



UPANISHAD AND BHAGAVAD GITA ON TRANSDISCIPLINARY TEACHING-LEARNING AND ITS IMPLICATIONS

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Abstract :

Lord Shri Krishna says in Bhagavad Gita Chapter 13, Verse 17:

कर्मणो ह्यपि बोद्धव्यं बोद्धव्यं च विकर्मणः।

अकर्मणश्च बोद्धव्यं गहना कर्मणो गतिः॥

'I can be attained through Knowledge.'

Human birth is the biggest gift to the soul as human beings can realize The Higher Knowledge-The Metaphysical Knowledge. Certainly, lower Knowledge- Physical Knowledge is also crucial to ensure protection and sustenance of human life. Triumph of human life is in realizing the Higher Knowledge with the help of lower Knowledge as an instrument. It is said in Mundaka Upanishad, Verse 1.1.4:

तस्मै स होवाच । द्वेविद्ये वेदितव्ये इति ह स्म यद्ब्रह्मविदो वदन्ति परा चैवापरा च ॥ ४ ॥

There are two sorts of knowledge to be acquired. Those who have realized the Brahman (The Super Power) say Para and Aparā, i.e., the Higher and the lower knowledge both the types of knowledge are to be gained and be enriched with.

Here lies the importance of Transdisciplinary Teaching-Learning. This research study aims at understanding the Inevitability and Implications of Transdisciplinary Teaching-Learning that covers both the knowledge: the Higher and the lower by studying teachings from The Upanishad and The Bhagavad Gita.

Key words: *Transdisciplinary, Upanishad, Bhagavad Gita*

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Introduction :

Lord Shri Krishna says in Bhagavad Chapter 4, Verse 17:

कर्मणो ह्यपि बोद्धव्यं बोद्धव्यं च विकर्मणः।

अकर्मणश्च बोद्धव्यं गहना कर्मणो गतिः॥



The truth about action must be known and the truth of inaction also must be known; even so the truth about prohibited action must be known. For mysterious are the ways of action.

Lower Knowledge- Physical Knowledge is not enough,

Higher Knowledge-The Metaphysical Knowledge is required.

It is the Higher knowledge that enables one to know the truth about action (*Karma*), inaction (*Akarma*) and prohibited action (*Vikarma*). *Karma* is the auspicious action that is recommended by the scriptures, *Vikarma* is the inauspicious action prohibited by the scriptures and *Akarma* is the action that is performed without the feeling of ‘I’m doing the *Karma*’ and without the attachment to the fruit of action performed.

When men shall roll up space as if it were a piece of hide, then there will be an end of misery without one’s cultivating the Knowledge of the Lord. (Svetasvatara Upanishad 6.20)

Knowledge of the creation is not enough; Knowledge of The Creator is required. Agonies of the mankind are escalating because lot of emphasis is placed on acquiring knowledge of the creation but hardly any emphasis is placed on acquiring the knowledge of The Creator. Without gaining the knowledge of The Creator, education remains incomplete and incomplete education-incomplete knowledge is dangerous. Performing actions is not enough; performing actions based on vision is required. In order to perform actions based on vision, higher knowledge is required. Thus, Transdisciplinary Teaching-Learning is required. Transdisciplinary Teaching-Learning leads to apposite human resource management in all walks of life.

Literature Review :

Several books and websites were identified and selected for the study. The overview of the related literature is enunciated as under:

1. **Mundaka Upanishad on Inevitability of Transdisciplinary Teaching-Learning that covers both the knowledge: Higher and the lower**

S. Sitarama Sastri (1905) presents *Shankaracharyaji’s* commentary on Mundaka Upanishad. *Angiras* whispered to *Saunaka* that there are two kinds of knowledge to be gained. Those who see the Reality (The Supreme Authority), say these two kinds are; he says: ‘*Para*’ which is the knowledge of the *Paramatman* (The Supreme Authority) and ‘*Apara*’ which is that which deals with the means and the results of good and bad actions.

This evidently states the Inevitability of Transdisciplinary Teaching-Learning that covers both the knowledge: Higher and the lower.

2. **Bhagavad Gita on Inevitability of Transdisciplinary Teaching-Learning that covers both the knowledge: Higher and the lower**

Swami Mukundananda (2014) gave crystal clear translation of the shlokas of Bhagavad Gita. While translating verse eight of chapter ten of Bhagavad Gita, Swami Mukundananda said that Lord Shri Krishna says, “I am the origin of all creation. Everything proceeds from me. The wise who know this perfectly worship me with great faith and devotion.”



It is categorically clear here that gaining worldly knowledge is not sufficient, faith and devotion for The Supreme Authority through the divine knowledge is required. This clearly states the Inevitability of Transdisciplinary Teaching-Learning that covers both the knowledge: Higher and the lower.

3. Bhagavad Gita on Implication of Transdisciplinary Teaching-Learning that covers both the knowledge: Higher and the lower

Swami Prabhupada (1974) translated verse sixteen of chapter four wherein Lord Shri Krishna says, “Even the intelligent are bewildered in determining what is action and what is inaction. Now I shall explain to you what action is, knowing which you shall be liberated from all sins.”

Here, a very important message on implication of higher knowledge is stated. It is on gaining higher knowledge (divine knowledge) that one can acquire complete knowledge on what action is and what inaction is which enables one to liberate from all the miseries and sins.

Research Objectives :

1. To understand the Inevitability of Transdisciplinary Teaching-Learning that covers both the knowledge: Higher and the lower by studying teachings from The Upanishad and The Bhagavad Gita
2. To explore the Implications of Transdisciplinary Teaching-Learning that covers both the knowledge: Higher and the lower by studying teachings from The Upanishad and The Bhagavad Gita.
3. To present conclusion of the study and come up with recommendations with a view to present the importance and inevitability of complete education by imparting both the knowledge: Higher and the lower.

Limitations of the Study:

The study is based on secondary data. However, data being collected from the spiritual books like The Upanishad and The Bhagavad Gita ensures achieving of research objectives and thereby solves the purpose of the study.

Research Methodology :

The study depends on the secondary data collected. The required data has been obtained from Spiritual books like The Upanishad and The Bhagavad Gita, websites and lectures heard during JNANAYAJNA.

Findings :

1. Inevitability of Transdisciplinary Teaching-Learning that covers both the knowledge: Higher and the lower

“If the light of the sun is invisible to the owl it is only the fault of that bird and not of the sun.”

— **Ramana Maharshi, Collected works of Ramana Maharshi**

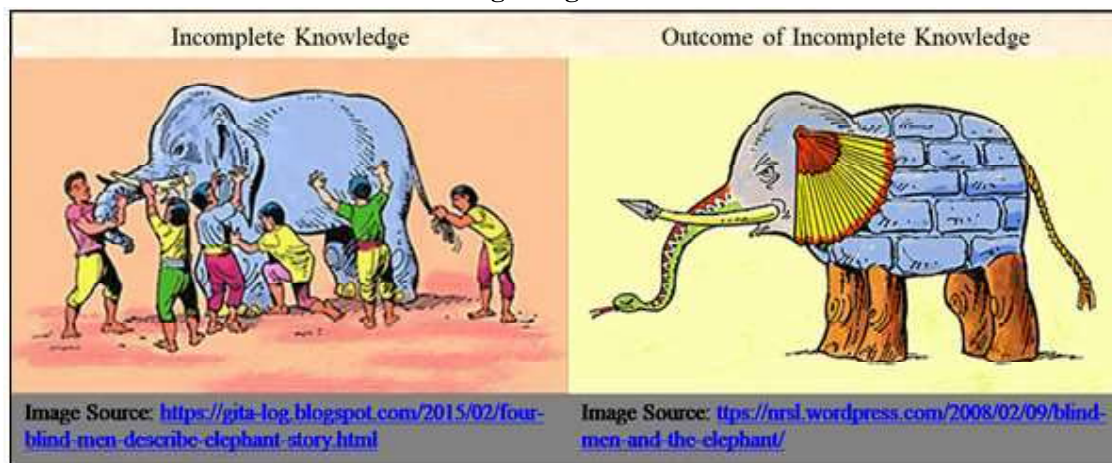
“Your own Self-Realization is the greatest service you can render the world.”

— **Ramana Maharshi**

These two quotes by Shri Ramana Maharshi illuminates the fact that vision is must, complete knowledge is must to ensure welfare of self and welfare of all.



Figure 6.1 : Illustration on Inevitability of Transdisciplinary Teaching-Learning that covers both the knowledge: Higher and the lower



Source- Self-Compiled

Incomplete knowledge is dangerous. There is an analogy as to how people misunderstand things on account of incomplete knowledge. There is this story about blind men and the elephant: There are few blind men who come across an elephant. These men started fumbling about, in quest of understanding and describing this animal. On holding the trunk one of them concludes that it is a snake. Another explores one of the elephant's legs and pronounces it as a tree-trunk. So for that man elephant is like a tree-trunk. One touches the elephant's tail and declares that it is a rope. Elephant is like a rope for him. After discovering the large body of the elephant, one man determines that it is, after all, a wall. For another one whose hand reached elephant's ear, it gave the impression like a kind of fan. Last one felt its tusk, declaring the elephant is that which is hard, smooth and like a spear.

Thus, it is absolutely clear that incomplete knowledge makes man to claim absolute truth on the basis of his limited knowledge. Whereas, Transdisciplinary knowledge-Learning that covers both the knowledge: Higher and the lower will enable one to have complete knowledge and see the truth in totality.

Eyes are not enough, Vision is required.

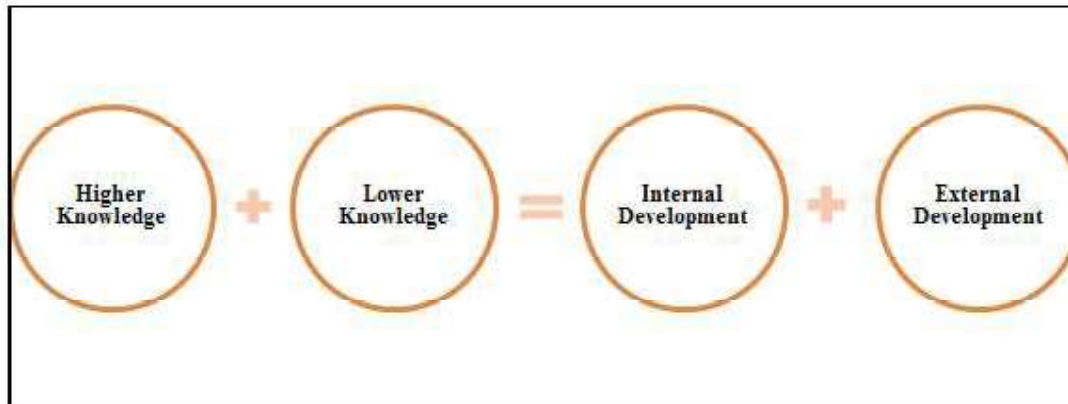
External Knowledge is not enough, Internal Knowledge is required.

2. Implications of Transdisciplinary Teaching-Learning that covers both the knowledge: Higher and the lower

Attainment of both the knowledge- the Higher and the lower will ensure attainment of complete knowledge/ complete education which in turn will not only ensure external development but will also enable one to develop internally.



Figure 6.2 : Implications of Transdisciplinary Teaching-Learning that covers both the knowledge: Higher and the lower



Source – Self-Compiled

Table 6.2 : Bhagavad Gita on Implications of Transdisciplinary Teaching-Learning that covers both the knowledge: Higher and the lower

| <i>Arjuna with one Knowledge - Archery</i> | <i>Arjuna with Complete Knowledge: Archery- Lower Knowledge + Higher Knowledge gifted by Lord Shri Krishna (Bhagavad Gita)</i> | <i>Implications of Transdisciplinary Teaching-Learning that covers both the knowledge: Higher and the lower</i> |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Bhagavad Gita 1.28, 29, 30 | Bhagavad Gita 18.73 | Bhagavad Gita 18.78 |
| <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p>Arjuna stated that his limbs are giving way and his mouth was dried up completely, his body shuddered, his bow was slipping from his hand, his skin was burning and he could not hold himself steady on seeing his kinsmen on the battlefield to fight with.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p>Arjuna mentioned that his illusion was dispelled by the grace of The Lord and that he was positioned in the divine knowledge. He experienced himself to be free from doubts and therefore stated that he will follow the instructions of The Lord.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">↓</p> <p>Sanjaya has said in Bhagavad Gita: यत्र योगेश्वरः कृष्णो यत्र पार्थो धनुर्धरः । तत्र श्रीविजयो भूतिध्रुवा नीतिर्मतिर्मम ॥ Wherever there is Bhagavan Shri Krishna, the Lord of Yoga, and wherever there is Arjuna, the wielder of the Gandiva bow, goodness, victory, glory and unfailing righteousness are there, such is my conviction.</p> |

Source – Self-Compiled


Conclusion :

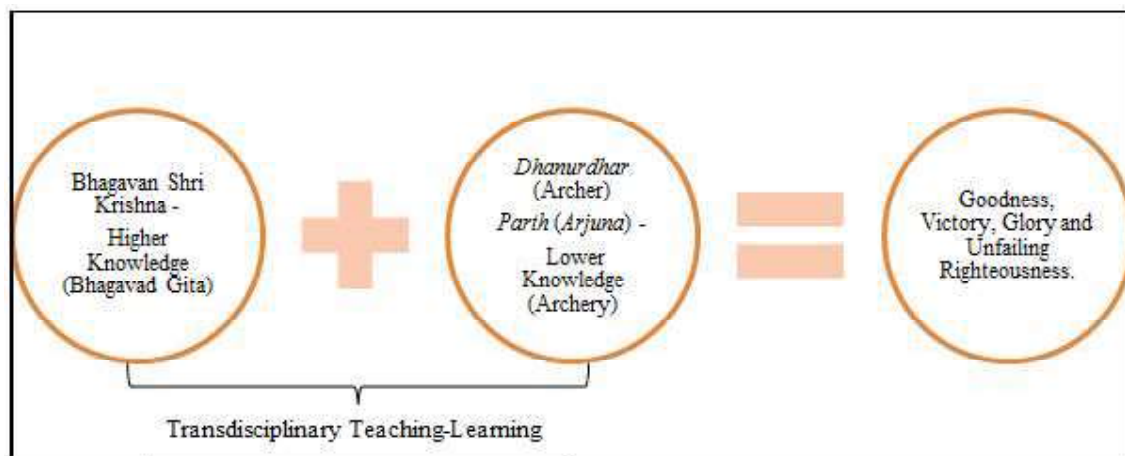
Sanjaya has said in Bhagavad Gita:

यत्र योगेश्वरः कृष्णो यत्र पार्थो धनुर्धरः।
तत्र श्रीर्विजयो भूतिध्रुवा नीतिर्मतिर्मम॥

Wherever there is Bhagavan Shri Krishna, the Lord of Yoga, and wherever there is Arjuna, the wielder of the Gandiva bow, goodness, victory, glory and unfailing righteousness are there, such is my conviction.

The paper concludes that, the outcome of complete knowledge, the outcome of complete education, the outcome of Transdisciplinary Teaching-Learning is goodness, victory, glory and unfailing righteousness.

Figure 7 : Goodness, victory, glory and unfailing righteousness as the outcome of Transdisciplinary Teaching-Learning



Source – Self-Compiled

Recommendations :

- ❖ Spread awareness regarding importance of Transdisciplinary Teaching-Learning that covers both the knowledge: Higher and the lower and its implications
- ❖ Organize Conferences and Seminars on the subject of importance of Transdisciplinary Teaching-Learning that covers both the knowledge: Higher and the lower its implications
- ❖ Organize Brainstorming Sessions on topics related to importance of Transdisciplinary Teaching-Learning that covers both the knowledge: Higher and the lower its implications
- ❖ Add syllabus that imparts Higher Knowledge in the curriculum


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