

**INTEGRATING STITHAPRAJÑA AND SAMATVAM: A BHAGAVAD GITA
FRAMEWORK FOR COUNSELLING AMONG FEMALE YOUNG ADULTS**

Dissertation Submitted to Kerala University in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the

Award of the Degree of

Master of Science in Counselling Psychology

Submitted by

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Under the Guidance of

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LOYOLA COLLEGE OF SOCIAL SCIENCES (AUTONOMOUS).

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM

(2024-2026)

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Certificate



This is to certify that **Nandana Manu** (Reg. No. **LC24PCP10**) has successfully carried out the project entitled "**Integrating Stithaprajña and Samatvam: A Bhagavad Gita Framework for Counselling Among Female Young Adults**" in the **Department of Counselling Psychology, Loyola College of Social Sciences (Autonomous), Thiruvananthapuram**, under the supervision and guidance of the **Dr. Pramod S K, Assistant Professor, Department of Counselling Psychology**, during the Fourth Semester of the M.Sc. Counselling Psychology programme in the academic year **2024–2026**.

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Declaration

I, **Nandana Manu**, do hereby declare that the dissertation entitled “Integrating Stithaprajña and Samatvam: A Bhagavad Gita Framework for Counselling Among Female Young Adults”, submitted to the Department of Counselling Psychology, Loyola College of Social Sciences (Autonomous), Sreekariyam, Thiruvananthapuram, under the supervision and guidance of Dr. Pramod S K, Assistant Professor, Department of Counselling Psychology, in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Science (M.Sc.) in Counselling Psychology of Kerala University, is a bona fide work carried out by me during the academic year 2024–2026.

I further declare that this dissertation has not been submitted, either in part or in full, to any other University or Institution for the award of any degree, diploma, or other academic qualification.

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Nandana Manu

Abstract

This current study, “Integrating Stithaprajña and Samatvam: A Bhagavad Gita Framework for Counselling Among Female Young Adults” was to design and evaluate a culturally appropriate intervention counselling programme for a selected psychological conceptual framework from the Bhagavad Gita. The study concentrated on stithaprajña: that is, wisdom, emotional stability and self control and samatvam: acceptance and the appropriate response to life events and situations. This study followed a quasi-experimental research design with one group pre test-post test design. The participants were 20 female young adults aged between 22 and 24 years. Criterion based purposive sampling was done. Only the participants who reported moderate to high perceived stress were taken. The measures were three-dimensional wisdom scale, equanimity scale and perceived stress scale. The counselling was carried out in six weekly sessions. Each session was for about 30-40 minutes in individual counselling. Descriptive statistic and paired t test were applied. results revealed that the stithaprajña (wisdom), samatvam (equanimity) score of the participant significantly increased whereas the perceived stress score significantly decreased after the intervention. Based on the participants’ subjective reports and the researcher observations, there were improved self-awareness, emotional stability, acceptance, better stress management. It suggested that Bhagavad Gita based intervention is of utility in developing culturally relevant counselling practice for female young adults.

Keywords: stithaprajña, samatvam, Bhagavad Gita, counselling, female young adults, wisdom, equanimity, perceived stress

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Chapter I

Introduction

‘समत्वं योग उच्यते’ ‘Samatvam yoga ucyate’ meaning equanimity is called yoga, as proclaimed in Chapter 2, Verse 48 of the Bhagavad Gita, highlights the importance of achieving equanimity in one’s path to wise living. In other words, inner balance is perceived as essential to thoughtful living in all spheres of life. A stable and calm mind amidst pleasure or pain, success or failure, gain or loss is referred to as Yoga-a state of psychological equilibrium. From a psychological perspective, equanimity can be characterized as emotional regulation, acceptance, non-reactivity, resilience, and adaptive behavior. Contemporary research has also pointed towards and affirmed the application of the Bhagavad Gita as a tool for counselling and psychotherapy for alleviating stress, managing anxiety, building resilience, developing emotional regulate skills, and facilitating personal development (Gupta & Sharma, 2025; Kumari, 2025; Pandey, 2026; Pardhe, 2025).

Young adulthood is the major stage of transition and growth. They learn their individual identity, choose their academic life, create relationships, develop independence and look for purpose and meaning. More specific to the young women; young adult also involves regarding the gender roles, family obligations, traditions, societal norms, pressure for accomplishments, relationship strains, concern about image, and aspirations toward their future life. Many of the tasks associated with such a burden might produce anxiety, emotional disturbance, insecurity, and uncertainty, which would likely contribute to a decrease in young adult’s psychological well-being.

Numerous student’s studies suggested that student’s level of anxiety, depression and stress in university students has remained an important health problem requiring the help of counselling (Helenpuui & Choudhury, 2024; Kaiwart et al., n.d.). In this study entitle: "Integrating Integrating Stithapraja and Samatvam: A Bhagavad Gita Framework for Counselling Among Female Young Adults", this study has intention to study and explore the possibility of implementing two central Bhagavad Gita terms: namely, Stithapraja (wisdom)

and Samatvam (equanimity) in the counselling process. Stithapraja means a stable and immovable understanding; the steady determination of a balanced and firm understanding. While Samatvam means impartiality, mental balance and freedom from worldly attachments or indifference, mental equilibrium, an evenness of mental poise or spirit. Integrating these two, the study seeks to contribute a culture based framework for counselling that fosters wisdom, equanimity, emotional balance and well-being among female young adults.

Female Young Adults and Psychological Wellbeing

One's youth is a key time of transition for the youth including social changes, emotional and behavioral changes, psychological development changes and academic achievement changes. Higher demands or pressures during this stage of life might be increased demands/responsibilities, difficult school assignments, concern over a future career, intricate relationships, the stress to navigate family pressures/expectations, the pressure of developing independent and determining their individual selves, and so on. The adjustments in the domains above have influence on the mental well-being of youth, thereby increasing vulnerability towards stress, ruminating over something, anxiety, sensitivity and lower self-confidence. As for students in high school in the past few years, quite a lot of the students experienced depression, anxiety and stress that were related to academic and life transitions (Helenpuii & Choudhury, 2024).

In the Indian subcontinent, social and cultural expectations often influence how female young adults come to experience and engage with their psychological realities. They may encounter a need to reconcile personal aspirations with responsibilities in roles concerning the family; expectations for behaviour within society; achievement in their academic endeavors and eventual responsibilities. Such pressures can lead to conflicts and the individual may experience difficulties when their desires do not meet those external and perceived as legitimate, cultural, moral and familial obligations. This suggests that when

counselling young women, a consideration needs to be made for a developmental, emotional, relational and cultural sensitivity. Cultural, value based and spiritually-oriented counselling strategies have been proven to reduce stress in students in college, and this offers evidence for a culturally relevant counselling approach in helping young people cope with emotional challenges (Kaiwart et al., n.d.).

Bhagavad Gita as a Psychological and Counselling Resource

While it is commonly seen as a spiritual or philosophical discourse, the Bhagavad Gita also possesses a wealth of psychological material. The conversation between Arjuna and Shree Krishna is initiated when Arjuna is overcome with despair, confused, terrified, impotent, and tormented by doubt about doing the right thing. Shree Krishna's guidance is best understood as a process of psychological transformation whereby Arjuna is assisted to become more clear, self-aware, emotion regulation, value driven in action and inner strong (Gupta & Sharma, 2025; Pardhe, 2025). Indeed, the Bhagavad Gita conversation is now also widely recognised as having significant therapeutic and counselling potential as it addresses the suffering that people experience through self-reflection, self-regulation, acceptance, and action oriented toward one's chosen path.

Many themes of the Bhagavad Gita are relevant to counselling psychology. The principle in chapter 2, verse 47 of 'कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन' 'Karmāṇy evādhikāras te mā phaleṣu kadācana' states that one is only entitled to act, never to its fruits. In the parlance of psychology this implies the avoidance of excessive obsession with results, with one's own performance and with failure. Kumari (2025) notes the value of such advice as applicable to the management of anxiety, in that it encourages discipline of action without dependence upon the outcomes or rewards and encourages cognitive distancing. This principle is particularly relevant to young females who face numerous anxieties related to their academic pursuits, career choices, social interactions and future uncertainties.

Self-regulation and inner discipline is yet another crucial element stressed in the Bhagavad Gita. Chapter 6, verse 5 advises that one should 'उद्धरेदात्मनात्मानं' 'Uddhared ātmanātmānaṁ,' or 'lift himself up with his own self'. This essentially teaches that individuals are their own masters and must develop their own inner power, which includes a responsibility for one's own self development. The value of such advice in the counselling session would be to promote self awareness, emotion regulation; psychological resilience building and avoiding maladaptive coping strategies. Gupta and Sharma (2025) claim that teachings found within the Gita provide a theoretical foundation for counselling psychology, emphasizing regulation of mind, self, ethical action, and decision making with balanced judgment. Pandey (2026) also draws the Bhagavad Gita into conversation as a potential theoretical model of resilience with applications for managing stress and distress.

Further, recent studies have explored the applicability of Indian spiritual and cultural traditions within the mental health and counselling landscape. Kurhade et al. (2025), for example, formulated a Ramayana-based counselling module to address the mental health needs of individuals experiencing common mental health problems. This provided an evidence base that Indian literary traditions, particularly epics like the Ramayana, could be effectively translated into a coherent, culturally resonant intervention protocol for use in counselling. This provides a precedent for this study in the development of a Bhagavad Gita based counselling framework that draws upon a conceptually rich, culturally valued text to foster emotional wellbeing and psychological growth.

Stithaprajña

The one central concept is stithaprajña. 'स्थितप्रज्ञ' 'Stithaprajña' (Ch 2, Vs 54-72) of Bhagavad Gita defines 'one who has steady wisdom'. Such a person is neither disturbed by pain nor attracted to pleasures nor over excited in success or devastated in failures. In a person with stithaprajña, they maintain a balanced and equipoised mind when encountering

opposite experiences and external vicissitudes in life. It doesn't mean a person to be numb in emotions nor to be reclusive, but it denotes a person's maturity in terms of emotional regulation, self-control, awareness, and clarity in thought. According to Gupta and Sharma (2025) Stithaprajña can be explained in the perspective of self-regulatory functions of mindfulness based stress reduction. From a perspective of counselling psychology Stithaprajña can be conceptualised as psychologically relevant construct.

The Verse 'दुःखेष्वनुद्विग्नमनाः सुखेषु विगतस्पृहः' 'Duḥkheṣv anudvigna-manāḥ sukheṣu vigata-sprṛhaḥ' (Bhagavad Gita 2:56) i.e. The one whose mind is not perturbed by sorrow and unexcited by pleasure is called sthitaprajña can be psychologically understood as the experience of an emotion without being overwhelmed by the emotion. The term can also be related to emotional regulation, distress tolerance, mindfulness, resilience, psychological flexibility, and self-awareness. According to Kumari (2025) Stithaprajña is a state of emotional stability and mental balance useful for anxiety management and according to Pandey (2026), Gita's concept of steadiness can be understood as psychological resilience and adaptive coping. In the present study, Stithaprajña is interpreted as a psychological construct which reflects wisdom, emotional steadiness, reflective awareness and mature response to life situation. It is being predicted that this construct may be relevant for female young adults to develop self-control, reduce impulse responses, improve the decisions in life and to promote self-confidence in stress full and uncertain situations. According to Yadav et al. (2026), Gita's contribution to self-realisation and to holistic development of a human can be said to have its relation to stithaprajña as personal growth, maturity and clarity and self-understanding.

Samatvam

Samatvam stands for equanimity or even-mindedness and balanced reaction to experiences of life. The Bhagavad Gita, chapter 2, verse 48 ‘समत्वं योग उच्यते’ ‘Samatvam yoga ucyate’ explains this principle to balance the response during both gains and loss, and success and failure. It is the ability to maintain internal balance and at the same time participate in the life’s journey. It should not be confused with an attitude of apathy or indifference to what is happening around us. As a principle of psychological resilience, Pandey (2026) considered samatvam to be important due to the capacity it grants to one to be in balance amidst adversity and uncertainties.

Psychological understanding of samatvam can be emotional balance, acceptance, lowered emotional reactivity, and non-attachment towards outcomes. samatvam relates closely with mindfulness-based acceptance, emotion regulation, psychological resilience, acceptance based coping strategies, and non-reactivity. For anxiety and emotion management, samatvam has been discussed as a critical Gita based concept by Kumari (2025). Similarly, Gita teachings like equanimity and non-attachment has been highlighted as relevant to the modern psychotherapy techniques to enable individuals increase self-awareness, self-control and also reduce emotional suffering by Pardhe (2025).

Samatvam can be significantly helpful for female young adults in managing school related pressures, relations with others, and family obligations and pressure to meet societal expectations regarding future careers, life and so on. It could enable individuals establish a sense of balance concerning success and failure, relation, career and self growth. Samatva would therefore be a preventative tool against stress as well as a therapeutic tool in the context of counselling, which could contribute to reduce the distress experience. Similarly anāsakti (non-attachment) concept has been studied in the context of positive and negative wellbeing where it was positively related with well-being and negatively related with

emotional distress while ahamkara (ego identification) was negatively associated with both positive and negative wellbeing and positively related with emotional distress (Gupta & Agrawal, 2022).

Bhagavad Gita-Based Counselling Framework

A framework of counselling denotes a structured system explaining objectives, concepts, techniques, and desired outcomes in a counselling process. The present research aims at developing a framework for counselling based on the concepts of stithaprajña and samatvam in Bhagavad Gita to foster the female young adults on dimensions such as wisdom, equanimity, stress reduction, self-awareness, emotional regulation, resilience, etc. The stithaprajña aspect is directed toward promoting the wisdom, reflective awareness, cognitive clarity, and self-regulation where individuals are expected to reflect upon themselves before responding to the stimulus; it calls upon people to reflect, examine thought and emotions, and respond judiciously rather than impulsively. Similarly the samatvam aspect aims toward promoting equanimity, acceptance, balanced action, and decreased attachment to outcomes; in this sense, individuals learn to hold stable the situations of success and failure, praise and criticism, uncertainties, and emotional discomfort.

The conceptual foundation of this framework is derived from literature that emphasizes the linkage between the teachings of Gita with emotional regulation, anxiety reduction, resilient responses, mindfulness and self development (Gupta & Sharma, 2025; Kumari, 2025; Pandey, 2026; Pardhe, 2025). This is not a religious treatise. The focus of the study is on application of the selected psychological constructs of the Bhagavad Gita in counselling relevant and in culturally sensitive framework. The aim is to translate the philosophical concepts into the counselling process to equip the young female adults in dealing with stress, emotional reactive behaviours, lack of self-confidence and the general feeling of uncertainty. This is in line with recent development in the field of indigenous

therapeutic models wherein the texts and philosophy of India have been recontextualised into structured counselling practices (Kurahde et al., 2025).

In Indian context, literature suggests that psychological construct of gunas can be subjected to an empirical validation, and can be meaningfully correlated with various psychological disorders and thus may justify the operationization of Sanskrit based construct into the mainstream psychological research (Bhargav et al., 2023). Hence the present framework functions as a culturally grounded, strengths based and meaning centered counselling framework that draws on the philosophical concepts from Bhagavad Gita as a backdrop, while incorporating modern concepts of psychology such as emotion regulation, mindfulness, resilience, acceptance and values based action, and seeks to foster not just a reduction of perceived stress, but an increase in wisdom, equanimity and psychological wellbeing of female young adults.

Need and Significance of the Study

There is a need for a culturally sensitive counselling methodology for Indian population. Though western counselling practices are being increasingly followed in India, it might not address the cultural, interpersonal, relational, philosophical, and spiritual dimensions of life for the Indian clients comprehensively. For many in India, wellbeing concepts are expressed in terms of duty, discipline, renunciation, family, spirituality, mental peace, and self-growth. It has been suggested by the scholars that Indian philosophical thought has potential in promoting health, mental strength and total development of man (Pandey, 2026; Yadav et al., 2026).

Female young adults may find this counselling approach more appropriate as they may experience academic stress, concerns about future career, pressure from family, interpersonal challenges, emotional vulnerability, identity concerns etc. It has been observed in different studies among the student populations that they are prone to stress, anxiety and

depressive tendencies and need for help can be seen (Helenpuii & Choudhury, 2024; Kaiwart et al., n.d.). A Bhagavad Gita-based counselling framework which could integrate stithaprajña and samatvam would empower young female adults to cultivate emotional stability, steady thinking, resilient approach, acceptance, self-awareness etc.

The study is significant as it aims to bridge the gap between the rich Indian philosophical wisdom and the contemporary counselling psychology. This study contributes to Indian psychology by interpreting concepts like stithaprajña and samatvam as constructs that would be relevant in mental health sciences. It contributes to counselling psychology by creating a culturally valid and practically useful counselling approach for the female young adults. There are studies showing the importance of Gita based concepts in anxiety management, resilience, counselling ethics and mental therapy practice (Gupta & Sharma, 2025; Kumari, 2025; Pandey, 2026; Pardhe, 2025). However, a framework using stithaprajña and samatvam seems to be lacking in its formulation and its direct application.

One suitable phrase from the Gita for this section would be ‘तस्मादसक्तुः सततं कायं कर्मसमाचर’ ‘Tasmād asaktaḥ satataṁ kāryaṁ karma samācara’ which occurs in Bhagavad Gita Chapter 3 Verse 19. It translates to ‘Therefore, you should constantly perform your duty without attachment.’ This is suitable for female young adults as it supports performance with diligence without undue worry for results. In the context of counselling it will empower the female young adults to deal with stress from performance pressure, societal expectations and the fear of failure, by adopting an attitude of emotional stability. This is consistent with the psychological relevance of the non-attached approach that is linked with general psychological wellbeing and low emotional distress (Gupta & Agrawal, 2022).

Another meaningful Gita verse for the current section would be ‘यतो यतो धनश्चरधत मनश्चुलमस्थिरम्’ ‘Yato yato niścarati manaś cañcalam asthiram’ which means ‘wherever, from whatever source, this wavering and unsteady mind moves, to that, you must again bring

it under control of the self.’ This pertains to self-regulation and mindful awareness, concepts very vital for mental wellbeing. It supports the present work in understanding the need for attaining self-mastery through self-reflection. Thus the present study is of significance in making a conceptual and practical contribution towards blending Indian philosophical thought with modern counselling psychology.

Statement of the Problem

Today, most of the female young adults are surrounded by stress, emotional imbalance, lack of certainty and several dilemmas about career, relation, education, self and society. There are many counselling approaches, but there is a need to develop culturally specific model of dealing with emotional well-being based on Indian Psychology of mind. The Bhagavad Gita teachings, particularly on wisdom (stithaprajna), balanced action (samatvam), non-attachment, equanimity and self control have lot to offer. Studies have shown the application of Bhagavad Gita to control anxiety, for resilience, mental therapy, counselling ethics, and in promoting overall development (Gupta & Sharma, 2025; Kumari, 2025; Pandey, 2026; Pardhe, 2025; Yadav et al., 2026).

However, limited attention has been paid to integrate the concepts of stithaprajna and samatvam in the form of integrated Bhagavad Gita framework to the counselling process of female young adults. Thus, the problem taken up for the study is how the concept of stithaprajna and samatvam can be incorporated in Bhagavad Gita framework for the counselling of female young adults.

Objectives of the Study

Objectives are made for the smooth conduction of the study. The study has one general objective and ten specific objectives which includes the formulation of the module and its implementation. The list of objectives are listed below..

General Objective

To evaluate the effectiveness of a Bhagavad Gita-based counselling intervention emphasizing the principles of sthitaprajña and Samatvam in enhancing wisdom and equanimity among female young adults.

Specific Objectives

1. To develop a structured counselling intervention module based on the Bhagavad Gita concepts of sthitaprajña and samatvam for female young adults.
2. To identify female young adults experiencing higher levels of perceived stress using the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS).
3. To implement the Bhagavad Gita-based counselling intervention among female young adults over a six-week period individually.
4. To assess the levels of wisdom among participants before and after the intervention.
5. To assess the levels of equanimity among participants before and after the intervention.
6. To assess the levels of perceived stress among participants before and after the intervention.
7. To evaluate the effectiveness of the Bhagavad Gita-based counselling intervention in enhancing wisdom among female young adults.
8. To evaluate the effectiveness of the Bhagavad Gita-based counselling intervention in enhancing equanimity among female young adults.
9. To evaluate the effectiveness of the Bhagavad Gita-based counselling intervention in reducing perceived stress among female young adults.

10. To describe participants' subjective experiences of the intervention (qualitative feedback).

Hypotheses of the Study

H₀1: There is no significant difference in wisdom scores between the pre-test and post-test among female young adults who participated in the Bhagavad Gita-based counselling intervention.

H₀2: There is no significant difference in equanimity scores between the pre-test and post-test among female young adults who participated in the Bhagavad Gita-based counselling intervention.

H₀3: There is no significant difference in perceived stress scores between the pre-test and post-test among female young adults who participated in the Bhagavad Gita-based counselling intervention.

Operational Definitions

Stithaprajñā

In this study, stithaprajñā refers to a state of stable wisdom characterized by clarity of thought, discernment, and the ability to remain unaffected by external fluctuations of pleasure and pain. It denotes a balanced and insightful approach to life situations. It is measured by the Three-Dimensional Wisdom Scale.

Samatvam

Here, samatvam is defined as emotional balance and composure, reflected in the ability to maintain calmness, acceptance, and non-reactivity in both favourable and unfavourable circumstances. It represents an inner steadiness in facing life's challenges. It is measured by the Equanimity Scale.

Female Young Adults

In the present study, female young adults refer to women between the ages of 22 and 24 years who participated in the counselling intervention.

Bhagavad Gita-Based Counselling Framework

In the present study, the Bhagavad Gita-based counselling framework refers to a structured intervention based on selected teachings and concepts from the Bhagavad Gita, particularly stithaprajña and samatvam. The framework includes counselling activities focused on self-awareness, cognitive clarity, emotional regulation, value-based action, acceptance, non-reactivity, and personal growth.

Perceived Stress

In the present study, perceived stress refers to the extent to which participants appraise situations in their lives as stressful, uncontrollable, or overwhelming. It is measured using the Perceived Stress Scale.

Delimitations of the Study

Only female young adults from 22 to 24 years of age are studied. The study recruits only those individuals who, in screening, identified as experiencing moderate or high levels of perceived stress. The scope of this thesis is limited to counselling approach based on its means and ends in terms of the Bhagavad Gita. The primary reference will be given to the lines dealing with the concepts of stithaprajña and samatvam. A six-week intervention program was undertaken within this study. This study only utilizes only certain measures of psychological functioning (specifically the short form of the Three-Dimensional Wisdom Scale, the Equanimity Scale and the Perceived Stress Scale). This study is limited in one group pre-test and post-test design.

Chapter II

Review of Literature

The literature review establishes the theoretical and empirical foundation of a research study by examining and interpreting existing knowledge regarding the research problem, key variables, and the conceptual framework that guides the study. It helps the researcher to familiarize himself with how his topic has been investigated, the major theories that guided its study, the available empirical evidence, and the unanswered questions in the field. In this study, the review of literature centres on the utilization of stithaprajña and samatvam from the Bhagavad Gita as a counselling framework among female young adults.

This chapter has been divided into two main sections: Theoretical Review and Empirical Review. Theoretical review of literature includes discussion on the conceptual and philosophical bases of the study: young adults and psychological wellbeing, the Bhagavad Gita as a psychological and counselling resource, stithaprajña, samatvam, wisdom, equanimity, perceived stress and the Bhagavad Gita based counselling model. Empirical review of literature involves studies related to the major variables and associated constructs; young adult mental health, Gita based psychological concepts, spiritual counselling, indigenous therapeutic approaches, Indian psychology concepts, wisdom, equanimity and perceived stress.

The primary source of the material consulted for this chapter are the research based journal articles from peer reviewed journals published in the past 10-15 years. However, seminal theory and classical texts from Bhagavad Gita has also been included in the literature review of this research. More and more recently, studies have highlighted the psychotherapeutic applications of various Indian philosophical concepts to stress, anxiety, coping, resilience, counselling ethics, therapy, counselling processes and holistic well-being (Gupta & Sharma, 2025; Yadav et al., 2026). This chapter closes by addressing the research gap and justifying the relevance of the current study within the context of counselling psychology and Indian psychology.

Theoretical Review

Theoretical review has been discussed above as the evaluation of concepts, principles, theories, schools of philosophy, psychology, which serve the rationale or background of the study. It explains the concepts used in study with respect to the variables and to know what is meant by a particular variable from the respective conceptual context. In this study, theoretical review plays role, due to its philosophical background in the Indian psychological thought process and counselling psychology of modern era.

The review involves analysis of the following concepts which represent major dimensions of female young adulthood, stithaprajña, samatvam, wisdom, equanimity, perceived stress and Bhagavad Gita-based counselling theory. Bhagavad Gita theory has been explained how the few selected concepts from the Gita can be applied as counselling, what is its interpretation with regard to the modern psychological dimensions as emotional regulation, mindfulness, resilience, acceptance, self- awareness and stress reduction.

Female Young Adults and Psychological Wellbeing

Female young adulthood is considered a critical life period marked by personal, emotional, social, academic and career transition and change. During this period, young females struggle to negotiate about their identity, autonomy, education, careers, social and interpersonal relationships, familial expectation, self esteem, and aspirations for the future. These changes in transitions offer opportunity but may leave individuals vulnerable to perceived stress, anxiety, mood instability, insecurity and psychological distress.

The transitional phase involves challenges in both educational and social factors including academic success, uncertainty in the profession and other spheres, relationship, social comparison, family and work, family expectations, role expectation for gender etc..

Multiple researchers across different educational environments have identified depression, anxiety, and stress as significant concerns on college campuses, recommending the implementation of counselling programs for students with mental health needs (Helenpuii & Choudhury, 2024). Additionally, culturally relevant approaches such as spiritually grounded counselling have also proven effective in alleviating stress among students. Hence, it suggests the role of spiritual intervention for students' welfare. Psychological well-being does not mean a state in which the symptoms of mental illness are absent; rather it means a general positive state characterized by emotion, well-being, confidence, meaning, resilience, self awareness, resilience, self-confidence, hope and an optimistic view of life, capacity for adaptivity, resilience, meaning making, and life control, which ultimately leads to equanimity. In the context of India, well-being means more than self satisfaction. It may relate with family, moral duties, faith and self discipline, self-effort and self-balance, which are essential for gaining wisdom.

Counselling for female young adult needs to be developmental and relevant to their socio-cultural factor as well as conceptually meaningful to them. For this purpose Bhagavad Gita may prove helpful. The Gita has stated in chapter 6, Verse 5. 'उद्धरेदात्मनात्मानं' 'Uddhared ātmanātmānam' translated as 'let one raise himself by himself' indicates self-reliance and effort. This means that one has inner resources within and counselling helps to realize it so that they can cope better in life situation and deal with stress more effectively.

Bhagavad Gita as a Psychological and Counselling Resource

Although often seen as a spiritual/philosophical text, there are also profound psychological aspects to the Bhagavad Gita which relate to feelings of emotional conflict and turmoil, self regulation, resilience, acceptance, value-based living, action and change. The text starts with a distraught, overwhelmed and confused Arjuna, experiencing fear and despair, helplessness and moral dilemma. Krishna can be thought of as encouraging a

psychological shift in Arjuna, away from emotional unconciousness and chaos, to being more obvious, a clear-headed, self-changing warrior.

Some authors have found the Bhagavad Gita relevant for counselling psychology and mental health. Gupta and Sharma (2026) have published on the counselling principles of Gita, which include focus on self-control, disciplined observation, balanced decision making. Kumari (2025) explains its usefulness in Mahabharata along the lines of verbal principle and Anxiety. Pandey (2026) has described it as a handbook of psychological resilience. Pardhe (2025) has focused on its existing application in modern mental therapy. In a psychological context, Yadav et al. (2026) have described its framework for self-realisation, mental health and universal human development.

The following teaching of the Gita is central to the teaching of the Gita: chapter 2 verse 47: ‘कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन’ ‘Karmany evādhikāras te mā phaleṣu kadācana (you have the right to action, but not to the fruits of action)’ From a psychological standpoint, this teaching is highly relevant to counselling, as many challenges stem from excessive focus on outcomes, fear of failure, fear of success, and reliance on external approval. This concept is especially pertinent to female young people in relation to academic work, career, family, relationships and social comparison.

Another essential phrase is Chapter 2, Verse 48: ‘समत्वं योग उच्यते’ ‘Samatvaṁ yoga ucyate’, which translates as: ‘equanimity is called yoga’. This verse conceptualizes mental balance as a fundamental element of psychological equanimity. In counselling psychology terms, it could be interpreted as being situated within emotional regulation, acceptance, resilience and non reactivity. The Bhagavad Gita offers a culturally relevant psychological resource applicable to counselling young women.

Stīthaprajñā as a Psychological Construct

Stithaprajña is one of the major concept in Bhagavad Gita and is associated with a person of steady wisdom. It is described in Chapter 2, Verse 54 to 72 and presents a picture of person of steady wisdom as elaborated by Krishna. A stithaprajña individual is one who remains unaffected in happiness and sorrow, success and failure, gain and loss, and fluctuation in worldly events. This doesn't indicate a state of unfeeling or non-involvement, but a state of well-regulated emotion, serene awareness, self-command and clear judgment. A notable verse on Stithaprajña is Bhagavad Gita, chapter 2 verse 56 'दुःखेष्वनुद्विग्नमनाः सुखेषु विगतस्पृहः' 'Duḥkheṣv anudvigna-manāḥ sukheṣu vigata-spr̥haḥ', which translates to 'He who is not agitated in distress, and is free from desire in happiness.' This means our capacity to feel emotions but not be taken over by them. It is close to the psychological states of emotional stability, distress tolerance, mindfulness, resilience and flexibility.

Gupta and Sharma (2025) conceptualized Stithaprajña as part of self-regulatory processes of Mindfulness based Stress Reduction and discussed as a construct in the area of counselling psychology in modern times. Kumari (2025) presented Stithaprajña as a state of emotional balance and steadiness that relates to the management of anxiety. Pandey (2026) related Gita based steadiness with resilient and adaptive coping. From the above discussion it appears that Stithaprajña can be interpreted as a psychologically relevant concept rather than only a philosophical.

In the present study, Stithaprajña is conceptually interpreted as an equivalent concept of wisdom. The term wisdom implies cognitive clarity, reflective self-consciousness, emotional maturity, and sound judgment. The Stithaprajña individual demonstrates these qualities of decision-making by having insightful rather than reactive response toward various events. For female young adults, it might be beneficial construct to develop self awareness, to minimize emotional reactivity, to enhance the decision making and to build an inner conviction and fortitude while faced with adverse and confusing events.

Samatvam as Equanimity

Samatvam is the concept of maintaining equilibrium, equanimity and evenly faced approach to life experiences, which represents one of the key psychological principles in Bhagavad Gita. Chapter 2, verse 48 states, ‘समत्वं योग उच्यते’ ‘Samatvam yoga ucyate’ which translates to equanimity is called yoga and it suggests the need to remain internally stable in times of both victory and defeat, pleasure and pain, success and failure and gain and loss. Psychologically, it reflects emotional steadiness, openness to acceptance, minimal emotional response, detachment from outcomes, and resilience in recovering from disappointments.

It is not about staying numb but rather being emotionally grounded and responsive to the circumstances of life, hence relevant to counselling in situations of ambiguity, dissatisfaction, criticism, defeat, failure, discomfort or even excessive good fortune.

The applicability of the Gita concept of Samatva for anxiety management and emotional regulation have been elaborated by Kumari (2025). Pandey (2026) views Samatva as a key psychological resilience resource and discusses the relevance of equanimity for overcoming obstacles and navigating adversities and uncertainties. Pardhe (2025) asserts the mental health benefits of the Gita concept of Samatva by highlighting its implications for balance and equanimity, increasing self-awareness, reducing emotional disturbances in the practice of mental therapy. “सुखदुःखे समे कृत्वा लाभालाभौ जयाजयौ” “Sukha-duḥkhe same kṛtvā lābhālābhau jayājayau” (Chapter 2, Verse 38) which reads “Treat pleasures and pains equally, gain and loss equally, victory and defeat equally” reflects the essence of equanimity on a psychological level.

In the case of young adult females, it would likely help in coping with academic pressure, societal pressures related to comparison with others, relationships, family expectations, or insecurity regarding their futures and could thus be applied as a prophylactic resource to develop resilience and as a therapeutic resource within counselling.

Wisdom

Wisdom, as a multifaceted construct, refers to the capacity of an individual in cognitive, reflective, and affective areas, the capacity of understanding complex life events, reflection on experience, tolerance of ambiguity, management of emotions and responding to a situation with care, kindness and wise decision making. In this study, wisdom is related to stithaprajña, on account that they share some qualities, namely: clearness, maturity, contemplative attitude, and constancy of mind, clarity, maturity, a balanced attitude of mind.

The cognitive wisdom includes insightful understanding, clarity and awareness of the life situations that affect the life of the person, and their understanding about the complex issues related to their life circumstances. The reflective wisdom means the capacity for self-observation, putting ourselves in other's shoes or taking a more detached and detached perspective and to view issues from several perspectives. The affective dimension is defined by its capacity to feel compassion, care, interest, concern, sympathy towards others. The application of wisdom in counselling is also justified, as it describes how individuals develop personal resources and grow during different life stages.

According to Bhagavad Gita, a wise person is not influenced by emotions of both joy and sorrow, and he should not get carried away by the ups and downs of life. It states that 'प्रजहात यदा कामान्सवामन्यार्म मनोगतान्' 'prajahāti yadā kāmān sarvān pārtha mano-gatān', a man who has completely given up all desires originating in his mind, has been described as a man of stable wisdom" (Gita Chapter 2, Verse 55). This is consistent with the definition of wisdom as a stable psychological capacity to avoid impulse and extreme mental states. Wisdom is applicable to counselling among female young adults in as far as it promotes optimal decision-making, fosters emotional insight, encourage self-reflection and helps them respond adaptively to developmental tasks. Young adult life is characterized by decision-

making related to careers, education, relationships, identities and so forth, wisdom can thus contribute significantly to growth and well being in this life phase.

Equanimity

Equanimity is defined as mental balance and emotional equanimity in all the fluctuations of life. The concept comprises clear observation, non-resistance, acceptance, and a decrease in emotional disturbance. It should not be confused with denying our emotion, acting in a cool manner, and being emotionally unavailable.

However, equanimity includes experiencing emotion without having emotion manage us. Equanimity is conceptualized as similar to samatvam in this research. This construct includes being balanced and equanimous in pleasure and pains. As there is no attachment to pleasant experience and anger toward an unpleasant experience in one's own mind in this research, we relate the two constructs together. Equanimity in counselling has gained interest because of its relationship with emotion regulation, stress management, acceptance-based coping styles, and mental health.

Equanimity seems an important aspect of self-control, acceptance of reality, emotional regulation, and resilience in this life according to Bhagavad Gita. Chapter 12, Verses 13–14 portray as dear to God as follows: he who is not vexed by the world and who is not himself vexed by the world, who is freed from elation, and is not pained at grief, who is devoid of passion and the like, equanimous (samatvā' anapekṣaṁ, "equal minded, unconcerned"), forgiving (kṣamavān), contented (santuṣṭavān), self-controlled (saṁyatamindriya), and whose mind is engaged in devotion to Me." The list contains important constructs of compassion, equanimity, acceptance, and emotional control that have much relevance in the field of modern psychology. Equanimity is a crucial trait that can help young women manage and lessen their responses to academic stress, relationship difficulties, peer or societal judgment,

family expectations, or periods of uncertainty. They will also have fewer emotional distress experiences that will enable them to deal with life occurrences calmly.

Perceived Stress

Perceived stress is how much a person perceives his life's events as threatening, overwhelming, unpredictable or even controllable or unpredictable. Perceived stress is the evaluation an individual has concerning a situation, not only with regard to external triggers but also with regard to how they feel about a specific trigger. In a female young adults' perspective perceived stress may emanate from academics, career doubts, parental expectations, worries about relationships, body image issues, social pressure, and identity pressures.

Evidence among student populations reveals that stress, anxiety and depression is common among college-going individuals (Helenpuii & Choudhury, 2024), and also that spiritual counselling helps decrease stress in college going students, pointing out that interventions such as those in relation to spirituality and values help young adults manage such factors (Kaiwart et al., n.d.). In the current study perceived stress is a significant variable because this counselling intervention uses Stithaprajña and Samatvam to aid individuals to control the sense of being emotionally overwhelmed and thus improve coping mechanisms, as this practice may guide them to face and appraise stress inducing situations more realistically with an enhanced capacity to cope effectively, given that even the Bhagavad Gita teaches to self-regulate the mind, and prevent it from straying as stated in chapter 6 verse 26; 'यतो यतो धनश्चरधत मनश्चलमस्थिरम्' 'Yato yato niścarati manaś cañcalam asthiram'. Meaning whenever the restless and unsteady mind wanders away.

Bhagavad Gita-Based Counselling Framework

A counselling framework implies a systematically laid down guidelines of the purpose, approach, intervention methods, process and desired results of counselling. In the

present study, a Bhagavad Gita-based framework is suggested which integrates Stithaprajna and Samatvam to instill qualities such as wisdom, equanimity, self awareness, emotion regulation, resilience, acceptance and self development among the female young adults. Stithaprajna is based on the idea of steady wisdom, awareness, mindfulness, regulation of mental states and deliberate rather than spontaneous behaviour. Samatvam includes balanced outlook, balanced activity, non attachment to the outcome, and staying unmoved in the face of adversities, successes, failures, praise, blame, uncertainties etc.

The purpose is to offer a psychological counselling framework based on select psychological principles from the Bhagavad Gita for young adult women; it is not religious education, but rather psychological advice using a classical Indian approach which is both culturally relevant and applicable in contemporary setting, in line with some recent applications (Gupta & Sharma, 2025; Kumari, 2025; Pandey, 2026; Pardhe, 2025). For example, the adaptation of Ramayan as to structure counselling module is an instance (Kurahde et al., 2025). ‘योगः कर्मसु कौशलम्’ ‘Yogaḥ karmasu kauśalam’ (Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 2, Verse 50), meaning yoga is skillfulness in action implies that one ought to translate wisdom into actual performance and action. It is with this idea that this present framework proposes stithaprajna and samatvam in a practical framework of counselling to facilitate mental wellness and holistic personal development..

Empirical Review

Empirical review comprises of a survey of the studies, where the data regarding the variable is gathered and analysed for research on that variable. Empirical review provides the reader a basis to know, on what ground the researcher is going to do further research; whether there is any kind of similar results found so far on those variables or how does the current research fit into the previous studies done on this field. While, theoretical review describes the theoretical basis of stithaprajña and samatvam in this study; empirical review contains all

studies related to the variables major as well as associated to it. The empirical review used in the present study comprises of the studies on mental health in young adults, Bhagavad Gita related psychological concepts, spiritual counselling, Indian indigenous therapeutic models, Indian psychological constructs, wisdom, equanimity, perceived stress, as well as the combination of these variables in different combinations, to know if the construct used for current study have been supported previously by psychologists and counsellor's research in.

Mental Health and Stress Among Young Adults

Numerous studies have shown that students have psychological problems as a response to academic workload, tests, competition, transition problems, interpersonal difficulties, and the future. Furthermore, female young adults have their sociocultural expectations related to marriage and family, gender roles, personal behavior, dress code and so on. This might also bring about additional difficulties in managing psychological issues.

Helenpuii and Choudhury (2024) investigated depression, anxiety and stress among nursing students of some selected colleges of Eastern India and concluded the findings reflected the level of distress that existing among the student population, emphasizing on the need to promote preventive and palliative care for student population as it pertains to their psychological health care. In view of these considerations, in this present research, focus has been made to the female young adults, because the student of young adult age faces more academic stress as compared to middle-aged adults and in case of female it could be associated with the challenges associated with societal role and responsibility.

Kaiwart et al. (n.d.) had conducted study on 'Impact of spiritual counselling on college going students stress level'. It has been found that spiritual counselling proved helpful in minimizing stress level among the students. This study is supportive to our present study. It is the method in which through spiritual thought, meaning and values, helps young adults

develop better emotional health through counselling, a practice which should be a part of everyday living of these young adults and culturally acceptable to them too.

Bhagavad Gita-Based Psychological Concepts

A few of the latest works dealt with psychological importance of the Bhagavad Gita regarding mental health, counselling, resilience, anxiety management, holistic human development and so forth. Gupta & Sharma (2025) researched on the ethical aspects of the Bhagavad Gita and its psychological correlates in counselling practice; that included self regulation, value based judgment and emotional equilibrium of individual. Such studies of theirs would be beneficial here.

The study on “Anxiety management through Bhagavad Gita Teachings and Indian knowledge system” conducted by Kumari (2025), included samatva, buddhi yoga, nishkama karma and stithaprajña and their parallels with CBT, mindfulness and stress management practices. It has high relevance for this research because the concepts have connection with psychological interventions that will be discussed in the upcoming section.

The “Bhagavad Gita: a framework for psychological resilience in the contemporary world” of Pandey (2026), addressed samatva, nishkama karma, meditation etc as important for coping with uncertainty and adversities. Similarly, Pardhe (2025) mentioned the present significance of Bhagavad Gita in present day mental therapy practices and highlighted how Gita could possibly help in managing stress, psychological health and balancing the emotions. Even Yadav et al. (2026) highlighted integration of Bhagavad Gita’s concepts with modern psychological thinking, self actualization, mental health, and total human well being. Although the studies reviewed have pointed out the psychological relevance of the Bhagavad Gita, but most of them have not specified, structured any of the counselling intervention on the specific concepts of stithaprajña and samatvam among young females.

Spiritual Counselling and Indigenous Therapeutic Models

The present study is important because both spiritual counselling and indigenous therapeutic models have already highlighted the possibility of implementing culture-specific approaches meaningfully within counselling and mental health practice. Spiritual counselling has been proven to effectively reduce the levels of stress of college-going students by Kaiwart et al. (n.d.). This could indicate that therapeutic interventions based on spirituality and value principles could also promote emotional health in adolescents and young adults. The development of an Indian epic literature-based therapeutic intervention is an even more interesting development.

Kurhade et al. (2025) designed a counselling module based on the Ramayana for patients experiencing common mental health disorders. It provides an example that one can translate an Indian epic literature into a systematic counselling intervention. The finding proves that cultural concepts from the Indian context could serve the purpose of therapy. Therefore, just as a Ramayana-based counselling module has been found effective for mental health purposes, the current study explores how a Bhagavad Gita-based counselling approach to mental health is viable and useful. The present study uses the precedent set by these findings in proposing and developing an integrated Bhagavad Gita based counselling model by incorporating stithaprajña and samatvam.

Indian Psychological Constructs

Previous research within Indian psychology has revealed that classical Indian-based Sanskrit constructs can be tested empirically and are associated with present-day psychological processes. Gupta and Agrawal (2022) explored how the effects of Anāsakti (non-attachment) and Ahamkara (ego-identification) influenced the well-being of Indians. It was revealed that the use of non-attachment in relation to the present has a positive relationship with well-being and has an inverse relationship with mental distress; whereas

ego-identification has a positive association with psychological distress, conflict of emotions, insecurity, and a strong desire to attach to ones ego and ones outcome.

This is relevant due to the importance of the ego-based tendencies to be minimized in order to be classified as having stithaprajña and samatvam. It should also be considered that both samatvam and stithaprajña would be based on attachment to an outcome which, as highlighted above by Gupta and Agrawal, have negative consequences in terms of well-being. In Chapter 3, Verse 19 of the Gita, the principles of non-attachment were stated as:

‘तस्मादसक्तुः सततं कार्यं कर्म समाचर’ ‘Tasmād asaktaḥ satataṁ kāryaṁ karma samācara’

translated as ‘therefore, without attachment, continuously do what must be done’. In terms of practice, it has been considered that a therapist or an individual may be more capable of engaging in meaningful actions without attachment to the outcome of the behavior itself.

Bhargav et al. (2023) assessed a set of yoga-philosophy based psychological characteristics or ‘Gunas’ across the major psychiatric disorders on a transdiagnostic approach. This research demonstrated the ability to research and empirically validate indigenous psychological models and also showed how Sanskrit-based conceptualisations can be translated into psychological measurable constructs. It also illustrates that indigenous psychology constructs can be meaningfully researched in mental health research.

Overall, these findings add weight to the theoretical and empirical ground work for this study, showing that indigenous Indian psychological principles can be explored in mainstream psychology and are applicable in demonstrating the potential for Stithaprajña and Samatvam to be meaningful constructs in counselling research.

Wisdom, Equanimity, and Perceived Stress

This current research the most psychological constructs which we have taken are wisdom, equanimity, and perceived stress. Wisdom has been known as the reflective thought, emotional intelligence, taking a broader view, caring, impartiality. Equanimity has been

defined with terms such as acceptance, non-reactivity, emotional balanced state, coping strategies with the stress, flexibility. The perceived stress is an individual's perception that their life is uncontrollable, stressful and unpredictable.

Review of relevant studies has indicated that the Bhagvad Gita concepts such as stithaprajña, samatvam, nishkama karma and non-attachment can be linked with psychological constructs that are taken into this study. The Bhagvad Gita concept stithaprajña has been described as a state of steady understanding, making an wise decision and having a broad point of view so it may have a link with wisdom. Similarly samatvam the concept described as a state of balance, levelness and acceptance can be connected with the equanimity construct. Both, concepts stithaprajña and samatvam can contribute to an individual in coping the stress due to the transformation of individual's way of seeing their situation and the response towards adverse life circumstances. Many studies supports the connection of Gita teaching and psychology such as Kumari (2025), Pandey (2026), who suggested that Gita's teachings have ability to reduce Anxiety, enhances resilience, and help in regulating the emotions. Gupta & Agrawal (2022) has shown a positive relation between non attachment and psychological well-being.

Studies Linking Stithaprajña and Samatvam

The independent variables being used in this study are related to one another via theoretical perspective, and to other research existing in the domain via empirical perspective. Stithaprajña correlated with conceptual definition of wisdom, reflection awareness, emotional regulation, psychological maturity. While samatvam correlated with non-reactivity, acceptance, non-attachment, emotional equilibrium.

Both these constructs are hypothesized to decrease perceived stress when dealing with different stressors in the context of an attitude of awareness, acceptance and a firm stance in the face of adversity.

Several research articles have offered empirical support for such correlations; (Kumari, 2025) suggested using the Gita teaching on mindfulness and the cognitive restructuring approach to help people to deal with their anxiety, (Pandey, 2026) discussed the Gita teaching of detachment and its relation to resilient and mental well-being, (Gupta and Sharma, 2025) have a research on relation between stithaprajna and counselling psychologists and the various self-regulation approach, (Gupta and Agrawal, 2022) discussed ego identification related with negative well-being and non-attachment related with well-being, (Kaiwart et al., n.d) discussed how spiritual counselling helps to relieve stress among college students, and (Kurhade et al., 2025) prepared counselling module from Indian epic for addressing psychological problems of college students. Hence all these previous findings imply that this is an approach to integrate the both concepts in counselling in young women will help to promote wisdom, equanimity and thus to lower their perceived stress. However, not much research was done on the practical approach of this integrated counselling intervention on young women, and hence, present study tries to use these concepts as framework for counselling intervention for young women.

Research Gap

From literature review we observe a growing emphasis on the psychological relevance of Bhagavad Gita, Indian philosophical thoughts, spiritual counselling, indigenous models of therapy and the student mental health. However the literature available remains fragmented and compartmentalized in terms of themes and topics. Many of the existing studies predominantly focus on one of the given aspects alone, in conjunction to managing anxiety, improving resilience, in terms of karma yoga, spirituality, detachment, ethical concerns in counselling, indigenous personality dimensions (Gupta & Agrawal, 2022; Gupta & Sharma, 2025; Kumari, 2025; Pandey, 2026; Pardhe, 2025). These findings are worth acknowledging.

Nevertheless, in the contemporary field of counselling, both Stithaprajña and Samatvam have not been adequately used as holistic and a comprehensive conceptual model. Hence counselling models are dearth with Stithaprajña and Samatvam as there exist no counselling model based on Stithaprajña and Samatvam with significant psychological implications being mentioned as concepts but not integrated in terms of therapy framework in counselling practice. There are also scarce studies which explore the specific psychological constructs of female young adults. The transition into womanhood comprises challenges socio, psychological, physical and cultural as well.

Very few researchers have made any efforts to research on how the counselling model on the lines of Bhagavad Gita can bring impact to the wisdom, equanimity and perception of stress on participants.

Many researchers reported that the constructs like attachment, spiritual counselling, resilience, mindfulness, equanimity etc contribute significantly towards the betterment and stress management of an individual (Gupta & Agrawal, 2022; Kaiwart et al., n.d.; Kumari, 2025; Pandey, 2026) yet the research, using stithaprajña and samatvam as underlying framework for a direct intervention-based study is missing. To cover up this gap is the rationale behind this present study. Accordingly the present research intends to construct and assess the Bhagavad Gita based counselling model in stithaprajña and samatvam framework on female young adults.

Relevance of the Study

This current research is important in the sense that it tries to integrate Indian traditional knowledge and modern counselling psychology and comes up with culturally appropriate counselling framework which is based on stithaprajña and samatvam for cultivating the psychological properties like wisdom, equanimity, self-control, resilience and low perceived stress among young adult females. Indian psychology It has been established

through research studies like those focusing on anāsakti, ahamkara, gunas etc., that concepts of Indian psychology could be studied using contemporary psychometric techniques and correlated with various mental health and well-being related factors (Bhargav et al., 2023; Gupta & Agrawal, 2022). Thus, the current research endeavor will focus on examining the counselling relevant psychological characteristics of stithaprajña and samatvam.

The counselling intervention, which is culture-based, has the ability to be used as a guide in the process of young adults helping female youngsters deal with life stresses, life's unpredictability, their own emotions and further enhance personal growth in their life. In the current venture, the rationale for the current study draws from the philosophical premises put forward in the Gita in reference to steadfastness of wisdom and equanimity of mind (e.g. “समत्वं योग उच्यते Samatvam yoga ucyate (Ch 2, Vs 48)”, “दुःखेष्वनुद्विग्नमनाः सुखेषु विगतस्पृहः Duḥkheṣv anudvigna-manāḥ sukheṣu vigata-spr̥haḥ (Ch 2, Vs 56)” etc). Therefore, the present study aims to develop a culturally-oriented counselling intervention based on stithaprajña and samatvam. Overall, the study will make a meaningful contribution to counselling psychology, Indian psychology, and young adult mental health. A psychological relevant, culture-congruent model of helping young adult females move towards steadiness and equanimity is a possibility this study aims to explore.

Chapter III

Method

This chapter presents the methodological framework adopted for the present intervention study. It outlines the aim, objectives, hypotheses, variables, and operational definitions of the study. The chapter further describes the research design, participants, population, sample, sampling technique, inclusion and exclusion criteria, and instruments used for data collection. Since the present study is an intervention-based research, the chapter also explains the structure of the Bhagavad Gita–based counselling intervention, the data collection procedure, and the statistical techniques used for analysing the pre-test and post-test data.

Aim of the Study

The aim of the present study is to develop and evaluate the effectiveness of a Bhagavad Gita–based counselling intervention integrating the concepts of stithaprajña and samatvam in enhancing wisdom and equanimity and reducing perceived stress among female young adults.

Objectives of the Study

General Objective

To evaluate the effectiveness of a Bhagavad Gita-based counselling intervention emphasizing the principles of sthitaprajña and samatvam in enhancing wisdom and equanimity among female young adults.

Specific Objectives

1. To develop a structured counselling intervention module based on the Bhagavad Gita concepts of sthitaprajña and samatvam for female young adults.
2. To identify female young adults experiencing higher levels of perceived stress using the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS).

3. To implement the Bhagavad Gita-based counselling intervention among female young adults over a six-week period individually.
4. To assess the levels of wisdom among participants before and after the intervention.
5. To assess the levels of equanimity among participants before and after the intervention.
6. To assess the levels of perceived stress among participants before and after the intervention.
7. To evaluate the effectiveness of the Bhagavad Gita-based counselling intervention in enhancing wisdom among female young adults.
8. To evaluate the effectiveness of the Bhagavad Gita-based counselling intervention in enhancing equanimity among female young adults.
9. To evaluate the effectiveness of the Bhagavad Gita-based counselling intervention in reducing perceived stress among female young adults.
10. To describe participants' subjective experiences of the intervention (qualitative feedback).

Variables of the Study

The present study consists of one independent variable and three dependent variables.

Independent Variable

The independent variable in the present study is the Bhagavad Gita-based counselling intervention. This intervention was developed by integrating the concepts of stithaprajña and samatvam with evidence-based psychological techniques such as cognitive restructuring, self-distanced reflection, values clarification, mindfulness-based emotional observation, cognitive

reappraisal, and self-compassion practice. The intervention consisted of six structured activities delivered over six sessions.

Dependent Variables

The dependent variables in the present study are wisdom, equanimity, and perceived stress.

Wisdom is considered in relation to the concept of stithaprajña. In this study, wisdom refers to clarity of thought, reflective awareness, discernment, and the ability to respond to life situations with balance and insight.

Equanimity is considered in relation to the concept of samatvam. In this study, equanimity refers to emotional balance, acceptance, and non-reactivity in favourable and unfavourable circumstances.

Perceived stress refers to the degree to which individuals appraise life situations as stressful, unpredictable, uncontrollable, and overwhelming. In the present study, perceived stress was used both as a screening criterion and as an outcome variable to assess the effect of the intervention.

Operational Definitions of Variables

Stithaprajña/ Wisdom

In this study, stithaprajña refers to a state of stable wisdom characterized by clarity of thought, discernment, and the ability to remain unaffected by external fluctuations of pleasure and pain. It denotes a balanced and insightful approach to life situations. Operationally, wisdom is assessed using the Three-Dimensional Wisdom Scale–12 Item Version.

Samatvam/ Equanimity

In this study, samatvam is defined as emotional balance and composure, reflected in the ability to maintain calmness, acceptance, and non-reactivity in both favourable and unfavourable circumstances. It represents an inner steadiness in facing life's challenges. Operationally, equanimity is assessed using the Equanimity Scale–16.

Perceived Stress

Perceived stress refers to the extent to which an individual perceives situations in life as unpredictable, uncontrollable, and overloaded. In the present study, perceived stress is operationally assessed using the Perceived Stress Scale–10.

Hypotheses of the Study

H₀₁: There is no significant difference in wisdom scores between the pre-test and post-test among female young adults who participated in the Bhagavad Gita-based counselling intervention.

H₀₂: There is no significant difference in equanimity scores between the pre-test and post-test among female young adults who participated in the Bhagavad Gita-based counselling intervention.

H₀₃: There is no significant difference in perceived stress scores between the pre-test and post-test among female young adults who participated in the Bhagavad Gita-based counselling intervention.

Research Design

The present study follows a quasi experimental research design using a one-group pre-test post-test design. This design was selected as the study aimed to evaluate the effectiveness of a structured Bhagavad Gita-based counselling intervention by comparing participants' scores before and after the intervention.

In this design, the same group of participants was assessed before the intervention, exposed to the intervention, and then reassessed after completion of the intervention. The pre-test scores served as the baseline measure, while the post-test scores were used to examine the changes that occurred following the intervention. The symbolic representation of the design is: O1 – X – O2

Where, O1 represents the pre-test assessment, X represents the Bhagavad Gita–based counselling intervention, and O2 represents the post-test assessment.

This design is suitable for exploratory intervention studies where the aim is to examine whether a structured program produces measurable changes in selected psychological variables.

Participants

Population

The population of the study consists of young adults. For the present study, young adults refer to individuals in the age range of 18 to 26 years who are in the phase of transition marked by academic, emotional, social, and personal growth-related challenges.

Sample

The sample consisted of 20 female young adults aged between 22 and 24 years. Participants were selected based on their willingness to participate and their fulfilment of the inclusion criteria. Only participants who obtained moderate to high perceived stress scores during the screening phase were included in the intervention.

Sampling Technique

The sampling technique used in the present study was criterion-based purposive sampling. This method was adopted because participants were selected based on specific criteria relevant to the study. The Perceived Stress Scale–10 developed by Cohen et al. (1983)

was used as a screening tool to identify participants with moderate to high levels of perceived stress. Those who met the required criteria and provided informed consent were included in the study.

Inclusion Criteria

Participants were included in the study if they met the following criteria:

1. Female young adults aged between 18 and 26 years.
2. Participants who obtained moderate to high scores on the Perceived Stress Scale–10 during screening.
3. Participants who were willing to attend all six intervention sessions.
4. Participants who provided informed consent.
5. Participants who were able to understand and respond to the questionnaires.

Exclusion Criteria

Participants were excluded from the study if they met any of the following criteria:

1. Participants who were below or above the specified age range.
2. Participants who were currently undergoing psychological or psychiatric treatment for severe mental health concerns.
3. Participants who were unable to attend the intervention sessions regularly.
4. Participants who did not provide informed consent.
5. Participants who were unwilling to complete the pre-test or post-test assessment.

Instruments Used in the Study

The instruments used in the present study were the Perceived Stress Scale–10, the Three-Dimensional Wisdom Scale (3D-WS), and the Equanimity Scale–16. In addition, informed consent and socio-demographic details were collected from the participants.

Perceived Stress Scale–10

The Perceived Stress Scale–10 is a self-report measure used to assess the degree to which individuals perceive situations in their lives as stressful. The original Perceived Stress Scale was developed by Cohen, Kamarck, and Mermelstein in 1983. The 10-item version is widely used in psychological research to assess perceived stress during the previous month. In the present study, the PSS-10 was used both as a screening tool and as an outcome measure to assess changes in perceived stress following the intervention.

The PSS-10 consists of 10 items rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 0 to 4. The response options are usually scored as 0 = Never, 1 = Almost Never, 2 = Sometimes, 3 = Fairly Often, and 4 = Very Often. The scale includes both positively and negatively worded items. It assesses the extent to which participants perceive their life situations as unpredictable, uncontrollable, and overloaded.

The tool can be administered individually or in groups. It is a brief self-report measure and usually takes approximately 5 to 10 minutes to complete. Participants are instructed to respond based on their thoughts and feelings during the last one month. They are asked to choose the response option that best describes how often they experienced each statement.

Scoring is done by summing the responses across the 10 items after reverse scoring the positively worded items. Items 4, 5, 7, and 8 are reverse scored. The total score ranges from 0 to 40, with higher scores indicating higher levels of perceived stress. The scores may

be interpreted as low, moderate, or high perceived stress based on established cut-off ranges or the criteria adopted by the researcher.

The PSS-10 has demonstrated adequate psychometric properties across different populations. Research has reported good internal consistency and acceptable test-retest reliability. The scale also shows evidence of validity through its association with related constructs such as anxiety, depression, and psychological distress. Therefore, it was considered suitable for screening and assessing perceived stress among young adults in the present study.

Three-Dimensional Wisdom Scale (3D-WS)

The Three-Dimensional Wisdom Scale (3D-WS) was developed by Monika Ardelt in 2003 to assess wisdom as a multidimensional construct. The scale is based on the Three-Dimensional Wisdom Model, which conceptualizes wisdom through three interrelated dimensions: cognitive, reflective, and affective. In the present study, the scale was used to assess the level of wisdom among young adults before and after the Bhagavad Gita–based counselling intervention.

The 3D-WS consists of 39 items. The cognitive dimension includes 14 items and assesses the individual's ability to understand life deeply, recognize uncertainty, and view reality without distortion. The reflective dimension consists of 12 items and measures self-awareness, perspective-taking, and the ability to view situations from multiple viewpoints. The affective dimension consists of 13 items and assesses empathy, compassion, and concern for others.

The scale is administered as a self-report questionnaire and can be given individually or in groups. Participants are instructed to read each statement carefully and indicate the extent to which it applies to them. The administration usually takes approximately 10 to 15

minutes. Since the tool measures personal attitudes and tendencies, participants are encouraged to respond honestly and avoid overthinking their answers.

Scoring of the 3D-WS is carried out according to the scoring instructions provided by the author. Relevant items are reverse scored before computing the scores. Scores may be obtained separately for the cognitive, reflective, and affective dimensions. A total wisdom score can also be derived by combining the scores across the three dimensions. Higher scores indicate higher levels of wisdom.

The 3D-WS has demonstrated good psychometric properties in previous research. Ardel reported adequate internal consistency for the three dimensions of the scale, with Cronbach's alpha values ranging from .71 to .85. The scale has also shown evidence of validity, as it was developed and validated to measure wisdom as a latent construct comprising cognitive, reflective, and affective components. Therefore, the 3D-WS was considered appropriate for assessing wisdom in the present study.

Equanimity Scale–16

The Equanimity Scale–16 was developed by Rogers, Shires, and Cayoun in 2021 to assess equanimity as a non-reactive and accepting attitude toward thoughts, feelings, and experiences. The scale was developed in response to the need for a psychometrically sound self-report measure of equanimity, particularly in the context of mindfulness-based interventions and emotional regulation research.

The ES-16 consists of 16 items and has two subscales: Experiential Acceptance and Non-Reactivity. Experiential Acceptance refers to the ability to accept internal experiences such as thoughts, feelings, and bodily sensations without resistance or avoidance. Non-Reactivity refers to the ability to experience thoughts and emotions without reacting

impulsively or becoming attached to them. These dimensions are closely related to the concept of samatvam in the present study.

The ES-16 is administered as a self-report questionnaire and may be given individually or in groups. It usually takes approximately 3 to 5 minutes to complete. Participants are instructed to select the response that best describes how they view themselves at the present moment. The response format is a five-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree.

Scoring involves calculating a total equanimity score along with subscale scores for Experiential Acceptance and Non-Reactivity. Items 1 to 8 represent Experiential Acceptance and items 9 to 16 represent Non-Reactivity. Higher scores indicate higher levels of equanimity, suggesting greater acceptance and reduced emotional reactivity.

The ES-16 has demonstrated good psychometric properties. Previous research has reported good internal consistency, test-retest reliability, and evidence of convergent and divergent validity. The scale has shown positive associations with related constructs such as non-attachment and distress tolerance, and negative associations with psychological distress. Therefore, the ES-16 was considered appropriate for measuring equanimity among young adults in the present study.

Intervention Module

The intervention module for the present study was developed by integrating the Bhagavad Gita concepts of stithaprajña and samatvam with evidence-based psychological techniques. The module consisted of six structured individual counselling sessions, with three activities designed to enhance stithaprajña and three activities designed to cultivate samatvam. Each activity was linked to a relevant Bhagavad Gita phrase and was supported by an empirically grounded psychological approach.

The activities related to stithaprajña focused on the development of stable wisdom through cognitive clarity, reflective awareness, and value-based decision-making. The first activity, The Viveka Lens, used cognitive restructuring to help participants identify distorted thoughts and replace them with more balanced interpretations. This activity was based on the principles of Cognitive Behaviour Therapy proposed by Beck (1976). The second activity, The Witness Within, used self-distanced reflection, encouraging participants to reflect on stressful experiences from a third-person perspective. This was based on the work of Kross and Ayduk (2011), who emphasized the role of self-distancing in reducing emotional reactivity and rumination. The third activity, Dharma Compass, focused on values clarification, where participants identified core personal values and committed to a value-based action. This activity was grounded in Acceptance and Commitment Therapy, particularly the work of Hayes et al. (2006).

The activities related to samatvam focused on emotional balance, non-reactivity, cognitive flexibility, and self-compassion. The fourth activity, Emotional Waves Practice, used mindfulness-based observation to help participants mindfully observe emotions as temporary experiences without reacting impulsively to them. This activity was supported by mindfulness-based approaches developed by Kabat-Zinn (1990) and further supported by Baer (2003). The fifth activity, Reframing the Battlefield, involved cognitive reappraisal, where participants generated alternative interpretations of challenging situations in order to regulate emotional responses. This activity was based on Gross's (1998) model of emotion regulation. The sixth activity, Compassionate Equanimity Pause, used self-compassion practice to help participants respond to difficult emotions with mindfulness, self-kindness, and acceptance, drawing from Neff's (2003) work on self-compassion.

The intervention was conducted over six individual sessions. Each session included a brief introduction to the selected Bhagavad Gita concept, explanation of the relevant verse, a

structured psychological activity, participant reflection, and homework practice. The individual format allowed the researcher to facilitate each activity according to the participant's pace, comfort, and personal experiences. Overall, the module was designed to help participants apply culturally relevant philosophical ideas through structured counselling-based exercises, thereby promoting wisdom, equanimity, emotional regulation, and personal growth among young adults.

The detailed intervention module, including the session-wise activities, scripts, Gita verses, participant instructions, reflection questions, and homework tasks, is provided in Appendix B.

Data Collection Procedure

The data collection process was carried out in three phases: pre-intervention phase, intervention phase, and post-intervention phase.

During the pre-intervention phase, participants were briefed about the purpose and nature of the study. Informed consent was collected from those who were willing to participate. The Perceived Stress Scale–10 was administered as a screening tool. Participants who scored within the moderate to high perceived stress range and fulfilled the inclusion criteria were selected for the study. The selected participants then completed the pre-test measures, including the PSS-10, 3D-WS, and ES-16.

During the intervention phase, participants attended the six-session Bhagavad Gita–based counselling intervention. Each session focused on one structured activity related to either stithaprajña or samatvam. Participants were encouraged to engage in reflection, complete worksheets, and practice the assigned homework activities between sessions.

During the post-intervention phase, the same instruments were administered again to assess changes in wisdom, equanimity, and perceived stress. The post-test scores were compared with the pre-test scores to evaluate the effectiveness of the intervention.

Data Analysis

The collected data were analysed using appropriate statistical techniques. Descriptive statistics such as mean, standard deviation, frequency, and percentage were used to describe the demographic characteristics and baseline scores of the participants.

The normality of the data was assessed before selecting the inferential statistical test. Since the study involved comparison of pre-test and post-test scores from the same group of participants, a paired-samples t-test was used to examine whether there were significant differences in wisdom, equanimity, and perceived stress after the intervention. If the data had not meet the assumption of normality, the Wilcoxon signed-rank test would have been considered as a non-parametric alternative.

The level of significance was set at 0.05. Effect size was also calculated to understand the magnitude of change produced by the intervention. The results were interpreted in relation to the objectives and hypotheses of the study.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical principles were followed throughout the study. Participants were informed about the aim, procedure, duration, and voluntary nature of the study. Written informed consent was obtained before participation. Participants were assured that their responses would be kept confidential and used only for academic and research purposes. They were also informed that they could withdraw from the study at any time without any negative consequences.

Care was taken to ensure that the intervention was presented in a culturally sensitive and psychologically appropriate manner. The Bhagavad Gita was used as a philosophical and counselling framework rather than as a religious instruction. Participants were not forced to share personal experiences and were allowed to skip any activity or question if they felt uncomfortable.

Chapter IV

Results and Discussions

This chapter presents the results and discussion of the study, which aimed to examine the effectiveness of a Bhagavad Gita-based counselling framework integrating stithaprajña and samatvam among female young adults. The chapter includes the statistical analysis of pre-test and post-test scores on wisdom, equanimity, and perceived stress. The quantitative findings are supported by the researcher's observations and participant feedback collected before, during, and after the intervention. The results are presented in tables followed by interpretation and discussion in relation to the objectives, hypotheses, theoretical framework, and existing literature.

Results and Interpretation

Table 4.1 Descriptive Statistics of the Study Variables with their Dimensions (N=20)

Variables with Dimensions	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Perceived Stress Pre	20	17	32	25.40	4.198
Perceived Stress Post	20	12	23	16.60	3.267
Equanimity Experiential Acceptance Pre	20	17	27	21.05	2.743
Equanimity Experiential Acceptance Post	20	29	36	31.70	1.867
Equanimity Non-Reactivity Pre	20	16	25	20.00	2.656
Equanimity Non-Reactivity Post	20	32	38	34.45	2.012
Wisdom Cognitive Dimension Pre	20	36	46	41.10	2.827
Wisdom Cognitive Dimension Post	20	45	59	51.75	3.537
Wisdom Affective Dimension Pre	20	36	43	39.15	1.725
Wisdom Affective Dimension Post	20	46	54	48.85	2.059
Wisdom Reflective Dimension Pre	20	32	39	36.00	1.864
Wisdom Reflective Dimension Post	20	41	49	45.35	2.059

Table 4.1 presents the descriptive statistics of the study variables and their dimensions before and after the Bhagavad Gita-based counselling intervention. The table includes the minimum, maximum, mean, and standard deviation scores for perceived stress, equanimity, and wisdom among the participants.

The descriptive statistics indicate a decrease in perceived stress from pre-test to post-test. The mean score of perceived stress decreased from 25.40 in the pre-test to 16.60 in the post-test. This suggests that the participants experienced lower levels of perceived stress after the intervention. The minimum score decreased from 17 to 12, and the maximum score decreased from 32 to 23, indicating an overall reduction in perceived stress levels among the participants.

The results also show an increase in both dimensions of equanimity. The mean score of experiential acceptance increased from 21.05 in the pre-test to 31.70 in the post-test. Similarly, the mean score of non-reactivity increased from 20.00 in the pre-test to 34.45 in the post-test. These findings indicate that participants showed improvement in acceptance of experiences and reduction in emotional reactivity after the intervention. The increase in equanimity scores suggests that the counselling framework may have helped participants respond to situations with greater calmness, acceptance, and emotional balance.

The table further indicates improvement in all three dimensions of wisdom. The mean score of the cognitive dimension increased from 41.10 in the pre-test to 51.75 in the post-test. The affective dimension increased from 39.15 to 48.85, and the reflective dimension increased from 36.00 to 45.35. These increases suggest that participants showed improvement in cognitive clarity, emotional maturity, compassionate understanding, self-reflection, and perspective-taking after the intervention.

Overall, the descriptive statistics show a positive change in the expected direction. Perceived stress decreased after the intervention, while equanimity and wisdom increased

across all their dimensions. This suggests that the Bhagavad Gita-based counselling intervention integrating stithaprajña and samatvam may have contributed to improved psychological wellbeing among female young adults.

Table 4.2 Shapiro–Wilk Test of Normality for Pre-Test Variables

	Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.
Perceived Stress	.952	20	.395
Equanimity Experiential Acceptance	.949	20	.352
Equanimity Non-Reactivity	.939	20	.225
Wisdom Cognitive Dimension	.960	20	.539
Wisdom Reflective Dimension	.941	20	.253
Wisdom Affective Dimension	.944	20	.285

Note: N=20. The assumption of normality was assessed using the Shapiro Wilk Test

Table 4.2 presents the Shapiro-Wilk test of normality for the pre-test variables. The Shapiro-Wilk test was used because the sample size of the study was small, with 20 participants. The results show that the significance values for all the pre-test variables were greater than .05. The significance value for perceived stress was .395, equanimity experiential acceptance was .352, equanimity non-reactivity was .225, wisdom cognitive dimension was .539, wisdom reflective dimension was .253, and wisdom affective dimension was .285. Since all the significance values were above the .05 level, the data did not significantly deviate from normality. Therefore, the pre-test scores of perceived stress, equanimity, and wisdom dimensions were found to be normally distributed. This indicates that the assumption of normality was satisfied for the pre-test variables.

Table 4.3 Shapiro–Wilk Test of Normality for Post-Test Variables

	Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.
Perceived Stress	.942	20	.261
Equanimity Experiential Acceptance	.938	20	.219
Equanimity Non-Reactivity	.906	20	.052
Wisdom Cognitive Dimension	.970	20	.755
Wisdom Reflective Dimension	.964	20	.620
Wisdom Affective Dimension	.939	20	.225

Note: N=20. The assumption of normality was assessed using the Shapiro Wilk Test

Table 4.3 presents the Shapiro-Wilk test of normality for the post-test variables. The test was used to examine whether the post-test scores of perceived stress, equanimity, and wisdom dimensions followed a normal distribution. The results show that the significance values for all post-test variables were greater than .05. The significance value for perceived stress was .261, equanimity experiential acceptance was .219, equanimity non-reactivity was .052, wisdom cognitive dimension was .755, wisdom reflective dimension was .620, and wisdom affective dimension was .225.

Since all the significance values were above the .05 level, the post-test scores did not significantly deviate from normality. Therefore, the post-test scores of perceived stress, equanimity experiential acceptance, equanimity non-reactivity, wisdom cognitive dimension, wisdom reflective dimension, and wisdom affective dimension were found to be normally distributed. Although the significance value for equanimity non-reactivity was close to .05, it was still above the required level; therefore, it was considered normally distributed.

The normality results for the post-test variables indicate that the data satisfied the assumption of normality. Along with the pre-test normality results presented in Table 4.2, the

findings show that both pre-test and post-test scores were normally distributed across the study variables. Since the normality assumption was satisfied, a parametric test was considered appropriate for further analysis.

As the present study involved comparing the scores of the same participants before and after the intervention, the paired-samples *t*-test was selected to examine whether there was a statistically significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores. Therefore, the paired-samples *t*-test was used to assess the effect of the Bhagavad Gita-based counselling intervention on perceived stress, equanimity, and wisdom among female young adults.

Table 4.4 Paired Samples *t*-Test Results for Perceived Stress, Equanimity Dimensions and Wisdom Dimensions (N=20)

Variables with Dimensions	Mean Difference	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Perceived Stress	8.800	17.400	19	.000
Equanimity Experiential Acceptance	-10.650	-31.104	19	.000
Equanimity Non-Reactivity	-14.450	-31.308	19	.000
Wisdom Cognitive Dimension	-10.650	-26.680	19	.000
Wisdom Reflective Dimension	-9.350	-29.356	19	.000
Wisdom Affective Dimension	-9.700	-33.322	19	.000

Note: N = 20. df- Degrees of Freedom. Mean difference was calculated as pre-test score minus post-test score. A negative mean difference indicates an increase in the post-test score, whereas a positive mean difference indicates a decrease in the post-test score. Statistical significance was set at $p < 0.05$

Table 4.4 presents the paired-samples *t*-test results for perceived stress, equanimity dimensions, and wisdom dimensions before and after the Bhagavad Gita-based counselling intervention. The paired-samples *t*-test was used to examine whether there was a significant difference between the pre-test and post-test scores of the same participants.

The results show that there was a statistically significant difference in perceived stress scores, $t(19) = 17.400, p < .001$. The mean difference was 8.800, indicating that perceived stress scores decreased from pre-test to post-test. This suggests that the participants experienced a significant reduction in perceived stress after the intervention.

The results also indicate statistically significant differences in both dimensions of equanimity. For experiential acceptance, the result was significant, $t(19) = -31.104, p < .001$, with a mean difference of -10.650. For non-reactivity, the result was also significant, $t(19) = -31.308, p < .001$, with a mean difference of -14.450. The negative mean differences indicate that post-test scores were higher than pre-test scores. Therefore, the intervention significantly improved experiential acceptance and non-reactivity among the participants.

Similarly, statistically significant differences were found in all three dimensions of wisdom. The cognitive dimension showed a significant increase, $t(19) = -26.680, p < .001$, with a mean difference of -10.650. The reflective dimension also showed a significant increase, $t(19) = -29.356, p < .001$, with a mean difference of -9.350. The affective dimension showed a significant increase as well, $t(19) = -33.322, p < .001$, with a mean difference of -9.700. These results indicate that the participants showed significant improvement in cognitive clarity, reflective awareness, and affective maturity after the intervention.

Overall, the paired-samples *t*-test results indicate that the Bhagavad Gita-based counselling intervention had a statistically significant effect on all study variables. Perceived stress significantly decreased, while both dimensions of equanimity and all three dimensions of wisdom significantly increased after the intervention. Therefore, the results reject the hypotheses of the study.

Discussion

The increase in wisdom may be understood in relation to the stithaprajña component of the intervention. Stithaprajña emphasises wisdom, self-regulation, and the ability to remain

mentally balanced during challenging situations. During the sessions, participants were encouraged to pause, reflect, examine their thoughts, and respond with greater awareness rather than impulsivity. It was observed that several participants gradually became more reflective in their responses and were able to identify the connection between their thoughts, emotions, and actions. Feedback from participants also indicated that they learned to “pause and reflect before reacting” and “understand themselves better.” These observations suggest that the intervention may have supported the development of wisdom-related qualities.

The improvement in equanimity may be linked to the *samatvam* component of the counselling framework. *Samatvam* refers to even-mindedness and balanced response to favourable and unfavourable situations. The intervention encouraged participants to observe emotional fluctuations, accept situations with greater calmness, and reduce excessive attachment to outcomes. The researcher observed that participants gradually became more open to discussing stressful situations without becoming overwhelmed. Participant feedback also reflected this change, with some reporting that they were able to “accept situations with greater calmness” and respond to difficulties with more balance. These findings suggest that the intervention helped participants cultivate emotional steadiness and reduced reactivity.

The paired-samples *t*-test showed a significant decrease in perceived stress scores from pre-test to post-test. This indicates that participants experienced a reduction in the extent to which they appraised life situations as stressful, uncontrollable, or overwhelming after the intervention. Therefore, the hypothesis stating that there will be no significant difference in perceived stress among female young adults before and after the intervention was rejected.

The reduction in perceived stress may be understood as a combined effect of increased wisdom and equanimity. Through the intervention, participants were encouraged to develop reflective awareness, balanced thinking, acceptance, and non-attachment to outcomes. These processes may have helped them reinterpret stressful situations with greater

clarity and emotional balance. The researcher observed that participants became more capable of identifying stress triggers and applying reflective practices discussed during the sessions. Feedback collected after the intervention indicated that participants felt better able to “manage stress more effectively” and “remain calm in difficult situations.” Thus, the decrease in perceived stress supports the relevance of the Bhagavad Gita-based counselling framework in promoting adaptive coping among female young adults.

The researcher’s observations during the intervention supported the quantitative findings. During the initial sessions, several participants appeared to experience stress, emotional confusion, overthinking, and uncertainty regarding academic, personal, and future-related concerns. Some participants found it difficult to separate their emotions from their thoughts and tended to react quickly to stressful situations.

As the intervention progressed, participants gradually became more reflective and engaged in the counselling activities. They were able to relate the concepts of stithaprajña and samatvam to their personal experiences. the researcher observed that participants began to pause before responding, identify emotional triggers, and consider alternative ways of interpreting stressful situations. They also showed increased openness to acceptance-based practices and discussions on balanced action.

By the end of the intervention, participants appeared more confident in expressing their experiences and reported greater calmness, clarity, and emotional balance. Many participants were able to describe how the sessions helped them understand their stress responses and manage them more effectively. These observations suggest that the intervention supported gradual movement from emotional reactivity toward reflective awareness and equanimity.

Participant Feedback and Transcript Extracts

Participant feedback was collected before, during, and after the intervention to understand their subjective experience of the Bhagavad Gita-based counselling framework. The feedback helped to support the quantitative findings by providing insight into how participants experienced changes in wisdom, equanimity, and perceived stress. Short transcript extracts are included to illustrate participants' reflections in their own words. To maintain confidentiality, participants are identified using codes such as P1, P2, and P3.

Pre-Intervention Feedback

Before the intervention, participants commonly reported stress, overthinking, emotional confusion, fear of failure, and difficulty in managing uncertainty. Many participants described feeling overwhelmed by academic pressure, future-related concerns, interpersonal expectations, and self-doubt. Their responses suggested a need for emotional regulation, self-awareness, and a more balanced way of responding to stressful situations.

Some participants reported that they often reacted quickly when they felt stressed or emotionally disturbed. Others stated that they found it difficult to accept situations that were beyond their control. This initial feedback reflected lower emotional balance and higher perceived stress before the intervention.

Transcript Extracts

P1: "I usually overthink a lot, especially when something does not happen the way I expected. I keep thinking about what went wrong."

P2: "When I am stressed, I react suddenly. Later I feel that I should have stayed calm, but at that moment I cannot control it."

P3: "I feel worried about my future and studies. Sometimes even small things feel too much to handle."

P4: “I know I should not take everything personally, but I get affected very easily.”

P5: “I feel pressure to do well and also to meet everyone’s expectations. It becomes stressful sometimes.”

The pre-intervention feedback indicated that participants experienced emotional reactivity, stress, and difficulty in maintaining inner balance. These concerns were relevant to the goals of the intervention, which focused on cultivating stithaprajña or wisdom and samatvam or equanimity.

Feedback During the Intervention

During the intervention, participants gradually began to connect the concepts of stithaprajña and samatvam with their daily experiences. They reported that the sessions helped them reflect on their thoughts, emotions, reactions, and coping patterns. Activities based on pausing before reacting, observing emotions, reframing stressful situations, and accepting uncertainty were experienced as useful by many participants.

The researcher observed that participants became more open in sharing their experiences as the sessions progressed. They were able to identify situations where they reacted impulsively and began to explore alternative responses. Several participants reported that the idea of maintaining balance during success and failure helped them look at stressful situations differently.

Transcript Extracts

P1: “The idea of pausing before reacting helped me. I tried it once when I was irritated, and I felt I could control my response better.”

P2: “When we discussed samatvam, I felt it was connected to my own life. I understood that I get disturbed when things do not go according to my plan.”

P3: “I liked the activity where we had to observe our thoughts. It made me realise that my stress increases because I keep repeating the same thoughts.”

P4: “The session helped me think that I can do my part without worrying too much about the result.”

P5: “I started noticing when I was reacting emotionally. Earlier I would not even realise it.”

These feedback responses suggest that participants gradually developed greater reflective awareness. the stithaprajña component appeared to help participants pause, reflect, and respond with more clarity, while the samatvam component encouraged acceptance and balanced response to stressful situations.

Post-Intervention Feedback

After the intervention, participants reported positive changes in their ability to manage stress, reflect before reacting, and accept situations with greater calmness. Many participants stated that they were able to understand themselves better and respond to difficult situations with more balance. The feedback suggested that the intervention was meaningful, acceptable, and personally relevant to the participants.

Participants also reported that the Bhagavad Gita-based concepts were easy to relate to when explained in a counselling-oriented and practical manner. They did not experience the intervention as religious instruction, but rather as a reflective and psychological approach to understanding emotions, stress, and personal growth.

Transcript Extracts

P1: “I learned to pause and reflect before reacting. Earlier I used to respond immediately, but now I try to think first.”

P2: “I feel I can accept situations with greater calmness. I understood that I cannot control everything.”

P3: “The sessions helped me understand myself better. I became more aware of how my thoughts affect my stress.”

P4: “I feel I can manage stress more effectively now. I still get stressed, but I do not feel as helpless as before.”

P5: “The idea of doing my duty without being too attached to the result helped me a lot, especially with studies.”

P6: “I felt more peaceful after practising the activities. It helped me look at problems in a balanced way.”

P7: “I realised that being calm does not mean ignoring problems. It means responding without getting overwhelmed.”

The post-intervention feedback supported the quantitative findings of increased wisdom and equanimity and reduced perceived stress. Participants’ statements reflected improved self-awareness, emotional regulation, acceptance, and balanced thinking. These changes are consistent with the goals of the stithaprajña–samatvam framework, which aimed to promote steady wisdom, equanimity, and psychological wellbeing among female young adults.

The feedback collected across the intervention indicates a gradual movement from emotional reactivity and stress toward reflective awareness and balanced response. Before the intervention, participants described overthinking, emotional sensitivity, fear of failure, and difficulty accepting uncertainty. During the intervention, they began to identify their emotional triggers and apply strategies such as pausing, reflecting, observing thoughts, and

reducing attachment to outcomes. After the intervention, participants reported greater calmness, self-understanding, acceptance, and ability to manage stress.

The transcript extracts suggest that the participants internalised the main principles of stithaprajña and samatvam. Statements such as “I learned to pause and reflect before reacting” indicate growth in wisdom and self-regulation, while statements such as “I can accept situations with greater calmness” indicate improvement in equanimity. Similarly, responses such as “I can manage stress more effectively” support the observed reduction in perceived stress.

Thus, the qualitative feedback provides meaningful support for the statistical results. It shows that the intervention was not only effective at the level of scores but was also experienced as personally useful by the participants.

Chapter V

Summary and Conclusion

Summary of the Work

This current research was titled “Integrating Stithaprajña and Samatvam: A Bhagavad Gita Framework for Counselling Among Female Young Adults”. The purpose was to develop and examine a culturally grounded counselling framework from select psychological principles from Bhagavad Gita. This study centered around the two fundamental principles stithaprajña which denotes wisdom, emotional regulation, self-mastery, mature awareness, and samatvam, equanimity, even-mindedness, acceptance, and balanced disposition towards all the situations. Both the concepts were identified as potential psychological resources for wisdom, equanimity, and perceived stress among female young adults through counselling.

The need for culturally relevant counselling approaches in India has become prominent today. The life stage of female young adults is a critical phase in which one deals with a number of significant responsibilities such as career concerns, identity confusion, relationship issues, family expectations, and so on. Most female young adults encounter problems like stress, excessive worrying, emotional imbalance, self-doubt, uncertainty while in the transition of their life. Even though some of the most contemporary forms of counselling and therapy, like the CBT, mindfulness based interventions, acceptance based approaches, and positive psychology, offer various promising avenues, a counselling approach that caters to the needs of the Indian clients in a meaningful way is still lacking. Bhagavad Gita is a rich source of information for psychologists on many issues that the client might be facing, like emotional turbulence, self regulation, resilience, and on how to lead life meaningfully. The book, with the opening in Arjuna’s confusion and frustration can be seen as movement from chaos and confusion towards clarity, wisdom, and effective action. “समत्वं योग उच्यते” “Samatvaṁ yoga ucyate,” “equanimity is called yoga,” mentioned in the Gita (Chapter 2, Verse 48) as the balance between success and failure, served as the foundation for this study. Again the description of the ‘stithaprajña’, (a person with steady wisdom) in

chapter 2 verses 54-72 with emphasis “दुःखेष्वनुद्विग्नमनाः सुखेषु विगतस्पृहः” “Duhkheṣv anudvigna-manāḥ sukheṣu vigata-spr̥haḥ” (one who is not depressed in sorrow and is not desirous in happiness) provided further support to the interpretation of stithaprajña from a psychological standpoint as an emotionally mature and steady wise person.

The literature review was organized into two sections, theoretical and empirical review. The theoretical review explored female young adults and psychological wellbeing, Bhagavad Gita as a resource for counselling and psychology, stithaprajña as a psychological construct, samatvam as equanimity, Wisdom, equanimity, perceived stress and the Bhagavad Gita-based counselling framework. Empirical review was made to cover research on students’ mental health, Bhagavad Gita based psychological constructs, spiritual counselling, Indian indigenous therapeutic models, Indian psychological constructs, wisdom, equanimity and perceived stress. Existing researches have showed that the Bhagavad Gita has been an increasingly utilized text by the students’ for managing anxiety, for building resilience, as a text for counselling ethics, as a guide for mental therapy practices, for achieving the goal of self – realisation and total development. It has also revealed that Indian psychological constructs like anasakti, ahamkara, and gunas have been subject of empirical investigation, both separately and in relation to several outcomes.

It was also noted that there has been an increasing trend toward adopting the practices of spiritual counselling and the use of indigenous therapeutic models in India. Several researchers who have investigated spiritual counselling with the student population have concluded that the spiritual approach to counselling helps in the stress management for college-going students. The effectiveness of an intervention derived from the Ramayana in providing an indigenous therapeutic model for counselling has provided a methodology. The current study is being undertaken to fill in the gaps, as there is very limited research available

on integrating the stithaprajña and samatvam into a structured counselling framework specifically targeting the female young adults.

The primary objective of this study was to develop a Bhagavad Gita based counselling framework, integrating stithaprajña and samatvam among female young adults and also to study its effects on the students' level of wisdom, equanimity and perceived stress. It also aimed at finding the feedback and views of participants before, during and after the intervention. It was hypothesized that the intervention based on the Bhagavad Gita would bring about a significant improvement in wisdom and equanimity and a significant reduction in perceived stress levels of the female young adults.

The study was based on quasi experimental research design with a one-group pre-test-post-test intervention design. The participants for this study were female young adults aged between 22 to 24 years. There were 20 participants. These participants were selected by using a criterion-based purposive sampling method. A Perceived Stress Scale was used as a screening tool and the participants who scored moderate to high in PSS scale, are eligible to take part in the study and agreed to give their informed consent, are included. The intervention was provided individually once a week for six weeks. Each intervention session lasted between 30-40 minutes.

The key variables that were studied were wisdom, equanimity and perceived stress. Wisdom was considered in relation to stithaprajña and was assessed by means of the Three-Dimensional Wisdom Scale short form. Equanimity was considered in relation to samatvam and was assessed by the Equanimity Scale. Perceived stress was measured using the Perceived Stress Scale. The framework of intervention was structured around certain Bhagavad Gita verses and counselling activities for enhanced self-awareness, cognitive clarity, emotional balance, acceptance, non-reactivity, values-based action and personal growth.

The intervention comprised six structured sessions. The first session concentrated on cognitive clarity that involved helping participants to distinguish the difference between a transient reaction and a deeper form of understanding. The second session was about non-reactive awareness in which the participants were helped to reflect upon and acknowledge thoughts and feelings before responding to the situations. The third session was on clarity of roles and values in which the participants were guided to contemplate upon values-based action and responsibility towards personal development. The fourth session focused on the balance in loss and gain in which participants were helped to accept success and failures in a more balanced manner. The fifth session centered on reframing stressful situations by helping participants to look at situations from a new perspective. The sixth session on compassionate equanimity involved helping the participants to integrate balance, compassion and self acceptance in everyday living. In each session, brief explanation of the Bhagavad Gita based concept was given followed by counselling discussion, activity, reflection and weekly assignment of practices to be carried out in everyday life.

The data was collected in three phases. The first phase involved pre intervention collection of data. Information from the participant's consent form was gathered and the values of wisdom, equanimity and perceived stress was collected from the participant. This information provided baseline assessment in these variables. Pre-test feedback about stress, emotional balance, self-awareness and coping of participants were also gathered to get a sense of participants initial perceptions. In the second phase which involved intervention phase, participant attended six individual sessions of counselling which were conducted using stithaprajña-samatvam approach. Feedback was gathered from the participants during the session which helps us understand how the participant is perceiving the activities and whether they could relate the concept to their life. In the third phase which was post intervention phase, the values of the wisdom, equanimity and perceived stress was measured and the post

test feedback was collected to evaluate how participants were experiencing the intervention and the effects which it has on them.

SPSS was used to analyze the pre and post test data of wisdom, equanimity and perceived stress. Descriptive statistics in the form of mean and standard deviation of these variables were computed before and after intervention. Shapiro-Wilk test was performed to check the normality of the difference scores and since it was found to be normally distributed, a paired samples t-test was performed to investigate if there was any statistically significant difference in the pre and post test mean scores on wisdom, equanimity and perceived stress. Effect size was also calculated to quantify the magnitude of change produced by the intervention.

The results showed that the wisdom was found to increase from the pre test to the post test. This implies that the Bhagavad Gita based counselling intervention may have helped the participants develop increased self-reflection, cognitive clarity, emotional maturity and a well rounded perspective. The increase in wisdom can be explained in light of the stithaprajña construct which formed the intervention framework. Participants were enabled to take pauses, reflect and examine the feeling that they were experiencing before responding to the situations so as not to act on impulsive reaction. The researcher observed that with the progress of the intervention many participants became increasingly reflective and could relate their thought, feeling and behavior together. Post-test feedback from the participants also indicated that they “could pause and reflect before reacting” and “could understand themselves more better”.

It was found that the equanimity has increased significantly from the pre-test to post-test. This indicates that the intervention may have helped participants to achieve a greater sense of emotional equilibrium, acceptance and a diminished reaction to situations and events. The increase in equanimity can be linked with the samatvam construct of the

intervention framework. The practices help the participants accept emotional vicissitudes, be open to uncertainty and experience a heightened sense of calmness when confronted with challenging situation. The researcher observed that with the progress of intervention the participants were more able to express their experiences of distress without becoming overly distressed and post test feedback supported this with many participants stating that they could “accept situations with a greater calm” and “view problems from a different lens”.

Further, it was observed that the perceived stress level had been reduced from pre-test to post-test. This suggests that participants evaluated less frequently life situations as threatening, unmanageable or overwhelming. The reduction in perceived stress can be viewed as the cumulative effect of improvement in wisdom and equanimity. When participants developed increased reflective awareness and response patterns characterized by balance and acceptance, they may have become more effective in reappraising stressful situations and managing emotional pain. The researcher observed that participants became more able to identify their stress triggers and apply the learned reflective practices during daily life. Post-test feedback also confirmed this observation, with several participants stating that they could “manage their stress levels better” and that they “feel less helpless in dealing with tough situations”.

This qualitative information on the experience of participants before, during, and after the intervention, gave supporting evidence for the statistical analysis (as described above in terms of hypothesis testing and group differences). Some of the responses in pre-interview about their feelings indicated that they commonly reported stress, overthinking, emotional confusion, fear of failure, as well as a struggle to cope with uncertainty. One participant said, "When stressed, I tend to react all of a sudden, and regret it later".

Another participant added that "There are times I get anxious when my academics pressure, concern about future and expectation from others becomes so overwhelming". Their

response indicates that they need emotional regulation, self awareness and adaptive coping. During the intervention sessions the participants began to be aware of linking the concept of stithaprajña and samatvam to their daily life. Many participants reported that the interventions sessions had help them in their daily life. They were able to monitor their thought processes, analyze their reactions, and to put a brake to their impulsive actions. One participant says, "To perform duty without expecting result, is very useful in managing stress from my Academics as well as personal life". The researcher observed increased engagement and reflectiveness in participants during the latter sessions of the intervention. Participants were able to recognize triggers for emotions and consider alternate reactions. In post-intervention interviews, participants reported increase in ability to cope with stress, take a pause and think before reacting, as well as acceptance of things with calmness. Some transcript extracts demonstrate this transition, e.g. "I learned to pause and reflect before reacting". Another response was, "I feel I can accept situations with greater calmness. I understood that I cannot control everything." and, "The sessions helped me understand myself better".

The feedback indicates that the participants found the intervention to be meaningful and relevant. They also confirmed that the intervention was not felt as religious instructions, but rather a philosophical and spiritual method of self-awareness, dealing with emotions and life. Conclusion Overall findings indicate that the Bhagavad Gita-based counselling framework incorporating the principles of stithaprajña and samatvam proved to be effective in significantly enhancing wisdom and equanimity, and reducing perceived stress amongst female young adults. Statistical and qualitative findings provided support for the effectiveness of the intervention. Findings are in accordance with the existing literature, emphasizing on the potential role of Bhagavad Gita teachings in improving emotional regulation, anxiety, resilience, self-awareness, and mental well-being. This also underscores

the utility of contextually relevant and culturally grounded counselling approaches in Indian settings.

Major Findings of the Study

1. The findings indicated an increase in wisdom among female young adults after the Bhagavad Gita-based counselling intervention. The post-test scores of wisdom were higher than the pre-test scores, suggesting improvement in reflective awareness, emotional maturity, cognitive clarity, and balanced decision-making among the participants.
2. The increase in wisdom may be understood in relation to the stithaprajña component of the intervention. The sessions encouraged participants to pause, reflect, observe their thoughts and emotions, and respond to situations with greater awareness rather than impulsivity.
3. The findings indicated an increase in equanimity among female young adults after the intervention. The post-test scores of equanimity were higher than the pre-test scores, suggesting improvement in emotional balance, acceptance, even-mindedness, and reduced reactivity.
4. The improvement in equanimity may be linked to the samatvam component of the counselling framework. The intervention helped participants understand the importance of maintaining balance in favourable and unfavourable situations and encouraged acceptance of uncertainty and reduced attachment to outcomes.
5. The findings indicated a decrease in perceived stress among female young adults after the intervention. The post-test scores of perceived stress were lower than the pre-test scores, suggesting that participants experienced a reduction in the extent to which they perceived situations as stressful, uncontrollable, or overwhelming.

6. The reduction in perceived stress may be understood as a combined effect of increased wisdom and equanimity. As participants developed greater reflective awareness and emotional balance, they appeared better able to manage stress and respond to challenges with greater calmness.
7. The paired-samples *t*-test showed significant differences between pre-test and post-test scores in the study variables. The results rejected the hypotheses that there will be no difference between the pre test and post test for wisdom, equanimity and perceived stress.
8. Researcher observations supported the quantitative findings. During the initial sessions, participants showed stress, overthinking, emotional reactivity, and uncertainty. As the intervention progressed, they became more reflective, engaged, and open to applying the concepts of stithaprajña and samatvam in their daily lives.
9. Participant feedback also supported the effectiveness of the intervention. Before the intervention, participants commonly reported stress, overthinking, fear of failure, and difficulty in accepting situations. During and after the intervention, they reported improvement in self-awareness, emotional regulation, acceptance, and stress management.
10. Transcript extracts from participants reflected meaningful changes. Participants reported that they learned to “pause and reflect before reacting,” “accept situations with greater calmness,” “understand themselves better,” and “manage stress more effectively.”
11. The intervention was experienced as personally meaningful and acceptable by the participants. They were able to relate the Bhagavad Gita-based concepts to their everyday experiences, especially in relation to academic stress, emotional reactions, uncertainty, and interpersonal concerns.

12. The findings suggest that the integration of stithaprajña and samatvam can serve as a culturally grounded counselling framework for enhancing wisdom and equanimity and reducing perceived stress among female young adults.
13. Overall, the study found that the Bhagavad Gita-based counselling framework was effective in promoting emotional balance, reflective awareness, acceptance, self-regulation, and psychological wellbeing among female young adults.

Conclusion

The present study, “Integrating Stithaprajña and Samatvam: A Bhagavad Gita Framework for Counselling Among Female Young Adults,” aimed to examine the effectiveness of a culturally grounded counselling intervention in enhancing wisdom and equanimity and reducing perceived stress. The findings indicated a significant increase in wisdom and equanimity and a significant decrease in perceived stress after the intervention. Improvements were observed across the dimensions of wisdom and equanimity, suggesting that the framework helped participants develop greater self-awareness, emotional balance, reflective thinking, acceptance, and reduced reactivity.

The study highlights the relevance of integrating selected teachings from the Bhagavad Gita into counselling practice in a culturally sensitive manner. The concepts of stithaprajña and samatvam were found to be psychologically meaningful in promoting steady wisdom, equanimity, and stress management among female young adults. Although the study was limited by a small sample size and the absence of a control group, the findings suggest that Bhagavad Gita-based counselling frameworks may serve as meaningful indigenous approaches for supporting psychological wellbeing and personal growth.

Implications of the Study

The present study has important implications for counselling psychology and Indian psychology. By integrating stithaprajña and samatvam into a Bhagavad Gita-based

counselling framework, the study demonstrates that selected teachings from the Bhagavad Gita can be interpreted psychologically and applied in counselling practice in a culturally sensitive manner. The findings suggest that Indian philosophical concepts can contribute meaningfully to the understanding of wisdom, equanimity, emotional regulation, and perceived stress among female young adults.

Theoretical Implications

Theoretically, the study contributes to the growing field of Indian psychology by positioning stithaprajña and samatvam as psychologically meaningful constructs.

Stithaprajña, traditionally understood as steady wisdom, was interpreted in relation to reflective awareness, emotional maturity, cognitive clarity, and self-regulation. Similarly, samatvam, traditionally understood as equanimity or even-mindedness, was interpreted in relation to acceptance, non-reactivity, emotional balance, and resilience.

The study also contributes to counselling psychology by bridging Indian philosophical wisdom with contemporary psychological concepts. It supports the view that the Bhagavad Gita may be understood not only as a spiritual or religious text, but also as a source of counselling-relevant psychological insight. The framework developed in the study connects classical concepts with modern psychological variables such as wisdom, equanimity, and perceived stress. In this way, the study supports the operationalisation of traditional Indian concepts within psychological research.

Furthermore, the study adds to the literature on culturally grounded counselling frameworks. It highlights the importance of moving beyond purely Western and symptom-focused models by incorporating indigenous perspectives that are meaningful within the Indian sociocultural context. The findings suggest that concepts such as steady wisdom, equanimity, non-attachment, and balanced action can enrich theoretical understandings of psychological wellbeing, especially among female young adults.

Practical Implications

Practically, the study has relevance for counselling interventions with female young adults who experience stress, emotional reactivity, uncertainty, overthinking, and self-doubt. The Bhagavad Gita-based counselling framework may be useful in helping clients develop self-awareness, emotional balance, reflective thinking, acceptance, and healthier responses to stressful situations.

The intervention activities based on stithaprajña may help clients pause before reacting, examine their thoughts and emotions, and respond with greater clarity and maturity. Similarly, activities based on samatvam may help clients accept situations with greater calmness, reduce attachment to outcomes, and develop a balanced attitude toward success, failure, praise, criticism, and uncertainty.

The framework may also be useful for counsellors working in educational settings, especially with college students and young adults. Since many female young adults face academic pressure, career-related anxiety, interpersonal concerns, and family expectations, this framework can provide a culturally familiar and meaning-centred approach to counselling. It can be used as a supportive intervention to promote stress management, emotional regulation, resilience, and personal growth.

The study also suggests that culturally rooted counselling approaches can be introduced without presenting them as religious instruction. Instead, selected teachings from the Bhagavad Gita may be adapted as reflective, psychological, and counselling-oriented practices. This makes the framework potentially acceptable and relevant for clients who are open to Indian philosophical concepts as tools for self-understanding and emotional wellbeing.

Overall, the study has both theoretical and practical value. Theoretically, it contributes to the psychological interpretation of stithaprajña and samatvam and supports the

development of Indian psychology. Practically, it offers a culturally sensitive counselling framework that may help female young adults enhance wisdom and equanimity while reducing perceived stress.

Limitations of the Study

At the same time, the study has certain limitations. Since it used a one-group pre-test post-test design, there was no control group for comparison. The sample size was limited to 20 female young adults, which restricts the generalisability of the findings. The intervention was conducted over six weeks, and no long-term follow-up was included to examine whether the changes were maintained over time. The study was also delimited to selected variables, namely wisdom, equanimity, and perceived stress.

In conclusion, the present study attempted to bridge Indian philosophical wisdom and contemporary counselling psychology by developing and examining a Bhagavad Gita-based counselling framework among female young adults. The integration of stithaprajña and samatvam provided a meaningful foundation for promoting steady wisdom, equanimity, emotional regulation, acceptance, resilience, and personal growth. The findings indicated improvement in wisdom and equanimity and reduction in perceived stress after the intervention. The researcher's observations and participant feedback further supported the effectiveness and acceptability of the framework. Thus, the study highlights the relevance of culturally grounded, meaning-centred counselling approaches in supporting the psychological wellbeing of female young adults.

Suggestions for Further Research

Future studies could involve larger and more varied samples to enhance the generalizability of the findings. Given that this study focused only on young adult women, future research could expand to include participants across various age ranges, educational levels, cultural backgrounds, and socioeconomic environments. Expanding the sample size

would enable more reliable statistical analysis and provide a better grasp of how effectively the Bhagavad Gita-based counselling framework works across diverse groups.

Future research could also utilize experimental or quasi-experimental approaches featuring control groups to enhance the evidence supporting the intervention's effectiveness. Including a control group would help establish whether the changes in wisdom, equanimity, and perceived stress are directly attributable to the intervention or influenced by other external variables. Additionally, comparing across genders could help determine if the framework produces similar or varying outcomes among male, female, and gender-diverse young adults.

Future studies may also incorporate follow-up evaluations to assess the sustained impact of the intervention. These evaluations would assist in determining whether the gains in wisdom, equanimity, and perceived stress are sustained following the end of the counselling sessions. The counselling framework could also be further validated through expert review, pilot testing, and use across various counselling settings. This would improve the framework's structure, content, and practical applicability, making it more suitable for wider use in counselling psychology.

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Appendices

Appendix A- Informed Consent Form

Title of the Study

Integrating Stithaprajña and Samatvam: A Bhagavad Gita Framework for Counselling
Among Female Young Adults

Researcher's Details

Name of the Researcher: Nandana Manu

Programme: MSc. Counselling Psychology

Institution: Loyola College of Social Sciences (Autonomous)

Purpose of the Study

You are invited to participate in a research study that aims to examine the relevance of a Bhagavad Gita-based counselling framework integrating the concepts of *Stithaprajña* and *Samatvam* among female young adults. The study focuses on understanding whether this counselling framework can help in enhancing wisdom and equanimity and reducing perceived stress.

The study is being conducted as part of the researcher's academic dissertation in Counselling Psychology.

Procedure of the Study

If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to take part in a counselling-based intervention programme. The intervention will be conducted once a week for six weeks. Each session will last approximately 30 to 40 minutes.

Before the intervention begins, you will be asked to complete a few psychological assessment tools related to wisdom, equanimity, and perceived stress. During the intervention, you will participate in structured counselling sessions based on selected psychological concepts from the Bhagavad Gita, particularly *Stithaprajña* and *Samatvam*.

These sessions may include discussion, reflection-based activities, and simple practices related to self-awareness, emotional balance, acceptance, and stress management.

Feedback will be collected from you before, during, and after the intervention to understand your experience of the sessions and the usefulness of the activities. After the completion of the intervention, you will again be asked to complete the same assessment tools to examine any changes.

Voluntary Participation

Your participation in this study is completely voluntary. You have the right to refuse participation or withdraw from the study at any point without giving any reason. Refusal to participate or withdrawal from the study will not result in any penalty or negative consequences.

Confidentiality

All information collected from you will be kept confidential. Your name and personal details will not be revealed in the dissertation, presentation, publication, or any academic discussion related to the study. The data collected will be used only for academic and research purposes.

Your responses may be represented using participant codes instead of your real name. Any feedback or transcript extracts used in the report will be anonymised to protect your identity.

Risks and Benefits

There are no major risks expected from participation in this study. However, since the sessions may involve reflection on personal experiences, emotions, stress, and life situations, you may feel mild emotional discomfort at times. You are free to skip any question or activity that makes you uncomfortable.

The possible benefits of participation include increased self-awareness, better understanding of emotional responses, improved ability to manage stress, and development of greater emotional balance and equanimity. However, benefits cannot be guaranteed.

Collection of Feedback

As part of the study, feedback will be collected before, during, and after the intervention. This feedback will help the researcher understand your experience of the counselling framework and the perceived usefulness of the sessions. Your feedback will be kept confidential and used only for research purposes.

Consent Declaration

I have read and understood the information provided above. I have been informed about the purpose, procedure, voluntary nature, confidentiality, possible risks and benefits, and feedback collection involved in the study. I understand that I have the right to withdraw from the study at any time without any negative consequences.

I voluntarily agree to participate in this research study.

Name of the Participant: _____

Signature of the Participant: _____

Date: _____

Signature of the Researcher: _____

Date: _____

Appendix B- Intervention Module

Introductory Script

Good morning/afternoon. Thank you for coming today and for agreeing to take part in this study. Before we begin, I would like to briefly explain the purpose of this intervention and what we will be doing in the coming sessions. My research is titled “Integrating Stithaprajña and Samatvam: A Bhagavad Gita Framework for Counselling and Personal Growth Among Young Adults.” Through this study, I am trying to understand whether certain ideas from the Bhagavad Gita, when combined with psychological counselling techniques, can help young adults develop better clarity of thought, emotional balance, and personal growth.

This intervention will be conducted individually. That means each session will be between you and me, and the activities will be done in a private and confidential setting. The sessions will include simple reflection-based and activity-based exercises, such as writing, observing thoughts and emotions, identifying values, reframing situations, and practising emotional balance. There are no right or wrong answers in any of these activities. The purpose is not to judge you, but to help you reflect on your own thoughts, emotions, and ways of responding to life situations.

Before starting the intervention, I will provide you with an informed consent form. This form explains the purpose of the study, the procedure, confidentiality, voluntary participation, possible risks and benefits, and your right to withdraw from the study at any time. Please read it carefully before signing. Your participation is completely voluntary. You can choose not to answer any question or stop the session at any point if you feel uncomfortable. Whatever you share during the sessions will be kept confidential and will be used only for academic and research purposes.

The main foundation of this intervention comes from the Bhagavad Gita. In this study, I am not using the Gita as a religious text, but as a philosophical and counselling framework. The Gita discusses many ideas related to inner balance, wisdom, emotional control, self-awareness, and meaningful action. These ideas are also closely connected to modern psychological concepts such as emotional regulation, cognitive clarity, self-reflection, acceptance, and resilience.

One important phrase from the Bhagavad Gita is “समत्वं योग उच्यते” “Samatvam yoga uchyate” from Chapter 2, Verse 48. This means that balance of mind is called yoga. In simple words, it means being able to stay mentally balanced in both good and difficult situations. For example, when something positive happens, like receiving appreciation, we may feel very happy. When something negative happens, like criticism or failure, we may feel upset. Samatvam does not mean that we should not feel anything. It means learning to experience emotions without being completely controlled by them.

Another important phrase is “कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन” “Karmanye vadhikaraste ma phaleshu kadachana” from Chapter 2, Verse 47. This means that we have control over our actions, but not always over the results. For example, as students or young adults, we can put effort into our studies, work, relationships, or personal goals, but the final outcome may not always be fully in our control. This idea teaches us to focus more on sincere effort, responsibility, and meaningful action rather than becoming overly anxious about the result.

In this intervention, we will mainly focus on two concepts: Stithaprajña and Samatvam. Stithaprajña means wisdom. In simple terms, it refers to the ability to think clearly, understand situations properly, and respond with maturity rather than reacting impulsively. A person developing Stithaprajña is able to pause and reflect before responding. For example, if someone receives criticism, instead of immediately thinking, “I am useless,”

they may pause and ask, “Is this completely true, or is this only one situation? What can I learn from this?” This kind of clarity and discernment is what we will try to develop through some of the activities.

A related Gita phrase is “दुःखेष्वनुद्विग्नमनाः सुखेषु विगतस्पृहः” “Duhkhesv anudvigna-manah sukhesu vigata-sprhah” from Chapter 2, Verse 56. This means that a person of steady wisdom is not deeply disturbed by sorrow and is not overly attached to pleasure.

Psychologically, this means developing inner steadiness. It does not mean avoiding emotions. It means experiencing emotions while still being able to think clearly and respond wisely.

The second concept is Samatvam, which means equanimity or emotional balance. In simple terms, it refers to the ability to remain calm, accepting, and non-reactive in both favourable and unfavourable situations. For example, if there is a conflict with a friend, Samatvam would mean noticing feelings of anger or hurt, taking a pause, and then choosing a response instead of reacting immediately.

Through the six sessions, the first three activities will focus on Stithaprajña. These activities will help you examine thoughts, observe experiences from a distance, and identify your personal values. The next three activities will focus on Samatvam. These activities will help you observe emotions, reframe difficult situations, and respond to yourself with kindness and acceptance.

Each session will begin with a short explanation of the concept, followed by an activity, reflection, and a small homework practice if needed. You are encouraged to participate honestly and comfortably. You do not have to share anything that feels too personal or uncomfortable. The aim of this intervention is to create a safe space where you can reflect, learn, and practise skills that may help you handle everyday challenges with more clarity and balance.

If you have any doubts at any point, you can ask me. If you are comfortable and ready, we can now begin with the consent form and then proceed to the first activity.

Activity 1: The Viveka Lens

Objective: To help the participant identify automatic thoughts and cognitive distortions, and develop clearer, more balanced interpretations of stressful situations.

Time Required: Approximately 30–40 minutes

Materials Required: A sheet of paper, pen, and a quiet counselling space

Gita Phrase

“नासतो धवद्यते भावो नाभावो धवद्यते सतु: ”

“Nasato vidyate bhavo, na bhavo vidyate satah”

Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 2, Verse 16

Meaning of the Phrase

This phrase means that the unreal has no true existence, and the real never ceases to exist. In simple terms, it teaches us to distinguish between what is real and what is only an assumption or interpretation of the mind.

Psychologically, this idea can be related to the ability to distinguish between facts and interpretations. Many times, when we experience stress, the situation itself may not be the only reason for our distress. The way we interpret the situation can also increase our emotional reaction. For example, if a person scores low marks in one exam, the fact is “I scored low in this exam.” But the interpretation may be “I am a failure.” This activity will help us identify such thoughts and look at them more clearly.

Introduction to the Activity

Today, we will begin with the first activity called “The Viveka Lens.” The word Viveka means discernment, or the ability to distinguish between what is true and what may only be an assumption, fear, or distorted thought.

In this activity, I will help you examine a stressful thought and understand whether it is based on fact or interpretation. The purpose of this activity is not to remove emotions, but to understand the thoughts behind those emotions more clearly. This is connected to the concept of Stithaprajña, which means stable wisdom. A person with stable wisdom is able to pause, reflect, and respond with clarity instead of reacting immediately.

Instruction to the Participant

I would like you to think of a recent situation that made you feel stressed, upset, disappointed, or anxious. It can be a small situation from your academic life, personal life, family, friendships, or any other area. Please choose a situation that you are comfortable reflecting on. Now, we will complete the thought record step by step.

First, write down the situation. Try to describe only what happened, without adding judgment. For example, “I received low marks in an exam” or “My friend did not reply to my message.”

Next, write the automatic thought that came to your mind in that situation. This is the first thought that appeared in your mind. For example, “I am not good enough,” “They do not care about me,” or “I will never do well.”

Now, identify the emotion you felt in that situation. It may be sadness, anger, fear, guilt, embarrassment, anxiety, or disappointment. After naming the emotion, rate its intensity from 0 to 10, where 0 means no emotional intensity and 10 means extremely intense.

After that, we will look at whether the thought contains any cognitive distortion. Cognitive distortions are unhelpful thinking patterns that make us see a situation in an extreme or inaccurate way. Some examples are all-or-nothing thinking, catastrophizing, overgeneralization, mind reading, and labelling.

Now, I want you to apply the Viveka questions to the thought.

Ask yourself:

1. Is this thought a fact or an interpretation?
2. Is this situation permanent or temporary?
3. Does this one event define my whole identity?
4. Is there another balanced way to look at this situation?
5. What would I say to a friend if they were thinking this way?

After reflecting on these questions, write a balanced thought. A balanced thought does not mean forced positive thinking. It means a more realistic and helpful way of understanding the situation.

Now, after writing the balanced thought, rate the emotional intensity again from 0 to 10. Notice whether there is any change in the intensity of the emotion.

Reflection Questions

After completing the activity, I will ask you to reflect on the following questions:

1. What did you notice about your automatic thought?
2. Was the thought completely factual, or was it partly an interpretation?
3. Did your emotional intensity change after writing a balanced thought?
4. How can this activity help you respond differently in stressful situations?

Closing of the Activity

The activity shows us that our thoughts strongly influence our emotional reactions. When we pause and examine our thoughts carefully, we develop greater clarity. This is the psychological meaning of Viveka, and it helps us move toward stithaprajña, or wisdom.

The aim is not to avoid emotions, but to understand them better by examining the thoughts that create or intensify them. When we learn to distinguish facts from interpretations, we become less controlled by immediate reactions and more capable of responding with balance and clarity.

Homework

For the coming week, I would like you to complete this thought record for at least three stressful situations. Whenever you feel upset, anxious, angry, or disappointed, pause and write down:

1. The situation
2. The automatic thought
3. The emotion and intensity
4. Whether the thought is a fact or interpretation
5. A balanced thought
6. The emotional intensity after reframing

You do not have to write long answers. Even a few lines are enough. The purpose is to practise looking at your thoughts through the Viveka Lens before reacting.

Activity 2: The Witness Within

Objective: To help the participant develop a self-distanced perspective by observing emotional experiences without becoming completely absorbed in them.

Time Required: Approximately 30–40 minutes

Materials Required: A sheet of paper, pen, and a quiet counselling space

Gita Phrase

“मात्रास्पर्शस्तु कौन्तेय शीतोष्णसुखदुःखदाः”

“Matra-sparshas tu kaunteya shitoshna-sukha-duhkha-dah”

Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 2, Verse 14

Meaning of the Phrase

This phrase means that contact with external experiences gives rise to sensations such as heat and cold, pleasure and pain, but these experiences are temporary and constantly changing.

In simple terms, the verse teaches that pleasant and unpleasant experiences come and go. Psychologically, this can be understood as the idea that emotions are temporary experiences. They may feel intense in the moment, but they do not remain the same forever. This activity will help us observe thoughts and emotions from a little distance instead of becoming completely absorbed in them.

Introduction to the Activity

Today, we will do the second activity called “The Witness Within.” The word “witness” here means the ability to observe our thoughts, emotions, and experiences without becoming fully controlled by them.

Sometimes, when we experience a difficult situation, we become very involved in the emotion. For example, we may think, “I am hurt,” “I am angry,” or “I cannot handle this.” When we are fully absorbed in the emotion, it may become difficult to think clearly. In this activity, we will practise looking at an emotional experience from a slightly distanced perspective. This is connected to the concept of stithaprajña, or stable wisdom, because a person with stable wisdom is able to observe experiences, understand them, and respond thoughtfully rather than reacting immediately.

Instruction to the Participant

I would like you to think of a recent situation that made you feel emotionally uncomfortable. It may be a situation where you felt sad, angry, anxious, disappointed, embarrassed, or hurt. Please choose a situation that you are comfortable writing about. First, write about the situation in the first person. This means you can use words such as “I,” “me,” and “my.” Write about what happened, what you felt, and what thoughts came to your mind. For example: “I felt very upset when my friend did not talk to me properly. I thought that maybe she was ignoring me, and I felt hurt.” Take a few minutes to write freely about the experience.

Now, we will do the second part of the activity. I would like you to rewrite the same situation, but this time from a third-person perspective. Instead of using “I,” use your name or refer to yourself as “she.” Imagine that you are observing the situation from outside, like a calm witness. For example: “She felt upset when her friend did not talk to her properly. She wondered whether her friend was ignoring her, and this made her feel hurt.”

As you write in the third person, try to observe the situation with some distance. You do not have to judge yourself or the other person. Just describe the situation as if you are gently watching it from the outside. After completing both versions, read them once again and notice whether there is any difference in how you feel.

Reflection Questions

After completing the writing exercise, I will ask you to reflect on the following questions:

1. How did you feel while writing the experience in the first person?
2. How did you feel while rewriting it in the third person?
3. Did the emotional intensity change when you looked at the situation from a distance?
4. Did you notice anything new about the situation?
5. How can observing your emotions from a witness perspective help you in daily life?

Closing of the Activity

This activity helps us understand that we are not the same as our emotions. Emotions are experiences that arise, change, and pass. When we observe them from a distance, we are able to understand them with more clarity.

The Bhagavad Gita teaches that pleasure and pain are temporary experiences. Similarly, in psychology, self-distanced reflection helps reduce emotional intensity and rumination. By practising the witness perspective, we develop the ability to pause, observe, and respond with greater wisdom.

This supports the development of stithaprajña, because stable wisdom involves not being carried away by every emotional experience, but being able to observe and understand it calmly.

Homework

For the coming week, I would like you to practise third-person reflection for at least two emotional situations.

Whenever you feel upset, anxious, angry, or disappointed, write briefly about the situation in two ways:

1. First, write it in the first person using “I.”
2. Then, rewrite it in the third person using your name or “she.”
3. After writing, notice whether your emotional intensity changes.
4. Write one sentence about what you understood from the experience.

The purpose of this homework is to practise becoming a gentle observer of your experiences instead of reacting immediately to them.

Activity 3: Dharma Compass

Objective: To help the participant identify core personal values and translate them into meaningful, value-based actions.

Time Required: Approximately 30–40 minutes

Materials Required: A sheet of paper, pen, and a quiet counselling space

Gita Phrase

“कर्मण्येवाधिकारस्ते मा फलेषु कदाचन”

“Karmanye vadhikaraste ma phaleshu kadachana”

Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 2, Verse 47

Meaning of the Phrase

This phrase means that we have control over our actions, but not always over the results of those actions. In simple terms, it teaches us to focus on sincere effort, meaningful action, and responsibility rather than becoming overly attached to the outcome.

Psychologically, this can be understood as value-based action. Many times, young adults experience stress because they focus only on results, approval, achievement, or comparison. This activity helps us identify the values that are personally meaningful and use them as a guide for action.

Introduction to the Activity

Today, we will do the third activity called “Dharma Compass.” The word Dharma can be understood as one’s values, responsibilities, or meaningful direction in life. A compass gives direction when we are unsure where to go. In the same way, our values can guide us when we feel confused, stressed, or pressured by external expectations.

This activity is connected to the concept of Stithaprajña, or stable wisdom. A person with stable wisdom does not act only based on temporary emotions, fear, or pressure. Instead, they act with clarity and according to values. Through this activity, we will try to identify what is truly important to you and how your actions can become more aligned with those values.

Instruction to the Participant

I would like you to take a few moments and think about the areas of life that are important to you. These may include family, friendships, education, career, health, personal growth, spirituality, honesty, kindness, independence, responsibility, or contribution to others. Now, from the values listed in the worksheet, please choose five values that feel most important to you at this stage of your life.

After choosing your five values, write a short answer for each of the following questions:

1. Why is this value important to me?

2. How does this value influence my decisions?
3. Am I currently living according to this value?
4. What prevents me from acting according to this value?

Now, I would like you to rate how much your current actions are aligned with each value. You can rate it from 0 to 10, where 0 means “not aligned at all” and 10 means “completely aligned.” For example, if one of your values is health, but you are not sleeping properly or taking care of yourself, your alignment rating may be 4 or 5. If one of your values is learning and you are making regular efforts to study and improve, your rating may be 7 or 8.

After rating each value, choose one value that you would like to focus on during the coming week. Now think of one small, practical action that you can take to live more closely according to that value. For example: If your value is learning, your action may be “I will study for 30 minutes without distraction.” If your value is family, your action may be “I will spend 15 minutes having a meaningful conversation with a family member.” If your value is health, your action may be “I will sleep on time for at least three days this week.” The action should be simple, realistic, and possible to practise during the week.

Reflection Questions

After completing the activity, I will ask you to reflect on the following questions:

1. Which value feels most important to you right now?
2. Are your current actions aligned with this value?
3. What is one area where you notice a gap between your value and your behaviour?
4. How can acting according to your values help you feel more stable and clear?
5. What small value-based action are you willing to practise this week?

Closing of the Activity

This activity helps us understand that wisdom is not only about thinking clearly, but also about acting meaningfully. When our actions are guided only by outcomes, approval, or

fear of failure, we may experience stress and confusion. But when our actions are guided by values, we develop inner direction.

The Bhagavad Gita teaches that we have control over our actions, but not always over the results. This does not mean that results are unimportant. It means that our peace should not depend completely on the outcome. When we focus on sincere effort and value-based action, we become more steady and less reactive.

This supports the development of stithaprajña, because stable wisdom involves acting with clarity, responsibility, and inner direction rather than being controlled by temporary emotions or external pressure.

Homework

For the coming week, I would like you to practise one value-based action that you identified today.

Please write down:

1. The value you selected
2. The action you planned
3. Whether you were able to practise it
4. How you felt after acting according to that value
5. What you learned from the experience

The purpose of this homework is to help you connect your values with your daily actions. Even a small action is meaningful if it reflects something important to you.

Activity 4: Emotional Waves Practice

Objective: To help the participant observe emotions as temporary experiences and develop non-reactive emotional awareness.

Time Required: Approximately 30–40 minutes

Materials Required: A sheet of paper, pen, timer, and a quiet counselling space

Gita Phrase

‘यं हि न व्यथयन्त्येते पुरुषं पुरुषर्षभ।

समदुःखसुखं धीरं”

“Yam hi na vyathayanti ete purusham purusharshabha, sama-duhkha-sukham dhiram”

Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 2, Verse 15

Meaning of the Phrase

This phrase means that a person who is not disturbed by changing experiences and who remains steady in both pleasure and pain is considered wise and stable.

In simple terms, the verse teaches us that life brings both pleasant and unpleasant experiences. We may feel happiness, sadness, anger, anxiety, disappointment, or excitement at different times. Samatvam does not mean avoiding these emotions. It means learning to observe them without immediately reacting or becoming overwhelmed by them.

Psychologically, this idea is connected to mindful emotional awareness. Emotions are not permanent. They arise, reach a peak, and gradually reduce in intensity, similar to waves in the ocean.

Introduction to the Activity

Today, we will begin the first activity related to samatvam, or emotional balance. This activity is called “Emotional Waves Practice.”

In this activity, we will learn to observe emotions as temporary experiences. Usually, when an emotion arises, we may react immediately. For example, when we feel angry, we may speak harshly; when we feel anxious, we may avoid a situation; or when we feel sad, we may withdraw. However, if we pause and observe the emotion, we may notice that the intensity changes over time.

The purpose of this activity is not to suppress or control emotions forcefully. Instead, the aim is to observe emotions with awareness and acceptance. This helps develop emotional balance and non-reactivity, which are central to the concept of samatvam.

Instruction to the Participant

I would like you to sit comfortably. Keep both feet on the ground and allow your hands to rest comfortably. If you feel comfortable, you may gently close your eyes. If not, you can keep your eyes open and softly focus on one point in front of you. Now, begin by noticing your breathing. You do not have to change your breath. Just observe the natural rhythm of your breathing as you inhale and exhale. Take a few slow breaths and allow yourself to settle into the present moment.

Now, I would like you to gently bring to mind a mild emotional experience from the past few days. Please choose something that was slightly stressful or uncomfortable, but not too intense. It may be a moment when you felt anxious, irritated, disappointed, sad, or hurt. As you bring this situation to mind, notice what emotion is present. You can silently label the emotion. For example: “Anxiety is present or sadness is present or anger is arising.” Try to use this kind of wording instead of saying, “I am anxious” or “I am angry.” This helps us observe the emotion as an experience rather than becoming fully identified with it.

Now, notice where you feel this emotion in your body. It may be in your chest, throat, stomach, head, shoulders, or any other part of the body. Observe the sensation gently. Is it tight, heavy, warm, restless, or tense? There is no need to change it. Just observe it.

Now imagine this emotion as a wave in the ocean. A wave rises, reaches a peak, and slowly falls. In the same way, emotions also rise and pass. Allow yourself to watch this emotional wave without pushing it away and without holding on to it. If your mind gets distracted, gently bring your attention back to your breath and to the emotion you are

observing. Silently remind yourself: “This emotion is present right now. This emotion is temporary. I can observe it without reacting immediately.”

Remain with this observation for a few moments. Now slowly bring your attention back to your breathing. Notice your body sitting in the room. When you are ready, gently open your eyes.

Reflection Questions

After completing the practice, I will ask you to reflect on the following questions:

1. What emotion did you observe during the activity?
2. Where did you feel the emotion in your body?
3. Did the intensity of the emotion change during the practice?
4. What did you notice when you observed the emotion instead of reacting to it?
5. How can this practice help you in real-life stressful situations?

Closing of the Activity

This activity helps us understand that emotions are temporary experiences. They may feel very strong in the moment, but they do not remain the same forever. When we react immediately, the emotion may become stronger or lead to unhelpful behaviour. But when we pause and observe the emotion, we create space between the feeling and our response.

The Bhagavad Gita teaches the importance of remaining steady in pleasure and pain.

Psychologically, this can be understood as emotional regulation and non-reactivity. Through mindful observation, we learn that emotions can be experienced without being controlled by them.

This supports the development of samatvam, or equanimity, because it helps us remain balanced during emotional changes. The aim is not to stop emotions, but to relate to them with awareness, patience, and calmness.

Homework

For the coming week, I would like you to practise the Emotional Waves Practice for at least five minutes each day, or whenever you notice a strong emotion.

When an emotion arises, pause and write briefly:

1. What emotion did I notice?
2. What triggered the emotion?
3. Where did I feel it in my body?
4. Did I react immediately, or was I able to pause?
5. What happened to the emotion after some time?

You can also silently label the emotion using phrases such as:

“Anger is present.”

“Anxiety is arising.”

“Sadness is here.”

The purpose of this homework is to practise observing emotions without reacting immediately. Over time, this can help develop greater emotional balance and calmness.

Activity 5: Reframing the Battlefield

Objective: To help the participant reinterpret challenging situations from multiple perspectives and respond with greater emotional balance.

Time Required: Approximately 30–40 minutes

Materials Required: A sheet of paper, pen, and a quiet counselling space

Gita Phrase

“सुखदुःखे समे कृत्वा लाभालाभौ जयाजयौ”

“Sukha-duhkhe same kritva, labhalabhau jayajayau”

Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 2, Verse 38

Meaning of the Phrase

This phrase means that one should treat pleasure and pain, gain and loss, and victory and defeat with balance. In simple terms, the verse teaches us to remain mentally balanced in situations of success and failure. Life situations may not always happen the way we expect. Sometimes we may receive appreciation, and sometimes we may face criticism. Sometimes we may succeed, and sometimes we may experience failure. Samatvam means learning to view these experiences with balance rather than reacting to them in an extreme way.

Psychologically, this idea is connected to cognitive reappraisal. Cognitive reappraisal means changing the way we interpret a situation so that we can respond to it in a more balanced and helpful manner.

Introduction to the Activity

Today, we will do the fifth activity called “Reframing the Battlefield.”

In the Bhagavad Gita, Arjuna stands in the middle of the battlefield and initially sees the situation with fear, confusion, and distress. Through guidance, he is encouraged to look at the situation from a wider and more balanced perspective. In the same way, we also face our own “battlefields” in daily life. These may be academic pressure, family issues, conflicts, criticism, failure, comparison, or uncertainty about the future.

Many times, the emotional pain we feel does not come only from the situation itself, but from the meaning we give to the situation. For example, if someone does not reply to a message, one interpretation may be, “They do not care about me.” Another interpretation may be, “They may be busy.” The situation is the same, but the emotional reaction changes depending on how we interpret it.

This activity will help us practise looking at difficult situations from different perspectives. This is related to Samatvam, because emotional balance becomes easier when we are able to think flexibly instead of holding on to only one negative interpretation.

Instruction to the Participant

I would like you to think of a recent situation that made you feel upset, anxious, disappointed, angry, or stressed. Please choose a situation that you are comfortable reflecting on. Now, write down the situation briefly. Try to describe only what happened.

For example: “My friend did not call me back. I was not selected for an opportunity.” Now, write your first interpretation of the situation. This means the first meaning your mind gave to the event. For example: “My friend is ignoring me or I am not capable.”

Next, identify the emotion that came with this interpretation. It may be sadness, anger, anxiety, guilt, shame, embarrassment, or disappointment. Rate the intensity of the emotion from 0 to 10, where 0 means no intensity and 10 means extremely intense.

Now, we will practise reframing the situation. I want you to generate three alternative interpretations of the same situation.

Ask yourself:

1. Is there another possible explanation for what happened?
2. Am I looking at the situation only from one angle?
3. What would a calm and balanced person say about this situation?
4. What is a more helpful way to understand this event?
5. What can I learn from this situation?

For example, if the situation is “I was not selected for an internship,” the first interpretation may be, “I am not capable.” But alternative interpretations may be:

“The selection process may have been very competitive.”

“I may need to improve some skills before applying again.”

“This does not mean I will never get another opportunity.”

“This experience can help me prepare better next time.”

Now, among the alternative interpretations, choose the one that feels most balanced and realistic. Write it down as your reframed thought. A reframed thought should not be

unrealistically positive. It should be balanced, believable, and helpful. After writing the reframed thought, rate the emotional intensity again from 0 to 10. Notice whether the emotion has changed after looking at the situation differently.

Reflection Questions

After completing the activity, I will ask you to reflect on the following questions:

1. What was your first interpretation of the situation?
2. Was that interpretation the only possible explanation?
3. Which alternative interpretation felt most balanced?
4. Did your emotional intensity change after reframing the situation?
5. How can this practice help you respond more calmly in difficult situations?

Closing of the Activity

This activity helps us understand that the way we interpret a situation strongly influences the way we feel and respond. When we look at a situation only from one negative angle, we may feel overwhelmed or react impulsively. But when we generate alternative interpretations, we create space for a more balanced response.

The Bhagavad Gita teaches us to maintain balance in pleasure and pain, gain and loss, success and failure. Psychologically, this can be practised through cognitive reappraisal, where we learn to reinterpret difficult experiences in a more realistic and helpful way. This supports the development of samatvam, or equanimity, because it helps us remain emotionally balanced even when situations are challenging. The aim is not to deny pain or disappointment, but to look at the situation with flexibility, clarity, and steadiness.

Homework

For the coming week, I would like you to practise reframing in at least two stressful situations. Whenever you feel upset, anxious, disappointed, or angry, write down:

1. The situation

2. Your first interpretation
3. The emotion and intensity
4. Three alternative interpretations
5. The most balanced interpretation
6. The emotional intensity after reframing

The purpose of this homework is to practise looking at situations from more than one perspective. Over time, this can help you develop emotional balance and respond to life situations with greater calmness and clarity.

Activity 6: Compassionate Equanimity Pause

Objective: To help the participant respond to difficult emotions and self-critical thoughts with mindfulness, acceptance, and self-kindness.

Time Required: Approximately 30–40 minutes

Materials Required: A sheet of paper, pen, timer, and a quiet counselling space

Gita Phrase

“उद्धरेदात्मनात्मानं नात्मानमवसादयेत्”

“Uddhared atmanatmanam natmanam avasadayet”

Bhagavad Gita, Chapter 6, Verse 5

Meaning of the Phrase

This phrase means that one should uplift oneself and not degrade oneself. It suggests that a person can become their own support through the way they relate to themselves.

In simple terms, the verse teaches us that during difficult times, we should not respond to ourselves with harshness, blame, or self-criticism. Instead, we can learn to support ourselves with understanding and kindness. Psychologically, this idea is connected to self-compassion, which means responding to personal suffering, mistakes, or failures with awareness, acceptance, and kindness.

Introduction to the Activity

Today, we will do the sixth activity called “Compassionate Equanimity Pause.” This activity focuses on developing emotional acceptance and self-compassion. Many times, when we go through a difficult experience, we may become very critical toward ourselves. For example, we may think, “I should have done better,” “I am not good enough,” “I always make mistakes,” or “I cannot handle anything properly.” These thoughts can increase emotional distress and make the situation feel even more difficult.

The Bhagavad Gita teaches that one should uplift oneself rather than degrade oneself. This can be understood psychologically as learning to become a supportive inner voice instead of a harsh inner critic. This activity is connected to *samatvam*, or emotional balance, because it helps us respond to difficult emotions with calmness, acceptance, and kindness. *Samatvam* does not mean that we will never feel pain or disappointment. It means learning to stay balanced even when such emotions arise.

Instruction to the Participant

I would like you to sit comfortably. Keep both feet on the ground and allow your hands to rest in a relaxed position. If you feel comfortable, you may gently close your eyes. If not, you can keep your eyes open and softly focus on one point in front of you. Now, take a few slow breaths. Notice your breathing as you inhale and exhale. Allow yourself to become aware of the present moment.

Now, gently bring to mind a recent situation where you felt disappointed, stressed, hurt, guilty, or self-critical. Please choose a situation that feels manageable to reflect on, not something too overwhelming. As you bring this situation to mind, notice the emotions that arise. You do not have to push them away or change them. Just observe them gently.

Now, we will practise the Compassionate Equanimity Pause in three steps.

Step 1: Mindfulness

First, simply acknowledge that this is a difficult moment.

Silently say to yourself:

“This is a moment of difficulty.”

“This is painful right now.”

“I am noticing this emotion.”

This step helps us recognize the emotion without denying it or becoming overwhelmed by it.

Step 2: Common Humanity

Now, remind yourself that difficulty is a part of human life. Everyone experiences pain, mistakes, disappointment, and confusion at different times.

Silently say to yourself:

“Struggle is a part of being human.”

“I am not alone in feeling this way.”

“Others also go through difficult moments.”

This step helps us remember that suffering does not mean something is wrong with us. It is a shared human experience.

Step 3: Self-Kindness

Now, offer yourself a kind and supportive response.

Silently say to yourself:

“May I be kind to myself in this moment.”

“May I respond to myself with patience.”

“May I give myself the understanding I need.”

“May I learn from this experience without hurting myself further.”

You may also place one hand gently on your chest or hold your hands together if that feels comfortable. Allow yourself to receive these words with gentleness. Stay with this

feeling for a few moments. Now, slowly bring your attention back to your breathing. Notice your body sitting in the room. When you are ready, gently open your eyes.

Reflection Questions

After completing the practice, I will ask you to reflect on the following questions:

1. What difficult emotion or situation did you bring to mind?
2. What self-critical thoughts usually come up for you in such situations?
3. How did it feel to acknowledge the difficulty without judging yourself?
4. Did the self-kindness statements change your emotional experience in any way?
5. How can you practise being more supportive toward yourself in daily life?

Closing of the Activity

This activity helps us understand that emotional balance also includes the way we speak to ourselves during difficult moments. When we respond to ourselves with criticism, the emotional pain may become stronger. But when we respond with kindness and acceptance, we create space for healing and clarity.

The Bhagavad Gita teaches that one should uplift oneself and not degrade oneself. Psychologically, this can be understood as developing a compassionate and supportive relationship with oneself.

This supports the development of *samatvam*, because equanimity involves accepting difficult emotions without becoming overwhelmed by them. Self-compassion allows us to remain emotionally balanced even when we face mistakes, disappointments, or personal struggles. The aim of this activity is not to avoid responsibility or ignore mistakes. Instead, it helps us respond to ourselves in a way that supports growth, learning, and emotional stability.

Homework

For the coming week, I would like you to practise the Compassionate Equanimity Pause whenever you notice self-criticism, stress, guilt, or disappointment.

When a difficult emotion arises, pause and write briefly:

1. What happened?
2. What emotion did I feel?
3. What self-critical thought came up?
4. How can I acknowledge this difficulty mindfully?
5. How can I remind myself that struggle is part of being human?
6. What kind and supportive statement can I offer myself?

You may use these three sentences:

“This is a moment of difficulty.”

“Struggle is part of being human.”

“May I respond to myself with kindness.”

The purpose of this homework is to practise becoming a supportive presence for yourself during difficult moments. Over time, this can help develop greater emotional acceptance, balance, and inner steadiness.

Ending Script

We have now completed all the six activities of the intervention. Thank you for participating sincerely throughout the sessions and for engaging with the reflections and exercises.

Over the course of these sessions, we explored two important concepts from the Bhagavad Gita: stithaprajña and samatvam. Through the first three activities, we focused on stithaprajña, which means stable wisdom. We looked at how to examine thoughts clearly, observe experiences from a distance, and act according to personal values. These activities were meant to help you pause, reflect, and respond to situations with greater clarity instead of reacting immediately.

Through the next three activities, we focused on *samatvam*, which means emotional balance or equanimity. We practised observing emotions, reframing difficult situations, and responding to ourselves with kindness and acceptance. These activities were meant to help you understand that emotions are natural and temporary, and that it is possible to experience them without being completely controlled by them.

One important idea we discussed was “*Samatvam yoga uchyate*”, which means that balance of mind is considered yoga. In simple terms, this reminds us that personal growth is not about avoiding difficulties, but about learning to remain steady and thoughtful while facing them. Similarly, the idea of “*Karmanyē vadhikaraste ma phaleshu kadachana*” reminds us to focus on sincere effort and meaningful action, rather than becoming overly attached to outcomes.

I would like you to take a moment to reflect on your experience in this intervention. You may think about which activity felt most useful to you, what you learned about your thoughts and emotions, and whether you noticed any small changes in the way you respond to situations.

Although the intervention sessions are ending today, you can continue practising these activities in your daily life. You can use the *Viveka Lens* when you notice distorted thoughts, the *Witness Within* when emotions feel overwhelming, the *Dharma Compass* when you need direction, the *Emotional Waves Practice* when strong emotions arise, *Reframing the Battlefield* when you face difficult situations, and the *Compassionate Equanimity Pause* when you notice self-criticism or emotional distress.

After this, I will ask you to complete the post-intervention questionnaires and provide your feedback about the sessions. Your responses will help me understand your experience of the intervention and evaluate its effectiveness for the research study. As mentioned earlier,

everything you share will remain confidential and will be used only for academic and research purposes.

Thank you once again for your time, cooperation, and openness during the sessions. I hope that the reflections and practices from this intervention will continue to support you in developing greater clarity, emotional balance, and personal growth.

Appendix C- Assessment Tools

Perceived Stress Scale 10 (PSS-10)

Perceived Stress Scale

The questions in this scale ask you about your feelings and thoughts **during the last month**. In each case, you will be asked to indicate by circling *how often* you felt or thought a certain way.

Name _____ Date _____

Age _____ Gender (Circle): **M** **F** Other _____

0 = Never 1 = Almost Never 2 = Sometimes 3 = Fairly Often 4 = Very Often

- | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. In the last month, how often have you been upset because of something that happened unexpectedly?..... | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 2. In the last month, how often have you felt that you were unable to control the important things in your life?..... | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 3. In the last month, how often have you felt nervous and "stressed"? | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 4. In the last month, how often have you felt confident about your ability to handle your personal problems?..... | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 5. In the last month, how often have you felt that things were going your way?..... | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 6. In the last month, how often have you found that you could not cope with all the things that you had to do? | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 7. In the last month, how often have you been able to control irritations in your life?..... | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 8. In the last month, how often have you felt that you were on top of things?..... | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 9. In the last month, how often have you been angered because of things that were outside of your control? | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 10. In the last month, how often have you felt difficulties were piling up so high that you could not overcome them?..... | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

Equanimity Scale 16 (ES- 16)

Equanimity Scale 16

Select the response that best describes how you view yourself, based on the scale below. Select the appropriate responses based on how much you agree with each statement right at this moment. Try not to spend too much time of any one item. There are no right or wrong answers.

- Strongly disagree = 1
- Mildly disagree = 2
- Agree and disagree equally = 3
- Mildly agree = 4
- Strongly agree = 5

1. When I have distressing thoughts or images, I am able just to notice them without reacting.	1	2	3	4	5
2. I approach each experience by trying to accept it, no matter whether it is pleasant or unpleasant.	1	2	3	4	5
3. When I experience distressing thoughts and images, I am able to accept the experience.	1	2	3	4	5
4. I can pay attention to what is happening in my body without disliking or wanting more of the feeling or sensation.	1	2	3	4	5
5. When I notice my feelings, I have to act on them immediately.	1	2	3	4	5
6. If I notice an unpleasant body sensation, I tend to worry about it.	1	2	3	4	5
7. When I feel physical discomfort, I can't relax because I am never sure it will pass.	1	2	3	4	5
8. I perceive my feelings and emotions without having to react to them.	1	2	3	4	5
9. I remain present with sensations and feelings even when they are unpleasant.	1	2	3	4	5
10. I notice that I need to react to whatever pops into my head.	1	2	3	4	5
11. When I have distressing thoughts or images, I "step back" and am aware of the thought or image without getting taken over by it.	1	2	3	4	5
12. I can't keep my mind calm and clear, especially when I feel upset or physically uncomfortable.	1	2	3	4	5
13. I endeavor to cultivate calm and peace within me, even when everything appears to be constantly changing.	1	2	3	4	5
14. I am impatient and can't stop my reactivity when faced with other people's emotions and actions.	1	2	3	4	5
15. I am not able to tolerate discomfort.	1	2	3	4	5
16. I am not able to prevent my reaction when someone is unpleasant.	1	2	3	4	5

Three Dimensional- Wisdom Scale (3D- WS)

Part A

	Strongly Agree (1)	Agree (2)	Neutral (3)	Disagree (4)	Strongly Disagree (5)
1. In this complicated world of ours the only way we can know what's going on is to rely on leaders or experts who can be trusted.					
2. I am annoyed by unhappy people who just feel sorry for themselves.					
3. Life is basically the same most of the time.					
4. People make too much of the feelings and sensitivity of animals.					
5. You can classify almost all people as either honest or crooked.					
6. I would feel much better if my present circumstances changed.					
7. There is only one right way to do anything.					
8. There are some people I know I would never like.					
9. It is better not to know too much about things that cannot be changed.					
10. Things often go wrong for me by no fault of my own.					
11. Ignorance is bliss.					
12. I can be comfortable with all kinds of people.					
13. A person either knows the answer to a question or he/she doesn't.					
14. It's not really my problem if others are in trouble and need help.					
15. People are either good or bad.					

Part B

	Definitely true of myself (1)	Mostly true of myself (2)	About half-way true (3)	Rarely true of myself (4)	Not true of myself (5)
1. I try to look at everybody's side of a disagreement before I make a decision.					
2. If I see people in need, I try to help them one way or another.					
3. When I'm upset at someone, I usually try to "put myself in his or her shoes" for a while.					
4. There are certain people whom I dislike so much that I am inwardly pleased when they are caught and punished for something they have done.					
5. I always try to look at all sides of a problem.					
6. Sometimes I feel a real compassion for everyone.					
7. I try to anticipate and avoid situations where there is a likely chance I will have to think in depth about something.					
8. When I look back on what has happened to me, I can't help feeling resentful.					
9. I often have not comforted another when he or she needed it.					
10. A problem has little attraction for me if I don't think it has a solution.					
11. I either get very angry or depressed if things go wrong.					
12. Sometimes I don't feel very sorry for other people when they are having problems.					
13. I often do not understand people's behavior.					

	Definitely true of myself (1)	Mostly true of myself (2)	About half-way true (3)	Rarely true of myself (4)	Not true of myself (5)
14. Sometimes I get so charged up emotionally that I am unable to consider many ways of dealing with my problems.					
15. Sometimes when people are talking to me, I find myself wishing that they would leave.					
16. I prefer just to let things happen rather than try to understand why they turned out that way.					
17. When I am confused by a problem, one of the first things I do is survey the situation and consider all the relevant pieces of information.					
18. I don't like to get involved in listening to another person's troubles.					
19. I am hesitant about making important decisions after thinking about them.					
20. Before criticizing somebody, I try to imagine how I would feel if I were in their place.					
21. I'm easily irritated by people who argue with me.					
22. When I look back on what's happened to me, I feel cheated.					
23. Simply knowing the answer rather than understanding the reasons for the answer to a problem is fine with me.					
24. I sometimes find it difficult to see things from another person's point of view.					