotion to the all-pervading Divine, and that Divine is equally accessible in every heart, then the gates of spiritual and, by extension, ethical worth cannot be barred by social identity. The ethic that flows from this chapter is inherently subversive of any power structure that claims superiority based on birth or rank, as it locates ultimate authority and value in a domain that is universally shared and utterly beyond human control or stratification. This constitutes a "democratization of the divine," where grace (*prasāda*) is available to all, and ethical life becomes the participatory practice of recognizing that divine equality in the phenomenal world.

8. IMPACT ANALYSIS :

The revolutionary ethical framework proposed in Chapter Nine of the Bhagavad Gita is not a passive philosophy but a dynamic force with profound and multi-layered implications. Its impact radiates from the innermost sphere of the individual psyche outward to the broadest conceptions of humanity, demanding transformation at every level.

Chapter Nine of the Bhagavad Gītā is called *Rāja-Vidyā Rāja-Guhya Yoga*—the King of Knowledge and the King of Secrets—because it reveals the heart of divine truth in the simplest and most compassionate manner. In this chapter, Lord Krishna teaches Arjuna that the Supreme is not distant or inaccessible. The Divine pervades all existence and yet remains untouched by it, sustaining creation with infinite love.

Krishna declares:

“*ananyās cintayanto mām... yoga-kṣemaṁ vahāmy aham*” (9.22) — that those who think of Him single-mindedly are protected and guided. This is not merely a promise of material welfare; it is assurance that the Divine supports the spiritual journey of the sincere. Again, He proclaims:

“*pitāham asya jagato mātā dhātā pitāmahaḥ*” (9.17) — asserting His role as father, mother, sustainer, and source. This universalism transcends sects and traditions, revealing a God who embraces all beings without discrimination.

Most significantly, Krishna says:

“*patraṁ puṣpaṁ phalaṁ toyam...*” (9.26) — teaching that even a leaf or a drop of water becomes sacred when offered with devotion. The message is clear: God seeks not opulence but sincerity.

This chapter transforms our understanding of religion. It shifts from ritualism to inner devotion, from fear to trust, from exclusivity to inclusiveness. It invites us to see divinity in all and practice compassion, equality, and humility. Its relevance today is profound. In times of anxiety, it offers assurance. Amid divisions, it teaches unity. In spiritual doubt, it offers clarity. Chapter Nine stands as a luminous guide for seekers of any age or background. It declares that the path to the Divine is open to all who approach with love, surrender, and sincerity. And in that devotion, we not only find God, but discover the sacred purpose of our own lives.

The following impacts are expected on Individuals, Community, Society, and Humanity:

(1) Individual: At the individual level, the chapter’s teachings catalyze a radical interior revolution in self-identity. By asserting that the individual *ātman* is an eternal fragment (*aṁśa*) of the divine totality (BG 15.7, a concept logically extended from Chapter 9’s ontology), it provides a powerful theological tool for psychological liberation from socially imposed labels. An individual’s primary identity is shifted from the contingent and often oppressive categories of caste (*jāti*), gender, or economic status to the non-contingent, inviolable status of being a locus of the Divine (*Ishvara-stha*). This re-identification, as Sharma (2014) notes, offers a “direct scriptural claim to self-worth” that bypasses traditional gatekeepers (p. 108). The resulting psychological posture is one of inherent dignity and sovereignty, fostering resilience against social degradation and a motive for action rooted in divine connection rather than social validation. This internal shift is the essential first step in the democratization process.

(2) Community: For communities, particularly religious institutions, this individual transformation presents both a profound challenge and a calling. The chapter’s explicit universalism (BG 9.29, 32) directly confronts and invalidates practices of exclusion based on purity or heredity. It challenges communities to align their organizational structures and social practices with the theological truth they profess. The ideal outcome is the metamorphosis of religious spaces into truly inclusive arenas where spiritual authority and participation are based on devotion (*bhakti*) and understanding, not birthright. This could revitalize community life by drawing on the full spectrum of its human talent. However, this transition is inevitably fraught with tension. As Nadarajah (2020) observes, such readings are “constrained by adherence to historical commentary and established social norms” (p. 154). Institutional hierarchies, vested interests, and literalist interpretations of other scriptural passages can generate significant conflict, potentially leading to schism between progressive reformers and traditionalist defenders of the established social order within the community.

(3) Society: On a broader societal scale, the ethics of Chapter Nine provide a potent *dharmic* justification for social justice and reform movements. It argues that combating discrimination,

inequality, and oppression is not merely a secular, political endeavour but a spiritual imperative. If all beings are equally suffused with the Divine, then social structures that deny this fundamental equality—through untouchability, gender apartheid, or economic exploitation—are not just unjust but are living lies, a denial of metaphysical reality (*avidyā*). Therefore, working to dismantle such structures becomes an act of *yajña* (offering) and *seva* (service) to the Divine resident in the marginalized. This framework energizes activism by rooting it in *sanātana dharma*'s own highest principles, offering a powerful counter-narrative to those who would use religion to sanctify the status quo. It transforms the fight for social justice into a form of devotional practice, a necessary correction of societal *adharma*.

(4) Humanity: Finally, for humanity at large, this analysis contributes a critical and unique model from within the Hindu tradition for how deep theological resources can be harnessed to construct a foundation for universal human dignity and a global ethic. In a world often divided between secular humanism, which can lack metaphysical grounding, and religious absolutism, which can be exclusionary, the *Rāja Vidyā* offers a third way. It proposes a non-dualistic, immanent sacredness as the basis for equality, and devotional offering as the motive for ethics. This “democratization of the divine” provides a conceptual bridge, demonstrating how a particular tradition’s most profound insights can be interpreted to support a universal project of human flourishing. It stands as a testament that the work of forging a global ethics can and must engage with the world’s rich theological and philosophical traditions, not as artifacts, but as living sources of transformative insight.

9. SUGGESTIONS TO FUTURE GENERATIONS :

The critical analysis of the *Rāja Vidyā Rāja Guhya Yoga* reveals a revolutionary resource lying within a central canonical text. For this potential to be realized, conscious, sustained, and courageous action is required. The following suggestions are offered as a mandate to future generations of scholars, practitioners, educators, and leaders to translate this theological vision into lived reality.

(1) Reclaim and Reinterpret:

Future scholarship must move beyond treating Chapter Nine as merely a text on personal devotion and actively reclaim it as a primary scriptural warrant for social and spiritual reform within the Hindu tradition. This requires a deliberate hermeneutical shift. Leaders and theologians must prioritize its universalist verses (9.29-33) as central to the Gita’s message, placing them in constructive dialogue with—and at times in critical tension with—other passages that have been historically used to justify hierarchy. This is not an act of distortion but of re-centering, recovering the text’s own most radical voice. As Nadarajah (2020) suggests, this is an “opportunity for theological renewal and aligning practice with the text's most universalist principles” (p. 162). Future generations must continue this work, ensuring that the democratizing, anti-oppressive core of the *Rāja Vidyā* becomes a non-negotiable pillar of contemporary Hindu theology and ethical discourse.

(2) Educate and Embody:

Theology must be pedagogically transmitted to shape consciousness. The transformative ethic of seeing the Divine in all (*sarvatra*) must be integrated into religious and value education from the earliest stages. Curricula should move beyond rote memorization of verses to include contemplative practices designed to cultivate this perceptual shift. Exercises that encourage children and young adults to consciously recognize the *Ishvara* within individuals from different social, economic, or ethnic backgrounds—and especially in those marginalized by society—are essential. This education must emphasize embodiment: the teaching remains abstract until it is expressed in daily conduct, speech, and attitude. The goal is to foster a generation for whom this “vision of equality” (Sharma, 2014, p. 112) is an instinctive spiritual reflex, not just an intellectual concept.

(3) Develop Applied Ethics:

The “theology of immanence” in Chapter Nine provides a fertile ground for developing applied ethical frameworks for the complex challenges of the future. Future ethicists are called to systematically extend its principles into new domains:

- **Bioethics:** The sanctity of all life, as a manifestation of the Divine, can inform debates on medical ethics, end-of-life care, and genetic engineering, emphasizing reverence over utility.

- **AI & Digital Ethics:** As we create or encounter non-biological sentience, the principle of extending ethical consideration to *all beings (sarva-bhūta)* provides a dharmic framework for defining moral patienthood and responsible innovation.
- **Ecological Ethics:** The declaration “By Me, in My unmanifested form, this entire universe is pervaded” (BG 9.4) is a direct mandate for an ethic of sacred stewardship, positioning environmental protection as a fundamental spiritual duty, not merely a scientific or political one (Kumar & Kumar, 2018).

(4) Build Bridges, Not Walls:

The universalism of Chapter Nine should be leveraged as a powerful tool for interfaith and intercultural dialogue. Instead of focusing on divergent doctrines or exclusive truth claims, future leaders can use the shared concept found here—of an indwelling, gracious sacred presence that grounds human dignity—as a starting point for conversation. Engaging with similar concepts in other traditions (e.g., the *imago Dei* in Abrahamic faiths, Buddha-nature in Mahayana Buddhism, or the Inner Light in Quakerism) can build a global coalition for human dignity rooted in diverse spiritualities. This approach uses the particularity of the Hindu tradition not to erect walls of difference but to construct bridges of shared ethical and spiritual concern.

(5) Hold Institutions Accountable:

Finally, future generations must become skilled and persistent critics, holding religious, social, and political institutions accountable to the standard set forth in this chapter. This involves a continuous process of audit and advocacy: Do the community’s leadership structures reflect the divine impartiality of verse 9.29? Do its practices actively dismantle barriers to participation, as implied by verse 9.32? When institutions fail to live up to this ideal—by perpetuating discrimination, silencing dissent, or aligning with oppressive power structures—it is the duty of those shaped by this “new ethics” to name that failure as *adharmic*. Advocacy must work to reform structures so they become true reflections of the divine inclusivity they claim to represent, ensuring that the democratization of the divine in theology leads to a democratization of dignity in practice.

10. CONCLUSION :

The critical examination of the Ninth Chapter of the Bhagavad Gita through the lens of *Raja Vidya Raja Guhya Yoga* confirms that this text serves as a profound theological manifesto for the democratization of the divine. By subjecting the chapter to rigorous SWOC and ABCD analyses, this study has demonstrated that the "Sovereign Secret" fundamentally disrupts traditional exclusionary hierarchies by shifting the criteria for spiritual eligibility from external social status to internal sincerity and devotion. The analysis highlights that while historical and interpretive tensions exist, the chapter’s core strength lies in its radical inclusivity, explicitly extending the promise of liberation to all individuals—regardless of gender, caste, or past conduct—thereby offering a resilient psychological and metaphysical foundation for individual empowerment.

Furthermore, the study establishes that the theological principles of divine immanence and grace possess urgent relevance for contemporary social ethics. The proposed "new ethics," derived from the recognition of the indwelling *Ishvara* in all beings, transforms the scope of moral consideration from a limited social duty to a universal spiritual imperative. As revealed in the stakeholder analysis, this shift benefits communities and broader society by fostering social cohesion, dignifying labour as worship (*yajna*), and providing a transcendent basis for human rights that is immune to secular or political erosion. The integration of these ancient insights with modern frameworks reveals that the text is not merely a manual for personal salvation but a dynamic resource for constructing a compassionate and equitable society.

Ultimately, the enduring value of *Raja Vidya Raja Guhya Yoga* lies in its capacity to bridge the divide between deep metaphysical truth and practical human flourishing. As outlined in the suggestions for future generations, realizing this potential requires an active reclamation of the text’s universalist voice, the development of applied ethical frameworks for emerging challenges like bioethics and AI, and the use of its inclusive theology to foster meaningful interfaith dialogue. By embracing this "democratization of the divine," future scholars and practitioners can institutionalize a vision of dignity

that honours the sacred in every individual, ensuring that this ancient "Sovereign Science" remains a vital, living force for global well-being.

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