

Human Excellence of Swami Vivekananda with special reference to Bhagavad Gita

Somdutta Tiwary¹ & Amit Tyagi²

1. Research scholar, Mahatma Gandhi Chitrakoot Gramoday Univ., M.P
2. Research scholar, Singhania University, Rajasthan

Email: tiwarisomdutt@gmail.com

Abstract:

The present study aims to find the views of Swami Vivekananda particularly on Human excellence. At the same time the search is based on the teachings of Bhagwad Gita in the same area. One of the greatest contributions of India to the world is Bhagwad Gita which is considered to be one of the first revelations from God. It is the essence of Upanishads and a complete guide to practical life. It provides “all that is needed to raise the consciousness of man to the highest possible level.” The world and India has seen several saints and prophets. When almost all of them talked about God, Swami Vivekananda insisted on man. The main theme of his lectures, private talks, writings, letters, etc. was Human Excellence. He wanted every human being to manifest the best qualities in all spheres of life. The study concludes that the best examples of the Human excellence he presents are Swami Vivekananda himself as Sri Krishna taught in Bhagvad Gita.

Introduction:

The person who has achieved the utmost excellence in his life is a man of harmony. Krishna presents a vivid picture of such a man at several occasions in the Bhagavad Gita. In his personality and life, we see harmony between pair of opposites like gentleness and fearlessness, renunciation and service, faith and rationality, meditation and work, etc. Usually we meet two kinds of noble people – the meditative introverted renunciate and the ever active social worker. A harmony of both of these in the same person is the epitome of Human Excellence.

Human Excellence can be broadly classified as Social Excellence and Spiritual Excellence. Social Excellence requires three qualities – (1) Knowledge of ways to uplift mankind, (2) Capacity to put the knowledge into practice, and most importantly, (3) Strength of conviction. Conviction (shradda) is the most important factor and is the seed of all good action. Conviction is of three things – (1) Conviction in the potential of oneself, (2) Conviction in the power of goodness, (3) Conviction in the potential of the world and society.

Swami Vivekananda was a perfect blend of Social and Spiritual Excellence. By following his teachings, we also can strive to inculcate these concepts in our life and attain both these aspects of Human Excellence.

According to Swami Vivekananda, every individual is unique and the character is his identity. Building up character is through the process of education. Education is not only the process of acquiring knowledge, but also how efficient you are in putting the knowledge to action for handling men and nature around him. This education combines with strength of self conviction and the depth of thought enables a person reach character excellence. The character energy that comes out of this human development through education, especially the tremendous amount of faith in one-self enables him to overcome any difficulty or obstacle that comes in his way to reach his objective. Only those people with a high degree of character excellence can nourish this world. Hence the character-energy / excellence is an essential element for human excellence.

According to Peter Drucker each person has inherent strengths and weaknesses. One cannot identify the strengths of self and identification of areas of self strength can be only through feedback analysis. A person's performance/ efficiency can be improved only in his areas of strengths and trying to improve the weakness will only lead to mediocrity. The above points are quite against the principles of the east. The west agrees with the concept of self-conviction when they state that "only internal success leads to external success".

According to Upanishad, anything done with vidya, sraddha and upanisad can alone become supremely efficient. To be efficient you need to equip yourself with the knowledge or know-how first. Once you equip yourself with the knowledge, efficiency can only come if you have a strong faith in yourself and the personal conviction to do it. It is a totality of positive attitudes that you develop towards achieving your objective. Upanishad considers that you are completely equipped to achieve the efficiency only you do think deeply and meditate on the subjects required to achieve the concerned objective. When all these three powers are combines you get a superlative degree of efficiency which he terms as human excellence.

The modern (Western) management concepts of vision, leadership, motivation, excellence in work, achieving goals, giving work meaning, decision making and planning, are all discussed in the *Bhagavad Gita*. There is one major difference. While Western management thought too often deals with problems at material, external and peripheral levels, the *Bhagavad Gita* tackles the issues from the grass roots level of human thinking. Once the basic thinking of man is improved, it will automatically enhance the quality of his actions and their results.

A popular verse of the *Gita* advises “detachment” from the fruits or results of actions performed in the course of one’s duty. Being dedicated work has to mean “working for the sake of work, generating excellence for its own sake.” If we are always calculating the date of promotion or the rate of commission before putting in our efforts, then such work is not detached. It is not “generating excellence for its own sake” but working only for the extrinsic reward that may (or may not) result.

The principle of reducing our attachment to personal gains from the work done is the *Gita*’s prescription for attaining equanimity. It has been held that this principle leads to lack of incentive for effort, striking at the very root of work ethic. To the contrary, concentration on the task for its own sake leads to the achievement of excellence – and indeed to the true mental happiness of the worker. Thus, while commonplace theories of motivation may be said to lead us to the bondage or extrinsic rewards, the *Gita*’s principle leads us to the intrinsic rewards of mental, and indeed moral, satisfaction.

Conclusion

Knowledge is the manifestation of what is already innate in man. The east believes that any of the competency or skill can be learnt and the superlative degree of efficiency can be achieved by equipping oneself with knowledge, having self-conviction to achieve it and by thinking deeply thinking and meditating on the competency concerned.

There lies an infinite man behind the finite and an immortal man behind the mortal man which are not within sensory cognition. Improving ones efficiency to a superlative degree with vidya, sraddha and upanisad exposes the infinite and immortal man within who has the energy to achieve any objective which nourishes and heals the world. This constitutes human excellence.

References:

1. M.P. Bhattathiri, Business Management using Bhagavad Gita, <http://www.maharashtraweb.com/gitamanagement.htm>
2. Kartik Rajagopal (2008) Thoughts of Swami Vivekananda on Human Excellence., <http://pristinepal.blogspot.in/2008/05/thoughts-of-swami-vivekananda-on-human.html>
3. Swami Ranganathananda, Swami Vivekananda and Human Excellence, Advaita Ashrama, Kolkata
4. Swami Vivekananda and Human Excellence, Practical Philosophy and Rational Religion, <http://practicalphilosophy.in/>

Aviation Science of the Ancient India: A Challenge for Modern Intellectuals