

From Chidābhāsa to Turīya: An Integrative Vedānta–ISLF Model of Consciousness Transformation and Sustainable Human Systems

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Abstract

The present study develops an integrative theoretical and analytical framework that bridges core constructs of Advaita Vedānta with an applied consciousness model under the ISLF paradigm. The research operationalizes key constructs such as Tādātmya (identity attachment), Chidābhāsa (reflected awareness), and Sākṣī (witness consciousness) to examine their structural relationship with sustainability orientation. Moving beyond purely descriptive literature, the study introduces a mathematical representation of consciousness transformation and aligns it with a Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) approach for empirical validation. The framework proposes that identity attachment acts as a constraining factor, reflected awareness as an enabling factor, and witness consciousness as a mediating mechanism that influences sustainable decision-making. Preliminary validation using pilot data indicates that Tādātmya negatively affects Sākṣī, while Sākṣī positively predicts sustainability orientation, supporting the mediation structure. The study contributes to consciousness research by translating philosophical constructs into measurable variables and establishing a process-based model of cognitive transformation. It also extends sustainability research by incorporating deeper internal awareness structures into behavioral analysis. The findings provide a foundation for future empirical studies and interdisciplinary research integrating Indian Knowledge Systems with modern analytical methodologies.

Keywords: *Consciousness, Vedānta, Tādātmya, Chidābhāsa, Sākṣī, Sustainability Orientation, Structural Equation Modeling, Mathematical Modeling, Indian Knowledge Systems, ISLF Framework*

1 Introduction

The study of consciousness has remained a central concern across multiple disciplines including philosophy, psychology, neuroscience, and management research. While modern scientific approaches have made significant progress in understanding cognitive processes, perception, and behavior, the deeper structure of consciousness and its influence on decision-making remains insufficiently explored. Contemporary research largely focuses on constructs such as awareness, attention, and mindfulness, which capture surface-level aspects of cognition. However, these approaches often do not account for the underlying identity structures and higher-order awareness states that shape human thinking and behavior. This limitation becomes particularly relevant in the context of sustainability, where decision-making is expected to go beyond immediate gains and incorporate long-term, ethical, and balanced considerations. Advaita Vedānta provides a comprehensive theoretical framework that addresses these deeper dimensions of consciousness. It distinguishes between pure consciousness and its empirical manifestations, and introduces key constructs such as Tādātmya (identity attachment), Chidābhāsa (reflected awareness), and Sākṣī (witness consciousness). These constructs explain how individuals move from identification with mental processes to a state of detached observation. Despite their conceptual depth, such constructs have remained largely confined to philosophical discourse and have not been systematically incorporated into empirical research models. This creates a gap between traditional knowledge systems and contemporary analytical frameworks.

At the same time, there is growing recognition that internal cognitive and psychological

factors play a critical role in shaping sustainable behavior. Existing models in sustainability research often emphasize external drivers such as policies, regulations, and organizational practices. While these factors are important, they do not fully explain why individuals behave sustainably in some contexts and not in others. There is a need to examine how internal states of consciousness influence the way individuals perceive, evaluate, and respond to environmental and social challenges.

The present study addresses this gap by proposing an integrative framework that connects Vedāntic constructs with an applied consciousness model developed under the ISLF paradigm. The framework translates abstract philosophical ideas into measurable variables and establishes structured relationships among them. It further advances the field by introducing a mathematical representation of consciousness transformation, thereby providing analytical clarity to the model. The inclusion of Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) allows the framework to be empirically examined, making it suitable for interdisciplinary research.

The central proposition of the study is that consciousness operates as a layered system in which identity attachment constrains awareness, awareness enables witnessing, and witnessing influences behavioral outcomes. In this context, Sākṣī is conceptualized as a mediating construct that transforms internal cognition into sustainability-oriented action. By integrating theoretical insights from Advaita Vedānta with modern analytical techniques, the study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of how consciousness influences human behavior.

Overall, the research contributes to the development of a structured and testable model of consciousness that bridges

traditional knowledge systems and contemporary research methodologies. It offers a new perspective on sustainability by highlighting the role of internal awareness structures and provides a foundation for future studies in consciousness, organizational behavior, and Indian Knowledge Systems.

2 Theoretical Foundation

The theoretical foundation of the present study is developed by integrating core principles of Advaita Vedānta with contemporary perspectives on cognition, awareness, and behavior. It seeks to explain consciousness not merely as a psychological phenomenon but as a layered and structured process that influences human decision-making. By drawing upon classical constructs such as Tādātmya, Chidābhāsa, and Sākṣī, the framework provides a deeper understanding of how identity, awareness, and witnessing interact within the cognitive system. At the same time, it aligns these constructs with modern research in mindfulness, self-awareness, and sustainability to ensure analytical relevance. This integrated approach enables the study to move beyond descriptive interpretation and establish a theoretically grounded model that connects internal states of consciousness with observable behavioral outcomes.

2.1 Advaita Vedānta and the Ontology of Consciousness

The theoretical foundation of the present study is rooted in Advaita Vedānta, which provides a comprehensive framework for understanding consciousness as a non-dual reality. According to this tradition, consciousness (Ātman or Brahman) is the ultimate and unchanging principle that underlies all forms of experience

(Radhakrishnan, 1953). Unlike Western psychological theories that treat consciousness as a product of neural activity, Advaita Vedānta positions consciousness as the fundamental substratum upon which mental and physical phenomena arise (Śāṅkara, 2008). The distinction between pure consciousness and its empirical manifestation is essential. Pure consciousness remains unaffected by mental modifications, whereas empirical experience arises through its reflection in the mind. This distinction forms the basis for understanding the layered structure of consciousness used in the present model. The concept of non-duality implies that the separation between subject and object is ultimately illusory, but at the empirical level, this separation appears real due to cognitive processes. The present study adopts this ontological perspective to explain how consciousness operates at different levels within human cognition. By treating consciousness as a foundational entity rather than an emergent property, the model provides a deeper explanation for behavioral patterns. This approach allows the integration of traditional philosophical insights with contemporary analytical frameworks, thereby strengthening the theoretical base of the research.

2.2 Chidābhāsa and the Formation of Reflected Awareness

The concept of Chidābhāsa, or reflected consciousness, plays a central role in understanding how awareness manifests in the human mind. In Advaita Vedānta, Chidābhāsa refers to the reflection of pure consciousness in the intellect (buddhi), which gives rise to subjective experience and cognition (Śāṅkara, 2008). This reflection enables individuals to perceive, think, and act, but it is inherently conditioned by the structure of the mind. Chidābhāsa can be linked to modern constructs of self-awareness

and metacognition. However, unlike these constructs, it emphasizes that awareness is not independent but arises through reflection. This implies that awareness is shaped by prior experiences, beliefs, and identity structures. Therefore, it cannot be considered purely objective. The present study conceptualizes Chidābhāsa as a transitional construct that connects identity attachment with higher levels of awareness. It represents a stage where individuals are aware of their thoughts but remain influenced by them. This interpretation is consistent with existing literature on reflective consciousness, which suggests that awareness alone does not guarantee objectivity (Brown & Ryan, 2003). The study highlights the importance of understanding the nature of awareness rather than assuming it to be inherently neutral. This contributes to a more nuanced theoretical framework that accounts for both the enabling and limiting aspects of awareness.

2.3 Tādātmya and Identity-Based Cognition

Tādātmya, or identity attachment, refers to the process by which individuals identify with their thoughts, emotions, and bodily states. In Advaita Vedānta, this identification is considered the primary cause of ignorance (avidyā) and the root of psychological suffering (Radhakrishnan, 1953). When individuals identify with mental modifications, they lose the ability to observe them objectively, leading to reactive and biased cognition. Tādātmya can be related to constructs such as ego involvement and self-identification in psychological literature. Studies have shown that strong identification with self-related constructs can lead to cognitive biases and emotional reactivity (Baumeister, 1998). This aligns with the Vedāntic view that identity attachment limits cognitive flexibility and reduces the capacity for reflective thinking. Tādātmya is

conceptualized as a constraining variable that negatively influences the development of witness consciousness. It represents the baseline state of cognition in which individuals operate under the influence of identity-driven processes. The inclusion of Tādātmya in the model provides a theoretical explanation for why awareness alone is insufficient for transformation. The study contributes to existing theories by highlighting the role of identity structures in shaping cognition. It also emphasizes the need to reduce identity attachment as a prerequisite for achieving higher levels of awareness and improved decision-making.

2.4 Sākṣī and Witness Consciousness

The concept of Sākṣī, or witness consciousness, is central to the theoretical framework of the study. In Advaita Vedānta, Sākṣī refers to the observing principle that remains detached from mental activities while being aware of them (Śaṅkara, 2008). This state represents a higher level of consciousness in which individuals can observe thoughts and emotions without identification. Sākṣī can be compared with constructs such as mindfulness and meta-awareness. However, it extends beyond these constructs by emphasizing complete detachment from identity. While mindfulness involves awareness of the present moment, Sākṣī involves awareness of awareness itself, which introduces a deeper level of cognitive processing (Brown & Ryan, 2003). The present study conceptualizes Sākṣī as a mediating construct that transforms the relationship between internal cognition and external behavior. It is influenced positively by reflected awareness and negatively by identity attachment. This dual influence highlights the importance of both enabling and constraining factors in the development of witnessing. The inclusion of Sākṣī as a central variable contributes to theoretical

models of decision-making by introducing a mechanism for reducing bias and enhancing objectivity. It provides a framework for understanding how higher awareness states can influence behavior in a consistent and measurable manner.

2.5 Consciousness and Sustainability Orientation

The final component of the theoretical foundation links consciousness with sustainability-oriented behavior. Traditional sustainability research has focused on external factors such as policies, economic incentives, and organizational practices (WCED, 1987). While these factors are important, they do not fully explain individual decision-making processes. Recent studies have emphasized the role of internal cognitive and psychological factors in shaping sustainable behavior (Kollmuss & Agyeman, 2002). However, these studies often remain limited to surface-level constructs such as attitudes and intentions. The present framework extends this line of research by incorporating deeper layers of consciousness. The model proposes that sustainability orientation is influenced by the level of witnessing awareness. Individuals operating from a state of *Sākṣī* are more likely to consider long-term consequences and make balanced decisions. This is because witnessing reduces the influence of immediate impulses and identity-based biases. The study provides a theoretical basis for understanding how internal transformation can lead to external behavioral change. This contribution is significant as it integrates philosophical insights with contemporary research on sustainability.

3 Architecture of the Vedānta–ISLF Consciousness Framework

The proposed model presents a structured architecture that explains how different layers of consciousness interact to influence human behavior, particularly sustainability-oriented decision-making. The architecture is grounded in Advaita Vedānta and translated into an analytical framework through the ISLF model. It is designed to move from a purely conceptual understanding toward a measurable and testable structure. The model consists of four primary constructs: *Tādātmya* (identity attachment), *Chidābhāsa* (reflected awareness), *Sākṣī* (witness consciousness), and Sustainability Orientation. These constructs are arranged in a causal structure where identity and awareness influence witnessing, and witnessing further influences behavioral outcomes. The architecture therefore represents a transformation pathway rather than a static structure.

3.1 Conceptual Architecture of the Model

The architecture follows a directional flow:

Identity → Awareness → Witnessing → Action

In this structure, *Tādātmya* represents the initial condition of the individual, where consciousness is strongly identified with thoughts, emotions, and external roles. This identification forms the base layer of cognitive processing and is associated with reactive behavior. *Chidābhāsa* represents the reflective layer of consciousness, where awareness of thoughts exists but remains influenced by identity structures. It acts as a transitional construct that connects identity-based cognition with higher awareness states. *Sākṣī* represents the witnessing state, where the individual observes mental processes without identification. This construct is central to the model because it enables

cognitive separation and reflective processing. Sustainability Orientation represents the outcome variable, capturing the extent to which decisions are aligned with long-term, ethical, and balanced considerations.

The architecture assumes that transformation occurs when the dominance of identity reduces and the level of witnessing increases. This transformation is gradual and depends on the interaction between identity attachment and awareness.

3.2 Mathematical Representation of the Model

To convert the conceptual architecture into an analytical framework, each construct is represented as a variable:

- T = Tādātmya (Identity Attachment)
- C = Chidābhāsa (Reflected Awareness)
- S = Sākṣī (Witness Consciousness)
- SO = Sustainability Orientation

The relationships among these variables are expressed through a set of equations that describe the transformation process.

3.3 Equation 1: Identity and Reflected Awareness

$$C = \alpha_1 T + \epsilon_1$$

This equation represents the relationship between identity attachment and reflected awareness. The coefficient α_1 indicates the extent to which identity influences awareness. Reflected awareness does not exist independently. It arises as a function of identity-based cognition. When an individual is strongly identified with thoughts and experiences, awareness is present but remains conditioned by that identity. The higher levels of Tādātmya are associated with awareness that is reactive rather than reflective. The error term ϵ_1 captures unexplained variation, which may arise from external influences such as environment, learning, or situational context. This equation establishes that awareness is

not automatically liberating. It depends on the structure of identity through which it operates.

3.4 Equation 2: Formation of Witness Consciousness

$$S = \alpha_2 C - \alpha_3 T + \epsilon_2$$

This equation is central to the model. It explains how witness consciousness emerges from the interaction between awareness and identity.

α_2 represents the positive contribution of awareness

α_3 represents the negative influence of identity

Witness consciousness increases when awareness increases and decreases when identity attachment is strong. This reflects a dual mechanism:

- Awareness enables observation of mental processes
- Identity attachment restricts this observation by creating identification

The emergence of Sākṣī depends on the balance between these two forces. If awareness is high but identity is also strong, witnessing remains limited. Conversely, when awareness increases and identity reduces, witnessing becomes dominant. This equation aligns with the theoretical understanding of Vedānta, where detachment from identity is necessary for the realization of witness consciousness.

The error term ϵ_2 includes factors such as training, meditation, or cognitive practices that may influence witnessing independently of identity and awareness.

3.5 Equation 3: Witnessing and Sustainability Orientation

$$SO = \beta_1 S + \epsilon_3$$

This equation establishes the relationship between witness consciousness and sustainability-oriented behavior. Sustainability orientation is positively influenced by witnessing awareness. When individuals operate from a witnessing state,

they are less reactive and more capable of considering long-term consequences. This leads to decisions that are balanced, ethical, and aligned with sustainability.

The coefficient β_1 represents the strength of this relationship. A higher value indicates that witnessing has a strong influence on behavioral outcomes.

The error term ϵ_3 accounts for external influences such as organizational policies, cultural norms, or economic constraints that may also affect sustainability decisions.

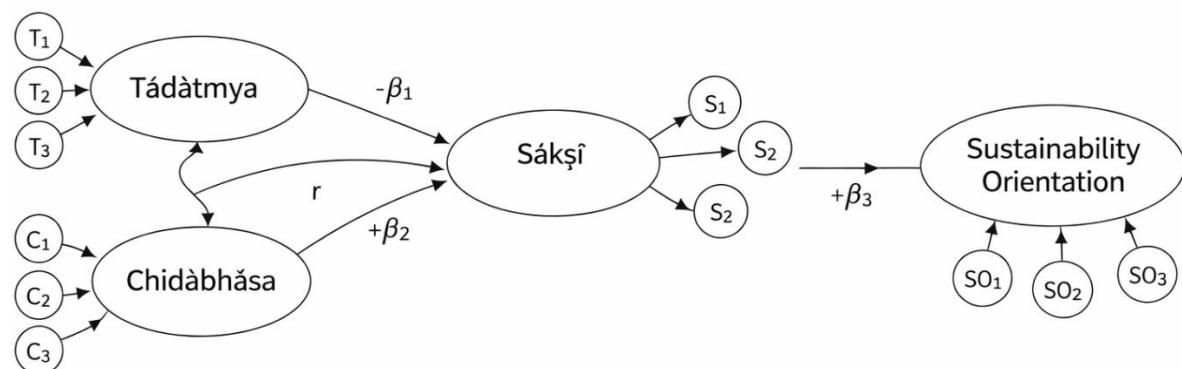
3.6 Combined Structural Equation and Mediation

By combining the above equations, the model can be expressed as a mediation structure:

$$SO = \beta_1 (\alpha_2 C - \alpha_3 T) + \epsilon$$

This representation shows that sustainability orientation is indirectly influenced by identity through its effect on witnessing consciousness. Tādātmya does not directly determine sustainability outcomes. Instead, it influences them through its effect on Sākṣī. This establishes Sākṣī as a mediating variable.

- High identity attachment reduces witnessing
- Reduced witnessing leads to lower sustainability orientation



The SEM includes:

- Tādātmya as an exogenous variable
- Chidābhāsa as an exogenous variable
- Sākṣī as an endogenous mediating variable
- Sustainability Orientation as the final endogenous variable

This mediation structure is supported by the pilot findings, where identity attachment showed a negative relationship with witnessing, and witnessing showed a positive relationship with sustainability. This suggests that the indirect effect of identity on sustainability is significant and operates through the witnessing mechanism.

3.7 Dynamic Interpretation of the Model

The model can also be interpreted in a dynamic form:

$$dS/dt = k (C - T)$$

This equation represents the rate of change in witnessing consciousness over time.

The growth of witness consciousness depends on the difference between awareness and identity. When awareness exceeds identity, witnessing increases. When identity dominates, witnessing decreases. This dynamic view highlights that consciousness transformation is not instantaneous. It evolves over time and depends on continuous interaction between identity and awareness.

3.8 Structural Equation Model (SEM)

Representation

The above mathematical relationships are translated into a Structural Equation Model (SEM) for empirical validation.

The structural paths are defined as:

- Tādātmya $\rightarrow$ Sākṣī (negative path)
- Chidābhāsa $\rightarrow$ Sākṣī (positive path)
- Sākṣī $\rightarrow$ Sustainability Orientation (positive path)

The SEM diagram visually represents these relationships in a left-to-right flow, where identity and awareness converge on witnessing, and witnessing leads to behavioral outcomes.

Each construct is measured using multiple observed indicators, ensuring that the latent variables are properly operationalized.

The SEM model reflects the theoretical assumptions of the framework. The negative path from Tādātmya to Sākṣī indicates that strong identity attachment restricts the development of witnessing. This is consistent with both theoretical understanding and empirical findings. The positive path from Chidābhāsa to Sākṣī shows that awareness contributes to the emergence of witnessing. However, this contribution is conditional and depends on the level of identity attachment. The positive path from Sākṣī to Sustainability Orientation confirms that witnessing is a key driver of sustainable behavior. This suggests that internal awareness structures play a significant role in shaping external actions. The model also allows for correlation between Tādātmya and Chidābhāsa, as both originate from the same cognitive system.

The proposed architecture provides a structured and measurable representation of consciousness transformation. By integrating Vedāntic constructs with mathematical and SEM-based modeling, the study offers a novel approach to understanding human behavior. The model is exploratory but provides a strong foundation for future research. With larger datasets and advanced statistical techniques, the relationships proposed in this framework can be further validated and refined. The architecture therefore serves as a bridge between traditional knowledge systems and modern analytical research, offering both theoretical depth and empirical applicability.

4 Conceptual Representation

The conceptual representation of the proposed framework provides a structured interpretation of how different layers of consciousness interact to influence human cognition and behavior. The model is not limited to a static classification of constructs but presents a transformation-oriented view in which consciousness evolves through identifiable stages. These stages are conceptualized as Tādātmya (identity attachment), Chidābhāsa (reflected awareness), Sākṣī (witness consciousness), and Turīya (integrated consciousness), ultimately leading to sustainability-oriented behavior. The model assumes that human cognition is initially dominated by identity attachment. Tādātmya represents the condition in which an individual is fully identified with mental processes, including thoughts, emotions, and social roles. This identification results in a form of cognition that is reactive, subjective, and often biased. Decisions made under strong identity attachment are influenced by immediate perceptions, personal preferences, and emotional responses, rather than objective evaluation. Therefore, Tādātmya serves as the foundational construct that shapes the initial state of consciousness.

Chidābhāsa represents the next layer in the conceptual structure, where awareness of mental processes emerges. However, this awareness is not independent. It is still influenced by identity attachment and therefore remains conditioned. Conceptually, Chidābhāsa can be understood as a transitional state in which the individual becomes aware of thoughts but does not fully detach from them. This stage introduces the possibility of reflection, but the reflection is not yet neutral. It is shaped by existing identity structures, beliefs, and experiences.

The transition from Chidābhāsa to Sākṣī represents the most critical transformation in the model. Sākṣī, or witness consciousness, is conceptualized as a state in which awareness becomes independent of identity. In this state, the individual observes thoughts and emotions without identification. This shift introduces a higher level of cognitive clarity and reduces the influence of biases. From an analytical perspective, Sākṣī enables a separation between the observer and the observed, which is essential for rational and balanced decision-making. The model suggests that the emergence of Sākṣī is not automatic. It depends on the interaction between identity and awareness. When identity attachment is strong, it restricts the development of witnessing. When awareness increases and identity reduces, witnessing becomes dominant. This interaction reflects a balancing mechanism within the cognitive system, where the level of witnessing is determined by the relative influence of identity and awareness.

Turīya represents the highest level of consciousness in the conceptual framework. It is not treated as a variable in the empirical model but as a theoretical state of complete integration. In this state, the distinction between observer and observed dissolves, and consciousness operates in a state of equilibrium. While Turīya is not directly measured, it provides a conceptual endpoint that defines the direction of transformation. The conceptual model also establishes a clear relationship between internal states of consciousness and external behavioral outcomes. Sustainability orientation is positioned as the outcome variable, representing the extent to which decisions are aligned with long-term and ethical considerations. The model assumes that sustainable behavior is not solely driven by external factors such as policy or knowledge

but is significantly influenced by internal cognitive structures. Tādātmya is associated with lower levels of sustainability orientation because identity-driven cognition tends to prioritize short-term and self-centered outcomes. Chidābhāsa introduces awareness, which can improve decision-making to some extent, but its effect is limited by the continued influence of identity. Sākṣī, on the other hand, enables a level of detachment that allows individuals to evaluate situations more objectively, leading to decisions that are more balanced and sustainable.

An important conceptual insight of the model is the mediating role of Sākṣī. The model proposes that identity attachment does not directly influence sustainability outcomes. Instead, its effect is transmitted through witnessing consciousness. This implies that even if identity attachment is present, its negative impact can be reduced if witnessing awareness is developed. Conversely, the absence of witnessing can amplify the negative effects of identity. The conceptual representation also supports a non-linear interpretation of transformation. The relationship between constructs is not merely additive. Small changes in awareness can lead to significant changes in witnessing once a certain threshold is crossed. This suggests that the development of consciousness may involve phase-like transitions rather than gradual linear progression. The conceptual model is its compatibility with empirical measurement. Each construct can be operationalized using observable indicators, allowing the framework to be tested using statistical methods such as structural equation modeling. This ensures that the model is not confined to philosophical interpretation but can be validated through data.

The model also accommodates contextual influences through error terms in the mathematical representation. These include

factors such as environment, education, culture, and organizational context, which may affect consciousness and behavior. This inclusion ensures that the model remains realistic and adaptable to different research settings. The conceptual representation bridges the gap between traditional knowledge systems and modern analytical frameworks. It demonstrates that constructs derived from Advaita Vedānta can be translated into structured models that are compatible with contemporary research methodologies. This integration enhances the relevance of traditional knowledge in addressing modern challenges such as sustainability. The conceptual representation of the Vedānta–ISLF framework provides a comprehensive understanding of how consciousness operates as a layered and dynamic system. It explains how identity, awareness, and witnessing interact to shape behavior and highlights the central role of witnessing in enabling sustainable decision-making. The model offers both theoretical depth and empirical applicability, making it a valuable contribution to interdisciplinary research in consciousness and sustainability.

5 Theoretical Contribution of the Vedānta–ISLF Consciousness Framework

The present study makes a set of structured theoretical contributions by integrating classical Vedāntic constructs with contemporary analytical modeling approaches. The contribution lies not only in introducing new variables into empirical research but also in redefining how consciousness is conceptualized, measured, and linked to behavioral outcomes. The framework extends existing theories in consciousness studies, organizational behavior, and sustainability by offering a

layered and process-oriented understanding of cognition.

The first major contribution of the study is the operationalization of abstract philosophical constructs into measurable variables. Concepts such as Tādātmya, Chidābhāsa, and Sākṣī have traditionally been treated as metaphysical or experiential categories. The present framework converts these into structured constructs that can be measured through observable indicators. This transformation enables the inclusion of Vedāntic ideas within empirical research designs. From a theoretical perspective, this bridges the gap between philosophy and social science research by demonstrating that deeply abstract constructs can be systematically analyzed using statistical tools. The second contribution lies in the development of a layered consciousness model. Most existing models in psychology and behavioral sciences focus on surface-level constructs such as awareness, perception, and cognition. These models do not distinguish between different depths of consciousness. The proposed framework introduces a hierarchical structure in which identity attachment, reflected awareness, and witnessing are treated as distinct yet interconnected layers. This layered approach provides a more nuanced understanding of how cognition operates. It explains not only what individuals think but also the level of consciousness from which those thoughts emerge.

The third contribution is the identification of witness consciousness (Sākṣī) as a central mediating construct. Existing theories of behavior often focus on direct relationships between cognitive variables and outcomes. The present model introduces a mediation mechanism in which Sākṣī acts as a transforming variable between internal cognition and external behavior. This

mediation explains how the influence of identity attachment on behavior is not direct but is filtered through the level of witnessing awareness. The identification of such a mediating mechanism adds depth to theoretical models of decision-making and provides a new direction for understanding behavioral transformation.

The fourth contribution is the integration of mathematical representation within consciousness studies. Traditional consciousness research is largely descriptive and lacks formal analytical structure. By introducing equations that define relationships among constructs, the study adds precision to the theoretical framework. The equations clarify how identity and awareness interact to produce witnessing, and how witnessing influences sustainability outcomes. This mathematical representation enhances the rigor of the model and allows it to be tested and refined using empirical data. It also aligns the study with analytical approaches used in other scientific disciplines.

The fifth contribution is the integration of Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with philosophical constructs. The study demonstrates that Vedāntic variables can be incorporated into SEM frameworks, which are widely used in social science research. This integration provides a pathway for validating philosophical models through empirical methods. It also shows that traditional knowledge systems can be examined using modern statistical techniques without reducing their conceptual richness. The SEM structure strengthens the theoretical framework by providing a clear representation of causal relationships and mediation effects.

The sixth contribution is the extension of sustainability theory through internal cognitive mechanisms. Existing sustainability

research often focuses on external factors such as policies, resources, and organizational practices. While these factors are important, they do not fully explain why individuals make sustainable or unsustainable decisions. The present framework shifts the focus toward internal states of consciousness. It proposes that sustainability orientation is influenced by the level of witnessing awareness, which determines how individuals process information and evaluate consequences. This contribution expands sustainability theory by incorporating deeper psychological and consciousness-based dimensions.

The seventh contribution is the introduction of a process-based model of cognitive transformation. Rather than treating consciousness as a static trait, the framework conceptualizes it as a dynamic process that evolves over time. The transition from Tādātmya to Sākṣī represents a shift from identification to observation, which fundamentally changes the nature of cognition. This process-based perspective provides a more realistic understanding of human behavior, as it acknowledges that individuals can move between different states of consciousness depending on context and development. It also supports the possibility of interventions aimed at enhancing witnessing awareness.

The eighth contribution is the alignment of Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) with contemporary research paradigms. The study demonstrates that traditional frameworks such as Advaita Vedānta can contribute to modern scientific inquiry. By translating these frameworks into measurable and testable models, the study enhances their relevance in academic research. This alignment supports the broader objective of integrating indigenous knowledge systems into global research discourse. It also provides a

foundation for future studies that seek to explore other traditional constructs using empirical methods.

The ninth contribution is the introduction of a dual influence model involving enabling and constraining forces. In the proposed framework, Chidābhāsa acts as an enabling factor that promotes witnessing, while Tādātmya acts as a constraining factor that limits it. This dual structure provides a balanced understanding of cognitive processes. It explains that the development of higher awareness is not solely dependent on increasing positive factors but also on reducing limiting factors. This perspective adds depth to theoretical models by highlighting the importance of both facilitation and inhibition in cognitive transformation.

The tenth contribution is the potential for interdisciplinary integration. The framework can be extended to fields such as neuroscience, leadership studies, and organizational development. For instance, the concept of witnessing can be linked to neural mechanisms associated with metacognition and self-regulation. Similarly, the model can inform leadership theories by explaining how higher awareness influences ethical decision-making. This interdisciplinary potential increases the applicability of the framework and opens new avenues for research.

In summary, the theoretical contribution of the study lies in its ability to integrate philosophical depth with analytical rigor. The framework introduces new constructs, establishes structured relationships among them, and provides a mechanism for empirical validation. It extends existing theories in consciousness and sustainability while creating a bridge between traditional knowledge systems and modern research methodologies. The model is not only conceptually rich but also practically relevant,

as it provides insights into how changes in consciousness can influence behavior and decision-making.

The study therefore contributes to theory by offering a comprehensive and structured approach to understanding consciousness as a determinant of human action. It lays the foundation for future research that can further refine and validate the proposed relationships, thereby strengthening the role of consciousness studies in contemporary academic discourse.

6 Implications for Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) Research

The present study provides important implications for the advancement of Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) by demonstrating that classical philosophical constructs can be systematically translated into empirical and analytical frameworks. Traditionally, concepts from Advaita Vedānta such as Tādātmya, Chidābhāsa, and Sākṣī have been treated as experiential and interpretative in nature. This study shows that these constructs can be operationalized as measurable variables and examined through structured methodologies such as mathematical modeling and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). This creates a pathway for integrating IKS into mainstream academic research without compromising its conceptual depth. Another important implication lies in the shift from descriptive to analytical approaches in IKS research. Many studies in this domain rely on textual interpretation and theoretical discussion. The present framework introduces a model-based approach where relationships among constructs can be tested and validated. This enhances the scientific credibility of IKS and supports its inclusion in interdisciplinary research areas such as psychology, management, and sustainability studies.

The study also highlights the relevance of IKS in addressing contemporary challenges. By linking consciousness states with sustainability orientation, the framework demonstrates that traditional knowledge systems can offer insights into ethical decision-making and long-term behavioral outcomes. This expands the scope of IKS from cultural and philosophical domains to applied research contexts.

Further, the framework supports the development of new research instruments and scales based on IKS constructs. It encourages scholars to design empirical studies that capture deeper layers of consciousness rather than limiting analysis to surface-level cognitive variables.

Overall, the study contributes to positioning IKS as a dynamic and researchable domain that can engage with modern scientific methods while preserving its foundational principles.

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