

"A man is  
great by  
deeds, not by  
birth"  
-Chanakya

Welcome to IIMK



INDIAN INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT KOZHIKODE



Working Paper

**IIMK/WPS/643/HLA/2025/02**

March 2025

**Freewill and Determinism**

Judu Ilavarasu <sup>1</sup>

©

**All rights belong to their respective author.**

**Please contact the corresponding author, if you would like to access the full paper.**

<sup>1</sup>Assistant Professor , Humanities & Liberal Arts in Management Area, Indian Institute of Management Kozhikode, IIMK Campus PO, Kunnamangalam, Kozhikode, Kerala 673 570, India; Email - judu@iimk.ac.in, Phone Number - 0495-2809622

## Freewill and Determinism

### **Abstract:**

The debate between freewill and determinism is longstanding in philosophy and other disciplines. This paper explores human freewill as a function of inner awareness. Awareness is the recognition of our thoughts and actions at a given moment, specifically through the witnessing presence of our own mind. To develop this idea, the classical yoga text, Patanjali's Yoga Sutras, is referred. The following aspects regarding action and freewill are discussed: 1) activity and inactivity of mind and its relation to freewill, 2) awareness as a switch between functional and non-functional states of mind, 3) emergence of freewill being in a state of witnessing awareness, and 4) avoiding the error of identification with the non-Self. A twin rope analogy would be used to illustrate the idea of emergence of freewill as a function of awareness. The degree of awareness at any moment conditionally determines the shaping of the freewill. Implication of this discussion on workplace wellbeing is also discussed.

**Keywords:** Freewill, Awareness, Determinism, Twin rope analogy



भारतीय प्रबंध संस्थान कोषिककोड  
Indian Institute Management Kozhikode  
*Globalizing Indian Thought*

Research Office  
Indian Institute of Management Kozhikode  
IIMK Campus P. O.,  
Kozhikode, Kerala, India,  
PIN - 673 570  
Phone: +91-495-2809237/ 238  
Email: [research@iimk.ac.in](mailto:research@iimk.ac.in)  
Web: <https://iimk.ac.in/publications>

