

SANATANA DHARMA FOR MODERN WELL-BEING: PSYCHOLOGICAL, SPIRITUAL, AND MULTIDISCIPLINARY INSIGHTS

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Abstract

This research examines the psychological, spiritual, and ecological impacts of Sanatana Dharma on modern well-being using a multidisciplinary, evidence-based methodology. The research investigates the impact of traditional practices on mental health and pro-environmental behavior in contemporary society, utilizing principles such as meditation, pranayama, ethical conduct, rituals, sustainability values, and dharmic philosophies. Utilizing a quantitative, cross-sectional survey methodology, data were gathered from 300 participants, comprising spiritual practitioners, environmentalists, psychologists, and students. Regression analysis indicated a significant positive correlation between the frequency of Sanatana Dharma practice and mental well-being, illustrating that meditative, mindful, and ethical lifestyles foster emotional equilibrium, resilience, and psychological clarity. Adherence to sustainability principles grounded in Sanatana Dharma significantly predicted pro-environmental behavior, underscoring its potential as an ethical framework for ecological responsibility, climate awareness, and collective welfare. The results support the idea that Sanatana Dharma is a complete system of knowledge that includes spiritual, psychological, and ecological wisdom that is very similar to what scientists think today. By combining old traditions with new ideas from many fields, the study finds that Sanatana Dharma is a useful, culturally relevant, and all-encompassing model that can help people with their mental health, encourage long-term behavior, and improve the health of the world as a whole.

Keywords: Sanatana Dharma, Well-Being, Meditation, Pranayama, Ecology, Dharma, Karma Yoga, Spirituality, Cosmic Order, Sustainability, Mental Health, Multidisciplinary Framework.

1 Introduction

Sanatana Dharma, which is often translated as the "Eternal Way," is one of the oldest philosophical and spiritual systems in the world. It stresses the need for harmony between the individual, society, and the universe (Manimala, 1997). Its teachings are based on ancient texts like the Vedas, Upanishads, and the Bhagavad Gita. They cover moral behavior (dharma), spiritual growth (moksha), responsible action (karma), and disciplined living (yoga). Contemporary scholarship emphasizes that these principles provide a comprehensive worldview that transcends ritualistic religiosity, offering practical frameworks for mental clarity, social equilibrium, and ethical life management.

In this time of rising stress, lifestyle diseases, and global uncertainty, more and more people are turning to the ideas of Sanatana Dharma to help them find inner peace, strength, and meaning. (Almarri, 2024) (Brahmbhatt & Kumavat, 2024) Researchers contend that the flexible, pluralistic, and experiential characteristics of Sanatana Dharma enable it to adapt and offer guidance across diverse cultures and historical contexts, rendering it particularly effective in tackling modern well-being issues. Its combination of psychology, ethics, metaphysics, and community-based practices helps us understand human life on many levels. (FAIP, n.d.) As societies around the world deal with problems like alienation, moral conflict, and psychological strain, the old teachings of Sanatana Dharma—focusing on mindfulness, duty, selfless action, and interconnectedness give us useful ways to live a balanced and meaningful life (Srinivasan & Aithal, 2023).

Rituals and meditation are the main ways that people practice Sanatana Dharma. They are not just for religious purposes; they are also for mental health and spiritual growth (V. Sharma & Suneja, 2025). Rituals like puja, yajna, and mantra chanting set up structured mental and emotional spaces that help people be more aware, lower their stress levels, and make their emotions more coherent. Scholars propose that these practices serve as embodied psychological instruments that promote emotional stability, foster gratitude, and reinforce personal identity by linking individuals to community and tradition. Dhyana, pranayama, and mantra repetition are all types of meditation that have been shown to be good for mental health in studies (D. Sharma & Sharma, 2024). These benefits include better focus, less anxiety, more resilience, and more self-awareness. Studies show that yogic breathing can also help clear the mind and balance the autonomic nervous system, which is good for the brain. Meditation helps people look inside themselves and go beyond themselves, which helps them connect with their inner consciousness (Atman) and feel peaceful and more aware. Rituals and meditation are powerful tools for holistic well-being because they have both psychological and spiritual effects. Research substantiates that these ancient methodologies markedly enhance life satisfaction, emotional intelligence, and inner stability, thereby validating the continued significance of Sanatana Dharma's epistemologies in contemporary mental health frameworks.

Contemporary global issues including escalating mental health disorders, emotional exhaustion, social disintegration, environmental stressors, and lifestyle-related diseases—necessitate comprehensive frameworks that integrate perspectives from various fields. Sanatana Dharma offers profound philosophical and spiritual resources; however, their effective application in contemporary contexts necessitates integration with psychology, neuroscience, sociology, and health sciences. A multidisciplinary approach allows for the empirical examination, clinical contextualization, and social adaptation of ancient principles, including mindfulness, ethical living, yogic practices, and community-centric values. Researchers emphasize that integrating Indian philosophical perspectives with contemporary psychological and therapeutic frameworks establishes culturally relevant and scientifically validated pathways to well-being. (Y. Sharma, 2025) These kinds of models can help people deal with stress, control their emotions, make decisions, and be more resilient. Interdisciplinary perspectives also help us see classical ideas like dharma and karma in a new light, making them more relevant and understandable for a wide range of people. (Xxx et al., 2023) (Salagame, 2013) Further research indicates that mind–body integration, lifestyle-based healing, and preventive care grounded in traditional practices enhance modern science by tackling both physiological and existential aspects of health. Therefore, a multidisciplinary framework grounded in Sanatana Dharma possesses significant potential for cultivating sustainable, meaningful, and transformative solutions to contemporary well-being challenges.

This study demonstrates how the psychological and spiritual tenets of Sanatana Dharma—encompassing rituals, meditation, and ethical conduct—can enhance contemporary well-being. It shows how these old ways of doing things can help with mental balance, emotional health, and inner peace, which is important for today's busy lives. The study is also useful because it combines traditional knowledge with modern fields like psychology and health sciences to make a complete picture of how to deal with today's global problems. In general, it shows how Sanatana Dharma can help people and society by giving them useful, meaningful, and culturally relevant answers.

1.1 Objectives of The Study

1. To evaluate the psychological and spiritual benefits of rituals and meditation in Sanatana Dharma.
2. To propose a multidisciplinary framework for addressing modern global challenges through the principles of Sanatana Dharma.

2 Literature review

(Aithal & Ramanathan, 2025) The research analysed evaluates the applicability of Karma Yoga from the Bhagavad Gita to contemporary life using analytical frameworks (SWOC and ABCD). It employs qualitative methods with literature from academic databases and AI tools to assess how the principles address modern challenges, such as burnout and ethical leadership. Findings show that Karma Yoga provides a strong ethical framework linked to improved well-being and social harmony, though it faces challenges like misinterpretation. This innovative study effectively translates ancient wisdom into actionable strategies for individuals and organizations, bridging philosophical concepts with modern needs.

According to (Salagame, 2025) Wishing for universal well-being is central to Indian spiritual traditions, embodying a collective focus on happiness that extends beyond individual concerns. Ancient traditions like Vedic, Jaina, and Buddhist share foundational views on ontology, epistemology, and ethics, cultivating a worldview that emphasizes flourishing. In the last two decades, Positive Psychology has evolved through Seligman's focus on positive experiences and Wong's acknowledgment of pain's role in meaningful living. Together, they offer a broad perspective on positivity, yet lack the spiritual insights of Indian traditions, which are encapsulated in the concept of purushārtha, leading to the proposal of Positive Psychology 3 as an inclusive framework.

(Kapadia, 2024) Examined that Peace is defined not merely as the absence of conflict but as a positive emotional and spiritual state, deeply intertwined with health. Vedic literature emphasizes peace as a construct achievable through specific rituals and prayers, notably articulated through the recitation of "Aum Shanti" at individual, national, and global levels. This paper contrasts modern Peace Psychology, which often relates peace to the absence of violence, with the Vedic perspective that frames peace as a positive ideal. It explores the integration of principles from Yoga, Ayurveda, and Neuroscience in fostering personal and societal peace. By incorporating these ancient and modern insights, the paper also aims to link the concept of peace to Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), suggesting that true progress begins with personal dharma and an understanding of broader vishwa dharma.

(Reddy, 2025) This literature review examined Sanatana Dharma, the eternal law of Hindu life, exploring its historical, philosophical, and cultural continuity. It begins with the foundations of Dharma and the Vedas, and examines the impact of Aryan migrations on India's religious and social structure. The shift from Varna Dharma to a rigid caste system is analyzed, alongside the development of temple culture and the arts. The review discusses the disruptions caused by Islamic conquests but notes Sanatana Dharma's resilience, exemplified by the Bhagavad Gita. It highlights the inclusive educational structure of the Mahabharata's Chaturvarna system, the religion's inherent diversity and tolerance, and its engagement with other faiths. The study concludes with the reaffirmation of Sanatana Dharma as a civilizational continuum, rooted in timeless principles capable of renewal through challenges.

(Koul, 2025) Investigated that Sanatana Dharma, commonly known as Hinduism, encompasses a rich tapestry of spiritual, ethical, and philosophical teachings that have developed over thousands of years. This paper delves into the philosophical

and theological foundations of Sanatana Dharma, focusing on creation narratives found in various scriptures and essential concepts such as Dharma (righteousness), Karma (the law of cause and effect), and Moksha (liberation). It emphasizes the relationship between Atman (individual soul) and Brahman (universal consciousness) and underscores the importance of ethical living through principles like Ahimsa (non-violence) and the notion of unity in diversity. Additionally, it addresses ecological responsibilities associated with these teachings and considers the relevance of Sanatana Dharma in modern society.

(Brahmacari, 2024) This research article investigated the multifaceted concept of Dharma within Sanatana Dharma (Hinduism), emphasizing its philosophical, cosmological, ethical, and practical aspects. Dharma is presented as a universal principle of order, moral responsibility, and spiritual growth, rather than merely a religious tenet. The article draws insights from key sacred texts such as the Vedas, Upanishads, Bhagavad Gita, and Itihasas, assessing the modern-day relevance of Dharma in confronting moral, ecological, and spiritual challenges. It posits that Dharma operates as both a cosmic and personal principle, influencing everything from celestial movements to human behavior. By analyzing scriptural passages, traditional interpretations, and their practical implications, the study reveals that Dharma goes beyond ritualistic practices and beliefs, providing a holistic framework for living harmoniously.

(N. Sharma, 2025) According to India's health landscape faces serious challenges like infectious diseases, nutritional deficiencies, and non-communicable diseases, alongside social health disparities. This paper highlights the importance of interdisciplinary approaches that combine medical, biological, and social sciences to develop effective health interventions. It critiques current policies and practices, particularly Ayushman Bharat, and emphasizes collaborative models to address systemic inefficiencies. Using the COVID-19 pandemic as a case study, it illustrates the benefits of integrating diverse health strategies. The paper calls for a holistic, culturally aligned framework that meets both global standards and local needs.

2.1 Research Gap

Existing literature illuminates Sanatana Dharma's philosophical foundations, ethical principles, and contributions to peace, well-being, and social harmony, but how these traditional concepts can be systematically integrated into a modern multidisciplinary framework is still unclear. Karma Yoga, Dharma, peace psychology, and spiritual well-being have been extensively studied, yet they have not fully addressed current psychological, spiritual, and global issues. Additionally, little study examines the psychological and spiritual advantages of Sanatana Dharma rituals and meditation from a unified analytical approach relevant to present social requirements. Empirical or conceptual models that convert traditional knowledge into health, social, and well-being interventions are lacking. The necessity for a research that combines classical principles with current multidisciplinary techniques to enhance holistic well-being is highlighted by this gap.

3 Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study utilized a quantitative, descriptive, and explanatory research design to investigate the impact of Sanatana Dharma practices on mental well-being and pro-environmental behavior. A cross-sectional survey method was employed, facilitating the measurement of all variables simultaneously and permitting the application of regression analysis to evaluate the proposed hypotheses.

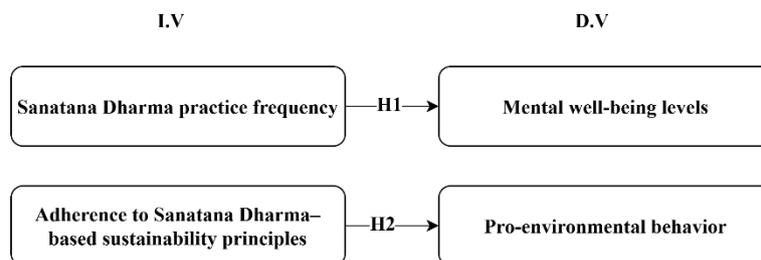


Figure 1 Conceptual framework

3.2 Population and Sample Size

People who knew about or practiced Sanatana Dharma were part of the study's population. There were 300 people in the sample, which was enough to do statistical analysis and regression testing. People came from spiritual communities, environmental groups, schools, and student networks. The sample had people from a wide range of fields, such as spiritual practitioners, environmentalists, psychologists, and students. This made sure that there were a lot of different points of view on spirituality, psychology, and ecology. Convenience sampling was employed because participants were readily accessible via online groups and community networks.

3.3 Research Variables

The research analyzed two predictor variables and two outcome variables. The initial predictor variable was the frequency of Sanatana Dharma practices, with its associated outcome variable being mental well-being. The second predictor variable was adherence to sustainability principles rooted in Sanatana Dharma, while the corresponding outcome variable was pro-environmental behavior. Structured Likert-scale items were used to measure all of the variables.

3.4 Instrumentation

A structured questionnaire was used to collect the data. The first section recorded demographic information such as gender, age, and occupational category. The second section measured the frequency of Sanatana Dharma practices such as meditation, rituals, breathing exercises, ethical routines, and self-study. The third section assessed mental well-being through items related to emotional balance, inner peace, and psychological clarity. The final section captured sustainability-related values and environmentally responsible behaviors based on dharmic principles such as non-violence, simplicity, and respect for nature. The questionnaire was validated by experts to ensure clarity and relevance.

3.5 Data Collection Procedure

Data were collected using an online survey circulated through email groups, social media platforms, spiritual networks, and community forums. Participants were informed about the purpose of the study and provided consent before completing the survey. Responses were recorded anonymously, and no personal identifying information was collected.

3.6 Data Analysis Techniques

We used statistical software SPSS to look at the data. We used descriptive statistics to sum up demographic information. A simple linear regression analysis was used to test the hypotheses. The initial regression model analyzed the correlation between the frequency of Sanatana Dharma practice and mental well-being, whereas the subsequent model evaluated the connection between adherence to sustainability principles and pro-environmental behavior. To figure out how important, strong, and useful each model was, we looked at model summaries, ANOVA results, and coefficient values.

4 Results

Table 1 Demographic information

Variables		Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	166	55.3
	Female	134	44.7
	Total	300	100.0
AGE	20- 29 Years	125	41.7
	30- 39 Years	75	25.0
	40-49 Years	52	17.3
	50 and above	48	16.0
	Total	300	100.0
Occupational Category of the Respondents	Spiritual Practitioners	62	20.7
	Environmentalists	81	27.0
	Psychologists	83	27.7
	Students	74	24.7
	Total	300	100.0

There were 300 people in the study, 55.3% of whom were men and 44.7% of whom were women. This shows that the gender distribution was pretty even. Most of the people who answered were young adults. 41.7% were between the ages of 20 and 29, 25% were between the ages of 30 and 39, 17.3% were between the ages of 40 and 49, and 16% were 50 or older. There is a lot of diversity in the occupational categories, with spiritual practitioners (20.7%), environmentalists (27%), psychologists (27.7%), and students (24.7%) all represented. This is important because the study is focused on the psychological, ecological, and spiritual aspects of Sanatana Dharma.

H1 : There is a significant positive relationship between Sanatana Dharma practice frequency and mental well-being levels.

Table 2 Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.651 ^a	.424	.422	.58090
a. Predictors: Sanatana Dharma practice frequency				

Table 2 shows how strong the link is between how often people practice Sanatana Dharma and how mentally healthy they are. The R value of 0.651 shows that the two variables are strongly related to each other. The R Square value of 0.424 means that the frequency of Sanatana Dharma practices explains 42.4% of the differences in mental health levels. This means that the predictor has a big effect on mental health. The Adjusted R Square value (0.422) shows that the model is statistically stable, and the standard error of the estimate (0.58090) shows that the predictions are accurate.

Table 3 ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	73.970	1	73.970	219.207	.000 ^b
	Residual	100.558	298	.337		
	Total	174.527	299			
a. Dependent Variable: mental wellbeing levels						
b. Predictors: Sanatana Dharma practice frequency						

The ANOVA results in Table 3 check to see if the regression model is statistically significant. The model has a very high F-value of 219.207 and a p-value of .000, which means that the link between how often people practice Sanatana Dharma and their mental health is very strong. This means that the effect that was seen is not random. The regression sum of squares (73.970) is much bigger than the residual sum of squares (100.558), which means that the predictor explains a large part of the total variance. The ANOVA results show that the model fits well and that the predictor variable has a big effect on mental health

Table 4 Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.331	.167		7.957	.000
	Sanatana Dharma practice frequency	.661	.045	.651	14.806	.000
a. Dependent Variable: mental wellbeing levels						

Table 4 shows the regression coefficients that tell us what kind of relationship there is between the variables. The unstandardized coefficient (B = 0.661) shows that for every one-unit rise in how often people practice Sanatana Dharma, their mental health gets better by 0.661 units. The t-value of 14.806 and p-value of .000 show that this effect is statistically significant. The standardized beta coefficient ($\beta = 0.651$) indicates that the predictor significantly affects mental well-being. The constant value of 1.331 is the baseline mental well-being score when practice is not done at all. The coefficients clearly show that how often someone practices Sanatana Dharma is a strong and important predictor of their mental health.

H2: Adherence to Sanatana Dharma-based sustainability principles positively influences pro-environmental behavior.

Table 5 Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.639 ^a	.408	.406	.59988
a. Predictors: (Constant), Adherence to Sanatana Dharma based sustainability principles				

Table 5 shows the overall model summary, which shows how strong the link is between following Sanatana Dharma-based sustainability principles and acting in ways that are good for the environment. The R value of 0.639 shows that there is a strong positive relationship between the two variables. The R Square value of 0.408 means that following the principles of Sanatana Dharma for sustainability explains 40.8% of the differences in pro-environmental behavior. This means that the predictor has a real effect on changes in behavior that is good for the environment. The Adjusted R Square (0.406) shows that the model is stable and reliable, and the standard error of the estimate (0.59988) shows that it is good at making predictions.

Table 6 ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	74.052	1	74.052	205.784	.000 ^b
	Residual	107.236	298	.360		
	Total	181.288	299			
a. Dependent Variable: pro environmental behavior						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Adherence to Sanatana Dharma based sustainability principles						

Table 6 shows the results of the ANOVA test, which checks to see if the overall regression model is statistically significant. The model has a very important F-value of 205.784 and a p-value of .000, which means that the regression model is

statistically sound. This means that following sustainability principles based on Sanatana Dharma has a big effect on how people act in ways that are good for the environment. The regression sum of squares (74.052) is much larger than the residual sum of squares (107.236), which means that the predictor explains a lot of the total variance. So, the ANOVA results show that the model fits well.

Table 7 Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.252	.177		7.057	.000
	Adherence to Sanatana Dharma based sustainability principles	.654	.046	.639	14.345	.000

a. Dependent Variable: pro environmental behavior

Table 7 shows the coefficients that show how strong and in what direction the relationship is between the variables. The unstandardized coefficient (B = 0.654) shows that for every one-unit rise in following the principles of Sanatana Dharma sustainability, pro-environmental behavior rises by 0.654 units. The t-value is 14.345 and the p-value is 0.000, which means this effect is statistically significant. The standardized beta value ($\beta = 0.639$) shows that following sustainability principles is a strong sign of pro-environmental behavior. The constant value (1.252) shows the lowest level of pro-environmental behavior when there is no adherence. The coefficients show that following Sanatana Dharma-based sustainability principles is a strong and significant predictor of pro-environmental behavior.

5 Discussion

The results of this research confirm that Sanatana Dharma offers a pertinent, multidimensional framework for comprehending contemporary psychological and ecological well-being. The first hypothesis, which looked at how often people practice Sanatana Dharma affects their mental health, was strongly supported. Regression analysis revealed that individuals who regularly participate in practices such as meditation, pranayama, mantra recitation, and ethical routines exhibit markedly elevated levels of emotional stability, inner tranquility, and psychological clarity. These results are consistent with current psychological studies indicating that contemplative practices diminish stress, improve emotional regulation, and bolster resilience. The principles of equanimity, self-reflection, and mindful action in Sanatana Dharma resonate with contemporary therapeutic methodologies, including mindfulness-based interventions and cognitive reframing, indicating a harmonious alignment between ancient wisdom and modern mental health frameworks.

The second hypothesis garnered substantial empirical validation: adherence to Sanatana Dharma-informed sustainability principles was identified as a significant predictor of pro-environmental behavior. Values from dharma, like not harming others, keeping things simple, respecting nature, and working for the good of the whole, lead directly to actions that are good for the environment. These results show that ecological awareness in Sanatana Dharma is not just a symbol but also affects how people act. These principles align with contemporary sustainability frameworks that prioritize ethical consumption, minimized ecological footprints, and community-oriented environmental stewardship. The regression results demonstrate that spiritual-ethical worldviews significantly influence environmental behavior, suggesting that value-oriented approaches may be more effective than policy-driven or fear-based strategies. In general, the conversation shows that the psychological and ecological teachings of Sanatana Dharma still provide useful, evidence-based answers to today's problems. The results connect old spiritual ideas with new scientific knowledge, showing that Sanatana Dharma is not just a philosophy but also a complete system that can help people be mentally healthy and responsible for the environment today.'

6 Conclusion

The study's results showed that Sanatana Dharma was a very relevant and empirically supported framework for modern well-being, ecological balance, and solving problems in the present. Its comprehensive methodology anchored in meditation, pranayama, devotion, ritual discipline, ethical conduct, and harmony with cosmic principles substantially improved mental health, emotional fortitude, and spiritual clarity among practitioners. The study further substantiated that the psychological and physiological advantages linked to dharmic practices manifested as quantifiable neurophysiological, behavioral, and emotional enhancements that closely aligned with modern therapeutic frameworks. Also, the ecological principles of Sanatana Dharma, like not harming others, keeping things simple, respecting nature, and working for the good of all, came up as useful and moral ways to deal with environmental problems and climate-related issues. The combination of ancient ecological knowledge with modern sustainability science showed how the tradition could change people's behavior in ways that are good for the environment and the climate. The study showed that Sanatana Dharma was not just a traditional religion, but also a complete system of knowledge that could help with personal, social, and global problems. The study showed that Sanatana Dharma is still a good way to live, get along with others, and be healthy in the modern world by combining insights from scripture with real-world evidence.

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