



Relevance of The Principles of Dharma for Today's Governance System: A Way to Viksit Bharat

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Abstract: Dharma strengthens welfare ethics and purposes in an optimistic approach, which is derived from the Ancient Indian culture. The scriptures such as Vedas, Smritis, Upanishads, Puranas and epics are the mine of such messages that help, even the modern governance to operate the system with a sustainable, ethical and moral manner. Since ancient times, principles of Dharma have been used as foundation of constitution. It shapes cultural, environmental and societal progress throughout different time periods. Vision of India towards Viksit Bharat needs governance following principles of Dharma to promote sustainability. This study follows a secondary qualitative research method to address role of Dharma in maintaining governance system. Framework like transformational leadership suggests values into policy-making for a progressive India. Principles of Dharma involves duty, resilience and empathy to discuss issues of people that helps to provide relevant solutions.

Keywords: Principles of Dharma, Governance System, Viksit Bharat, Human Welfare, Ethical Practices, Indian Constitution

1. Introduction

“Dharma” is an Indian philosophical concept that promotes a total moral order for human behaviour, communal harmony, justice and good governance (Kdpublishations, 2026). This system of Dharma, originating from Vedic texts, Smritis, Upanishads and ancient epics strongly emphasises duty, responsibility and welfare rather than legalism. Similarly, while discussing governance, Dharma developed further to become Rajdharma, signifying moral governance, justice, well-being and restraints. Based on this philosophy, the ruler was considered a trustee

with moral obligations beyond individual interests, and the rule was accepted by the people in terms of their well-being.

The complex issues currently faced by India as a modern state include governance problems such as corruption, administrative inefficiencies, social inequality and issues of public mistrust and ethics in decision-making processes. Also, there is a gap between constitutional values and policy implementation in delivering services and ensuring accessibility to justice and people's welfare governance. However, the challenges indicate the importance of developing a framework of ethics to ensure moral responsibility, which is solidified with accountability to the public and oriented towards the national interest in the long term.

Aim

The study aims to determine the core knowledge about the Dharma-based principles in solidifying the modern Governance for Viksit Bharat.

Objectives

- To determine the core conceptual findings of Dharma at the beginning of this culture and philosophical resolutions with the historical background.
- To understand the key governance risks in modern times and address gaps in ethical standards regarding justice, morale, and public welfare approaches.
- To identify the ethical principles based on Dharma to implement transparent, ethical, and people-welfare governance related to Viksit Bharat.
- To assess the essential Dharma regulations implemented by the governance for formulating policy, leadership ethics and sustainable development for the country.

However, there are several disconnections between constitutional values and policy implementation in delivering services and ensuring accessibility to justice and citizen-centric governance. It serves to provide policymakers with normative guidance on ethical decision-making, people-centric governance transformations and accountability building. Moreover, this study also substantiated national development approaches by linking governance ethical abilities with addressing the vision of Vikshit Bharat. Finally, the importance of Dharma is reinforced in establishing its relevance to contemporary concerns of fostering good leadership and governance.

2. Literature Review

Dharma is the roadmap to find out the “way of life”, as per the ancient philosophy of India (Garg and Manhas, 2022). The relationship between “Karma” and “Artha” is related to the social and individual works, which refers to the individual getting the results as per their work. Also, “Karma” is a popular word that defines whether people will get results for what they do, whether it is good or bad. In ancient India, the concept related to Dharma was Rajdharma, which related governance with considerations of welfare, justice, and responsible exercise of power. The central idea brings forward Dharma, which is concerned with duty-based thinking and offers balance in terms of materialism and ethics, important to constitutionalism.

Ancient Indian society maintained its social order by means of Dharma, which is defined as the law governing moral behaviour, social order, and political order at various life stages. (Rai and Dwivedi, 2024). Scholars like J.P. Suda emphasised that “Dharma: Its Nature and Role in Ancient India”. It also found that Dharma is at the heart of Artha and Kama, and those practising adhharma were responsible for national downfall. In the current time, India is plagued by corruption, inequality and unethical movements, all of which resulted in a decline of the governance principles of Dharma and inspirational regulatory mechanisms. The principles of Rajdharma in the Arthashastra and Shanti Parva emphasise welfare, responsibility and morality in governance systems. Alongside this, Dharma ethics can serve to improve fair practices, accountability, and global competitiveness as a framework for business and management aspects.

Raj Dharma provides a philosophical basis of ethics for democratic countries, focusing on morality, justice, accountability, and the righteousness of leaders and government (Mahajan, 2025). Also, Mahajan emphasises that Dharma can be embraced only through the Rule of Raj dharma policies to ensure they govern well. This kind of governance promotes enlightened citizenship, participatory decision-making, and the recognition of interests that encompass vote banks. Raj Dharma as a system of governance is a gradual process, and there is a need for comprehensive approaches in terms of education, healthcare, social welfare and agricultural sectors. The Rajdharma is aligned with the modern Government of Vikshit Bharat in establishing ethical institutions and nation-building in the long-term.

The Hindu scriptures, such as the Vedas, the Purnas and ancient epics like the Ramayana, reflect various eternal moral principles like Dharma, Ahimsa, Satya, Nishkama Karma, which govern Indian root moral (Saxena *et al.* 2025,

November). These concepts give an insight into duty, truthfulness, non-violence and selfless service and implement a comprehensive ethical policy for application. Finally, the research relates these historical principles to Western theories of ethics and demonstrates their relevance for the present day. Through the Virtue-ethical morality system, governance can develop a legacy for virtue that implements the functional features in helping find outcome software to solve the problems in a welfare manner (Swanton, 2023). It also emphasises “shelter life against luck”. However, incorporation of these values in governance systems helps to ensure ethical governance and development to realise the vision of Vikshit Bharat.

The philosophical ideas of Lord Krishna emphasise Nishkarma Karma, which encourages the performance of duties without any attachment. In modern time, social and economic contexts are misunderstood and detached from the eternal ethics and principles of those ancient scriptures (Godbole, 2025). The ethical principles also acknowledge the dependence that exists in society and the balance between the taker and the giver in ensuring economic and social order. In the context of modern India, industrialisation and corporate management comprise two significant elements of national power and development potential. Ancient Vedic and Dharmic models offer guidelines on balancing profit with ethics, morality and business values. Overall, the application of these Dharma rules and governance principles will help to build strong ethics and sustainable growth to meet the objectives of Vikshit Bharat.

A good governance system is a crucial approach for ensuring development of communities and countries through offering progress. It can create long term resilience contributing in development of a country. In the perspective of Channuwong (2024), governance principles of a state need an efficient public administration system to operate within law and policies. In recent years government system should be undertaking proper management based on responsibilities. Principles of dharma can implement an effective financial accountability among countries. According to Mehrotra (2025), principles of Dharma show an ancient concept in Hindu philosophy resonates with complexities present in connection between perspectivity and contextuality. It helps governance to recognise their responsibility towards human world and implement initiatives like Viksit Bharat.

Vision of India regarding Viksit Bharat suggests requirement of this country to integrate a sustainable governance ensuring administrative efficiency. In modern era, governance system of India involves corruption and socio-economic disparities

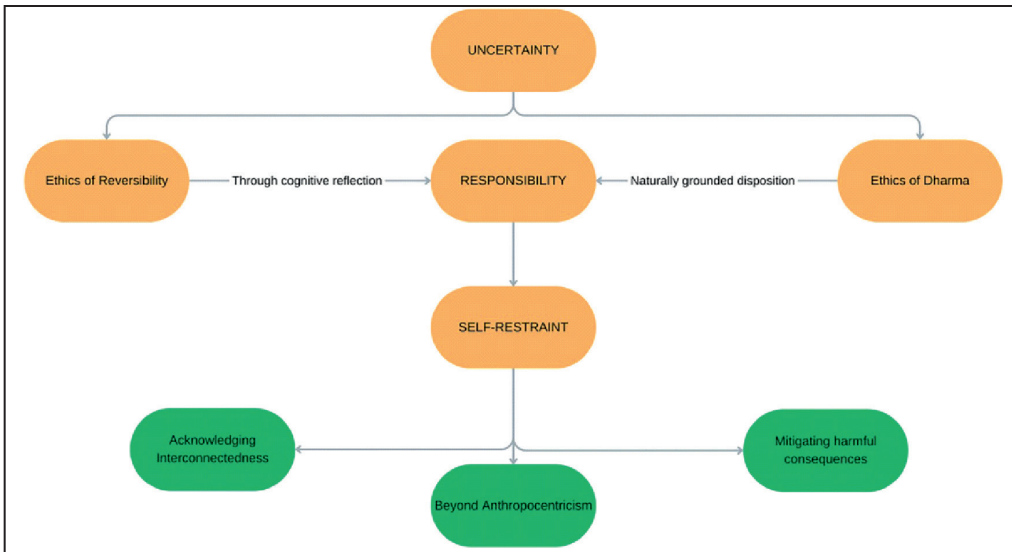


Figure 1: Framework linking ethical responsibility with governance system

Source: Mehrotra, 2025

that show policy paralysis (Kumar, 2025). In this situation Dharma can offer a sustainable framework to address these issues through offering justice, highlighting duty and involving moral accountability into governance. In the viewpoint of Ravi (2024), Dharma suggests philosophy of Nyaya showing logical reasoning and evidence-based methodologies sourced from Sanskrit. This concept is associated with constitutional principles of equality and fair practices. It is important for Indian governance system to ensure equitable access of resources that protect marginalized communities. It is evident that governance rooted in Dharma prioritized distributive justice provides benefits to all citizens (Patel, 2024). These principles help to uphold rule of law without bias and support governance to integrate concept of Viksit Bharat.

Scholar argues that Dharma integrates environmental sustainability decisions and brings stability in governance system (Gaur, 2025; Patel, 2024). Ancient Indians find an association between harmony and nature aligning with contemporary concerns of environmental governance. Involving Dharma in policy making ensures sustainable development through safeguarding resources for future generations (Krishnakumar and Balasubramanian, 2025). This concept can be analysed through *transformational leadership* theory that emphasizes vision and ethical responsibility. It shows importance of leaders to inspire followers to contribute in

designing developmental policies (Singh and Chaudhary, 2023). This theory can explain importance of Dharma in encouraging leaders to act selflessly and prioritize welfare along with inspiring citizens. It enhances morale values of Indian governance to improve ruling system and empower society to achieve new milestones.

Research gap

Existing literature highly focuses on Western theories of ethics that have minimal integration of indigenous concepts involving Dharma. Highlighting concept of Western outlook creates a gap in contextualizing Indian governance towards socio-cultural realities. Present research can reduce this gap through discussing contribution of Dharma in shaping the Indian governance system through aligning with frameworks.

3. Methodology

This research involves *interpretivism research philosophy* to identify patterns of data sources. Interpretivism is associated with idealism that helps to involve diverse approaches to make this research informative. It helps to reject objectivism that suggests a view within the world independently of consciousness (Junjie and Yingxin, 2022). This philosophy provides information regarding exact societal trends suggesting Indian governance system. Interpretivism assists to grasp context and nuances of existing qualitative data in providing detailed insights. It is beneficial to adapt existing information through different lenses uncovering crucial themes. In this research interpretivism guide to identify overlooked patterns without collecting new data.

Both *deductive and inductive approach* included in this research as it provides support in utilising larger amount of data in term of identifying issues associated with the research. According to Nava et al. (2025) the deductive method uses qualitative analysis, whereas the inductive method uses quantitative scoring to determine the perceived significance of the pre-established criteria. In providing detailed narrative and capture patterns of existing information, this approach is critical. Indicative approach is beneficial for analysing qualitative data due to its ability to identify original context. This approach suggests an effective research design method for this present research involving *exploratory research design*. Identifying gaps in existing literature, exploratory research design is used (Olawale et al. 2023). It is crucial to focus on findings and developing new ideas based on existing studies.

In supporting this research, both *primary quantitative and secondary qualitative data collection method* has been utilised. Primary quantitative data has been accumulated through an online survey using “Google Form” and then the data has been statistically analysed using IBM SPSS. An open-ended questionnaire [*refer to Appendix A*] is used for collecting the responses from 51 participants. Selection of the participants are performed using a “*simple random sampling*” process which helps in providing equal chance to provide response. Secondary data collected from literature, journals, Indian constitutional provisions, government reports and policy frameworks as it provides practical insights into governance challenges. This process involves a large dataset providing deeper understanding regarding historical and cultural context (Cheong *et al.* 2023). Secondary data can generate new insights, helps to support and challenges theories associated with themes. This process is effective to provide a huge dataset in a minimum time. It integrates information regarding governmental policies based on Dharma and discusses its effectiveness for Indian society. Secondary data reduce risk of false information as it is collected from authentic websites.

Thematic data analysis is a key data analysis method in qualitative research. It identifies themes and meaning of qualitative information uncovering nuanced (Ahmed *et al.* 2025). This process supports data-driven insights and enables comparison between studies. Thematic analysis involves diverse datasets to provide detailed information about chosen phenomena. Data is collected through following ethics as it involves only authentic websites to collect information. Official websites of Indian government and reports are involved in this research for involving more information about Viksit Bharat scheme. Synthesising diverse sources provides a holistic understanding regarding relevance of Dharma. It allows integration of indigenous concepts and making framework culturally rooted.

4. Results and Findings

Primary Quantitative Data Analysis

Descriptive Statistics

The statistical figure demonstrated that the highest number (20) of participants were from the age group 21-30 years. Also, below 20 participants were 13 of the total population of 51, which indicates that the majority of the participants were adults or middle-aged adults.

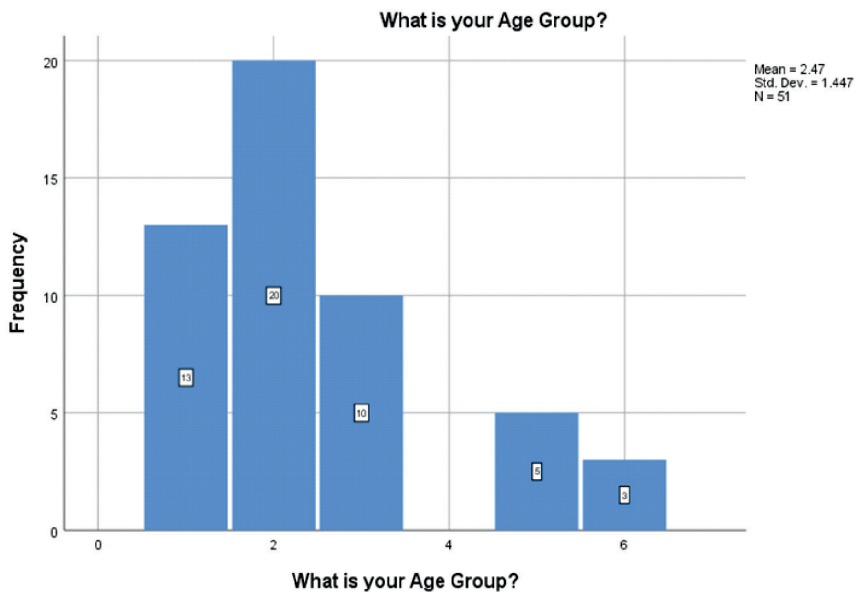


Figure 2: Age-Group Distribution

Source: IBM SPSS

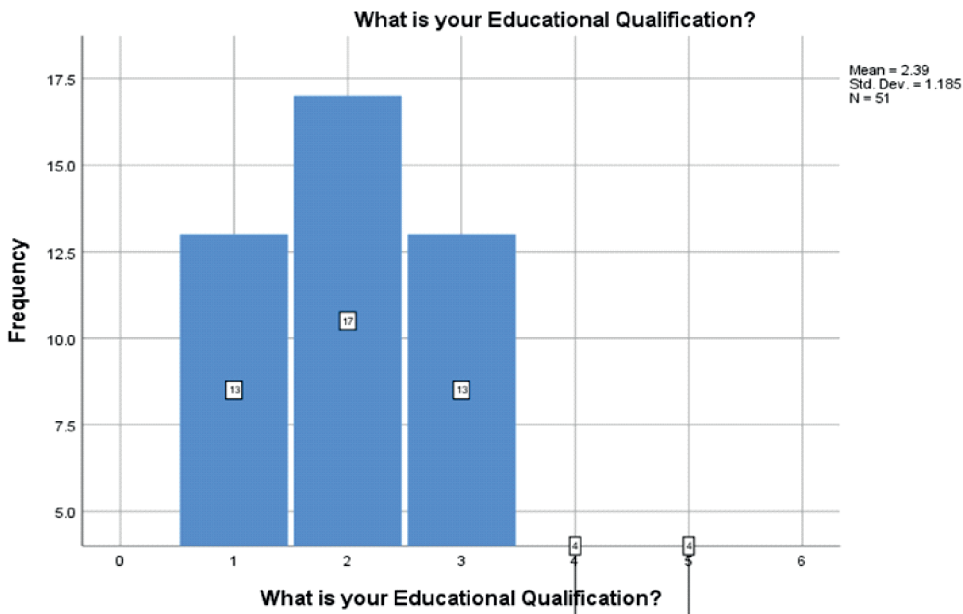


Figure 3: Educational Qualification

Source: IBM SPSS

The figure demonstrated the educational qualification of the respondents, with the largest number of graduates (17) and the lowest number of doctoral and others, equally (7.8%). This indicates that the participants are highly educated to give meaningful responses in this aspect.

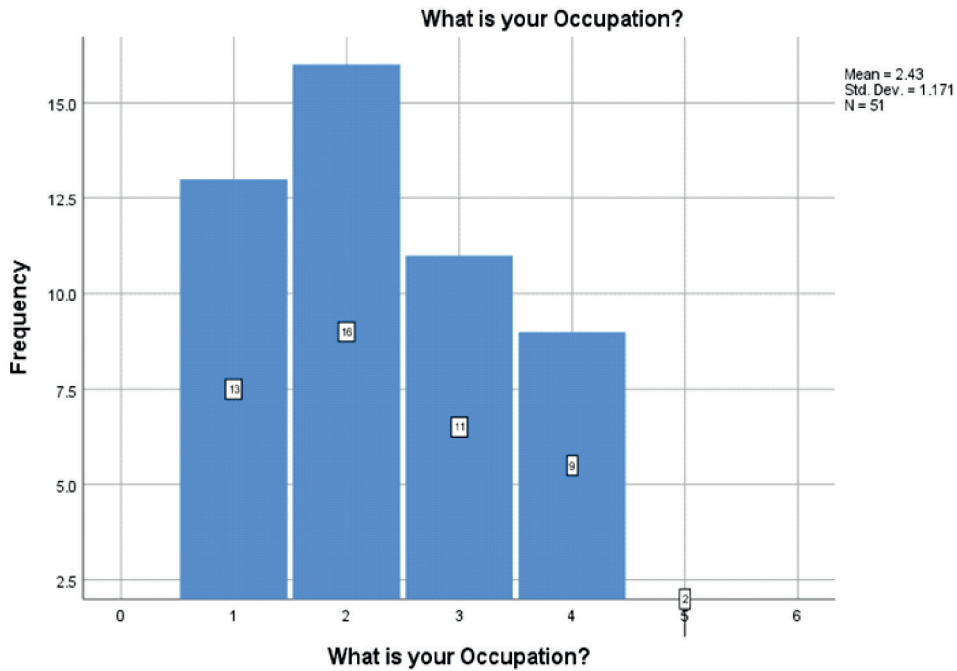


Figure 4: Occupational Demographics

Source: IBM SPSS

The figure illustrates that approx 16 participants are occupational government employee, while the second largest group of respondents (25.5%) are students. The participants' occupations are directly related to the topic, which indicates a core aspect of the research.

Descriptive statistics of identified variables

The mean scores differ between 2.20 and 2.43, indicating that the responses are generally biased towards agreement on the scale framework. Items like “The well-being of society must be the priority of governance” (Mean = 2.43) and “Fairness in law and governance enhances social stability” (Mean = 2.33) tend to represent relatively stronger endorsement. Standard deviations are generally close to or slightly above

1.20, suggesting moderate variability. Positive skewness is generally observed across the variables, suggesting that the respondents tended to choose lower numerical values more often, indicating generally positive perceptions. The kurtosis values are generally negative, suggesting that the distributions tend to be flatter without being too concentrated. The descriptive statistics above generally indicate stable response patterns and moderate levels of agreement with the statements on governance and ethical orientation.

Correlation Analysis

Table: Correlation Statistics

		<i>I believe that public institutions operate fairly and ethically.</i>	<i>In general, government policies and actions are in the long-term interest of the public.</i>	<i>Citizens can rely on governance structures to behave in an ethical way.</i>	<i>I think governance must be guided by moral duties.</i>	<i>The well-being of society must be the priority of governance rather than political considerations.</i>	<i>Traditional moral values are applicable in contemporary governance.</i>	<i>Ethical leadership enhances public trust in governance.</i>	<i>Leaders must be accountable to ensure good governance.</i>	<i>Moral obligations should inform government policies and decision-making.</i>	<i>The governance systems should ensure that resources are distributed in an equitable manner.</i>	<i>Fairness in law and governance enhances social stability.</i>	<i>The reduction of inequalities should be a major governance concern.</i>
I believe that public institutions operate fairly and ethically.	Pearson Correlation	1	.499* *	.503* *	.285*	.296*	0.087	0.258	.318*	.339*	0.126	.423* *	.396* *
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000	0.000	0.043	0.035	0.542	0.068	0.023	0.015	0.377	0.002	0.004
	N	51	51	51	51	51	51	51	51	51	51	51	51
In general, government policies and actions are in the long-term interest of the public.	Pearson Correlation	.499**	1	.464* *	.678*	.549**	.397**	.456* *	.381* *	.563* *	.394* *	.639* *	.553* *
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000		0.001	0.000	0.000	0.004	0.001	0.006	0.000	0.004	0.000	0.000
	N	51	51	51	51	51	51	51	51	51	51	51	51
Citizens can rely on governance structures to behave in an ethical way.	Pearson Correlation	.503**	.464**	1	.324*	.575**	.399**	.342*	.435**	.492**	.381**	.575**	.371**

		<i>I believe that public institutions operate fairly and ethically.</i>	<i>In general, government policies and actions are in the long-term interest of the public.</i>	<i>Citizens can rely on governance structures to behave in an ethical way.</i>	<i>I think governance must be guided by moral duties.</i>	<i>The well-being of society must be the priority of governance rather than political considerations.</i>	<i>Traditional moral values are applicable in contemporary governance.</i>	<i>Ethical leadership enhances public trust in governance.</i>	<i>Leaders must be accountable to ensure good governance.</i>	<i>Moral obligations should inform government policies and decision-making.</i>	<i>The governance systems should ensure that resources are distributed in an equitable manner.</i>	<i>Fairness in law and governance enhances social stability.</i>	<i>The reduction of inequalities should be a major governance concern.</i>
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.001		0.02	0.000	0.004	0.014	0.001	0.000	0.006	0.000	0.007
	N	51	51	51	51	51	51	51	51	51	51	51	51
I think governance must be guided by moral duties.	Pearson Correlation	.285 [*]	.678 ^{**}	.324 [*]	1	.578 ^{**}	.584 ^{**}	.479 ^{**}	.350 [*]	.499 ^{**}	.427 ^{**}	.468 ^{**}	.360 ^{**}
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.043	0.000	0.02		0.000	0.000	0.000	0.012	0.000	0.002	0.001	0.009
	N	51	51	51	51	51	51	51	51	51	51	51	51
The well-being of society must be the priority of governance rather than political considerations.	Pearson Correlation	.296 [*]	.549 ^{**}	.575 ^{**}	.578 ^{**}	1	.515 ^{**}	.396 ^{**}	.381 ^{**}	.560 ^{**}	.420 ^{**}	.588 ^{**}	.353 [*]
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.035	0.000	0.000	0.000		0.000	0.004	0.006	0.000	0.002	0.000	0.011
	N	51	51	51	51	51	51	51	51	51	51	51	51
Traditional moral values are applicable in contemporary governance.	Pearson Correlation	0.087	.397 ^{**}	.399 ^{**}	.584 ^{**}	.515 ^{**}	1	.523 ^{**}	.397 ^{**}	.594 ^{**}	.687 ^{**}	.447 ^{**}	.342 [*]
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.542	0.004	0.004	0.000	0.000		0.000	0.004	0.000	0.000	0.001	0.014
	N	51	51	51	51	51	51	51	51	51	51	51	51
Ethical leadership enhances public trust in governance.	Pearson Correlation	0.258	.456 ^{**}	.342 [*]	.479 ^{**}	.396 ^{**}	.523 ^{**}	1	.364 ^{**}	.694 ^{**}	.365 ^{**}	.593 ^{**}	.459 ^{**}

		<i>I believe that public institutions operate fairly and ethically.</i>	<i>In general, government policies and actions are in the long-term interest of the public.</i>	<i>Citizens can rely on governance structures to behave in an ethical way.</i>	<i>I think governance must be guided by moral duties.</i>	<i>The well-being of society must be the priority of governance rather than political considerations.</i>	<i>Traditional moral values are applicable in contemporary governance.</i>	<i>Ethical leadership enhances public trust in governance.</i>	<i>Leaders must be accountable to ensure good governance.</i>	<i>Moral obligations should inform government policies and decision-making.</i>	<i>The governance systems should ensure that resources are distributed in an equitable manner.</i>	<i>Fairness in law and governance enhances social stability.</i>	<i>The reduction of inequalities should be a major governance concern.</i>
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.068	0.001	0.014	0.000	0.004	0.000		0.009	0.000	0.008	0.000	0.001
	N	51	51	51	51	51	51	51	51	51	51	51	51
Leaders must be accountable to ensure good governance.	Pearson Correlation	.318 [*]	.381 ^{**}	.435 ^{**}	.350 [*]	.381 ^{**}	.397 ^{**}	.364 ^{**}	1	.460 ^{**}	.326 [*]	.540 ^{**}	.459 ^{**}
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.023	0.006	0.001	0.012	0.006	0.004	0.009		0.001	0.02	0.000	0.001
	N	51	51	51	51	51	51	51	51	51	51	51	51
Moral obligations should inform government policies and decision-making.	Pearson Correlation	.339 [*]	.563 ^{**}	.492 ^{**}	.499 ^{**}	.560 ^{**}	.594 ^{**}	.694 ^{**}	.460 ^{**}	1	.477 ^{**}	.731 ^{**}	.364 ^{**}
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.015	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.001		0.000	0.000	0.009
	N	51	51	51	51	51	51	51	51	51	51	51	51
The governance systems should ensure that resources are distributed in an equitable manner.	Pearson Correlation	0.126	.394 ^{**}	.381 ^{**}	.427 ^{**}	.420 ^{**}	.687 ^{**}	.365 ^{**}	.326 [*]	.477 ^{**}	1	.279 [*]	.449 ^{**}
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.377	0.004	0.006	0.002	0.002	0.000	0.008	0.02	0.000		0.047	0.001
	N	51	51	51	51	51	51	51	51	51	51	51	51
Fairness in law and governance enhances social stability.	Pearson Correlation	.423 ^{**}	.639 ^{**}	.575 ^{**}	.468 ^{**}	.588 ^{**}	.447 ^{**}	.593 ^{**}	.540 ^{**}	.731 ^{**}	.279 [*]	1	.520 ^{**}

		<i>I believe that public institutions operate fairly and ethically.</i>	<i>In general, government policies and actions are in the long-term interest of the public.</i>	<i>Citizens can rely on governance structures to behave in an ethical way.</i>	<i>I think governance must be guided by moral duties.</i>	<i>The well-being of society must be the priority of governance rather than political considerations.</i>	<i>Traditional moral values are applicable in contemporary governance.</i>	<i>Ethical leadership enhances public trust in governance.</i>	<i>Leaders must be accountable to ensure good governance.</i>	<i>Moral obligations should inform government policies and decision-making.</i>	<i>The governance systems should ensure that resources are distributed in an equitable manner.</i>	<i>Fairness in law and governance enhances social stability.</i>	<i>The reduction of inequalities should be a major governance concern.</i>
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.002	0.000	0.000	0.001	0.000	0.001	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.047		0.000
	N	51	51	51	51	51	51	51	51	51	51	51	51
The reduction of inequalities should be a major governance concern.	Pearson Correlation	.396**	.553**	.371**	.360**	.353*	.342*	.459**	.459**	.364**	.449**	.520**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.004	0.000	0.007	0.009	0.011	0.014	0.001	0.001	0.009	0.001	0.000	
	N	51	51	51	51	51	51	51	51	51	51	51	51
**.	Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).												
*.	Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).												

The correlation statistics reveal that perceptions of institutional fairness are moderately and positively correlated with views of government policies ($r = .499$, $p < .01$) and the reliability of ethical governance ($r = .503$, $p < .01$). These correlations suggest that trust-related perceptions are conceptually related. Also, there is a high correlation found between moral duty orientation, “I think governance must be guided by moral duties,” and long-term policy perceptions, “In general, government policies and actions are in the long-term interest of the public” ($r = .678$, $p < .01$), which indicates the consistency between ethical governance and policy perceptions. Additionally, “Moral obligations should inform government policies” is strongly correlated with fairness and stability ($r = .731$, $p < .01$), suggesting consistency between ethical governance perceptions. Most correlations are positive and

statistically significant, but weaker correlations (for example, $r = .087$) suggest that some constructs are relatively more independent. Nevertheless, the overall trend suggests conceptual consistency between ethical, leadership, and fairness-related governance constructs.

Regression Analysis

Table: Regression statistics

Model Summary									
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.538a	.289	.133	1.161	.289	1.852	9	41	.088

a. Predictors: (Constant), Dharma-Based Ethical Orientation, Leadership Ethics and Responsibility, Justice and Fairness in Governance

The regression analysis model summary provides $R = .538$ and $R\text{ Square} = .289$, which means that the predictors are able to explain approximately 28.9% of the variation in Perceived Quality of Governance. However, the Adjusted R Square value of .133 indicates that the explanatory power is diminished when considering the complexity of the model.

Table: ANOVA Results

ANOVA ^a						
	Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	22.456	9	2.495	1.852	.088b
	Residual	55.230	41	1.347		
	Total	77.686	50			

a. Dependent Variable: Perceived Quality of Governance

b. Predictors: (Constant), Dharma-Based Ethical Orientation, Leadership Ethics and Responsibility, Justice and Fairness in Governance

The ANOVA table ($F = 1.852$, $\text{Sig.} = .088$) provides evidence that the model is not statistically significant at the .05 significance level. This implies that while the variables have some collective explanatory power, their combined effect is not strong enough to provide conclusive evidence of predictive power. The results indicate a partial and limited explanatory role of the variables included in the study, which are related to ethics and governance.

Reliability statistics

Table: Reliability Statistics

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.857	16

The reliability analysis indicates Cronbach's Alpha = .857 for 16 items, which indicates high internal consistency. The Cronbach's Alpha value exceeds the acceptable level, which confirms that the instrument is reliable. The items of the scale show high consistency in measuring the constructs.

Secondary qualitative analysis

Analysing core conceptual findings of Dharma at the beginning of this culture and philosophical resolutions with historical background

Dharma has been central to Indian civilization for decades as it supports constitution from Vedic age (Reddy, 2025). This not only highlights religious belief as it promotes ethical practices of government to form social behaviour. In the opinion of Brahmachari (2025), Indian ancient text including Rigveda, Atharvaveda, Mahabharata, Ramayana and other Puranas highlights diplomatic frameworks. It provided a basis to Indian constitution and emphasized Dharma as a guiding principle for rulers that ensured justice. This concept also promotes duty of individuals for human welfare and contributes to forming a structured society. As mentioned by Yadav and Narayan (2025), Kautilya's Arthashastra is an ideal text that showcases Dharma as moral foundation of statecraft. It suggests king as protector of justice and in recent years government should fulfil such duties. Dharma with governance system has a deep connection as it strengthens ethical values and supports the government to implement initiatives like Viksit Bharat.

Principles of Dharma are not rigid, rather it helps in adapting circumstances while maintaining its ethical core. Such flexible principles help to remain relevant for Indian constitution across centuries. Dharma shows importance of maintaining balance between power and responsibility (Tuli and Gupta, 2025). It enhances awareness among governance to focus on social development rather than personal gain. Analysis suggests a strong historical bond between Dharma and governance system. Its importance as a conceptual foundation continues to resonate in modern times. In modern jurisdiction Dharma represents that governance must balance

economic growth with justice while showing morality towards society. Its impact on cultural development through aligning contextual situations with its principle.

Understanding important governance risks in modern times addressing gaps in ethical standards of public welfare approaches

Government of India claims that “*India’s governance is the world’s most ambitious experiment in managing diversity, scale, and aspiration yet its greatest challenge is not what it promises, but what it delivers*” (Singh, 2025). Recent reports highlight that India stands at threshold of Viksit Bharat as it aims to achieve this goal by 2047. It is evident that Indian administration involves 1.4 billion citizens, 28 states, over 250,000 local bodies along with 8 union territories. Political system of India is considered as the largest and most complex in the world (Bhat *et al.* 2023). Such a complex system is under risk of maintaining law and order in each state. Based on Worldwide Governance Indicators of World Bank 2024, India ranked 54.8 percentile on government effectiveness that is above the global median. This suggests necessities for implementing effective ethical standards for ensuring public welfare.

Pattern of Indian constitution in recent years shows that modern governance faces significant risks that create challenges for ethical standards. Corruption is a main threat for Indian government as it breaches policies regarding safeguards and reduces trust (Kumar *et al.* 2025). Such issues can be addressed through principles of Dharma as it is able to discuss gaps. India has several communities and a diverse level of income group that arise issues regarding unequal behavior. Socio-economic disparities present in Indian governance system as marginalized communities excluded from most developmental schemes (Makwana and Elizabeth, 2022). Principle of Dharma shows justice for equitable distribution of resources among people. Indian constitutions involve equal rights and developmental initiative for all communities while bureaucratic inefficiency delays reforms. Dharma on the other side, addressed duty-oriented leadership prioritizing long-term welfare.

Evaluating ethical principles based on Dharma implementing transparent and ethical governance related to Viksit Bharat

Data suggests a total participation of 10,55,879 in Viksit Bharat scheme. Among all participants 5,57,120 males and 4,98,415 females are officially registered (Innovateindia, 2024). Experts discuss that NITI Aayog is primary driver of Viksit

Bharat initiative. It has expressed strong confidence in potential of India to achieve its ambitious goals in future (Viksitindia, 2025). Needs for sustained growth needs to be promoted in this mission to enhance contribution of each sector in Viksit Bharat mission. International financial institutions also offer their expertise in development trajectory of India. Data from World Bank explain that achieving high-income status by 2047 is possible for India. This country should have an average growth rate of 7.8% over next two decades to achieve a goal related to Viksit Bharat. Statement of this mission involves “Viksit Bharat 2047 is the government’s vision to transform the country into a self-reliant and prosperous economy by 2047” (S3waas.gov.in, 2025).

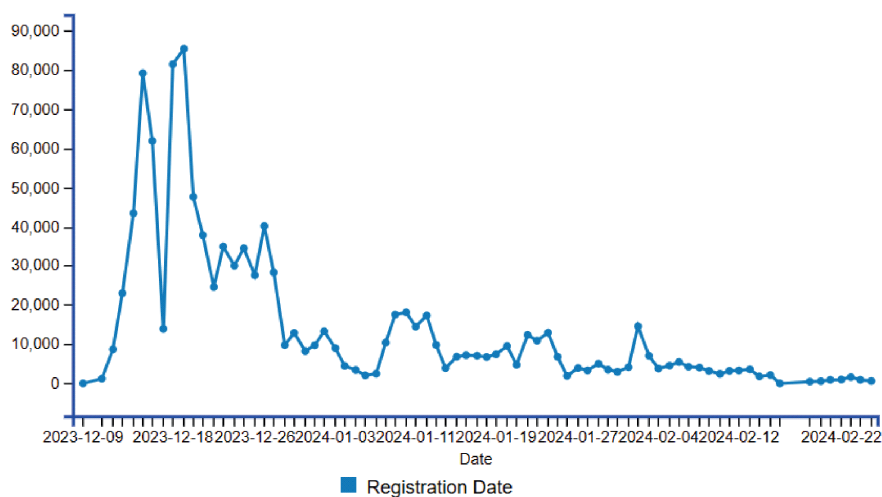


Figure 2: Day-wise progress of Viksit Bharat mission

Source: Innovateindia, 2024

Ethical principles derived from Dharma and it can be directly applied to Indian governance ensuring reforms. In enhancing fairness in law and resource distribution, justice is crucial. Principles of Dharma aligns with constitutional guarantees of equality providing justice. Leaders need to act with responsibility, to ensure public welfare and ensure growth of this country. Dharma highlights truthfulness suggesting necessity for a transparent governance prioritizing open communication (Channuwong *et al.* 2024). Union Home Minister Amit Shah stated that “After Independence, followers of various Sanatana traditions had waited for a long time for a government that would give due importance to Sanatana Dharma and

govern the country in accordance with its principles” (News18.com, 2026). It suggests importance of Dharma for Indian constitution and achieving its developmental goals. Modern governance can adopt this principle to address major issues involving climate change and environmental crises to reestablish respect for diversity.

Identifying essential regulations of Dharma for formulating policy, leadership ethics and sustainable development for country

Policies guided with Dharma showing inclusivity and justice that is people-oriented. It is responsibility of countries to ensure development of marginalized groups and support them to achieve justice. Ethics and a balanced system are pillars of Dharma that reflect on constitutions based on this concept (Reddy, 2025). Transformational leadership theory can address leadership ethics through describing moral authority. The progress of a country depends on principles and values of its leaders. Fair practices of leaders inspire citizens to act ethically and develop a feeling of inclusivity. It focuses on participatory governance activities that are necessary to attract trust of citizens and make it easy to promote new policies.

Ancient practices and policies of Dharma still provide structure to governance system. It highlighted responsibilities of government not only on societal development as it promoted ecological development. Modern Indian governance can adopt these principles to achieve goals related to Viksit Bharat. As an example, it can be addressed through statement of president Droupadi Murmu suggesting *“Our vision of Viksit Bharat is rooted in justice, sustainability, and inclusivity. These are not new ideals; they are the principles of Dharma that have guided our civilization for millennia”* (Pib.gov, 2025). This statement shows continuity of Dharma in supporting policy development and enhancing ethical leadership along with ensuring sustainable development.

Discussion

The present research indicates that Dharma is not just a normal notion but rather an ethical concept that is functionally impacted in India's past practices of governance. However, research findings have demonstrated that the ancient scriptures established Dharma as the basis of Rajdharma, which involved the ruler being ethically responsible for justice and welfare. This strong sense of duty of governance is lacking in the contemporary rule-based systems of administration, which emphasise protocols over results with regards to human well-being. In this order, this analysis shows

that flexibility seen in Dharma helped governance structure integrate adaptability while maintaining ethical integrity and trust. Adaptability is still relevant for present India, because of governance and socio-economic compulsions. The current risks facing governance are those of corruption, bureaucratic disability, inequality and lack of trust in leadership, among others.

The results suggest that the risks arise due to a noticeable gap that exists between the values as presented in the constitution and the effective mechanisms of implementing policies. The gap is filled by Dharma, which focuses on the importance of responsibility rather than authority and the well-being of society rather than the gains of the political class. However, the study indicates that governance through Dharma ensures administrative justice, which solidifies the equal distribution of resources to the marginalised sections of society. Also, the experience in Vikshit Bharat schemes indicates that a framework of ethical governance improves citizen engagement and the effectiveness of development strategies. However, Dharma is integrated with the transformational leadership theory, which determined that the concept of ethical leadership gains the trust of the members of an organisation. Alongside this, there are expectations of optimistic role models who would choose the public welfare first, by integrating the ethical model into the administrative structure. Besides this, environmental sustainability was also found to be an important finding in the research, as Dharma highlights the source of developmental objectives. This ethical leadership is crucial for the growth and success of the country in the long run, especially when the vision for the growth sets a height of prosperity in the governance of Vikshit Bharat 2047 (Mundhe, 2024). Overall, the discussion emphasizes the fact that Dharma provides an effective ethical perspective that is able to address the latest problems in governance in an all-in-one manner. In this order, the relevance of this concept is pivotal to refer the pathway to contemporary governance leadership to conduct a practical application with the core Dharma integration.

Conclusion

This study is relevant to show the pathway of strengthening the application of Vikshit Bharat to follow the factors of Dharma as an all-round developer. Considering the findings from the quantitative analysis it can be considered that there is conceptual consistency between ethical, leadership, and fairness-related governance constructs. The historical undermining of Dharma as an ethical principle on which justice, public welfare and adequate leadership are predicted through secondary qualitative

analysis. Alongside this, the findings from the combination of several thematic analyses solidified that Dharma brings duty, accountability and compassion together, which provides solutions to issues of governance, including corruption and inequality. The study has demonstrated that Dharma has strong ethics with values that are related to the constitution, such as justice, equality, leadership personality and transparency, while formulating and implementing policy. Also, ethical leadership through Dharma promotes the trust of citizens, which is significant to democratic governance of India in the aspect of importance to develop the country adequately. Through balanced economic growth and social and environmental concerns, Dharma can also contribute to sustainable development by integrating the organic and authentic sources of application, which would result in better outcomes than the current outcomes. However, the research suggests that initiatives under Vikshit Bharat acquire greater legitimacy if they are based on ethical governance rather than focusing on economic prosperity. However, the future studies can include an empirical investigation about Dharma from the ancient scriptures, such as Vedas, Puranas, Upanishads or statements of that is related to conducting proper governance for the country, which will teach a welfare and optimistic, people-centred leadership. In all, such studies can contribute in advocating solid ethics as a weapon for good governance in India's democratic development aligned with Vikshit Bharat objectives.

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