



The Impact of Sankhya Philosophy on India's Current Educational System

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Abstract:

Sankhya philosophy is one of the most prominent Vedic (Orthodox) philosophy and one of the oldest of Indian philosophies. An eminent, great sage Kapila was the founder of the Sankhya school of Hindu philosophy which is mentioned in the Mahabharata and the Upanishads. There are several disagreements on the etymological meaning of Sankhya philosophy. Such as according to some critics, Sankhya means complete knowledge and someone said Sankhya means the calculation of twenty fifth principles. In a nutshell, the Sankhya dynasty flourished in succession. At first great sage Kapila gave this knowledge disciple Asuri, then Asuri gave this knowledge to his disciple Pancasikha, which beautifully described in the book 'Samkhyakarika'. The earliest surviving text of the sankhya school of hindu philosophy. All though from Sankhyakarika, We can learn about Sankhya knowledge. At present, we can see that social deterioration, lack of values dependent on capitalist education. Therefore, the only goal of education should be to develop and express the spirit of people. In fulfilling this goal of education, 'Sankhya Philosophy' plays a vital role in the development of conscience knowledge as well as practical knowledge. On the whole, it can be said that through the development of the soul and the development of values. Sankhya Philosophy' helps people and society to live a beautiful and orderly life. So, my Research paper highlights the above discussion which is currently remarkable at present era.

Keywords: Sankhya Philosophy, Education, Kapil Muni, Vedic

1. Introduction

Sankhya is one of the most prominent and one of the oldest of Indian schools of philosophies. An eminent, great sage Kapila was the founder of the Sankhya School. The Sankhya philosophy combines the basic doctrines of Sankhya and Yoga. However, it should be remembered that the Samkhya represents the theory and Yoga represents the application or the practical aspects. Sankhya is dualistic realism. It is dualistic because it advocates two ultimate realities: Prakriti, matter and Purusha, self. Samkhya is realism as it considers that both matter and spirit are equally real. Samkhya is pluralistic also because of its teaching that Purusha is not one but many. Prakriti is the non-self, it is devoid of consciousness Prakriti is unintelligible and gets greatly influenced by the Purusha, the self. It can only manifest itself as the various objects of experience of the Purusha. Prakriti is constituted of three gunas, namely sattva, rajas and tamas the term guna, in ordinary sense means quality or nature. But here, it is to be understood in the sense of constituent (component) in Samkhya. Sattva is concerned with happiness. While rajas is concerned with action, tamas is associated with ignorance and inaction. In accordance with the Satkaryavada, the Samkhya maintains that the three gunas of Prakriti are also associated with all the world-objects. Prakriti is the primordial and ultimate cause of all physical existence. Naturally the three gunas which constitute Prakriti also constitute every object of the physical world. Prakriti is never static. Even before evolution, the gunas are relentlessly changing and balancing each other. As a result, Prakriti and all the physical objects that are affected or produced by Prakriti, are also in a state of constant change

and transformation. Samkhya accepts three sources of valid knowledge: Perception, inference and testimony. According to sankhya philosophy ultimate aims of education is Liberation (mokhsolav) through vivekgyan.

2. Significance of the present Study

Sankhya philosophy is the ancient and most important theoretical philosophy of the East. This philosophy was disseminated by Maharishi Kapil Muni. The relevance of this philosophy may be observed in the modern society and in the education system. The aim of the present education is development of the innate possibilities of the learner and child-centric education, though such concepts have come from Purusa, Prakrit, Satkarmabad of Sankhya philosophy. Beside these the aims of education are development of self, values and to reduce the social and cultural degradation. All these are the important aspect of the axiology of Sankhya Philosophy. Therefore, this philosophical discourse has been chosen by the researcher is very relevant and significant in the present perspective.

3. Features of Sankhya Philosophy

- 1. Metaphysical Aspects of Sankhya Philosophy:** Metaphysically Samkhya Philosophy is regarded as dualistic realism. It believes two ultimate realities Prakṛti and Purusa. But that reality is plural. They differ from each other, as like, subject and object. Purusa is having subjective reality and prakriti can be characterized by objective reality.
- 2. Prakṛti:** Prakriti is the ultimate cause which is eternal into which the whole world is dissolved. Gunas of Prakriti: The gunas are the ultimate elements of constructing prakriti. Prakriti is the combination of sattva, rajas and tamas. Sattva has the function of manifestation. Rajas have the function of activity and Tamas has the function of retardation. Sattva: Sattva has the function of manifestation. The tendency towards conscious manifestation in the senses, the mind and the intellect; the luminosity of light and the power of reflection in a mirror or crystal are all due to the operation of the element of Sattva in the constitution of things. Sattva manifests an object to consciousness. Rajas: Rajas has the function of activity. It is active because of its mobility and stimulation. It is also the nature of pain. Rajas makes an object move and act. It is the principle of activity. Tamas: Tamas has the function of restraint. It is opposed to the Sattvagunas because it is heavy, laziness, drowsiness, sleep and alike. It produces ignorance and darkness and obstructs activity. Tamas is the inertia, resistance or restraint. Sattva, Rajas, and Tamas contradict as well as cooperate among each other to produce an object. These three gunas are present in all the objects of the world. None of them exist alone.
- 3. Purusa:** Purusa or self is an eternal reality. Purusa is neither the body, nor the mind (manas), neither ego (ahamkaara) nor intellect (buddhi). It is free from distortions. Its objects changes but it itself never changes. It is above self-arrogance, aversion and attachment. Evolution: A sage named Kapila has described the order of creation which is accepted by the Sankhya Philosophy. The order of creation is as follows.
 - 1. Mahat:** Mahat is the first component produced as a result of evolution. It is cosmic in its nature. It is important to mention that buddhi should not be understood as the same as consciousness. Buddhi helps to identify the soul or the atman which differs from all physical objects and their qualities.
 - 2. Ahamkara:** The cosmic Buddhi becomes individuated and evolves into the cosmic egoism or Ahamkara. It is the second product of evolution. Ego is identified as “I” or “mine” feelings of an individual. Every individual has buddhi, and since ahamkara is a practical element of buddhi, it is found in all individuals.
 - 3. Manas:** According to the Sankhya Philosophy, manas or mind is neither eternal nor atomic. It is constituted with parts and thus can come into contact with the different sense organs simultaneously. Mind helps to analyze and synthesize the sense-data into determinate perceptions. Being an internal sense organ, it is aware of objects belonging to the past, present, and the future.
 - 4. Jnanendriyas:** Jñanendriyas are known as five sense organs; nose, ears, eyes, skin, and tongue. On Sankhya views, sense is an imperceptible energy or force which exists in the perceived organs and apprehends the object.

5. **Karmendriyas:** Karmendriyas is understood as the five organs of action which reside in mouth, ears, feet, anus, and the sex organ. They perform the functions respectively as speech, hearing, movement, excretion, and reproduction.
6. **Tanmatras:** There are five tanmatras; sabda or sound, sparsa or touch, rupa or form, rasa or taste, and gandha or smell.
7. **Mahabhutas:** There are five mahabhutas found in the cosmos namely; Air or Vayu, Fire or Agni, Akasa or Ether, Water or Jala, Prithivi or Earth. The Samkhya theory of evolution is illustrated in the following diagram for your clarity and better understanding.

4. Epistemological Aspects of Samkhya Philosophy

The sankhya accepts only three independent sources of valid knowledge. These are perception, inference and scriptural testimony (sabda). The other sources of knowledge, like comparison, postulation and noncognition, are included under these three, and not recognized as separate sources of knowledge. In all valid knowledge there are three factors, namely, the subject (Pramata) the object (Prameya) and the ground or source of knowledge (Pramana). The modification (vrotti) of the intellect, through which the self knows an object, is called Pramana. The object presented to the self through this~ modification is the Prameya. Prama or valid 'knowledge is the reflection of the self in the intellect as modified into the form of the object.

5. Axiology Aspects of Sankhya Philosophy

The self, who is eternal, pure conscious, and all pervading, due to its ignorance identifies itself with the manas, ahmkara, and mahat which are the products of Prakrti. Thus, it experiences the worldly pain and suffering. The universe is constituted of manifold objects, and since objects are embedded with gunas and selves and even interrelated among them, suffering is unavoidable. This is so because the Samkhya claims that wherever there is guna there is suffering. Further, they said that the life in heaven is also controlled by the gunas.

Sankhya philosophy starts with acceptance of universalness of three sorrows– Spiritual (related to soul, mind and body), Physical (related to outer world) and Divine (related to horoscope and divinity). According to Sankhya, emancipation or salvation is the name of riddance from sorrows.

6. Educational Implications of Sankhya Philosophy

Sankhya has great relevance for contemporary education. If we consider the modern view of education as development, then Sankhya's postulate that development is only the unfolding of what already has potential existence needs no modification to suit today's world. Sankhya's psychological views also reflect modern learning theories. If knowledge leads to the modification of buddhi in the Sankhya system, then modern education aims at the modification of behaviour. If cognition is a function of buddhi or intellect in Sankhya, it is the formation of intellectual structure in modern education. Sankhya's theory that generalisation is the result not only of observation of elements but also non-observation of non-elements reflects the modern view of concept formation. A deeper study will yield many more similarities.

According to modern education system, the aims of education are divided into two category, Proximal aims of Education, Ultimate aims of Education. Let us attempt to analyze in detail the implications of Sankhya for modern education:

- **Proximal Aims of Education:** Sankhya states the ultimate aim as attaining the perfection of purusa through discrimination, leading to its salvation. Thus, the aim of education should be to create discerning individuals capable of attaining the perfection that exists within them, as Swami Vivekananda also put it.
- **Methods:** The methods are clearly indicated thorough study of authorities but keeping an open mind and using reason to validate their theories Experiential learning with maximum involvement of the

senses Activity based learning including projects, practical work, etc. enabling the development of observation and logical reasoning.

- **Curriculum:** The curriculum will involve the study of all disciplines, with stress on the natural sciences, since to understand prakriti is to discriminate between purusa and prakriti, and the arts, so as to develop an appreciation and understanding of the works of authorities. Physical sciences and the yoga will also form part of the curriculum since Sankhya believes only a healthy and focused individual can attain salvation.
- **Discipline:** Sankhya recommends a high degree of discipline. One can deduce that it should be self-imposed.
- **Role of teacher:** The teacher is to be a facilitator of the development of the innate potentiality of the child. Place of student: Since Sankhya believes in the multiplicity of purusas, it follows that education must be individualized and child-centred.
- **Religious and moral education:** It can be deduced that religious education will not have much importance but moral education involving the teaching of ethical values will definitely hold a central place in any system of education based on Sankhya.
- **Liberation:** Liberation or Kaivalya is one of the most valued objectives of sage Kapila. He explains that liberation is attained when matter is dissociated from the spirit. As long as the individual associates the body with the soul, he will always stay in bondage. As a result, liberation in Sankhya makes the end of bondage and can be attained only with the knowledge of discrimination. He said liberation namely Jivan Mukti and Videha Mukti. Jivan Mukti is a state of liberation which is attained while the individual is still living in this world. This is possible only when the right knowledge of discrimination is attained. On the other hand, Videha Mukti is attained after the death of the individual. Development of Values: The development of values is described by Swami Vivekananda in these words, "To be happy is the universal urge of all beings and at all times. One has to be at peace with oneself to be happy. There can be no peace for a turbulent mind. 'Vasanas' (undesirable, wants) take away the peace of mind. It is only when we follow a value system that we can have a serene, contemplative mind. When mind is calm, we can turn it within to 'see' the treasure of pure consciousness. No treasure, on earth is equal to a slice of that 'tattva' (element)". Development of Self-Actualization: A self-actualized individual has a strong sense of who they are. They have a deep understanding of their beliefs and values, and they live in congruence with those beliefs and values. Because they accept and understand themselves, they are authentic and true to themselves. They do not pretend to be anything they are not. Not only are self-actualized people authentic, but they seek authenticity as well, both in people and in the world. They are quick to spot dishonesty. Sankhya philosophy guides us to realize the truth for self-actualization. Enlightenment of self: Enlightenment of self is a state of awakened understanding. It can be described as the transcendence of suffering and desire in order to obtain spiritual liberation (moksha). To be enlightened is to be freed from the tyranny of the mind and to experience deep spiritual peace, presence and wholeness. The state of enlightenment is important in Hindu, Buddhist, Yogic and Sankhya philosophy also.

7. Conclusion

Like any other Theist philosophy of India, the real knowledge of the truth is the base of the salvation theory of Sankhya Philosophy. This philosophy helps to escape from sorrow and misery of life by eradicating ignorance and acquiring real knowledge. Ultimate knowledge is the base of welfare of mankind and society. At the end it may be said that modern science, psychology, education can be enriched from this philosophy. Animate and inanimate- integration of these two aspects leads towards life, movement change and its development. If it is realized by knowledge and karma then education becomes successful.

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