

Ethical Values and Its Importance as A Man Making Education from The Discussing Point of Shankaracharya

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INTRODUCTION

Shankaracharya, the great exponent of Advaita Vedanta is one of the prominent numbers in Indian Philosophy, whose gospel is substantially grounded on ethical and spiritual values, yet the significance of his gospel in the sphere of ethics has not been duly appreciated. All the writings of Shankaracharya's philosophy give more importance on his spiritual explanation but the same importance have not attached to the ethical explanations that includes in the writings of Shankaracharya.

Upanishads, Gita and the Brahmasutra are well known as Prashanatraya of advaita Vedanta. In fact, no study on ethics and metaphysics of Shankaracharya is possible without giving preference to his exposition on the triple text. Out of these triple text the Gita is mainly concerned with ethical problems while Upanishads and Brahmasutras are mainly concerned with metaphysical or spiritual problems. Problems of ethics and metaphysics in Shankaracharya's philosophy is interrelated and they can be properly understood only by a combined study of the both. So, it is essential to study of his commentaries on the Upanishads, the Brahmasutras and the Gita.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Neelakantan, K.N. (2012) said that advaita ethics highlighting on two considerations. The first consideration is that the ultimate aim of human beings is to realize the highest value called Moksa or liberation, which is nothing but the realization of one's identity with Brahma. This Moksa or liberation is achieved by dispelling avidya or ignorance of one's own self. Therefore, the knowledge is the only means of attaining Moksa. Ethical values lead to purity of mind which is known as cittasuddhi an essential requisite for knowledge. The second consideration of Advaita ethics is that the method of realization of self is not one and same for all people. Those people who do not have intense desire for the realization of self must follow the path of action carrying out for various duties and obligations as prescribed in the Gita. On the other hand who are only concerned with Moksa or liberation must have follow the path of knowledge characterized by discrimination and dispassion.

Radhakrishnan, S., & Moore, C. A. (Eds.).(1957) in his writings of Shankara ethical explanation says that, among the all items of the universe human beings alone are the ethical subject. Human individual knows that there are two worlds, infinite and finite and he has relation to both worlds. Finite and infinite is not mere poetic vision, but it is the truth of philosophy. All kinds of ethical goods are valuable as the means of realizing the ultimate end. While self-realization is considered as absolute good, ethical goods are considered as relative goods. The ethical good helps to realizing the infinite and ethically bad does not help to realizing it. Freedom consists in the realization of the Atman in the individual soul. Atman is real as Brahma. Moksa consists in consummation of concinnity between Atman and the self. Moksa does not mean the disappearance of the world. According to Shankara Moksa is possible within this life and world, which is known as Jivan Mukti means liberation within this life.

Menon, Y. K. (2004) in his book said that, in Shankaraya's view, the origin of good and evil as opposite qualities resides in the object due to Avidya or ignorance caused by Maya, which can be rightly said as 'illusion'. Due to illusion or false knowledge oneself think other self or Jivas are separate from him. The error of feeling separate from other selves is the source of suffering of bondage. The effect of Maya is fully active till the individual soul identifies himself with his body, mind and senses, all together which is known as 'ego'. The delivered or illumined person is called a Jivanmukta or free soul. In the Upanishads it says that a Jivanmukta becomes, 'Free from evil, free from taint, free from doubts and he becomes as a knower of Brahman.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEMS

The problem of this research work is stated as “Ethical Values and its Importance as a Man Making Education from the Discussing Point of Shankaracharya”. The main reason of concentrating on the problem is to grow attention on ethical values which enable us to consider what is right or wrong, what is good or bad etc. Ethics gives importance on what we ought to do. It is fact that in present time the importance on ethical education is not equally given as the other aspects of education. But, it is true that without ethical values a human life cannot be a meaningful one.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The present time is popularly known as the time of science and technology. The equipments and the productions of science and technology make our life is more sophisticated and luxurious one. But without realization of ethical values the result of the science and technology will be mechanical and harmful for mankind. Ethics is the principle of life and it is essential in the every sphere of life. Life without principle cannot be a meaningful one. Ethical principles play a vital role in social, cultural, academic, political and all other aspects of life. In every aspect of human life we should follow some principles.

The present study will focused on ethical values of Shankaracharya's philosophy and tries to find out the usefulness of ethical principles from the discussing point of his philosophy. The study also tries to find out the importance of ethical principles as man making education for mankind as discussed in Shankaracharya's philosophy.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The present study sets the following objectives and the researcher will try to fulfill the same. The objectives of the present study are-

- To highlight the general ethical principles and values.
- To find out the ethical values of life in Shankaracharya's philosophy.
- To find out the importance of ethical values as man-making education from the viewpoint of Shankaracharya.
- To make aware and create interest on ethical values among the people.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

A research work is progress as per the research questions set by the researcher. There are some definite research questions of this study which are set according to the aim and objectives of this study. The following research questions are set for the present study.

- What are the ethical values?
- What are the importance of ethical values in human life and its significance as man-making education?
- What is the usefulness of making aware and create interest about ethical values?

METHODOLOGY

The aim of the present study is to find out the importance of ethical values in human life from the view point of Shankaracharya's philosophy. The present study is purely qualitative in nature. Therefore, descriptive and analytic methods of research have been adopted for the study.

The study on the topic “Ethical Values and its Importance as a Man Making Education from the Discussing Point of Shankaracharya” is mainly based on literature review. Both primary and secondary sources of data have been used in the present study in relation to the collection of data.

SIGNIFICATION OF THE STUDY

Significance of the study means its importance and relevance in the present context. In this sense the significance of the present study is considered as top most relevant to the present society. Knowledge and observation of ethical principles in individual life help in welfare of individual as well as society. Ethical principles help us to find what is good and when anyone can able to realize good then he will ready to avoid bad and harmful activities. So, it can be said that realization and application of ethical values may be the way to establish a peaceful society.

ANALYSIS OF THE STUDY

Etymologically the word ‘ethics’ is deduced from the Greek adjective ‘ethica’ which comes from another Greek word ‘ethos’ means customs, exercises or habits. Ethics is known as moral philosophy. The word ‘moral’ is

deduced from the Latin word 'mores' which means customs or habits. It is a study about moral principles like right and wrong, good and bad, ought and ought not. Therefore, Ethics is the wisdom of character and conduct as it evaluates the voluntary and habitual conduct of persons and considers the rightness or impropriety of their conduct. Ethics is the wisdom of ideal involved in mortal life. Thus, ethics may be defined as the wisdom of loftiest good. It's the wisdom of loftiest end or purpose of mortal life.

The ethical concept of Shankaracharya's philosophy just as the metaphysical doctrine is based on the Upanisadic view. The term 'Rta' stands for the cosmic principle of Dharma. In the ethics of Rgveda Rta is the anticipation of the Law of karma. It stands for law in general and the immanence of justice. The chronicity of the sun, moon and the stars suggested the conception of Rta. Rta refers to the order of the world. Rta exist before the manifestation of the universe. Rta is not only cosmic order, but the law of morality and righteousness as well. It is the moral law which is obeys by all the Gods and the human beings. All the things of this universe control by the rules of Rta. It is the ultimate cause of everything. There are no any other rules over and above the Rta. The unity of the world is possible only for the existence of Rta. In the Vedas Rta is considered as embryo of the world. In the moral sense Rta means righteousness. It is the standard of moral judgments. Follow the path of Rta means follow the path of truth and righteousness. Enjoying happiness for the moral action and suffering for the immoral action is possible only because of this universal rule of Rta. It helps us to harmonious and happy life.

The Kathopanisad mentioned two paths for the means of realization of ultimate end of our life. These two incompatible paths are Preyas and Sreyas. Between the two Preyas deals with physical welfare or happiness, while Sreyas deals with mental welfare of good. According to preference, there are difference between good and happiness and both have bound to human beings with difference aims. Sreyas is the way of spiritual realization. In the Kathopanisad it is said that both Preyas and Sreyas comes in our life. Our mind analyzes and separates them. The wise man always prefers good between two, while ignorant people give preference on felling happiness. The ignorant people who have no knowledge of reality think that the physical pleasures as real and they effort to achieve the maximum physical pleasure or happiness. But the wise people who have absolute knowledge of reality effort to achieved good instead of happiness. Because, as a result of absolute knowledge they suitable to realized the temporariness of physical pleasure.

The idea of purusartha is the basic principle of Indian ethics. Shankaracharya also explain his ethical concept with proper reference to the purusarthas. The word 'purusartha' literally means what is sought by man', the human good. According to Indian thinkers there are four values or purusarthas of human life – Artha, Kama, Dharma and Moksa. Artha or wealth is the means of fulfillment of physical needs. Artha involves the surviving of livelihood, economic security and fulfillment of material desires within ethical boundaries, Kautilya in his Arthashastra, it is said that among Dharma, Artha and Kama, Artha is considered as highest as it is the means for the achievement of Dharma and Kama.

The second Purusartha is kama which involves the fulfillment of sensory and emotional pleasure. The literal meaning of Kama is desire. Desire is the motivating power of all conditioning. The fulfillment of desire brings the feeling of happiness in human mind. Kama is the natural tendency of every individual, but it should be pursuit with moderation and in harmony with Dharma.

Dharma means righteousness which refers to the ethical duties, moral principles and right way of living. The Vedic ethics is mainly based upon Dharma. The Upanishads identify Dharma with Satya. Dharma fulfills the intellectual, social and moral necessity of human mind. Dharma implies the obligation with moral laws by controlling our desires, hunger, emotion, feeling and instincts. Thus Dharma implies the laws or principles on which society is based.

The fourth purusarth Moksa or emancipation is the ultimate end of mortal life. Moksa or emancipation means free from the cycle of birth and death. Moksa is the transcendental good and grounded on the conception of eternity of soul. According to Indian Ethics our body is not permanent, but the soul or spirit exist behind our body is permanent. The chain of birth and death continue till the soul attains Moksa from this world. The Moksa can be attained though realization of the nature of life and world, spiritual practice and dissolution of ego.

Among the four Purusarthas Artha and Kama may be said to be purely secular and have only worldly value. They have only instrumental value. On the other hand Dharma and Moksa have spiritual value. They are intrinsic values. The aim of every individual in the world is to attain the four purusarthas.

CONCLUSION

In the modern time very unlikely it is seen that in the present education system, provision has been made for only intellectual knowledge. Some important qualities of human beings such as, sympathy, co-operation, mercy, compassion, benevolence, love, truth, sincerity etc. are very much essential for a well ordered and peaceful society. These rates can be developed only through moral education. Because, moral education is man making and character building education. Gandhiji gives a comment on moral education that **“formation of character should have priority over the alphabet.”**

Moral Education will help the people to fit for judgment making and make them efficient to make effective decisions and choices. Therefore, the importance of moral education is vital and also it should be an integral part of the school and college curriculum in present time. The CBSE and NCERT have been taking an effort to

re-introduce Value Education into their curriculum. NCERT had set up a National Resource Centre for Value Education (NRCVE) in 2000 for increasing moral and other values among the students. In 2002, it introduces a “National Programme for Strengthening Value Education.” The aim of this programme was on generating awareness, material development, teachers’ training, promotion of research and innovations in the education of human values. Shankaracharya’s Advaita theory advocates self-realization as the highest ethical idea of human life.

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