

Indian Knowledge System (IKS) as a Significant Corpus of Resources Useful for Personal and Professional Development

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Abstract:

This research article is the outcome of a study conducted to critically analyse the credibility of the Indian Knowledge System (IKS) and indigenous resource inclusion at various levels of the teaching and learning process for inculcating socio-emotional intelligence. Socio-emotional intelligence refers to the ability to recognise, understand, and manage one's own emotions, as well as understand and relate effectively to the emotions of others. This article begins with a discussion of the meaning of Socio-Emotional Intelligence (SEI) and the status of SEI skills among learners in India. It also discusses the various initiatives to inculcate Socio-emotional skills through education and the challenges in their implementation. After having presented the credibility component, the article presents an elaborate account of teaching SEI through references and select lines taken from the Indian Epics i.e., the Ramayana and the Mahabharata; and, select lines from the Bhagavad Gita. Towards the end, the conclusion and findings are presented that are indicative of the future course of action and the high level of impact of IKS in curricula on the lines of the recommendations proposed in NEP2020. This article serves as a valuable resource for educators, policymakers, and other stakeholders interested in promoting the holistic development of individuals through education.

Keywords:

Indian Knowledge System (IKS), NEP2020, Socio-Emotional Intelligence, The Ramayana, The Mahabharata, The Bhagavad Gita, Personality Development, Indian Academia, GoI initiatives in Education

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I. Introduction

Socio-emotional intelligence refers to the ability to recognise, understand, and manage one's own emotions, as well as understand and effectively relate to the emotions of others in various social contexts. It involves being aware of and being able to navigate and regulate one's own emotions, as well as having empathy and understanding for the emotions of others. This type of intelligence encompasses skills such as self-awareness, self-regulation, empathy, social awareness, and relationship management. It is a crucial aspect of emotional and social development, as it enables individuals to build strong relationships, communicate effectively, and navigate complex social situations. Socio-emotional intelligence is considered an essential skill for success in personal, academic, and professional contexts.

Scope and Limitation of the Article

Indian Knowledge System (IKS) encompass a wide range of ancient wisdom, including traditional medicine, astrology, yoga, meditation, and more. These systems have been passed down through generations and have played a significant role in shaping India's history and culture. Introducing these IKS resources in teachings will be useful to improve self-reflection, emotional regulation, and empathy. These practices help students to understand and manage their emotions effectively, leading to better decision-making and healthier relationships. As the domain of IKS is so vast, this article is limited to the discussion of the Ramayana, the Mahabharata; and the Bhagavad Gita.

Importance of Socio-emotional intelligence

Development of Socio-Emotional Intelligence (SEI) is crucial for the holistic growth of an individual, as it plays a fundamental role in shaping one's personal, academic, and professional lives. While cognitive intelligence is often emphasised in traditional educational systems, socio-emotional development is equally

important, if not more, in fostering well-rounded individuals. It equips individuals with the necessary skills to navigate and succeed in social relationships. It encompasses key abilities such as empathy, self-awareness, and effective communication, which are essential for building strong and healthy connections with others. Developing these skills allows individuals to understand and connect with the emotions and perspectives of others, fostering mutual understanding, cooperation, and collaboration. In various personal and professional settings, such as team projects, leadership roles, or personal relationships, having a high level of socio-emotional intelligence enhances one's ability to negotiate, resolve conflicts, and build positive relationships.

Socio-emotional development also significantly impacts an individual's mental and emotional well-being. By promoting self-awareness and emotional regulation, individuals with developed socio-emotional intelligence are better equipped to manage stress, cope with adversity, and maintain a positive psychological state. These skills can contribute to higher levels of resilience, self-confidence, and overall mental health. In contrast, a lack of socio-emotional development may lead to difficulties in managing emotions, interpersonal conflicts, and increased susceptibility to mental health issues. It also plays a vital role in academic achievement and success. Research has consistently shown a positive correlation between socio-emotional intelligence and academic performance. For instance, students with higher levels of socio-emotional skills are more likely to be motivated, engaged, and exhibit better behaviour in the classroom. They are also better equipped to handle academic challenges, adapt to changing environments, and effectively communicate and collaborate with peers and teachers. Thus, socio-emotional development is integral to the holistic growth of an individual. It not only facilitates healthy and positive relationships but also enhances mental and emotional well-being and contributes to academic success. Recognising and prioritising socio-emotional development in education and personal development programmes is essential for nurturing well-rounded individuals capable of thriving in various aspects of their lives.

Status of Socio-emotional skills among children in India

The status of socio-emotional intelligence among children in India is a topic that deserves attention and further research. While there is limited specific data available on the subject, a variety of factors suggest a complex scenario. One factor influencing socio-emotional intelligence is cultural context. Indian society places a strong emphasis on academic achievement, often leading to a neglect of social and emotional development in educational settings. The traditional rote learning approach prevalent in many schools may prioritise cognitive skills over socio-emotional skills. This can result in children receiving inadequate support and guidance in developing important socio-emotional competencies. Another significant factor is the impact of diverse socioeconomic backgrounds on socio-emotional development. India's vast economic disparities create variations in access to quality education, resources, and opportunities for children. Children from disadvantaged backgrounds may face additional challenges in developing socio-emotional skills, such as limited support systems and exposure to stressful environments.

Cultural norms and parenting styles also play a role. Indian parenting styles may vary, with some adopting an authoritarian approach that may not encourage open expression of emotions or emphasise empathy and social skills. On the other hand, there is an increasing recognition of the importance of socio-emotional development, with parents and educators realising its significance in preparing children for a rapidly changing world. Despite these challenges, there have been efforts to promote socio-emotional intelligence among children in India. Non-governmental organisations and educational institutions have initiated programmes and interventions targeting socio-emotional learning. These programmes aim to cultivate empathy, emotional regulation, and interpersonal skills among children. It is essential to conduct more comprehensive research and gather data on the current status of socio-emotional intelligence among children in India. This will help identify specific areas for improvement, evaluate existing interventions, and provide evidence-based recommendations for enhancing socio-emotional development in educational systems. With increased awareness and concerted efforts, India can work towards nurturing emotionally intelligent children who are socially adept, empathetic, and resilient in facing the challenges of today's world.

Initiatives to inculcate Socio-Emotional Intelligence through education

Introduction of Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) programmes is one among the most significant initiatives in the recent years. SEL programmes are designed to promote self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. These programmes provide a structured framework for addressing socio-emotional needs and equipping students with the necessary skills to navigate their personal and social lives effectively. Various stakeholders in India have recognised the importance of socio-emotional skills and have taken several initiatives to promote their development through education.

Some of these initiatives include:

1. Government Initiatives: The Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has introduced guidelines and policies that endorse socio-emotional learning in schools. The National Curriculum Framework

(NCF) emphasises the integration of life skills, values, and attitudes within the curriculum to foster socio-emotional development.

2. **Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs):** Numerous NGOs in India strive to promote socio-emotional skills among children through targeted programmes. Organisations like Pratham, Teach for India, and Akanksha Foundation conduct workshops, mentoring programmes, and teacher training sessions to enhance socio-emotional learning in schools.
3. **Teacher Training:** Several institutions and organisations provide teacher training on integrating socio-emotional learning into the curriculum. These programmes equip teachers with the knowledge and skills to incorporate activities and strategies that foster socio-emotional development in classrooms.
4. **Research and Advocacy:** Researchers and educational experts in India have conducted studies and published reports highlighting the significance of socio-emotional skills in education. These efforts aim to raise awareness among policymakers, educators, and parents about the benefits of socio-emotional development and advocate for its inclusion in educational policies and practises.
5. **Parental Involvement:** Recognising the role of parents in fostering socio-emotional intelligence, initiatives have been taken to involve parents in the process. Workshops and awareness campaigns are conducted to provide parents with resources and strategies to support their child's socio-emotional development at home.
6. **Innovative Teaching Approaches:** Various schools and educators in India have embraced innovative teaching approaches to integrate socio-emotional learning. Techniques such as cooperative learning, project-based learning, and mindfulness activities are incorporated into the curriculum to enhance socio-emotional skills among students.
7. **Partnerships with International Organisations:** Collaboration with international organisations has also helped in promoting socio-emotional skills in India. For instance, organisations like UNICEF and UNESCO have worked with Indian stakeholders to develop frameworks and programmes focusing on social-emotional learning.

These initiatives collectively aim to foster socio-emotional skills among children in India, with the goal of equipping them with the necessary competencies to thrive in personal, academic, and professional contexts. Continued efforts and collaborations between various stakeholders are essential to further strengthening the impact of socio-emotional learning initiatives in the Indian education system. SEL programmes adopted in India often focus on various aspects of socio-emotional development. For instance, they emphasise the importance of self-awareness by encouraging students to recognise and understand their own emotions, strengths, and weaknesses. By developing self-awareness, students gain a deeper understanding of their own behaviour and can tailor their actions in a way that is socially appropriate and considerate of others. Another crucial aspect of socio-emotional development targeted by educational initiatives in India is the promotion of social skills and empathy. Students are encouraged to build positive relationships, communicate effectively, and work collaboratively with their peers. These initiatives often incorporate group activities, role-plays, and collaborative learning exercises to foster empathy, teamwork, and conflict resolution skills.

Challenges in the implementation of socio-emotional development skills

While the importance of academic achievement cannot be understated, the incorporation of socio-emotional development into education initiatives in India recognises the need for a holistic approach to education. By focusing on the emotional well-being and social skills of students, these initiatives contribute to the overall development of individuals who are capable of thriving in a diverse and interconnected society. However, challenges remain in implementing these initiatives effectively. There is a need for training and support for teachers to effectively incorporate socio-emotional development in their classrooms. Additionally, ensuring equal access to such programmes across all schools and regions is crucial to addressing the existing educational disparities in the country.

1. **Cultural Mindset and Priorities:** The traditional emphasis on academic achievement in Indian society often overshadows the importance of socio-emotional development. Shifting the mindset of parents, educators, and society at large to prioritise socio-emotional skills as essential for holistic growth can be a significant challenge.
2. **Limited Awareness and Understanding:** Many stakeholders, including parents, educators, and policymakers, may have limited awareness and understanding of the concept of socio-emotional development. The lack of awareness about its benefits and effective strategies for implementation can hinder its integration into the education system.
3. **Curriculum Overburden:** The existing curriculum in India is already demanding, leaving little room for the inclusion of additional subjects or activities. Incorporating socio-emotional learning into the curriculum may face resistance due to concerns over overcrowding the syllabus or neglecting other subjects.

4. **Teacher Training and Capacity Building:** Teachers play a crucial role in fostering socio-emotional skills among students. However, many educators may require training and support to effectively integrate socio-emotional learning into their teaching practises. Providing comprehensive and ongoing training opportunities for teachers is essential but can be a challenge given limited resources and the vast number of educators in India.
5. **Socioeconomic Disparities:** India's socioeconomic disparities pose challenges in ensuring equal access to socio-emotional development opportunities. Children from disadvantaged backgrounds may face additional barriers, such as limited resources, support systems, and exposure to stressful environments, which can impede their socio-emotional growth.
6. **Assessment and Evaluation:** Developing effective methods to assess and evaluate socio-emotional skills can be challenging. Unlike academic subjects, socio-emotional skills are less tangible and may require alternative methods of evaluation, such as observations, self-assessments, and feedback from peers and teachers.
7. **Scaling Up Successful Initiatives:** While several successful initiatives promoting socio-emotional development exist in India, scaling them up to reach a larger number of schools and students can be challenging. Limited resources, funding, and coordination between stakeholders may hinder the widespread implementation of these initiatives.

Thus, the recognition of socio-emotional development as a key aspect of education in the Indian context has led to the introduction of various initiatives aimed at fostering these skills in students. Through social and emotional learning programmes, schools in India are focusing on self-awareness, social skills, empathy, and responsible decision-making. These initiatives contribute to the overall well-being of students and their ability to navigate relationships and make responsible choices. Nonetheless, further efforts are needed to ensure widespread implementation and equal access to such initiatives throughout the country.

Teaching about Socio-Emotional Intelligence through ancient Indian texts

While the value of teaching socio-emotional intelligence is widely recognised, the question arises as to how we can effectively impart these skills to learners. This study identified that the rich narratives and characters from Indian Epics, such as the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, provide fertile ground for teaching socio-emotional intelligence, offering numerous references and examples that resonate and engage learners.

1) The Ramayana:

The Ramayana also provides exemplars of self-confidence and discipline. Lord Ramademonstrates unwavering self-confidence throughout his journey. When tasked with the challenge of rescuing his wife, Sita, from the demon king Ravana, Lord Rama stays focused, disciplined, and firmly committed to fulfilling his duty. Lord Rama's unwavering resolve and adherence to principles, even in the face of numerous obstacles, showcase his self-confidence and discipline. He maintains his composure, follows a strict code of conduct, and remains true to his dharma (moral duty). This unwavering conviction ultimately leads to the triumph of good over evil.

वाच्यावाच्यंप्रकुपितोनविजानातिकर्हिचित्।

नाकार्यमस्तिक्रुद्धस्यनावाच्यंविद्यतेक्वचित्।।5.55.5।।

Translation into English

An angry person does not know what he should say and what he should not say. No act appears wrong for an angry man. Nothing is unutterable for him at anytime, anywhere.

These lines highlight the importance of self-confidence and discipline. Learners can be guided to draw inspiration from these narratives and apply them to their own lives. By reflecting on these texts and discussing the characters' journeys, students can understand the transformative power of self-confidence and discipline. Educators can encourage learners to cultivate self-confidence by recognising their abilities, strengths, and unique qualities.

यस्समुत्पतितंक्रोधंक्षमयैवनिरस्यति।

यथोरगस्त्वचंजीर्णासवैपुरुषउच्यते।।5.55.6।।

Translation into English

A man who drives away his rising anger with tolerance just as snake casts off its slough is alone called a truly wise man.

Additionally, they can foster discipline by emphasising the importance of focus, perseverance, and unwavering dedication to one's goals and values. Incorporating these discussions into educational settings can

empower students to develop a strong sense of self and a disciplined approach towards achieving their aspirations.

Empathy and Understanding: Empathy, the ability to understand and share others' feelings, is a key socio-emotional skill. Indian epics offer rich examples of empathy that provide valuable lessons.

आढ्यतोवापिदरिद्रोवाद्ःखितसुखितोऽपिवा।

निर्दोषश्चसदोषश्चव्यस्यःपरमागतिः॥

Translation into English

Whether rich or poor, grieving or happy, innocent or not, a friend is the biggest support of a man.

The story of Lord Rama's compassion towards the poor and marginalised in the Ramayana, as well as his empathy towards his devotees, showcases how this virtue leads to fostering connections and nurturing emotional bonds amongst individuals. By discussing these instances, learners can develop a deeper understanding of empathy and its role in building harmonious relationships.

मनुष्यजैसाभीअच्छायाबुराकर्मकरताहै, उसेवैसाहीफलमिलताहै।

कर्त्ताकोअपनेकर्मकाफलअवश्यभोगनापड़ताहै।

Meaning in English:

A man reaps the fruits of his actions.

In fact, the work done by a human being becomes his destiny.

Lessons on Effective Persuasion and Communication, Essential Components of SEI

Communication is a two-way process that involves sharing information. Communication is essential for getting along with other and getting things done. Whether a student or a teacher, effective communication plays an important role in their success. To be an effective team leader, you need good Communication skills. To fulfil the responsibilities of sharing ideas, concerns, suggestions and other information with those on your team, your superiors and, in some cases, people outside your team/organisation you should have effective communication skills. The interaction between Sita and Hanuman serves as a great example.

Hanuman meets a weak woman under a tree after searching the Ashoka Vana. Her innate brightness was eclipsed by grief laden days. Hanuman recognised that she was Sita who was guarded by 'Rakshashis' armed with different weapons. All of a sudden, the sounds of cymbals and Vedic hymns filled the 'Ashok Vatika', where Sita was imprisoned by Ravana after he abducts her from Dandaka Forest. Hanuman scanned the forest and noticed Ravana approaching Sita. Ravana greeted Sita and addressing her proposed her to accept him and be his queen. He stated he was stronger than Rama and assured Sita that as his queen she would rule the world.

Sita noticed the audacity and arrogance and simply threw a blade of grass in front of him, suggesting that Ravana's bluster and promise mattered only that much to her. She then proclaimed her love for Rama and said that they inseparable like the sunlight and the sun. She warned Ravana to change his mind and listen to good advisors, else meet his death at the hand of Rama. Ravana was filled with rage listening to Sita, he ordered the 'Rakshashis' present to persuade Sita using all the four possible means: Sama, Dana, Bheda and Danda – including the use of force. He gave Sita a deadline of 2 months to change her mind; if not she would be killed, he threatened her. After Ravana went, the 'Rakshashis' menaced Sita to force her obedience. They were stopped by Trijata, who spoke of a dream she had which prophesised Ravana's defeat and Rama's victory. Nothing would delight Sita. All this while Hanuman was away but observant grasping the situation. Being a strong independent woman, she was embarrassed by the fact that Ravana had given her time to live, so she contemplated suicide. After all the Rakshashis were asleep, she tried to hang herself using her long hair. At this point Hanuman realized that he cannot delay any further and started chanting the name of Rama! A bewildered Sita looked up wondering who in this forsaken place chanted the name of her husband?! She spotted Hanuman among the branches. Hanuman proceeded to narrate the incidents that led to Sita's kidnapping and his crossing of the oceans. Hanuman was a master in the art of conversation and hence adopted this approach as opposed talking with Sita, to win her trust slowly. Sita initially thought that she was hallucinating, but Hanuman jumped down and introduced himself. He asked about Sita and she responded by identifying herself. Having started a conversation Hanuman tried to move closer, but Sita became cautious and warned him, "If you are Ravana in disguise, I am warning you that you are inviting death by doing this". Hanuman convinced her that Rama sent him. Sita requested a Rama description. She cried as Hanuman detailed Rama. This stranger's description made her miss the individual. Hanuman gave her Rama's ring as proof. Sita immediately wept.

Sita urged him to demonstrate his point by describing Rama to her. Hanuman described Rama in incredible detail, which filled her eyes with tears. She reflected on how much she missed the person described by this stranger. Hanuman proved his identity by handing her the Rama ring. Sita recognised it instantly and began to weep.

Sita began to believe Hanuman after seeing evidence that supported his claims but asked him how Rama became acquainted with Hanuman. Hanuman then described the events that led to Rama's union with his king, Sugreeva. Sita asked about Rama's health and wanted to know whether he had forgotten about her. Hanuman appeased Sita by informing her that he was unaware of her being here and that if he did, he would immediately ransack Lanka and rescue her.

Hanuman went a step farther and volunteered to carry Sita to Rama on his back. Sita laughed at him, perplexed as to how such a little monkey could carry her across the seas. Hanuman offended by Sita's ridicule grew in size and showed his 'vishwaroopa'. He said he could carry the entire island of Lanka on his back if he so desired. Sita, on the other hand, declined the offer, citing the plan's impracticality. She was also aware that such an approach would tarnish Rama's reputation. Hanuman was likewise persuaded by Sita's reasoning. He asked Sita for evidence of having met her. She gave Hanuman her crest diamond, the only piece of jewellery she had on her because she had thrown everything as a trail for Rama to follow in the forests. She also shared a tale about their friendship while residing at Chitrakoota. "No one else is aware of the story, and if you tell it to him, he will know that you have met me," she explained. She also set Rama a one-month deadline to come and save her, or else she would not be living. Sita wished Hanuman success and bid him farewell after she conveyed her message.

As we can see, both Sita and Hanuman made claims in this episode. They chose a position and backed it with reasoning; they then produced facts to persuade the other party. When we combine them, we get the qualities of successful communication.

Thus, if we want to guarantee that our communication achieves the goal, we must actively listen and ensure that there is information exchange on both sides. We should not hurry into providing information, but rather focus on establishing trust before disclosing anything. To establish trust, we must provide arguments and proof to back up our statements. It is also critical to use the appropriate tone and body language. Consider what might have occurred if Hanuman sprang in front of Sita in his colossal size without following the strategy of persuasion through communication. She would have assumed he was Ravana's supporter and would not have trusted him at any cost.

Thus, this episode is useful to teach a lot about socio-emotional intelligence while communicating in times of crisis.

Effective Interpersonal Skills and Intrinsic traits

Effective interpersonal skills contribute significantly to socio-emotional intelligence. Indian epics provide numerous examples of characters exhibiting qualities such as active listening, conflict resolution, and collaboration. In the Ramayana, Hanuman introduces himself and his master Sugriva, when he first encounters Lord Rama and Lakshmana in the forest. Lord Rama was amazed by Hanuman's communication ability and is in awe of his capacity to express himself. In the four or five slokas, Lord Rama describes the key elements of Hanuman's communication abilities that most impressed him as follows:

नूनव्याकरणंकृत्स्नमनेनबहुधाश्रुतम्।

बहुव्याहरताऽनेननकिञ्चिदपशब्दितम्॥4.3.29॥

Meaning in English

He spoke without any grammatical errors, and not a single word was amiss of verbiage, and he spoke briefly, clearly, and without ambiguity.

नमुखेनेत्रयोर्वापिललाटेचभ्रुवोस्तथा।

अन्येष्वपिचगात्रेषुदोषस्संविदितःक्वचित्॥4.3.30॥

Meaning in English

No fault can be found in his face, eyes, forehead, eyebrows, or any other part of his body (during his expression).

उरस्थंकण्ठगंवाक्यंवर्ततेमध्यमेस्वरे॥3.31॥

Meaning in English

His sentences are not too elaborate, not ambiguous, not dragging, not fast, raised in the chest or throat, in a medium tone.

संस्कारक्रमसम्पन्नामद्रुतामविलम्बिताम्।

उच्चारयतिकल्याणीवाचंहृदयहारिणीम्॥4.3.32॥

Meaning in English

His words are auspicious. They are refined. Neither fast nor slow, his utterances capture the heart.

The essence of Lord Rama's effective communication analysis can be summed up as:

- 1) It is preferable to speak in short bursts. It should not be too long or too short, and you should only speak at the required level.
- 2) Speak in a clear and unambiguous manner.
- 3) Make sure you don't make any grammatical mistakes while you speak.
- 4) Use only acceptable terms that can't be replaced with something else.
- 5) Try to maintain a balanced tone that the other person can hear. Your voice should not be too loud or weak.
- 6) Your word pronunciation should be perfect. The way you say the words should sound like music and be enjoyable.
- 7) All of your words should be directed right to the heart.

The emphasis on dialogue and negotiation in the story of Lord Rama seeking Sugriva's alliance in the Ramayana highlights the significance of effective communication and empathy in building relationships. Students can analyse these instances to understand the impact of interpersonal skills in fostering teamwork and cooperation.

2) The Mahabharata

The Mahabharata, a timeless Indian epic, holds immense wisdom and guidance that can help shape the socio-emotional intelligence of students. With its rich characters and intricate plotlines, it presents an unparalleled opportunity to engage students in developing their emotional intelligence, empathy, and social skills. By incorporating the lessons from this epic into the education system, students can acquire crucial life skills that will help them navigate the complexities of the modern world. One of the key aspects of the Mahabharata is the portrayal of the various characters' emotional journeys. Through their triumphs, failures, and internal conflicts, students can explore the complexities of human emotions and learn to identify and manage their own feelings. For example, the character of Arjuna experiences deep despair and fear before the great battle of Kurukshetra, and it is through his conversations with Lord Krishna that he learns to overcome these emotions and fulfil his duty. This storyline can teach students the importance of introspection and seeking guidance in times of emotional turmoil, enabling them to develop their own emotional resilience.

The Indian epics provide invaluable teachings on emotional regulation, a critical skill in managing oneself and relationships. The character of Draupadi in the Mahabharata demonstrates emotional control and resilience in the face of adversity. Despite being humiliated, she refrains from harbouring vengeance, instead offering forgiveness and embracing her responsibilities. Learners can draw inspiration from Draupadi's emotional regulation, learning to manage their own emotions and respond thoughtfully in challenging situations. Another crucial aspect of the Mahabharata is its emphasis on empathy and compassion. Students can learn valuable lessons about understanding and considering the perspectives of others through the complex relationships between the characters. For instance, the Pandavas and Kauravas are cousins who find themselves on opposite sides of a war. By examining how their rift originates from jealousy, greed, and misunderstandings, students can grasp the consequences of these negative emotions and the importance of empathy in building healthy relationships. These narratives can encourage students to foster empathy, understand different viewpoints, and develop conflict resolution skills.

The Mahabharata also promotes moral values and ethical decision-making. Students can explore the dilemmas faced by the characters and witness the consequences of their choices. For instance, the character of Yudhishtira faces a moral dilemma when he is forced to choose between truthfulness and saving lives during a critical moment in the epic. The ensuing consequences of his choice provide a powerful lesson on the importance of integrity and the need for ethical decision-making. By analysing such situations from the Mahabharata, students can cultivate their moral compasses and understand the long-term implications of their actions. Moreover, studying the Mahabharata can enhance students' social skills. The epic narrates important lessons on leadership, team dynamics, and effective communication. The Pandavas, for instance, embody the qualities of an ideal team, each having their own unique strengths and contributions. By exploring the dynamics of their relationships, students can understand the significance of collaboration, shared goals, and effective delegation. Additionally, the conversations between Krishna and Arjuna serve as a comprehensive guide on leadership and effective decision-making, encouraging students to practise active listening, constructive feedback, and inclusive decision-making.

3) The Bhagavad Gita

The Bhagavad Gita, a sacred scripture in Hinduism, is replete with valuable lessons on socio-emotional skills. Through its philosophical teachings and dialogues between Lord Krishna and Arjuna, TBG provides insights into self-awareness, empathy, emotional regulation, and interpersonal skills.

Let's delve into some of the key lessons on socio-emotional skills that can be drawn from the Bhagavad Gita:

1. Self-belief and rising to the occasion: In the Bhagavad Gita, Arjuna's moment of doubt and despair on the battlefield represents a lack of self-confidence. However, Lord Krishna imparts wisdom and instills self-confidence in him. The dialogue between Arjuna and Lord Krishna serves as a powerful example of overcoming self-doubt and finding the strength within. Lord Krishna reminds Arjuna of his noble lineage, his inherent qualities as a warrior, and his duty to uphold righteousness. Through this guidance, Arjuna's self-confidence is restored, and he gains the courage to fulfil his responsibilities, even in the face of adversity. The teachings in the Gita emphasize the significance of self-belief and the ability to rise above challenges.

सुखदुःखसमेकृत्वालाभालाभौजयाजयौ।
ततोयुद्धाययुज्यस्व नैवंपापमवाप्स्यसि ॥२-३८

Transliteration

sukhaduhkhe same kṛtvālābhālābhaujajayajayau |

tatoyuddhāyayujyasvanai vāmpāpamavāpsyasi || 2-38

Translation into English

Holding pleasure and pain, gain and loss, victory and defeat as alike,
gird yourself up for the battle. Thus, you shall not incur any sin.

2. Self-awareness: The Bhagavad Gita emphasizes the importance of self-awareness as the foundation of personal growth. Lord Krishna encourages Arjuna to cultivate self-awareness by recognizing his duty as a warrior and understanding his true nature. This introspection helps Arjuna gain clarity about his role and responsibilities. Similarly, learners can be encouraged to reflect on their own values, strengths, and weaknesses as a means to enhance self-awareness and make well-informed decisions.

आपूर्यमाणमचलप्रतिष्ठं समुद्रमापः प्रविशन्ति यद्वत्।

तद्वत्कामायं प्रविशन्ति सर्वे शान्तिमाप्नोति न कामकामी ॥२-७०

Transliteration:

āpūryamaṇamacalapratiṣṭhaṁ samudramāpaḥ praviśanti yadvat |

tadvatkāmāyaṁ praviśanti sarve śāntimāpnōtinakāmakāmī || 2-70

Translation into English

Just as the ocean remains undisturbed by the incessant flow of waters from rivers merging into it,
likewise the sage who is unmoved despite the flow of desirable objects all around him attains peace,
and not the person who strives to satisfy desires.

3. Empathy: *The Bhagavad Gita* teaches the significance of empathy in understanding others and fostering harmonious relationships. Lord Krishna exemplifies empathy by advising Arjuna to consider the perspectives and emotions of others. He emphasizes the importance of empathy in developing compassion and connecting with fellow beings. Learners can be encouraged to put themselves in others' shoes, practicing empathy as they navigate their relationships and interactions.

परित्राणाय साधुनां विनाशाय च दुष्कृताम्।

धर्मसंस्थानार्थाय सम्भवामि युगे युगे ॥४-८

Transliteration:

paritrāṇāyasa dhūnāṁvināśāyaca duṣkṛtām |

Dharma-saṁsthāpanārthāyasaṁbhavāmiyugēyuge || 4-8

Translation into English

To deliver the pious and to annihilate the miscreants, as well as to reestablish the principles of religion,
I Myself appear, millennium after millennium.

4. Emotional regulation: Emotional regulation is a vital skill that enables individuals to effectively manage their emotions and respond appropriately in various situations. *The Bhagavad Gita* emphasizes the need for emotional balance amidst challenging circumstances. Lord Krishna teaches Arjuna the art of emotional regulation, enabling him to maintain composure in the midst of the battlefield. By teaching learners to recognize their emotions, observe their triggers, and respond thoughtfully, educators can help them develop emotional regulation skills.

जातस्य हि ध्रुवो मृत्युर्ध्रुवं जन्ममृतस्य च ।
तस्मादपरिहार्येऽर्थे न त्वं शोचितुमर्हसि ॥२-२७ (Bhagavad Gita 2. 27)

Transliteration

jātasya hi dhruvomṛtyurdhruvaṁ janmamṛtasya ca ।
tasmādaparihārye’ rthenatvaṁśocitumarhasi ॥ 2-27

Translation into English

Death is certain for the born, and re-birth is certain for the dead; therefore, you should not feel grief for what is inevitable.

5. Interpersonal skills: *The Bhagavad Gita* provides insights into effective communication, conflict resolution, and collaboration – all integral aspects of interpersonal skills. Lord Krishna’s guidance to Arjuna underscores the importance of authentic and respectful communication, where individuals genuinely listen and seek to understand others’ perspectives. Furthermore, Arjuna’s trust in Lord Krishna and their collective decision-making process showcases the significance of collaboration and teamwork. By incorporating discussions on these concepts, educators can nurture interpersonal skills among learners.

योगयुक्तो विशुद्धात्मा विजितात्मा जितेन्द्रियः ।
सर्वभूतात्मभूतात्मा कुर्वन्नपि न लिप्यते ॥५-७

Transliteration:

yoga-yuktoviśuddhātmāvijitātmājiteन्द्रियः ।

Sarva-bhūtātma-bhūtātmākurvannapinalipyate ॥ 5-7

Translation into English

One who works in devotion, who is a pure soul, and who controls his mind and senses is dear to everyone, and everyone is dear to him. Though always working, such a man is never entangled.

In conclusion, *the Bhagavad Gita* offers profound teachings on socio-emotional skills. Through its emphasis on self-awareness, empathy, emotional regulation, and interpersonal skills, it guides individuals on their path to personal growth and harmonious relationships. By exploring the lessons derived from the Bhagavad Gita, educators can effectively impart socio-emotional skills to students, enabling them to lead fulfilling lives and contribute positively to society. Self-confidence and discipline are essential qualities for personal growth and success.

II. Conclusion

Socio-emotional intelligence, often referred to as emotional intelligence, plays a crucial role in an individual’s personal and professional success. It encompasses qualities such as self-awareness, empathy, emotional regulation, and interpersonal skills. One of the key factors that necessitates a focus on socio-emotional development in India is the diverse and complex social fabric of the country. India is home to diverse cultures, languages, and socio-economic backgrounds. This diversity often poses challenges in interpersonal relationships and communication, requiring individuals to develop empathy, tolerance, and understanding. Through educational initiatives, teachers and educators strive to promote these qualities and enhance students’ socio-emotional skills, fostering harmonious coexistence and cooperation.

Educational initiatives in India also aim to enhance responsible decision-making among students. This involves equipping them with the skills to critically analyse situations, understand the potential consequences of their actions, and make thoughtful choices. By integrating real-life scenarios and ethical dilemmas into the curriculum, students are encouraged to develop a moral compass and exercise responsible decision-making. Addressing the challenges in the implementation of various initiatives in order to facilitate socio-emotional intelligence and skills requires a multi-faceted approach, involving awareness campaigns, policy changes, resource allocation, and continuous professional development for educators. Overcoming these hurdles is crucial to effectively integrate socio-emotional development into the Indian education system and ensure that all children have equal opportunities to enhance their socio-emotional skills.

Incorporating Indian epics and *the Bhagavad Gita* into the education system will not only enhance students’ socio-emotional intelligence but also foster an appreciation for diverse cultures and ancient wisdom. Teaching socio-emotional intelligence is crucial for nurturing well-rounded individuals. Indian epics are a treasure trove of lessons and examples that can enable learners to develop effective communication, persuasion, empathy, emotional regulation, and interpersonal skills. By incorporating these narratives into educational curricula, students can not only gather invaluable insights but also apply them to their own lives, interpersonal

relationships, and professional endeavours. As educators, let us harness the power of Indian epics to impart socio-emotional intelligence and contribute to the holistic growth of our learners. By immersing themselves in the epic's narratives, students will gain a deeper understanding of emotions, empathy, morality, and effective interpersonal skills. These valuable life lessons will equip them with the emotional resilience, empathy, and social skills necessary to thrive in an increasingly interconnected and complex world. The Mahabharata offers an inexhaustible treasure trove of insights, making it an essential tool for nurturing students into empathetic, emotionally intelligent, and socially adept individuals.

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