

EDUCATION MANAGEMENT : A VEDANTIC PERSPECTIVE

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WHAT IS VEDANTA

Vedanta is a body of knowledge found at the end of the Vedas, perhaps the most ancient of Indian scriptures.

There are four Vedas, each of which is divided into four sections. The first section of each Veda deals with a wide range of human activities prompted by the desires for pleasure, economic security and religious and moral well being. The last sections, called Vedanta (anta means end, hence the end section), reveals knowledge about the individual self, about the external world in relation to oneself, and about God, whose manifestation is found in the creation itself. Together, this knowledge is called Self Knowledge, unfoldment of the reality of the Self in relation to the Non-Self, comprised of everything else.

Vedantic knowledge has been unfolded in India from ancient times through a long and unbroken teacher -

student tradition. The source of this knowledge is not known, but it is Shankaracharya, acknowledged by many as one of the greatest teachers of all time, who wrote extensive and masterful commentaries on the major texts that have continued to enrich the teaching of Vedanta to this day. Two primary sources of Vedantic Knowledge are the Bhagvat Gita (hereafter referred to as Gita) and the Upanishads. The Gita is comprised of 700 verses, presented in 18 chapters. It is a dialogue between Arjuna and Lord Krishna, initiated by Arjuna's dilemma. Perhaps the best known of all Indian Scriptures worldwide, the Gita is a treatise on management of one's own life as a whole.

VEDANTA AND MANAGEMENT

Management, as a term is understood today, refers to concepts, skills, and techniques needed for the effective functioning of organisation. Primarily

developed and validated in the West, and in the context of business and industry, this body of knowledge is being increasingly applied to a variety of non-business organisations as well, including education. Education Management thus emerged as a distinct field of study and research in higher education throughout the world.

The focus of modern management concepts and skills is on managing "others" resources other than oneself, although there are occasional references to self management in the context of such topics as leadership and business ethics. Vedant, by definition, is Self Knowledge - understanding the reality of oneself. The basic premise of Vedanta is that ignorance of the reality of one's true nature is the cause of the fundamental human problem - the persistent feeling of inadequacy, insecurity, and limited entity that create the desire to "become" adequate and secure through the pursuit of a wide range of activities, economic, social and cultural. It is only through an understanding of one's true nature that an individual grows out of this feeling and liberates himself from the perceived bondage of human existence. The Gita deals exhaustively with the fundamental human problem and provides useful guidelines for dealing with its varied manifestations. Since the fundamental human problem is universal, the insights that the Gita provides are also universal and valid for all time.

This paper is a modest attempt to (1) delineate selected concept from the Gita and Upnishadas that have implications for management and (2) examine how they relate to some of the issues

and trends in modern education management. The concepts are presented under three broad categories :

- (a) human actions and their results (Karma and Karmyoga);
- (b) ethics and values (Dharma);
- (c) knowledge, teacher and student (Jnana).

The issues in education management selected for analysis are :

- (a) teacher - student relationship;
- (b) integration of content and methodology in teacher preparation;
- (c) the teaching of values;
- (d) intellect and emotion;
- (e) the "virtue" of hierarchy;
- (f) leadership.

1. BHAGAVAT GITA AND UPANISHADAS : SELECTED CONCEPTS

(A) Human Actions - The Law of Karma

• *The Endowment*

Every individual is endowed with three basic capacities - the capacity to will, the capacity to know, and the capacity to act. While all living organisms have the capacity to act, their actions are instinctive, programmed. Only humans are endowed with the faculty of choice. One can choose to act, to not act or to act differently.

• *Action and Reaction*

Centered on the faculty of choice is human action. Every action stems from an individual's choice which in turn is determined by his or her knowledge, experience, and culture. Since one's knowledge is often limited and one's control

over other factors minimal, an action may not always be right. But even wrong actions are the product of human will and choice.

People not only act but also react. Unlike action, which is willed, the reaction is purely mechanical. A reaction is an emotional response to external situations; it manifests itself in impulsive behaviour. Anger, hatred, jealousy, fear, sadness are reactions. Reactions do not have our sanction; that is why they occur repeatedly. When one responds to a situation, the response can be either a reaction or an action. When one analyses the situation in the light of one's knowledge and then consciously chooses to take a particular course, one is acting, not reacting. When one responds purely on an emotional level, one is reacting. It is reactions that often cause damage to interpersonal relationships. One assumes responsibility for one's actions, not for one's reactions.

Ability to distinguish between action and reaction is the first step towards responsible human behaviour and critical for developing healthy relationship. Four levels of behaviour are identified : instinctive, impulsive, deliberate, and spontaneous. Instinctive behaviour is a natural endowment of all living organisms. Animals can act only instinctively. They are "programmed". They do not choose, do not exercise a free will. The other three levels apply to human beings. Impulsive behaviour is prompted more by emotion than by thought. Deliberate behaviour springs from thought which presupposes a knowledge-values-base. Spontaneous behaviour is the culmination of thoughtful, knowledge-val-

ues-based behaviour which has become an integral part of an individual. Such behaviour "characterises" the individual; he can not behave otherwise since the knowledge - value - base is well established in him and, indeed, defines him.

• *Action and the Result of Action*

An important concept richly developed in the Gita is the relationship between human action and the result it produces. Every action produces result. A result may appear immediately or in course of time. A human being has control over his action in so far as they are matters of his or her choice and will. However, he has no control over the result of his actions. Determination of result is outside the domain of human will and choice; it is part of the larger "Order" that underlies all phenomena in the creation, both natural and social. This distinction has important implications for human conduct.

It is natural for human beings to entertain some expectations in terms of results of the action they perform. And it is common experience that the actual results do not always correspond with those expectations. When expectations are not met at all, or when results fall short of expectations, they cause disappointment, sadness, or pain. These are reactions which, if frequently experienced, can cause people to loose faith in the efficacy of human effort and to doubt if there is any justice in the "Order". The verse in the Gita that deals with this dilemma is one of the most widely coated verses in the context of human action and the fruits of action.

Indeed, it constitutes the essence of Karmayoga. It says : "Your choice is in action only, never in the results thereof. Do not be the author of the results of action. Let your attachment not be to inaction." (2, 47). The most appropriate thing is to gladly accept whatever result comes.

• *Karmayoga : Action and its accompanying attitude*

No human being can live without performing action. One can not stop action as long as one is living. While one can stop some voluntary actions some of the time, there is a whole range of involuntary actions that go on ceaselessly. Karmayoga addresses those voluntary actions that are initiated with a purpose and, therefore, create expectations as to their results. Since man has no control over the fruits of his actions, which are determined by the laws that govern the Order, man should learn to separate his approach to action from his approach to their result. All actions that are conscious and deliberate (that have knowledge - value - base) should be seen as one's duties, either to oneself or to others. Such duties should be performed in a spirit of worship to God which implies that one then accepts, with humility and grace, whatever results accrue from one's actions. This is not a negative attitude; in positive terms it constitutes an appreciation of God's laws that govern all phenomena in the creation and, specifically, of the theory of Karma and Karmaphala (action and fruits of action). The thrust of the verse cited above is not that one should entertain no expectations from one's action (that is not possible when an action has a purpose) but

that one should accept the results that come without grudge or resentment. This understanding is of immense value in the conduct of one's life.

The importance given to duties is perhaps a unique contribution of the Vedas, especially in the present context when the world is enamoured of the concept of human rights. Nowhere in the Vedantic literature is there a specific treatment of human rights. This, by no means, is an omission if one understands the intrinsic relationship between duties and rights. In human relationships, the duty of one becomes the right of another. A child's duty is his parent's right and vice-versa; a student's duty is his teacher's right and vice-versa; an employe's duty is his employer's right and vice-versa. When individuals perform their duties in accordance with Dharma (ethical and moral values) there can be no violation of human rights. The emphasis on duty over right is only proper, given the fact that the Gita addresses the individual and stipulates a values - based code of conduct (Dharma) for his own eventual liberation. The focus of duty is the self; the focus of right is someone else. Duties come upon an individual by virtue of his birth, station in life, relationships that emerge, and his own activities for survival and growth.

(B) Dharma, Ethics and Values

Because most human actions are guided by one's knowledge and personal values, both of which are constantly changing, it becomes necessary for human beings to have a set of norms that can guide action. The faculty of choice gives individuals some option for

their goals as well as the means to achieve those goals. Given the limitation of personal knowledge, experience and values, human beings need a set of standards that is independent of one's subjective set of values based on likes and dislikes. It is these independent standards or norms that are called Ethics :

- *Dharma is More Than Religion*

The word Dharma has suffered a lot of distortion at the hands of those who have tried to translate it as religion. Dharma is a much wider concept that defies adequate translation in terms of synonym. It has several shades of meaning. In a fundamental sense, Dharma means true nature, the reality of something or someone. This reality, in fact, defines the object - sugar is sweet or fire is hot. If it was not sweet it would not be sugar; if it was not hot it would not be fire. This is their respective reality, it undergoes no change, is absolute and universal. This is their Dharma. The word is used also to mean duty. An individual is expected to perform all of his duties within the framework of what is right and wrong. This moral dimension of duty elevates work from the level of "a job to make a living" and puts it within the realm of ethics and values. Yet another meaning of the word Dharma is attribute or quality; a virtuous person is called "Dharmic". Conversely, violation of established norms of conduct is called "Adharmic" behaviour. In the Vedas, Dharma refers to religious ethics, a set of do's and don't's, to guide human conduct. It occupies first place among the four categories of human goals because the pursuit

of Artha (security) and pleasure (kama) needs to be governed by ethical standards. Adhering to Dharma brings harmony and peace to the individual. In the ultimate analysis, these gains are more enduring than temporary material benefits whose appeal often drives people to violate Dharma. If this recognition can dawn upon people, it would be the surest way to realise the goal of universal peace and harmony.

- *Values*

Because moral values are treated in ancient scriptures, they are mistakenly construed as arbitrary rules of conduct, prescribed by some unknown source, having no objective reality and therefore not acceptable as valid knowledge. Nothing could be further from the truth.

A value indicates regard for a thing, situation, or attitude which for some reason is esteemed or prized by an individual. Applied to human relationships, this means that one will value those norms of behaviour which work to one's advantage. In other words, what one wants or expects from others, becomes one's norm or value. If one does not want to be hurt by others one is placing a value on noninjury; if one does not want to be cheated, one is placing a value on honesty; if one does not want to be struck by a speeding vehicle, one is placing a value on responsible driving. It is obvious that values stem from an inherent common regard for one's own interest and comfort. There is thus an element of universality to these values in terms of expected human behaviour. The source of ethical values lies in how one wants others to behave with refer-

ence to oneself. Values are based on commonsense appreciation of how one wants to be treated. There is nothing far fetched or arbitrary about it.

In the 13th chapter of the Gita is contained a discussion of twenty values that should ideally guide human life if one wants to attain the highest goal of liberation. Those that seem particularly relevant in the context of this paper are : absence of self-worshipfulness, absence of pretence, non - injury, steadiness, mastery over mind, dispassion towards sense objects, absence of egoism, absence of sense of ownership, constant even - mindedness in the face of the desirable and the undesirable, and constant application of the knowledge of the self.

(C) Knowledge, Teacher, Student

Vedantic literature offers some unique insights into the nature of knowledge, the role of the teacher, the role of the student, and the teaching - learning process. Although these are examined in the context of the teaching of Vedanta, one can see how generalisable they are. Their validity is timeless; in fact, much of what has been "discovered" and written about teaching and learning in modern educational literature was evidently known to the great teachers of Vedanta. The commentaries of Shankaracharya are particularly incisive and revealing.

• *Gaining Knowledge*

The gaining of knowledge is nothing but the shedding of ignorance. As soon as one comes to know of something, one's ignorance of that disap-

pears. The two things are simultaneous. The gain of knowledge is not a creation; it is only a negation of ignorance. Teaching and learning constitute the process of removing ignorance. Knowledge is not produced or created; it already exists. This is a logical corollary of the fact that all knowledge is about something and that something already exists. If something exists in the Order, knowledge about it must also be within that Order. One can only discover it. For any knowledge to take place, three factors are necessary : the knower, the object of knowledge, and an appropriate means of knowledge. Means of acquiring knowledge include the sense organs and a prepared (ready), attentive mind.

• *The Teacher*

The teaching of Vedanta differs from all other teaching in a fundamental sense. In the teaching of worldly knowledge, the knower (the subject) is separate from the object of knowledge ; all knowledge is about something other than the knower. In Vedanta, the focus is on the individual's understanding of the reality of himself. The subject and the object are one and the same. This distinction has important implications for the teacher as well as the student.

The Mundaka Upanishad provides a clear definition of a Guru (teacher). "Go to a teacher who is learned in the subject matter (Srotriyam) and steadfast in that knowledge (Brahmanistham)." Srotriyam means one who knows the content of the texts and also the methodology for teaching that knowledge. Unless he knows the methodology of teaching, he cannot be source of knowledge for oth-

ers. He must have a way to communicate that knowledge. Since words are the only means of imparting knowledge about the Self, communication skills assume critical importance in Vedanta. Brahmanistham implies total integration of the knowledge within the teacher; he does not merely "know" the reality of himself; he "is" that reality. It is only the teacher who is "established" in self knowledge who can unfold it to the student.

• *The Student*

The student who is seeking self knowledge is called a seekar (Sadhaka). In chapter 4 of the Gita, there is a specific reference to the role of the student. "Understand that (which is to be known) by prostrating, by asking proper questions, and by service. Those who are wise, who have the vision of the truth, will teach you this knowledge." (4.34). This verse begins with a word *mat* means thereafter (Tadviddhi). This has reference how the seekar should prepare himself before "appropriately" approaching the teacher for gaining knowledge. Preparedness in this context means a clean and steady mind that is rid of such common impurities as personal likes and dislikes, passion, anger and greed. Besides, he should have faith (shraddha) in both the scriptures as well as the teacher. Faith is an inadequate synonym for the sanskrit word 'Shraddha' which includes the dimension of commitment. Prostration to the teacher is symbolic of surrendering one's ego which is often an obstacle in the gaining of knowledge. The Shraddha for the teacher is reflected in the student's total

acceptance of the teacher's words. This acceptance, however, is not blind; it is subject to verification. As the master unfolds the texts, step by step, the student gains an understanding of his true nature and is able to shed all doubt and error. This is both a validation of knowledge and a reinforcement of Shraddha. The Gita captures this thought in a verse in the 4th chapter. "One who has faith in the scriptures and in the words of the teacher, who is committed to that knowledge and who is master of his or her senses, gains the knowledge. Having gained the knowledge, one immediately gains absolute peace." (4.39).

II EDUCATION MANAGEMENT : CONTEMPORARY THOUGHT

In this section, an attempt is made to look at some of the main concerns in education from perspective of contemporary Western thought. In doing so, I intend to show that many of the accepted ideas in the field of education, derived mostly from behavioural sciences developed in West, were known and taught by ancient rishis (sages) and teachers in India. This will help confirm both the validity and universality of these ideas. Along the same lines, I will point out the differences, particularly the basic ones, in the two perspectives - Vedantic and Western - and the causes underlying them.

(A) Teacher - Student : Role and Relationship

Student readiness and motivation, teacher competence and commitment, and the power and relevance of the subject matter are considered the major de-

terminants of effective teaching and learning. Emphasis is laid on clearly stated objectives in terms of student learning. "Nothing is truly learnt unless it is integrated with the learner's sense of purpose," Eble (1983) reminds us. The concept of student readiness parallels that of preparedness in Vedanta. The student must be qualified (*adhikari*), meaning eligible or equipped to learn. The qualifications consist of a quiet, undisturbed mind and *Shraddha*, both in the scriptures and the teachers. In contemporary literature readiness relates to such factors as prior knowledge (prerequisites), and levels of physical and emotional capacity.

(B) Content and Methodology : The Persistent Dilemma

More misconceptions prevail regarding the relationship of content to methodology than about lot of other thing in the education of teachers. Almost a 100 years ago, Dewey (1904) wrote : "Scholastic knowledge is some time regarded as if it were something quite irrelevant to method. When this attitude is even unconsciously assumed, method becomes an external attachment to knowledge of subject matter. It has to be elaborated and acquired in relative independence from subject matter, and then applied."

The divorce of subject matter and method of teaching is almost built into teacher education programmes. Content is taught by professors (scholars) in the various disciplines who have rarely probed question of methodology. Methods of teaching are taught by professors of education who are often

out of touch with the discipline of knowledge. It is not surprising, therefore, that prospective teachers are unable to integrate the two dimensions for effective teaching. At the university levels, "training" for teaching is almost unacceptable, the assumption being that effective teaching is a natural byproduct of sound scholarship. Perhaps the most important lesson one can learn from Vedanta is that the method of teaching a given subject matter is an integral part of the content itself, that one cannot be said to have acquired mastery over the subject matter unless one has also gained insights into the process by which that subject matter is best unfolded for learning. In his two - dimensional model of effective teaching Lowman (1984) refers to "intellectual excitement" as resulting from "absolute clarity of presentation and its positive emotional impact on the student." The great Teachers of Vedanta have demonstrated the integration of knowledge and methodology through the ages. I have myself experienced this excitement and pure joy in Swamiji's classes. Given my background and interest in teaching, the first thing that struck me when I began my study of Vedanta was Swamiji's superb ability to teach an hitherto unfamiliar (to me) field of knowledge in ways that made learning so very effective. And he did that without the use of a single "teaching aid" to supplement his talks (the lecture method). With so many new techniques and technology now available, we are still wondering why effective teaching (let alone excellence) is still so

rare in our schools and colleges.

(C) The Teaching of Values

Concern about the decline of traditional values has surfaced in most societies in recent years. People are witnessing a catastrophic loss of credibility in their institutions - business, government, the professions, education and, to some extent, even the family. They do not know how to believe, let alone trust. Unable to make sense of the wide gap between the rhetoric and the activities of those in positions of authority and responsibility, people are increasingly validating a personal belief system that appears pragmatic in meeting the challenges of life, or simply drifting through life as a necessary evil without meaning and purpose. The major components of this belief system seem to be :

- a) Money is the most important resource for me to have a good life; I am defined in society by the wealth and the power it bestows.
- b) I must engage in those pursuits that ensure the maximum monetary rewards, regardless of the means employed.
- c) To be successful, I must have the "guts" to manipulate people and situations to my advantage.
- d) Everyone around me in position of wealth and power reinforces my perceptions. If everyone can get away with it, so can I.
- e) All talk of ethics and morality, values and norms, is devoid of any content. It belongs to the domain of religion or philosophy, has no relevance to life on earth, and is, therefore, not practical.

The devastating consequences of such a personal belief system are manifest, in varying degrees, in all societies. The paradox is that even those, who have adopted the system, do not endorse it when it comes to the actions and behaviour of others towards them. This paradox is the result of gross misunderstanding of the source and purpose of values in many human societies.

The ancient, Vedantic approach to values, described in the first section, has been echoed powerfully, in the modern age, by Ayn Rand (1961) in her writings on Objectivist Ethics. "Ethics is not mystic fantasy," she says, "nor a social convention nor a dispensable, subjective luxury, to be switched or discarded in any emergency. Ethics is an objective, metaphysical necessity of man's survival - not by the grace of the supernatural nor of your neighbours nor of your whims, but by the grace of reality and the nature of life.... The standard of value - the standard by which one judges what is good or evil - is man's life, or, that which is required for man's survival as man.... That which his survival requires is set by his nature and is not open to his choice. What is open to his choice is only whether he will discover it or not, whether he will choose the right goals and values or not. He is free to make the wrong choice but not free to succeed with it.... Man is the only living species that has the power to act as his own destroyer."

That deliberate, conscious attempts to inculcate universal human values, such as those discussed in the Gita, are mostly conspicuous by their absence in formal educational system, is fairly obvi-

ous. That is why, in some countries, including India, recent policy announcements have "mandated" the inclusion of values in school curricula. A discussion of this approach to value development, the assumptions underlying it, and the conditions necessary for it to succeed is beyond the scope of this paper.

The decline of traditional values, whose objectivity and universality has been recognised even by some Western intellectuals, can perhaps be attributed to the following major ideas that seem to have contributed to emergence of "modern" society and its temper :

- a) The separation of man from nature and acceptance of man's right to exploit nature for his material wellbeing by utilising science and technology;
- b) The concept of the survival of the fittest which validates competition and gives man a free hand in interpreting fitness in ways that suit his selfish ends;
- c) The dismissing of all higher manifestations of human life - religion, philosophy, art - as necessary supplement in the material life process;
- d) The concept of relativism that denies all absolutes, treats everything - good and evil, virtue and vice - as relative;
- e) Idea of positivism that valid knowledge can be attained only through the method of science - observation, experimentation, proof. Values, ethics, and beliefs fall outside the category of objective knowledge and are therefore of no

consequence to the scientist. To the positivist, the metaphysical has no objective reality, it is only a figment of somebody's imagination. A logical corollary of positivism is the denial of the subjective and, therefore, the emotional dimension of human life. To say the least, this has served only to impoverish our understanding of the reality of human life.

(D) Intellect and Emotion

The impact of scienticism, with its emphasis on observation, qualification, and measurement as techniques of gaining "objective" knowledge, is easy to see in modern educational theory and practice. Even management education often reflect this approach. Scientific enquiry, it is claimed, is the domain of the intellect; objectivity requires that emotions and feelings (the soft stuff) be kept outside intellectual pursuits. It is encouraging to see that limitations of this approach are beginning to be recognised even by researchers. Goleman (1994) in his latest book - "Emotional Intelligence : Why it Can Matter More than IQ" - reports research-based findings about factors at work when people of high IQ flounder and those of modest IQ do surprisingly well. These factors add up to what Goleman calls emotional intelligence; it includes self awareness and impulse control, persistence, zeal and self motivation, empathy and social deftness. "These are the qualities that mark people who excel in real life, whose intimate relationships flourish, who are seen as stars in a work place. These are also the hallmarks of character and self

discipline, of altruism and compassion - basic capacities needed if our society is to survive."

In India, Chakraborty's (1992) work in the field of management education is refreshingly original and deserves attention of educators who care about the development of character and values. "Emotion is indeed the motive power behind intellect," he says, drawing support from such sources as Einstein: "The intellect has a sharp eye for methods and tools, but is blind to ends and means;" Russel: "Science is no substitute for virtue;" and Aurobindo: "The spirit that manifests itself in man.... Is great and profounder than his intellect...."

Chakraborty notes that the word 'emotion' tends to be used in a negative sense because of its association with 'emotionalism'. The later term describes behaviour that is totally dictated by feelings with no regard for knowledge and reason. "Both emotions and intellect can be positive and negative. When an emotion has a virtuous basis, it can inspire the intellect to act usefully; when an emotion is vicious, it can drive the intellect to act destructively."

(E) The Virtue of Hierarchy

The concept of hierarchy has been subjected to a great deal of discussion and debate in modern management literature. Along with its twin-bureaucracy, they have been painted as major obstacles to organisational effectiveness. Several alternatives to hierarchical structures are being proposed in the search for efficiency and excellence.

A deeper probe into the concept of hierarchy, however, reveals that it is

built into the natural 'Order' of things. Schumacher (1977) provides an insightful analysis of this Order. The whole creation is divided into four sections (kingdoms): mineral, plant, animal and human. The relationship between them is hierarchical. If we move from the lowest to the highest, we notice successive gain of quality or power. The mineral is inanimate, it has no "life." The plant has life in as much as one can tell whether a plant is alive or dead. The animal has, in addition to life, consciousness. One can recognise this fact when one sees a dog that has been knocked unconscious by us speeding vehicle. Human being have, in addition to life and consciousness (found in animals), also self awareness: they are not only able to think but are also able to be aware of their thinking. This relationship is not an accidental or spontaneous evolution, Schumacher notes, but is part of the Grand Design or the Order. One can extend this concept further by referring to the life of the body, the life of the mind and the life of the intellect as having a hierarchical relationship from the lower to the higher.

The concept of higher and lower, which is the essence of hierarchy, has been accepted over the years in variety of situation and interpersonal relationships. This acceptance was without reservation by and large, and seen as a logical extension of the Order. Social institutions, including the family, were organised around the principle of hierarchy. To understand why hierarchy has earned so much disrepute lately, one needs to look at one fundamental assumption: that the higher has quality or power superior to that of the lower.

Translated in practical terms, it would mean that the older (or senior) is superior in terms of experience, maturity and wisdom that typically come with age. Whenever this assumption is valid, hierarchy creates no problems. The reality in most organisations today, does not validate the assumption. If the older (senior) does not possess additional qualities of powers (ability wise, not authority wise) it loses all claim to superiority and, therefore, moral authority. Hierarchy in such situation becomes artificial and loses its sanctity. This is why it is being increasingly challenged in organisations, including educational institutions. If teachers resent the authority of administrators, if students resent the authority of teachers if administrators resent the authority of those above them, and so on, it is because that authority is not derived from intrinsic qualities of competence and character. It may get superficial obedience but not wholehearted support and co-operation, much less loyalty.

(F) Leadership

Conceptually, leadership and hierarchy are related ideas. The essence of leadership consists in superior qualities and powers (not authority). These powers enable leader to influence people, not govern them. Authority is finite, it has limits imposed by organisational status and jurisdiction. Influence is infinite. Great leaders, including great teachers, exert positive influence on peoples' lives, across time and space. The proof of leadership is in followership. Only followers give legitimacy to leadership. In the 3rd chapter of the

Gita, there is a reference to leadership and followership. "Whatever an important person does, that alone the other person does. Whatever that person sets as proper, the world follows (3.21) Swami Dayanand elaborates the meaning of this verse as follows. "Shrestha here refers to one who is considered to be important by other members of the society, a leader to be reckoned with, like a king, prince, judge or officer of some kind. The father of a given household is such a person, a role model. The word "acharati", in this verse, refers to what one does in terms of how one lives how one acts and reacts to the variety of situations encountered in day - to - day life.

What is remarkable about this definition and role is its focus on doing and living, not on saying or telling. One does not provide a role model through one's words. One's actions alone define the kind of person, one is. To reinforce the point made in the context of hierarchy, it is superior qualities and powers backed by moral integrity and character that give legitimacy to leadership. As Bennis (1993) points out : "effective leadership is overwhelmingly the function of character, judgement is an important secondary criterion.... If you asked subordinates what they want in a leader, they usually list three things : direction or vision, trustworthiness and optimism. Like effective parents, lovers, teachers and therapists, good leaders make people hopeful".

Several models of leadership are available in modern management literature. The most recent is value-based leadership, as opposed to contingency

leadership. O'Toole puts the two in perspective : "Successful leadership is ultimately rooted in high moral principles. Leaders must always lead by the pull of inspiring values.... Contingency theory is an invalid conclusion drawn from a valid observation. The theory derives from the fact that most human behaviour is not reducible to scientific explanation. From this observation, the professoriate concluded that nothing prescriptive can be said about leadership.... Where relativists err is to claim that there is no objective social knowledge at all and, worse, that it is always wrong to make moral judgements."

In the context of education management, Eble's (1983) "Seven deadly sins of teaching" make a lot of sense. "The sins we teachers commit", Eble says, "are as deadly to students' chances of learning as the traditional deadly sins were to chances of salvation." The seven "sins" he elaborates are : arrogance, dullness, rigidity, insensitivity, vanity, self indulgence, and hypocrisy. "Pride is clearly operative in most of these", Eble concludes.

All of us who have been at the centre stage in Education can see the power and relevance of these ideas about teachers and leaders. It is remarkable indeed that some of these ideas so clearly parallel to what is said in the Gita. Knowledge and Wisdom, in the best sense of the terms, do not seem to have time and space dimensions.

(G) Concluding Observation

The intellectual tradition of the West, influenced by science tends to emphasise analysis, and typically uses

the "either.... or" approach in understanding reality. This approach, called reductionism, has serious limitation because reality rarely lends itself to division and fragmentation. Human life is more than the sum of its parts. It is only through synthesis that one can capture the wholeness and richness of life's multiple dimensions. Chakraborty (1992) captures the essence of this approach in describing leadership as a "synthesis of the believing mind and the critical mind, the assimilating, trusting mind and the excluding, rejecting mind, the Eastern mind and the Western mind, the spiritual mind and the secular mind, the loving mind and the disciplined mind". What better aspiration can there be for educators ?

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With Best Wishes from

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