

## VIVEKANANDA'S STYLE OF LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT THROUGH MORAL VALUES AND CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT AT SCHOOL: KEY TO TURBULENT TIMES

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### **Abstract:**

Swami Vivekananda is one of the famous philosopher as well as educationist in the history of Indian education. His educational thoughts and ideas have been influenced by his philosophy of life. Swami Vivekananda believed in the Vedanta philosophy which considers that the ultimate goal of human life is to attain 'Unity with the Creator'. According to him 'God resides in every human heart'. So that, the best worship of God is service to mankind. According to Swami Vivekananda 'Education means that process by which character is formed, strength of mind is increased, and intellect is sharpened, as a result of which one can stand on one's own feet'. Swami Vivekananda always believed that the development of a nation is not possible without real education. This helps to construct good leaders. According to him, development of good personality in every human being is very essential in case of nation building. That's why, Swami Vivekananda emphasized on Man making education by which we can made a good citizen for our national development. Here in furtherance the good citizens also build a good leader in them. According to Swami Vivekananda 'Man making means a harmonious development of the body, mind and soul.' All these are the traits needed in good leaders also.

**Key words:** Educationist, Indian education, Educational thoughts and Vedanta philosophy

### **1.0 Introduction:**

The Indian Value System Inherited and influenced by our ancient civilization, Which is rich and vibrant can be successfully applied in the modern days The evolution of mankind thousands of years ago led to organizing them into a disciplined force capable of achieving anything. The complexities of leadership has its genesis in men being different from each other in terms of skills, characteristics, attitudes and behaviour representing different needs, ambitions and value systems. The concept of leadership therefore evolved from time immemorial.

In the Indian context, we have inherited a value system influenced by the thoughts of various educationists and leaders which provide an extremely rich and vibrant culture. All that thoughts and value systems can be successfully applied in the modern world. Today, as new breeds of Indian MNC's evolve and dominate the global economy from as diverse industries as IT and Steel, the Indian leadership styles and business acumen is envied worldwide. The current study has been conducted on the basis of following objectives:

- 1) To elaborate the thoughts and ideas of Vivekananda regarding moral values and character building education.
- 2) To study the relevancy of thoughts and ideas of Vivekananda taught in school education system in context to turbulent times.

### **2.0 Literature Review:**

**Tuohy (1999)** noted that early leadership studies were focused on the traits of leaders as great people. Such research into the life and work of recognized leaders was conducted to "isolate particular traits and characteristics, either behavioural or psychological, which might identify potential leaders in another context" (p. 167). From the 1950s to the 1980s, leadership studies shifted their focus from a 'great man' approach to examining particular leadership styles and behaviours. These studies gave rise to charismatic leadership (**Weber, 1947**), situational leadership (**Arbuckle, 1993**), servant leadership (**Greenleaf, 1977**), principle-centered leadership (**Covey, 1991**) and functional leadership (**Stokes and James, 1996**) theories. Some commentators sought to distinguish leadership from management and

administration (Drucker, 2007; Gardner, 1986; Johnson & Johnson, 1994; Kotter, 1990), whilst Nahavandi (1997) believed that these distinctions were simply “different parts of the same phenomenon” (p. 5). Other authors focused on advancing particular aspects of leadership. Sergiovanni (1992) concentrated on the moral dimension of leadership, Starratt (1986) proposed a visionary and reflective approach towards leadership, and Neidhart (1997) advocated the development of a leader’s spirituality. The Scottish Executive states that it ‘sees the role of leadership in schools and the wider educational community growing in importance’ (Scottish Executive, 2005, p2). The importance the Executive attaches to leadership and development of leadership capacity is reflected in the leadership agenda set out in *Ambitious, Excellent Schools* (Scottish Executive, 2004a; Scottish Executive, 2005). These documents make the link between effective leadership, leadership development and pupils’ school success. The stated intention is that by assisting schools in their leadership work, not adding to their workload (Scottish Executive, 2005), schools will be more able to develop pupils’ ‘capacities as successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors to society’ (*A Curriculum for Excellence*, Scottish Executive, 2004).

### 3.0 Moral Values and Thoughts of Vivekananda:

Moral values are the standards of good and evil, right or wrong which govern an individual’s behaviour and choices. Moral values are the rules and guidelines, the mores, which an individual or a group has about what is right or wrong, good or evil. Morality speaks of a system of behaviour in regards to standards of right or wrong behaviour. Moral values include some important aspects:

1. Moral standards with regard to behavior.
2. Moral responsibility referring to our conscience.
3. Moral identity or one who is capable of right or wrong action.

Morality has become a complicated issue in the multi-cultural world we live in today. Let’s explore what morality is, how it affects our behaviour, our conscience, our society, and our ultimate destiny. Morality describes the principles that govern our behaviour. Without these principles in place, societies cannot survive for long. In today’s world, morality is frequently thought of as belonging to a particular religious point of view, but by definition, we see that this is not the case. Everyone adheres to a moral doctrine of some kind.

Vivekananda realizes that mankind is passing through a crisis. The tremendous emphasis on the scientific and mechanical ways of life is fast reducing man to the status of a machine. Moral and religious values are being undermined. The fundamental principles of civilization are being ignored. Conflicts of ideas, manners and habits are pervading the atmosphere. Disregard for everything old is the fashion of the day. At this situation, Vivekananda seeks the solutions of all these social and global evils through education. Vivekananda emphasized on such education through which moral values can be developed among the students so that they can conduct their life morally and can become good leaders. They can decide what is right or wrong, what is good or evil, what is justice or injustice. Vivekananda believed that if we can make a student as a good human being, the development of moral values within him is the prior task of education. That in furtherance led to the development of good leaders. According to him, morality is the important aspect of personality. It is the key trait of the personality of a good leader even. For this, Vivekananda laid stress on religious education. Swami Vivekananda believed in the liberal concept of religion. Essential elements of all religions are the same. No religion is inferior to other religion. Man should follow an attitude of respect for all religion. According to Vivekananda, love is the highest goal of religion. Man should imbibe love for all and hatred for none.

### 4.0 Character Building Education and Thoughts of Vivekananda:

Swami Vivekananda emphasized on Man making education for human development as well as national development. According to him, man making education is inherent in character development as well as vocational development. Swami Vivekananda always told one thing that the main purpose of education is to build up such a personality whose character is covered with full of morality. According to him, education without character is like a flower without fragrance. An education system that doesn’t recognize this can be self-defeatist at the best.

The character of any man is but the aggregate of his tendencies, the sum total of the bent of his mind. Vivekananda told that every work that we do, every movement of the body, every thought that we think, bears an impression on the mind-stuff. What we are every moment is determined by the sum total of these impressions on the mind. Every man’s character is determined by the sum total of these impressions.

According to him, if good impressions prevail, the character becomes good, if bad, it becomes bad. Here this concept also works for leaders as well. Swami Vivekananda realized three things are necessary to make every man great, every nation great.

- Conviction of the powers of goodness.

- Absence of jealousy and suspicion.
- Helping all who are trying to be and do well.

Swami Vivekananda suggested trying to give up jealousy and conceit and learn to work unitedly for others. He told, purity, patience and perseverance overcome all obstacles. He suggested taking courage and work on. Patience and steady work, according to Swami Vivekananda, this is the only way to get success as a good leader.

#### **4.1 Character Formation and Vivekananda:**

According to Swami Vivekananda, character is the foundation for self development. Therefore, the prime aim of education is to build up good character among students. This depends upon the ideals cherished by the individual. So the educator should have to present high ideals before his students. The best way to develop a character is the personal example of high character set by the teacher. In ancient Indian system of education, the teachers used to present high ideals before the pupils, who in their turn imitated these ideals according to their capacities.

Swami Vivekananda has suggested some important guidelines or principles for character formation among the students, which are also the foundation of good leadership qualities in them. These are as follows:

##### **1) Hard work:**

According to Vivekananda, character formation requires hard work. This is not possible by those who have a wish for all types of enjoyment. Struggle is ultimate key factor of a successful leader, in which a teacher can give its best to build this type of character in students.

##### **2) Moral and Spiritual Values:**

Besides hard work, character formation requires some important traits such as purity, thirst for knowledge, perseverance, faith, humanity, submission and veneration, etc. These qualities may be developed by the teacher's example and the pupil's efforts. These traits are needed in today's leaders at a great extent.

##### **3) Gurukula System:**

According to Vivekananda, the relationship between the teacher and the taught is possible only in a Gurukula system of education. Therefore, he favoured the ancient Indian Gurukula system of education. In these Gurukulas, the pupils served the teacher, who in his turn helped the pupils everywhere to achieve knowledge. Here also comes the message of team building or group developing in them to achieve their goals.

##### **4) Formation of Good Habits:**

Character is intimately connected with habits. Habits express character good habits make for good character. A leader also develops this quality from his early school age even.

##### **5) Learning through mistakes:**

The child should be allowed to commit mistakes in the process of character formation. He will learn much by his mistakes. Errors are the stepping stones to our progress in character. Strong will, is the sign of great character. If a person will having this type of experience and have practiced for the same, that person can show the path to other persons very easily.

##### **6) Will makes men great:**

Vivekananda himself was an ideal teacher. His words worked like magic upon men and women. Vivekananda asked the people to build up their character and manifest their real nature which is the Effulgent, the magnificent the Ever Pure. 'Will make men great' this statement also seems to be very true for leaders.

#### **4.2 Relevancy of Thoughts and Ideas of Vivekananda in Present Turbulent Times:**

Recently our human civilization is passing through a dangerous situation. If we observe the present situation of our society sincerely, we can see that very dangerous anti-social activities, immoral activities, corruptions etc. are happening here and there in our society. Not only this, but also a bad effect or impressions of these activities have come into the system of education at school, college and university level. Consequently, we can see that teachers are sleazing by their students inside and outside of the school today. They have no moral values to judge themselves what is right or wrong. Lack of morality, their character is also very bad. Sometimes, it is found that they have forgotten to respect their teachers. According to Swami Vivekananda, it is not a good sign for our society and nation. For this reason, he always told that if we want to develop humanity, morality, honesty, good character etc. among our students, school education is the best way to serve this purpose. Because today's students are the leaders of future.

#### **4.3 Moral values and School Education:**

Students are the future of our Nation. We are taught moral lessons at home and in school such as love, fellow human beings, respect elders, no wrong things should be done, never speak lies, love your country, don't be jealous etc. But

now days everywhere crime flourishes. We see corruption; old people are sent out of home and treated badly. People are unaware of the truth. Jealousy has become the overall base of life.

#### **4.3.1 Need of Development of Moral Values in School Education:**

The need of development of moral values in our school is very significant. Some important needs have been mentioned below.

##### **1. Preparing Our Children for Future Roles in Society:**

Knowledge gained in school is only one goal of education. The primary goals of education should be enabling students to gain knowledge and moral values. Our kids will need both in preparing themselves to be good parents and citizens in society.

##### **2. Many Parents Aren't Teaching Moral Values:**

If all parents were teaching their children moral values in the home, it would not be necessary for the schools to do this work. The sad fact is that a lot of kids are not learning from their parents the difference between right and wrong. This is because most mothers and fathers in their busy work days spend only a few hours with their children. In many families there is only one parent and no other role models for kids to follow. And for preparing the children or young one's it is the most necessary part.

##### **3. There is Too Much Violence and Dishonesty in Society:**

Every day students are exposed to violence, dishonesty, and other social problems in the media and the real world. How many times have we heard about school shootings? What about other times when students are caught cheating on exams? Then, too, we read about bullying in school and fights between gangs. If moral values were taught in schools, we would have fewer of these problems.

##### **4. To Counter Bad Influences in Society:**

Unfortunately, many of the role models of young people are setting bad examples. These bad examples range from sexual promiscuity, degrading of women, advocacy of violence, and the condoning of dishonesty in order to succeed.

##### **5. Moral Values Will Stick With You For Life:**

The significant of moral values in our life is very important. Moral values teach us what is right or wrong. Thus we can conduct our life in a right direction. We can understand what is good or evil. This type of learning helps us to conduct our life morally in this world.

#### **4.4 Some Important Moral Values and School Curriculum:**

According to Swami Vivekananda, if we want to make our students as a moral human being, school curriculum is one of the best ways to serve this purpose. Because he think that moral values can be inculcated among our students through a value based school curriculum. Therefore, Vivekananda suggested some important moral values which should be included in our school curriculum.

##### **1. Unconditional Love and Kindness:**

In most cases, if you love someone, he or she will love you back in return. This, however, is not the real meaning of love. Love should be unconditional. With more love in the world, kindness will follow and replace cruelty.

##### **2. Honesty:**

Students must be taught that dishonesty and cheating is wrong, and will get you nowhere in the future. As a student, one is only hurting himself or herself by cheating, because this action will eventually catch up to you in the end with bad consequences.

##### **3. Hard Work:**

Nowadays, so many students want to cheat and cut corners in their studies, because they are lazy and don't place any value on hard word. This thinking must change.

##### **4. Respect for Others:**

Unfortunately, in our highly competitive dog eat dog society; many people will tread on others to get ahead in life. Respect for others should include respecting different religions, races, sexes, ideas, and life styles.

##### **5. Co-operation:**

To achieve a common goal, it is necessary for all people to work together. If this is not done, a few people may profit, but the end result for everyone will be a failure. I still believe in the motto, "united we stand and divided we fall."

##### **6. Compassion:**

Compassion is defined as being sensitive to the needs of people. If there were more compassion in the world, there would be less homeless, hunger, wars, and unhappiness.

##### **7. Forgiveness:**

Anger in most cases is caused by unwillingness to forgive. There would be less violence and fighting in school if students could learn this moral virtue.

**4.5 Character Building and School Education:**

Character building improves the quality of education. According to Vivekananda, trying to teach students without teaching character is like trying to teach reading without teaching the alphabet. Character forms the building blocks for becoming a good citizen. So, building a good character among our students is the main task of our school education. We can not play the blame game in our educational system. Whether knowingly or unknowingly with all teaching comes the values and concepts of exactly what it is to be humane. When a problem arises, it needs to be recognized, addressed and resolved.

Instead of blaming people or institutions for the results of a lack of morality in schools, we should focus our efforts on finding ways of successfully implementing character education into schools. Changes have to occur in parents, legislators, communities, and the media and educational system so that children are taught how to behave. Actualizing character education programs into schools is necessary in order to overcome this nation's crisis of character.

**4.5.1 Role of School Education in Character Development among Students:**

According to Vivekananda, Character development is not possible without proper school education. He believed that only education can play a vital role to develop a good character among our students. Therefore, the following programmes should be exercised in school education for developing humane character among our students.

1. Character Development Programme:
2. Present Suitable Examples of ideal persons before students.
3. Give moral education for developing a good character.
4. Developing Nationalism among students.
5. Developing good habits among students.
6. Development of good attitude among students.
7. Development of democratic ideals for building a good character.
8. Organising Social Service activities.

**5.0 Results of the Study:**

The following findings have come out through the study:

1. Development of ethical values and good character among our students is very indispensable to defend and stay alive our society as well as our nation from different kinds of harmful activities. These characteristics also help in building good leaders.
2. Development of moral values among our students is very imperative to covenant their life with morally. And helps in providing a nation worthy leaders.
3. An emphasis should be given in character building all the way through the development of right values.
4. For developing moral values and good character among our students, value based education should be included in our school curriculum.
5. Swami Vivekananda emphasized on Man making education. Man making means a harmonious development of a child in respect to their morality, humanity, honesty, character health etc. Therefore, a supportive environment to fulfil this aims of education should be created in our school. Here all these traits are basis for the Leaders.
6. According to Vivekananda, true acquaintance is very crucial for every human being. The getting hold of of true knowledge is not possible without moral values. So that, development of moral values is very important for the development of true knowledge, which is counted as good leadership quality.

**6.0 Conclusion:**

Lastly, we can say that, the thoughts and ideas of Swami Vivekananda regarding moral values and character building is bearing a great significance in the field of building great leaders for the future. Only the real school education can motivate our students to think, to do something in a right path or right ways. According to Vivekananda, thus we can make a society or nation or universe where everything is good, no corruptions, no anti-social activities, no immoral activities are exist.

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