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From Shloka to Strategy: Learning the Bhagavad Gita's Teachings Through a Card Game Method

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Abstract

The Bhagavad Gita, a Hindu text embedded within the Mahabharata that gives important religious teachings and guidance on life, duty and self-realization. Even though traditional teaching methods are classic they are based on memorization which makes them less interesting for students today. With the objective of restoring interest and improving learning outcomes in compliance with IKS principles, this study suggests innovative assistance: the gamification of Bhagavad Gita teachings through a card game. The design process, theoretical basis, implementation and evaluation of the Bhagavad Gita card game are presented in this paper. The main motive of this Gita quest is to present readers with the knowledge of the Bhagavad Gita using selected shlokas that relates with their everyday life. The game's design includes Chausar, an old Indian strategy game that build up the cultural tradition of learning via play. The project aligns with India's Vision 2047, which aims to make the country a global leader in education, artistic growth and innovation. By applying gamified learning of the Bhagavad Gita into national, international schools and university curriculum not only strengthen IKS in domestic education but also helps to shape a knowledge economy that is respected globally and is culturally confident. In short, the Bhagavad Gita's gamification offers a fun, culturally relevant way to introduce students to age old knowledge while developing India's position as a global intellectual and cultural leader. It shows how educational games can help create a knowledge based, future ready society that respects its history.

Keywords: Indian Knowledge System (IKS), Bhagavad Gita, Chausar, Card game, Gamification, Interactive teaching material, Hands on education, Religious education.

1. Introduction



The Bhagavad Gita is a part of the Indian mythology known as the Mahabharata. It contains 700 verses and describes a conversation that happens between the warrior Arjuna and Lord Krishna during the battle of Kurukshetra. The main concepts of the Bhagavad Gita are Dharma means duty, Karma means action and result, Bhakti means devotion and Jnana means knowledge. Both of them were taking part in deep philosophical and moral disputes. The book is divided into eighteen chapters each of which addresses a different aspect of life, develops self-awareness and leads to spiritual wisdom. The Gita is regarded as the guide for moral decision-making and self-discovery that helps in both the practical aspects of daily life and the growth of more spiritual knowledge.

A. Relevance of the Bhagavad Gita in Contemporary Society

The Bhagavad Gita provides guidance in different aspects of life. In the today's age of increasing stress and anxiety the Gita's emphasis on detachment (Nishkama Karma) and mind control (Yoga) helps individuals maintain inner peace. The concept of staying balanced in success and failure (*Bhagavad Gita 2:47*) promotes emotional challenges and mental stability. Its teaching goes beyond the religion.

B. Indian Knowledge System and the Bhagavad Gita

The Indian Knowledge System (IKS) covers a broad and vast knowledge of areas like philosophy, science, medicine, arts, and education. IKS is founded in scriptures such as the Vedas, Upanishads, Puranas and epics and is all about learning in a comprehensive perspective, moral living, and self-realization. The Bhagavad Gita is an important part of this knowledge system and provides offers deep understanding of life, duty, and spirituality. The Bhagavad Gita serves as a basic pillar of the Indian Knowledge System. Its teachings guide the people toward self-awareness, ethical decision-making and personal growth. The Bhagavat Gita offers both practical and spiritual guidance that can be applied in fields of management, mental well-being, and social harmony. By applying these principles into modern education through interactive tools like gamification the Bhagavat Gita remains a root that connects ancient traditions with modern forms of learning. This paper explores how a card game based on the Teachings of the Gita can be a new learning tool in IKS framework.

C. Modern-Day Challenges for Learners

In today's digital world, students face various challenges that effect their learning experiences and mental development. Information gets so much overload due to the vast availability of online resources and makes it difficult to filter and get only meaningful knowledge. Excessive use of digital technology reduces the attention span, making it difficult to focus and think critically. Mental health concerns, including stress, anxiety, and peer pressure impact students ability to grasp and apply knowledge effectively. The Bhagavad Gita offers practical strategies for overcoming such obstacles by teaching understanding and purposeful education. By applying Gita-based games into learning it can develop critical thinking.

D. Gamification and the Bhagavad Gita in Education and Workplaces

Bhagavad Gita is a significant component of the Indian Knowledge System (IKS). It gives knowledge regarding ethics, leadership and self-knowledge, which are extremely beneficial for education and corporate training. By applying Gita-based games in learning, students and employees can develop significant life skills. Gita based gamification can be implemented in schools and colleges to improve the decision-making and thinking of students. In business, the Bhagavad Gita provides leadership guidelines that can be applied in effective training programs. By incorporating Gita-based games in



business organizations and educational institutions enables children of any age group to develop critical thinking, moral values, emotional intelligence and leadership skills through an interactive way.

2. Literature Review

A. *Current Pedagogical methods of Teachings the Bhagavad Gita*

The Bhagavad Gita is taught using traditional pedagogy which depends on simple practices like lectures and Satsang (Spiritual Learning). Philosophical approaches to teaching the Gita have been studied by academics like *Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan (1948)* and *Bal Gangadhar Tilak (1915)*, who have focused self-realization, on moral philosophy and leadership principles. These methods, however fail to make youngsters participate. Group projects, role playing games, and discussions in classrooms have all been used to put the Gita's lessons into practical contexts. *According to research by Sharma (2012) and Subramanian (2021) case studies from the Gita can be used in management and ethical decision-making courses.* Despite these improvements, the Bhagavad Gita is not widely used to improve availability through innovative learning techniques like gamification.

B. *Innovative Pedagogy in the Indian Knowledge System (IKS)*

Gurukul based learning is one of the traditional pedagogies in IKS, where knowledge is given through storytelling and live experiences as contrast to memorizing. Indian pedagogy has always included interactive methods like Puranic storytelling, question-answer sessions (Upanishadic dialogues) and practical application of lessons (*Balasubramanian, 2018*). Integrating contemporary educational materials with conventional methods has been an upcoming pedagogical innovation in IKS. Vedic and traditional Indian texts have been brought back to life by adding e-learning platforms and digital storytelling. In order to support IKS in modern education, the National Education Policy (NEP 2020) also highlights the importance of innovative techniques for teaching. However, there is still not much research on gamification as an IKS-based educating tool, especially with regard to the Bhagavad Gita.

C. *Gamification in Education, Training programs and Corporate Agencies.*

The use of game elements outside of gaming environments or gamification, has become an effective educational and training tool. *Defined by Deterding et al. (2011)* as the use of game design elements in non-game contexts, is a fairly new and rapidly growing field. The concept of gamification is different from that of an education. As educational institutions and corporate training initiatives use gamified learning methods, the use of conventional method in contemporary education continues to be a subject of interest. Using the Bhagavad Gita, a in gamified ways like card games to teach philosophical and ethical lessons is an innovation. The impact of gamification in different educational environments are addressed in this literature review, in addition to this a Bhagavad Gita-based card game can be applied to encourage complete education.

D. *The implementation of Gamification in Schools and Colleges*

Earlier studies show that gamification helps learners to gain the potential to develop critical thinking and cognitive abilities (*Kapp, 2012; Papastergiou, 2009*). Other pedagogical benefits include increased



engagement and higher motivation of the students to learn and study. Educational platforms like Duolingo, Quizizz have successfully applied these elements to make learning more interactive. With the goal to make subjects like philosophy and literature simpler to understand, higher education institutions have been using gamification more and more (Landers, 2014). Role-playing elements have been integrated to platforms like Classcraft to promote group learning. Landers' work, including his 2014 paper "Developing a Theory of Gamified Learning," explores how game elements can be used to enhance learning. Students and youngsters at schools and colleges can use Bhagavad Gita card game to survey moral reasoning and leadership concepts in an interactive way. The Bhagavad Gita is rich in dialogues and can be used into a game-based learning model where students get engage with characters, principles and philosophical teachings.

Key gamification components highlighted by research include:

Points and Badges: Promoting advancement via accomplishments (Hamari et al., 2014).

Leaderboards: Establishing a competitive educational setting (Domínguez et al., 2013).

Using storytelling and narrative to immerse students in worthwhile educational experiences (Gee, 2003).

Using critical thinking and decision-making to engage students in problem-solving and interaction (Zichermann & Cunningham, 2011).

In corporate training programs too Gamification is helpful. To improve teamwork, employee skills and problem-solving abilities (Werbach & Hunter, 2012) organizations use game-based learning too. Most commonly used methods include interactive storytelling, role-playing games, and simulations (Pelling, 2011). Deloitte's Leadership Academy incorporates gamification in combination with a reward-based system to boost executive education (Burke, 2014).

E. Effects of Religious and Philosophical Text Based Gamified Learning

According to research gamifying religious and philosophical literature in the classroom improves students understanding of ethical and moral issues (Cruz & Orange, 2016). Interactive learning improves engagement with complex texts, according to studies on gamification and theology (Boyle et al., 2016). The Bhagavad Gita, with its universal message of duty, righteousness and self-reflection, offers a rich platform for a gamified learning tool.

3. Objectives

A. Gamification to Improve Knowledge of Bhagavad Gita Theory

The Bhagavad Gita gives us a teachings on duty is Dharma, selfless action is Nishkama Karma, knowledge is Jnana, devotion is Bhakti, and discipline is Yoga. But in an age of digital world and changing pedagogical approaches the traditional approaches to teaching the Gita—which are based on textual and memorizing might not engage youngsters so effectively. This research looks to explore gamification as an innovative way to improve the understanding, and application of Bhagavad Gita's principles in educational and corporate sectors. Gamification through card games and digital learning platforms has the capability to transform learning into an interactive and experiential process that will make learners to learn hard concepts in an enjoyable way. The main role of this research is to make



Bhagavad Gita based gamification into classrooms, corporate programs and self-development initiatives. This research is to make an interest in traditional Indian knowledge systems by making them more logical, enjoyable and powerful in modern educational and corporate systems.

B. A Card Game Approach and Its involvement within the Indian Knowledge System (IKS)

Traditional ways of teaching the Gita take care not to make its back in philosophy interesting and interactive mainly for youngsters. In order to overcome this limitation this study offers the creation of a Bhagavad Gita-themed card game that can make learning interactive and philosophy can be understood in an interesting way and applicable in academics and workplaces. The new card game will serve as an interactive medium in which players interact with leadership problems and life choices that is based on the Gita's teachings. Every card will symbolize major philosophy, moral decision making and applications that are practical, challenging players to think strategically and use the teachings of the Gita in decision-making situations. This method of learning by doing is relevant with IKS methods. In addition to spiritual and intellectual learning, the study dives into how the game-based learning method that can be applied to school curricula, university programs, and corporates by developing leadership qualities, reasoning and intelligence. By using gamification, the research shows the significance of IKS in modern-day education system, by making the Bhagavad Gita's teachings interactive and effective for students and youngsters.

4. METHODOLOGY

A. Design and development of the Gita Quest

This game is based on strategy and is interactive that is designed to offer knowledge about spirituality, challenges, and life lessons. This quest is based on Indian tradition and ancient wisdom from the Bhagavad Gita tests the players ability to cross real-life situations by moving their pawns across a Chauser board. The game aims to offer players of all ages with a fun yet philosophical gaming experience by mixing luck, intelligence, and patience. Using knowledge from the Bhagavad Gita, the gameplay elements were developed, graphically designed, and prototyped. The project, which began as a classroom academic exercise, ultimately developed into a study model for educational gamification within the Indian Knowledge System.

B. Objective:

This Gita quest's primary purpose is to educate viewers about the Bhagavad Gita through a few selected shlokas that are associated with their daily lives. The Gita lessons are taught to readers in an interactive manner through the use of an interacting Chauser board game and the spread of information and understanding on shlokas. This Gita quest also promotes self-analysis and personal growth by linking spiritual wisdom to real-life difficulties and experiences. Additionally, it provides philosophical and moral advice in a way that attracts readers of all ages, helping them access life with ease. In order to make tradition useful and appropriate for today's world, it will also help promote a greater understanding of Indian culture and values through the power of narrative. It gives readers of all ages spiritual and moral advice that helps them live a clear life. This will encourage a better understanding of Indian culture and values through the power of storytelling, giving tradition significance and meaning in the modern world.

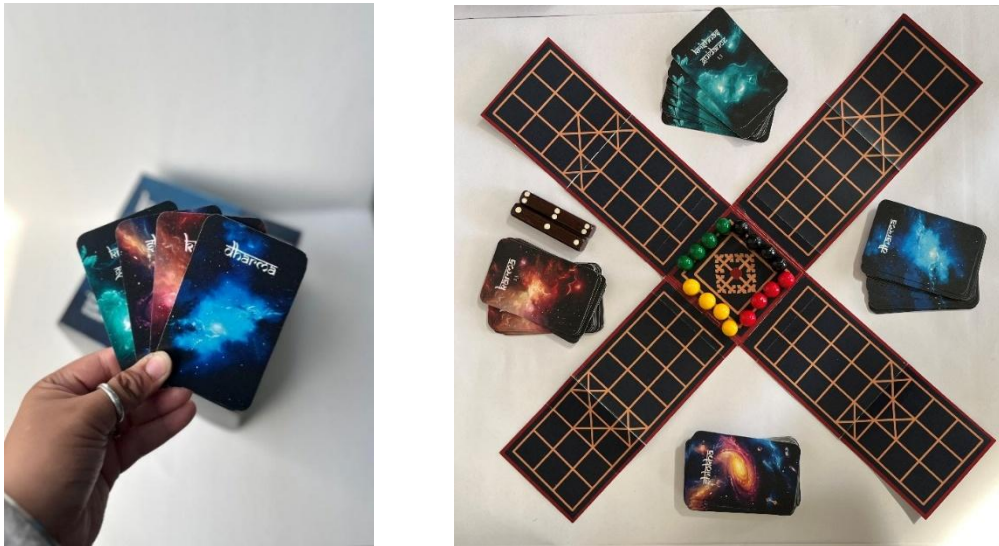


Photo Credit : Aadhya Gupta

Target Audience:

Age 12-18 - For those between the ages of 12 and 18, Gita Quest makes studying the Bhagavad Gita easier and interesting. Gamers learn principles like dharma, karma, and self-control while developing friendships and making better choices in the classroom. The game gives them the capacity to handle stress, competition, and failures while also developing critical thinking through interactive challenges. Through shlokas and storytelling, they learn more about the culture and begin to reflect on their character and duties. Playing with others builds interaction and patience, which gives interest and meaning to learning.

Age 18-25 - For young Gita Quest offers advice on relationships, careers, and personal growth based on the teachings of the Bhagavad Gita. It allows the development of moral leadership, good judgment, and adaptability, making overcoming stress, uncertainty, and challenges in life easier. The game encourages an increased awareness of one's identity, purpose, and plans through self-reflection. Karma-accepting players learn the value of selfless actions and dedication to their education and careers.

Age 26-50 - The Bhagavad Gita often offers adults advice on how to handle their responsibilities, challenges, and ethical choices in life. By using the Gita's philosophy to problems like relationships, career decisions, and personal growth, the Quest acts as a tool for self-examination. This design promotes self-awareness and meaningful conversations, making it a useful activity for people trying to balance their personal and professional lives. It can be played alone or with family.

Seniors (Over 50): Self-examination knowledge, and happiness in life. Gita: The Quest gives senior players an environment for self-examination discussion, and experience trade. The game's exciting yet relaxing design and storytelling elements allow seniors to carefully go over key lessons from the Bhagavad Gita. Because of the game mechanics, which motivate self-analysis, appreciation, and an awareness of one's life journey, it is a fulfilling experience that encourages both spiritual and mental wellness.

Gita: The Quest is an experience for all kinds of age groups, developing from a game into a resource for lifelong learning that players can use at various stages of their lives. It encourages the younger generation to look into the idea of goodness, offers seniors the opportunity to share their stories, pushes teenagers to think critically, and helps adults use wisdom in real-life situations. By bridging generations,

the quest shows how the lessons from the Bhagavad Gita can be made engaging, simple to understand, and life-changing for people of all ages.

C. Different cards (Patra)



Photo and Design Credit: Aadhya Gupta

Shlokha Sangrah: This type of Sangrah includes phrases from the Bhagavad Gita that offer knowledge and path. Spiritual truths can be learned through Shloka cards. The player must carefully read certain words or phrases that lack vowels in order to understand them and move forward in the game.

Dharma Patra: The Dharma Patra represents moral decisions and moral responsibilities. The words on these cards are connected with our dharma.

Karma Patra: Karma Patra highlights actions and their results. By taking these cards, players learn how their actions—whether positive or negative—affect the game and build the cause-and-effect the idea.

Krishna's Guidelines: These principles offer divine advise and solutions for karma. These cards, which stand for the wisdom and teachings of Lord Krishna, offer players with clarity and help in determining the correct response.

Board of Chausar: Players are meant to learn about the consequences of their choices and the ultimate victory of good over evil. Like the important characters in the Mahabharata, players would have to balance their Chausar moves with wisdom to make sure their course remains true to Dharma.

D. Rules / Mechanism:

Shuffle the stacks of Dharma, Karma, Shloka, and Krishna's Guidance. To start player rolls a six, they are shown a Shloka scroll with a text, its meaning, and incomplete phrases that lack vowels. To guess which vowels are missing, the player must understand the Shloka. They take a Karma scroll with a challenge if they are unsuccessful. If you don't finish it, you have to draw a Clue scroll and take three steps back. The player takes six steps back if the attempt is still unsuccessful. If they enter safe zones the players are rewarded with Dharma scrolls which are indicated by crosses. An additional turn is given for gathering three Dharma scrolls and it continues.

E. Winning Point:

The one who is able to take all 4 pawns back to their home on chausar board wins the quest.

F. About Chausar:

Chausar (or Pachisi) is known as an ancient Indian board game, Developed in the sixth century, it became a model for modern games such as Ludo. Chausar, a game played with pase on a cross-shaped cloth or board, was well-liked by royalty and is particularly mentioned in the Mahabharata. The workings of fate and life can be seen in the game, indicating a balance between strategy and luck. The number of moves a player can make after rolling is referred to as the "pase." The lengthening of pase allowed for deeper gameplay and more calculated risks while providing suspense and strategic depth. This feature increased the game's replay value and made it a favorite among kings and royalty.

G. Chausar connection to Next level learning

Chausar was not only as a timepass activity but also a philosophical teaching method. It is obvious how Bhagavad Gita card game takes inspirations from Chausar: Chausar has long been used to teach moral lessons as the Mahabharata explains. Similar challenges happen in the card game when players apply the teachings of the Bhagavad Gita. Similar to Chausar, players must base their decision making on the lessons found in the Bhagavad Gita.

H. Taking gamification, a step Further

Transforming the game into a mobile app (Digital Platform) to make it more interactive and easily accessible.

6. Prototyping And Feedback



Photo Credit: Aadhya Gupta

An initial testing phase was conducted with a selected group of university students and academicians, ranging in age from 18 to 25 and 26 to 50, representing a range of academic and cultural backgrounds, in order to assess the learning potential and acceptance of the Bhagavad Gita Card Game.

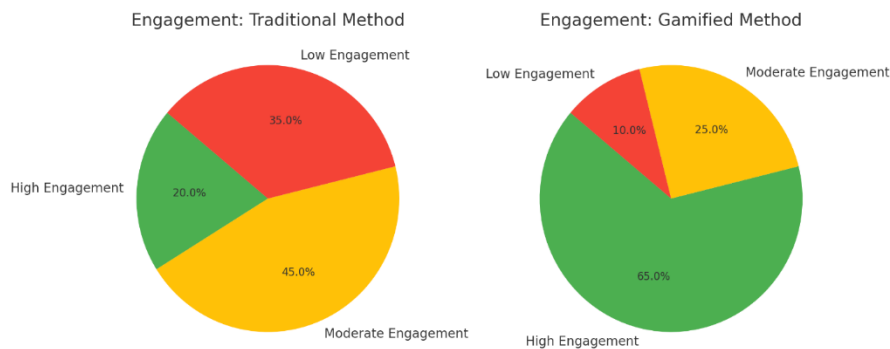
A. Overview of the Game Session:

The quest start when a player rolled a six. After moving their pawn, the player drew a Shloka Patra, read aloud the text and its meaning, and tried to to decode sentences using the Shloka's context. If they were unsuccessful, they completed a task and selected a Karma Patra. This exciting session inspired thinking of Indian philosophy through interactive play. This quest has been reviewed for engagement and educational value, making sure it provides a fun and easy-to-play method of learning timeless knowledge..

B. Feedback Summary:

According to 92% of participants, the game format improved their understanding and enjoyment of the concepts found in the Gita. Students requested simplified Sanskrit terms with symbols and illustrations in order to get better. Teachers suggested adding the game to philosophy or value education modules as a bonus material.

The below two pie charts compare the levels of student engagement with gamified and traditional Bhagavad Gita learning methods:



Traditional Approach: The majority of students expressed moderate to low levels of involvement.

Gamified Method: A sizable majority reported high levels of engagement, indicating the efficacy of the game-based strategy.

Familiarity Levels with the Gita:

- Very Familiar
- Somewhat Familiar
- Not Familiar

Sample Balanced Data:

Age Group	Very Familiar	Somewhat Familiar	Not Familiar
Under 18	5	7	6
18-25	6	8	6
26-50	6	7	7
50+	5	8	6

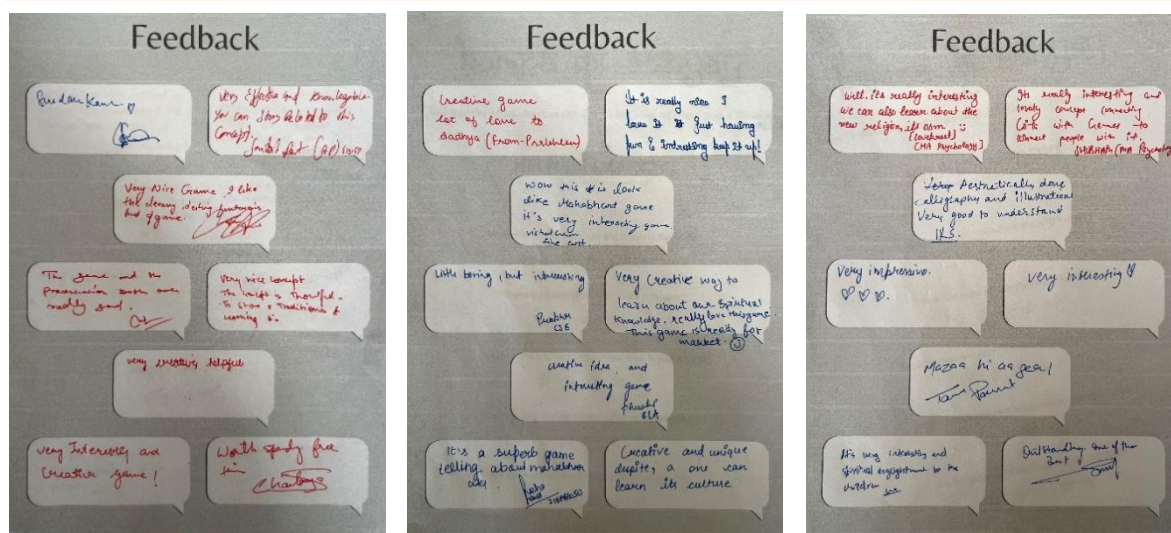


Photo Credit: Aadhya Gupta

Conclusion

The Bhagavad Gita Card Game is more than just an innovative teaching tool, it is a way to the changing demands of the youngsters in the twenty-first century and to India's larger vision as it approaches its century in 2047. Since people's attention spans are short and information is high but scattered, there has never been a greater need for meaningful learning experiences based on cultural knowledge. This project shows how classic Indian texts, especially the Bhagavad Gita, can be successfully incorporated into modern classrooms using creative methods like card games.

The purpose of this study was to find out how, when correctly combined with traditional educational systems, gamification may promote an extensive awareness of philosophical ideas and moral thought. The Bhagavad Gita provides a strong foundation for promoting morals and life skill qualities that are becoming more and more important in our complex, fast-paced world through its teachings on duty, separation, selfless action, and empathy. The card game changes these abstract ideas into beneficial, playable forms, making education lively and exciting.

Testing showed that the game could improve memory, understanding, and involvement. Students showed more interest in the Gita's lessons, and teachers noticed increased participation and value-based discussions. It indicates that the Gita, which is often seen as difficult or complex for younger audiences, can be made enjoyable and friendly without affecting its philosophical depth.

According to India's Vision 2047, By developing moral leadership, mixing traditional knowledge with digital and hands-on instruction, and encouraging creativity and innovation, the project shows an integrated approach to transforming education. It is a case study of how broad education may revive India's cultural assets for the purposes of nation-building and cultural preservation. The card game model aligns with the NEP 2020 framework, which places a strong emphasis on inquiry-based, value-based, and multidisciplinary learning with an Indian ethos at its heart.

The game can be used outside of Indian classrooms to promote Indian thought as an important component of global education by participating in international discussions on leadership and mindfulness.



In conclusion, this research shows that combining innovation and tradition is not only possible but also successful. The Bhagavad Gita Card Game serves as an example of how play can have meaning and how innovative design can give new life into ancient knowledge. Such programs will be essential in developing students who are not only knowledgeable and skilled but also logical, committed and ethically aware as India looks to 2047 and beyond.

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