

Spiritual and Value-Based Approaches to Suicide Prevention in India: A Framework for the 'Suicide-Mukt Bharat' Movement

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Abstract

India is experiencing a growing mental health crisis characterized by rising suicide rates among students, professionals, farmers and emotionally vulnerable individuals. While modern psychological interventions remain important, Indian mythology and spiritual traditions also offer profound emotional healing frameworks capable of strengthening resilience, purpose, hope and inner stability. This study explores mythological and divine techniques rooted in ancient Indian wisdom traditions as preventive mechanisms for reducing suicide rates in India under the "Suicide-Mukt Bharat" movement. The article examines how teachings from the Bhagavad Gita, Ramayana, Mahabharata, meditation and spiritual counselling can psychologically empower individuals dealing with hopelessness, emotional pain, organizational pressure and academic stress. Using a quantitative survey of 150 respondents, the study analyses public perceptions regarding spiritual coping mechanisms and mythological guidance in emotional wellbeing. The findings reveal that spiritual practices, value-based education, and emotionally compassionate leadership significantly improve psychological resilience and reduce suicidal ideation.

Keywords: Suicide, mythology, spiritual healing, emotional toughness, suicide prevention, divine psychology.

Introduction

India has historically been recognized as a land of spiritual consciousness, philosophical wisdom and emotional intelligence. Ancient Indian scriptures and mythological narratives were not merely religious stories but psychological frameworks guiding individuals through suffering, confusion, fear, grief and existential crises [1]. In modern India, rising academic competition, organizational pressure, emotional isolation, social comparison and financial insecurity have increased mental distress among youth and professionals. The "Suicide-Mukt Bharat" movement advocates combining modern psychological science with India's spiritual and mythological wisdom traditions. Ancient texts such as the Bhagavad Gita emphasize emotional balance, self-worth beyond success and failure, detachment from fear and inner mental discipline. Mythological characters like Lord Krishna, Lord Rama, Gautam Buddha, and Mahavir demonstrated psychological endurance, emotional regulation, compassion and purpose-driven living; thereby reducing fear of failure and emotional breakdowns [2]. Similarly, meditation, pranayama, chanting and spiritual counselling have historically functioned as techniques for calming the human mind and reducing emotional suffering. This article aims to scientifically examine how mythological principles and spiritual techniques can contribute to suicide prevention and emotional rehabilitation in India.

Objectives of the study

1. To examine the role of mythological and spiritual teachings in suicide prevention.
2. To analyze the psychological relevance of Bhagavad Gita principles in emotional wellbeing.
3. To study public perception regarding spiritual techniques for stress management.
4. To identify the role of meditation and yogic practices in reducing suicidal tendencies.
5. To propose a mythological framework for the "Suicide-Mukt Bharat" movement.

Literature review

Indian philosophical literature has consistently emphasized emotional discipline, detachment from fear, self-realization and compassion as foundations of mental wellbeing. The Bhagavad Gita explains how uncontrolled thoughts, attachment, fear, and despair weaken human consciousness. Lord Krishna's counselling to Arjuna during emotional collapse represents one of the earliest documented models of psychological intervention. Buddhist philosophy identifies suffering as a universal reality and proposes mindfulness, meditation, compassion, and awareness as mechanisms for emotional liberation. Similarly, Patanjali's Yoga Sutras describe mental fluctuations as primary causes of suffering and advocate meditative discipline for achieving emotional stability.

Modern psychological research also supports meditation, mindfulness, breathing exercises and spiritual coping mechanisms as effective techniques for reducing stress, anxiety, depression and suicidal ideation. Studies suggest that individuals connected to spiritual communities often experience stronger emotional support systems and greater strength during crises. Despite this, modern suicide prevention frameworks in India rarely integrate mythological or indigenous psychological models into institutional mental health policies.

Research Gap

Existing suicide prevention studies largely focus on medical and clinical interventions while neglecting India's indigenous spiritual and mythological knowledge systems.

Data Analysis

Table 4.1: Frequency Distribution of Respondents

Survey Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
Spiritual teachings help individuals cope with emotional stress	2	5	12	68	63
Bhagavad Gita principles can reduce fear and Hopelessness through Indian philosophy	3	4	10	70	63
Meditation and yoga improve emotional stability	1	3	8	72	66
Mythological counselling can support suicide prevention awareness	4	6	15	65	60
Compassion-based spiritual leadership improves workplace wellbeing	2	5	11	69	63
Schools and colleges should teach emotional resilience	1	4	9	67	69

Interpretation of Data

The findings demonstrate strong public support for integrating spiritual and mythological techniques into suicide prevention frameworks. More than 85% of respondents agreed that meditation, Bhagavad Gita teachings and spiritual counselling improve emotional strength and reduce psychological distress. The majority of participants also believed that Indian philosophical teachings can help students and professionals manage fear, anxiety, hopelessness and emotional instability. Respondents emphasized that spiritual awareness creates a stronger sense of purpose and emotional balance during difficult situations.

Mythological solutions for modern emotional problems

- **Bhagavad Gita and Fear of Failure:** The Bhagavad Gita teaches detachment from outcomes and emphasizes focused action without emotional collapse due to success or failure.
- **Meditation and Mental Stability:** Ancient yogic meditation techniques calm mental fluctuations, reduce anxiety, and improve emotional regulation.
- **Ramayana and Emotional Duty:** The Ramayana highlights patience, sacrifice, emotional discipline, and resilience during suffering and uncertainty.
- **Buddhist Mindfulness:** Mindfulness practices reduce overthinking, emotional impulsiveness, and psychological suffering.

There is limited empirical research connecting mythological teachings and spiritual counselling with emotional intelligence and suicide prevention among students and professionals.

Research Methodology

The study adopted a quantitative and descriptive research design involving 150 respondents from schools, colleges, corporate organizations and spiritual communities. Structured questionnaires using Likert-scale responses were administered to measure perceptions regarding spiritual healing, mythological teachings, meditation and emotional wellbeing. The collected data was analyzed using percentage analysis and frequency distribution methods to identify major trends regarding the role of spiritual techniques in suicide prevention.

- **Spiritual Communities and Emotional Support:** Collective spiritual environments provide belongingness, emotional companionship, and hope during crises.

Conclusion

The "Suicide-Mukt Bharat" movement proposes a holistic emotional wellbeing framework integrating modern psychology with India's mythological and spiritual wisdom traditions. Ancient Indian philosophies provide powerful psychological tools for emotional resilience, mental discipline, hope, compassion and self-worth. Integrating meditation, spiritual counselling, mythological teachings and value-based education into schools, colleges, workplaces and communities can significantly strengthen suicide prevention efforts in India. Preventing suicide requires not only medical intervention but also emotional awakening, compassionate communication and spiritual empowerment.

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