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A Critical Study of Ethical Concept in Bhagavād Gītā

Kyaw Zaw Tun¹, Mai Tin Moe Khaing², Zaw Hein Htet³

Abstract

This research paper tries to prove why the ethical concepts of Bhagavād Gītā can build the peaceful life in society. By understanding the ethical concept of Bhagavād Gītā, every individual can promote the good moral characters in society. The descriptive method is used to achieve the aim of this research paper and the evaluative method is used in the conclusion. The ethical concepts of Bhagavād Gītā are critically examined by the principle of moral development. This paper can contribute to understand that morality is crucially important to promote the traditional and cultural norms and reciprocal understanding among the people.

Key words: homage, sympathy, pity.

Introduction

The beginning of Indian philosophy lasted over two thousand years ago. It has been divided into four major periods of development. These periods convey the cultural systems and religious belief to develop the Indian philosophical systems. Indian philosophical systems are very complex but the different schools of thoughts tried to develop cultural, social, ethical, aesthetic, intellectual and literary of India. From the primitive time, human beings try to get food, clothing and shelter for their survival of life. These are the physical needs of all human beings. But these are not directly connected with their philosophical problems.

For Indian, the philosophical problems are mainly concerned with the meaning and value of life. The philosophical thinking can provide spiritual developments and moral characters which will provide the reciprocal understanding among human beings. So, most of Indian philosophical system contributes to develop the good moral characters in society. On the other hand, social, traditional, customary and religious welfares are very mysterious and superstitious with Indian people. The main sources of Indian philosophy are Vedas and Upanishads treatises. Both Vedas and Upanishads traditions encouraged the development of Indian philosophy. Vedas means the collections of knowledge of facts of daily life and Upanishads means learning the knowledge near the master.

The development of Indian philosophy may be divided into four major periods. These are the Vedic period, the Epic period, the Sutra period and the Scholastic period. Actually, all Indian philosophical systems came down from the Vedic treaties. The two great epics, Ramayana and Mahabharata flourished in the Epic period. The song of Bhagavād Gītā is one of the pieces of Mahabharata. It pointed out to understand the ethical concepts of Indian philosophy and Indian culture. The philosophical schools of Buddha, Carvāka, Jaina, Mimamsa, Vedanta etc. are mainly concerned with the ethical views.

Bhagavād Gītā, a piece of Mahabharata is undoubtedly India's single most influential religious text. It is a dialogue style which presented the conversation between a great warrior, Arjuna and his charioteer, Krishna. They are in the battlefield among the Kinsmen of a society. They discussed the evils of war to avoid the unpleasant conditions.

This research paper tries to prove that why Bhagavād Gītā can provide the ethical concepts of human beings today although it is composed over two thousand years ago. The ethical concepts of Bhagavād Gītā are critically examined by the moral principles of Buddhism.

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In conclusion, the ethical concepts of Bhagavād Gītā are critically by Buddhist's ethics. By understanding the ethical concepts in Bhagavād Gītā, human beings can build the universal love (human heartedness or loving kindness) with good will. It can help to develop the feelings of sympathy, compassion, tolerance and sense of duty.

India is famous for its old traditions such as cultural, social, ethical, philosophical, artistic, literary and religious. Bhagavād Gītā tries to prove that the war is not wanted for the warrior and the ethical values are very important to behave among the families as well as kinsmen. It tries to show that the feelings of greed, anger and delusion cannot build a peaceful society in everywhere and every time. In Bhagavād Gītā, the duties of people are classified by their obligation between man and woman, father and son, and brother and sister etc. The family duties are very important for every person because they performed their duties respectively. The absence of truth, trust, respect, homage, pity, sympathy, reverence and humanity will become the declination of a society.

It provides the concept that all family members under one roof must have a solid family spirit. The feeling of "desire" can decline the good moral characters of human beings. The feelings of greed, anger and delusion can destroy the good moral characters which are maintained and sustained by Buddhist's ethics. By critical study of the ethical concepts of Bhagavād Gītā by Buddhist's ethics, it will upgrade the ethical concepts among the people.

The Historical Background of Indian Philosophy

India is known as for its cultural and philosophical traditions in the East. Indus valley is a source to the birth of Indian's civilization. The philosophical traditions of India contributed the development of literature and culture of other civilization but not a same copy from India.

In India, the knowledge of cultural, social, moral, religious, nationalistic, racial, magical, ritualistic, literary and philosophical are related to each other which are existed as a main stream of Indian civilization. These traditions contribute to upgrade the rational thinking, analytical thinking and critical thinking. These are the main sources to develop a society.

In India, philosophy is crucially important to cultivate the moral characters of human beings. So, philosophical thinking can promote the image and dignity of a society. In India, the developments of cultural and philosophical thinking are traced back to the two main races Dravidians and Aryans. The Dravidians are native of India but the Aryans came down from central Asia to India. The two races combined in India and as a result India's custom, philosophy, religion and traditions are systematically developed from the combination of these two races. The Vedic treaties are composed by them. It is the earliest record of Indian Philosophy.

Indian philosophy can be divided into four major periods. These are the Vedic period (2500 B.C. to 600 B.C.), the Epic period (500 or 600 B.C.), the Sutra period (nearly early centuries of Christian era) and Scholastic period (from the third period to 17th century A.D.). These periods are the foundations of cultural, moral, social, traditional and religious affairs.

The Vedic and Upanishads are the earliest and most important treaties of Indian philosophy. The *Rig Veda* (1200 B.C.) the *Sama Veda* and *Yajur Veda* are liturgical song and ritual formula for religious ceremonies and the fourth *Artharva Veda* contained incarnations, spells and recipes for a successful life. The Upanishads are the concluding portion of the Veda.

The second period is the Epic period which includes the two great long poems, Ramayana and Mahabharata. Bhagavād Gītā is one of the portions of Mahabharata.

The third period is the Sutra period. The name Sutra means thread and its context is a brief memory statements. A Sutra work consists of a collection of many Sutra and aphorism.

The fourth period is the scholastic period. In this period, Indian philosophical schools can be divided into Orthodox and non-orthodox schools. The orthodox schools accepted the Veda's traditions and non-orthodox schools denied it. The Buddha, The Carvāka, The Jaina are non-orthodox schools. The Mimamsa and Vedanta are the orthodox schools which are directly used upon Vedic tradition. Sankhya, Yoga, Nyaya and Vaisesika systems based upon ordinary experience and reasoning.

The most serious and well known philosophical systems are the Buddhism, the Carvāka and the Jaina. Buddhism is emphasized to liberate from the circle of life. The Bhagavād Gītā presented the concept of respect, reverence, sympathy, wisdom, duty, virtue and love which can provide the relationship among the Kinsmen. The ethical concepts of Bhagavād Gītā will be critically examined by Buddha's ethical teachings.

The Ethical Concepts in Buddhist's Philosophy

The teaching of Gautama Buddha is mainly concerned with the ethical principles of human beings. Ethics critically examined the moral rules and codes which are determined by their respective societies. Ethics grows out of life and certain situation of life when a person is confronted with doubt as to what is the right thing to do or the best course to follow. In Western Ethics, there is a distinction between theoretical ethics and applied ethics. Theoretical ethics is concerned with the search for ethical criteria, moral values and their justifications. Applied ethics is more concerned with how to apply them or live by them. Buddha's ethical teachings included both theoretical ethics and applied ethics.

Ethics is very important to develop the good moral characters which can avoid the evils characters such as stealing, killing, lying, sexual misconduct and intoxicated. Every country and every society built the typical ethical principles which can raise the standard of their society. The good moral characters can promote and maintain the cultural, social, economical, educational and moral sentiments. These are the images of a society. The goal of all Buddhists is to attain Nirvana which is very concerned with the moral principles of human beings. In Buddhism, the virtuous or moral characters consist in two ways. One is the negative aspect of avoiding evil and the positive one is cultivating the good.

Buddha's ethical teaching has consisted the Four Noble Truth. The First Noble Truth is about suffering. According to Buddha, life in the world is full of sufferings birth, old age, disease, death, sorrow, grief, wish and despair are suffering. The Second Noble Truth is about the cause of suffering. There are twelve links in the chain of causation. The Third Noble Truth is the cessation of sufferings. The ending of suffering is Nirvana. The Fourth Noble Truth is a path or a way (*magga*). It leads to the ending of suffering.

This noble way consists of the eight good things. It is called the Eightfold Noble Path. They are (1) Right View, (2) Right Resolve, (3) Right Speech, (4) Right conduct, (5) Right Livelihood, (6) Right effort, (7) Right mindfulness and (8) Right concentration. These eight good things represented the conduct (*Sila*), concentration (*Samadhi*) and Knowledge (*Prayna*). The perfection of knowledge is regarded as impossible without morality.

The most important ethical concept of Buddha is built by the five main precepts. David J. Kalupahana, the writer of Buddhist Philosophy; A Historical Analysis explains the five moral virtues or precepts as follows;

- (1) From taking life, both of oneself and of others,
- (2) From taking what is not given
- (3) From wrong indulgence in sense pleasures
- (4) From falsehood and
- (5) From indolence consequent on the use of intoxicants.

These virtues or precepts are very difficult to practise completely. But these virtues can reduce the feelings of greed, anger and delusion in the mind of all human beings. The five moral virtues can promote the social life, ethical life and relational life among people to become a good person.

Ethical Norms of Bhagavād Gītā

The epic period was enlightened between 1000 B.C and 200 A.D in India. So the Bhagavād Gītā is evolved over two thousand years ago. Bhagavād enables one to achieve the ultimate good life. The treatises of justice, righteousness and Dharma Shastras were compiled during this period. These treatises are concerned with the regulation of the life of individual and the society, in respect to specific codes of actions, which were presented along with their justification in the literature on dharma. There are five ethical norms in Bhagavād Gītā.

The Concept of Duty in Bhagavād Gītā

In the ethics of Bhagavād Gītā, the importance of duty is founded upon the anxiety of human beings. It has empirical duty and spiritual duty. Duty is regarded as worthy, ennobling and divine. Duty is the good consciousness to understand and perform among the peoples.

The Bhagavād Gītā holds that counting death is better than deviation from one's social and professional duty. It also emphasized to take refuge in God.

The Ideal of Sthitaprajna

The ideal of sthitaprajna means stable intellect to provide some guidance for the common men when he is overpowered by emotions and faces of a conflict of sentiment and duties which appears insoluble. It emphasized upon soul which is immortality and indestructibility on which the entire universe of names and forms, of matter, life, mind and intellect are based and grained.

A human being is passing his life step by step as a childhood, adolescence, youth and old age. If a person possessed a true knowledge, whose performing actions without expectation of fruit and action and devotion in an integrated manner he reaches the state of established wisdom or intellect. To attain *Sthitapragana*, a person must possess four characteristics. The first one is giving up the desires of mind including sensual desires. The second characters are forbearance. The third character is to be free of destruction in the presence of pain. The quality is freedom from affection, hatred, favor and jealousy. The fourth and most essential character is self-control. The absence of self-control leads to the total destruction of the character of an individual.

The Path of Knowledge

The aim of Bhagavād Gītā is the solution of the conflict of duties, which arises in everybody's life. The conflict can be solved with the help of a combination of knowledge, action and devotion. The higher or supreme knowledge causes a person to give up ordinary attachments and to perform action without any expectation of its fruits.

The Path of Action

The path of action means a person who attains true knowledge through action and duty performed without selfish end.

The Path of Devotion

The path of devotion has great advantage because it makes a person fearless, and God never fails to save his dear devotes. A true devotes who is the lover of God and who is in

return loved by Him, is one who is non-envious, friendly and compassionate towards all-beings, free from ideas of possession and ego-consciousness, sympathetic in pain and pleasure, forgiving, always contented, contemplative, self-controlled, of firm conviction and with his mind and intellect dedicated to God.

The Ethical Concepts in Bhagavād Gītā

Bhagavād Gītā is composed with the ethical concepts which are most important moral characters for all human beings. In Bhagavād Gītā, the concept of anger, greed and delusion can be able to destroy the culture, tradition, custom and the unity of a human society. It is a conversational style between the great warrior Arjuna and his charioteer, Krishna. They believe that the war cannot be able to create the good result and peace of mind.

Stanza 1, illustrate the condition of a battle field; Arjuna saw the family members, such as friends and acquaintances who were his Kinsmen assembled together in both armies. They are ready to fight for land;

“Arjuna saw them standing there; father, grandfathers, teachers, uncles, brothers, sons, grandsons and friends. He surveyed his elders and compassions in both armies, all his kinsmen assembled together.”¹

In the above stanza, the two armies lost the respect, homage, pity, sympathy and humanity upon each other. They have lost the ethical values and they were ready to fight violently with one another. In the battle field, the relative of a human society was seen as a stranger in their mind. The moral characters of respect, homage, pity, sympathy were destroyed by anger, greed and delusions. So, their assemble was not to peace both sides because the every layers of a society standing in the battle field to fight against. All are kinsmen in a society.

Stanza 3 expressed as follow,

“Dejected, filled with strange pity, Arjuna said this; Krishna, I see my Kinsmen gathered here, waiting War.”²

He saw the unpleasant conditions in both armies and they were absent pity or fear are absent in their mind.

Stanza 10 illustrated as follows;

“Arjuna sees the members of society in the battlefield. They are teachers, fathers, sons and grandfather, uncles, grandsons, fathers and brothers of wives and other men of our family.”³

The family members of a society such as teacher, father and sons are included in the battlefield. Arjuna did not want to kill them because they were Kinsmen. If he killed them in battle, then the happiness of a family was ruined.

The savage characters can be found in this battlefield. The sense of happiness, pleasant, joy and pity are lost in the battlefield but cruelty, wicked, unpleasant were influenced upon them.

¹John, M. Koller, (1985). *A Source Book in Asian Philosophy*. New York: Charles Scribner's Son, p.34

²John, M. Koller, (1985). *A Source Book in Asian Philosophy*. New York: Charles Scribner's Son, p.34

³Ibid., p.35

Stanza 15 state as follows;

“How can we ignore the wisdom, of turning from this evil, when we see the sin of family destruction, Krishna?”¹

According to Arjuna, wisdom is the most powerful agent in society. The wisdom can control the moral characters of human beings which can avoid the evils. He did not want to destruct a family.

Stanza 16 is composed as follows;

“When the family is ruined, the timeless law of family duty perishes; and when duty is lost, chaos overwhelms the family.”²

This Stanza expressed the crucial important of a human society. If the unity of family spirit has lost, the duty of homage, respect and love would be perished. When the duty of a family is lost, the family will be influenced by bad conditions.

Stanza 17 has pointed out that,

“In overwhelm chaos, Krishna, women of the family are corrupted, and when women are corrupted, disorder is born in society.”³

This stanza is very important for a new generation in human society. It is the most important ethical concept in a society. The women are needed to stand as an important being for the society. Thus this passage described that the moral conducts such as respect and value are very important for women. It is a good moral character of a society because every woman may be a good mother in a society.

Stanza 12 pointed out,

“Look to your own duty; do not tremble before it; nothing is better for a warrior than battle of a sacred duty.”⁴

The above passage shows that the responsibility is very important for an individual human being. Every person will perform their duties without deny. Every person has their own duties and to perform dutifully in his life. Duty is determined upon human being without escape from his duty.

Stanza 15, determined as follows;

“Impartial to joy and suffering, gain and lost, victory and defeat arm yourself for the battle, lest you fall into evil.”⁵

This Stanza expressed that; justice is important theme in human society. A human being must know the differences between the two opposite concepts. If you did not know the right concepts, then you will meet the evil results of the world.

Stanza 22, has included the bad results of anger in human life.

“From anger comes confusion; from confusion memory Lapses; from broken memory understanding is lost; from loss of understanding; he is ruined.”⁶

In the above Stanza, it expresses the cause of the ruined of human being. It begins with the anger and ends by devastated. Anger is the basic concepts of a ruing society. If anger is

¹Ibid., p.35

²Ibid., p.35

³Ibid., p.38

⁴John, M. Koller, (1985). *A Source Book in Asian Philosophy*. New York: Charles Scribner's Son, p.39

⁵Ibid., p.40

⁶Ibid., p.40

produced by confusion, then his memory lapses and understanding is lost. So the existence of human society will ruin. The concept of greed is the foundation of anger and anger is the basic concept of delusion. So, anger can destroy the moral characters of human being.

Stanza 37, has presented as follows,

“It is desire and anger, arising from nature’s quality of passion; know it here as the enemy, voracious and every evil!”¹

In the above Stanza, desire is the starting point of angers. Desire and anger destroy the moral conducts of human being. These concepts are the enemy of both individual and society. Desire is encouraged to commit the misconduct of human being. Anger is like fire which gave the sufferings of human being continuously.

Stanza 1, represented as battlefield as follows,

“To protect men of virtue and destroy men do evil, to set the standard of sacred duty, I appear in age after age.”²

In this Stanza, the important thing is to protect the virtue and to avoid the evil. The duty will perform fully in life and his image will never disappear in this world. Evil does not disappear and destroy in this world but it is basic upon seer or user. If a human being is destroyed by the evil completely, then the virtue automatically supports to develop his life.

Stanza 15, he expressed as follows:

“Disciplining himself, his mind controlled, a man of discipline finds peace, the pure clam that exists in me.”³

The discipline is the main key in ethical concepts of human society. If a man can control the discipline of society, then the mind will be stable and peace. The stable and peace of mind can decide what is good or what is bad.

Stanza 4 and 5 show that action is necessary for the survival of human body. Action performed to reduce desire and to promote scarified.

“Perform necessary action; It is more powerful than inaction: without action you even fail to sustain you own body. Action imprisons the world unless it is done as sacrifice; freed from attachment, Arjuna, performed action as sacrifice!”⁴

Krishna said Arjuna, without doing over necessary in action. The performing action is more powerful than without doing nothing. So all human being must maintain his bodily action, verbal action and mental action. If an action takes overdoing, it will evolve the unnecessary problems among the people. Continuously;

Stanza 6, stated as follow passage,

“Always performed with detachment any action you must do; performing action with detachment one achieves supreme good.”⁵

This Stanza expressed that the moral standards are crucially important to cultivate the society. If every person must do his action without bias, then he will attain the highest good in society.

¹Ibid., p.40

²Ibid., p.40

³Ibid., p.40

⁴John, M. Koller, (1985). *A Source Book in Asian Philosophy*. New York: Charles Scribner’s Son, p.42

⁵Ibid., p.42

Stanza 4 and 5 were composed as follows;

“Understanding, knowledge, non-delusion, patience, truth, control, tranquility, joy, suffering, being, nonbeing, fear and fearless.....”¹

In the above Stanza, the most important moral concepts are understanding, knowledge, patience, truth, control, tranquility, Joy and Fearlessness. These concepts are the best standards of moral concepts. But sufferings are unavoidable destinies of human being. These two opposite feelings are portrayed between being and non-being of a human being.

Stanza 5, expressed that the spiritual development is changed upon human being as an attitude.

“Non-violence, equanimity, contentment, Penance, charity, glory, disgrace, and these diverse attitudes of Creatures arise from me.”²

In the above Stanza, these facts are expressed that these diverse attitudes are composed in human being. All human beings want to peace and tranquility which constructed by equanimity, condemnation, charity, glory and disgrace.

Stanza 1, stated as follows;

“One who bears hate for no creature is friendly, compassionate, and unselfish; free of individuality, patient, the same in suffering and joy.”³

In this Stanza, the most useful concepts are expressed to use between individuality and society. Friendly, compassion without hate, altruistic, patient are the same feeling of pleasure and pain. When human being suffered the pleasure, then the pain included together with the pleasure. The concepts of suffering and joy are overwhelmed upon human beings.

Stanza 1 has stated as follows;

“Content always, disciplined, self-controlled, firm in his resolved, his mind and understanding dedicated to me, devoted to me, he is dear to me.”⁴

In the above Stanza, it is expressed that the most useful knowledge is self-controlled of human beings. Self-controlled is most firmly bonded in human's understanding. At last, a loss of our suffering and pain are founded upon our self-controlled.

In Bhagavād Gītā, there are main classical intentions upon ethical character which are always flourished in this world. The conditions of devastation, desire, hate, delusion can't be conveyed by any good result. So homage, respect, sympathy and etc. are the basic moral code in human society.

By understanding the Bhagavād Gītā, all human beings can compose the valuable ethical concepts in their life. It is presented the spirit of family and it is the very important for human society.

Conclusion

Bhagavād Gītā is a sample of moral values and characters in Indian cultures. In Bhagavād Gītā, the ethical characters of a human being can be decided between the two feelings such as pleasure and suffering. Every person will suffer the feeling of anger, greed and delusion which are the unpleasant feelings of a human society. Human beings always try to survive for their life in anyway. The concepts of good and bad, right and wrong, subjective and objective, absolute and relative and the “is” and “ought” are related with the survival of human

¹Ibid., p.45

²Ibid., p.45

³Ibid., p.49

⁴John, M. Koller, (1985). *A Source Book in Asian Philosophy*. New York: Charles Scribner's Son, p.49

beings. The moral characters of respect, homage, sympathy, generously and humane characters lead human being as a good life.

The aim of this research paper is to criticize the ethical concept of Bhagavād Gītā from the stand points of Buddhist's ethics. Every person cannot live alone because the nature of human being wants to associate with the others for his or her survival. Bhagavād Gītā try to prove that the misconduct or inhumanity can destroy between the Kinsmen and acquaintance. All human beings are the family members of a society. Although all human beings understand the good moral characters in a society, it can disappear when they face with the crisis. The concepts of respect, homage, pity, sympathy, wisdom, duty, impractical, to protect the virtue, remove the selfish and patience are propounded as the good moral characters in human society. If a human being practises these good moral characters in his daily life, he will become a good person.

All human beings have the immoral character of anger, greed and delusion which are existed in their inner lives. As a human being, he should limit the desires and release the angers, greed and delusion. Self-controlled is the main theme for human being. All human beings must practise the good attitudes such as knowledge, patience, tranquility and contentment. On the other hand, non-violence, equanimity, charity and glory etc... are the most efficient attitudes among the people.

At last the good moral characters can build the pleasant situation not only individual but also society. And then, religion is one of the supporting factors to maintain the good moral characters. The basic moral codes of respect, homage, sympathy, humanity and helping the poor persons are always triumphed upon the evil moral characters. Today, the world is unstable and full of unexpected problems. Actually, the world existed to live every creature which is constructed by beautiful and peaceful life, by avoiding the bad moral characters.

The feelings of anger, delusion and greed can destroy the moral characters of human beings. If everyone has these evil feelings, then the whole society will be ruined. The moral characters are needed to progress the human society which will become an ideal state. This society will give pleasure, happiness, wealth, property and high standard living for every individual. Everyone of a society is related with one another by various forms such as family, friend and relative. Bhagavād Gītā revealed this nature to contribute the reciprocal understanding among the people.

In the ethical norms of Bhagavād Gītā, the concept of duty is very important to maintain the empirical duty and spiritual duty of human beings. Besides that, the stable intellect, knowledge, action and devotion can criticize the other human beings. Actually, in the battlefields the whole family members face to fight against each other. They try to kill each other because they did not have right view, right concentration, right thought and right action. In the Bhagavād Gītā, they emphasized that the importance of woman are need to build a society. In Bhagavād Gītā, it is pointed out that to protect man is virtue and destroy men are bad. In this way, the ethical duty of Bhagavād Gītā will perform by the five precepts of Buddhist ethics because not to kill is avoid doing evil. And hatred, defeated, ignorance, anger, and attachment, etc... lead to suffering which cannot be repaired in any time. On the other hand, the knowledge of kinsmen, piety, impartial, sacrifice, understanding, knowledge, non-delusion, patience, truth, control, tranquility, non-violence, equanimity, contentment, penance, charity and glory are lead to a pleasant situation to build a good society. This knowledge can overcome the greed, anger and delusion which destroy the peace and pleasure life of human beings.

In Bhagavād Gītā, it is lack of right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration of Buddhist's ethics. If it will fulfill these ethical concepts, the whole society will be highly developed in the world. And then, he tried to kill the enemy in the battlefield but this enemy was their kinsman. This fact is to avoid the killing others which will point out from the five precepts of Buddhist ethics.

Actually, the feelings of pity, impartial, sacrifice, non-delusion, patience, truth, control, tranquility, non-violence, equanimity, contentment, penance, charity, glory are evolved over two thousand years ago in India. Myanmar people believe and accept the Theravāda Buddhism which has been existed in India since two thousand and five hundred years. Today, Buddhism is distributed over the land of India but it is less important in India's cultures and traditions. These feelings can build a pleasurable society and valuable life of human beings.

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A Study of the Effects of Buddhist Practices in Buddhist Philosophy

Tha Bye*

Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to explore how far Buddhist philosophy can be supported by rational arguments and also in terms of the observed effects of Buddhist practices. The research problem is that why the Buddhist philosophy is not only rational but also practical. The methods used are descriptive and evaluative method. Research finding is that possessing great wisdom and enlightenment us to truly know all that is infinite. The morality in Buddhist philosophy is essentially practical in that it is only a means leading to the final goal of ultimate happiness. The Buddhist philosophy is based on rationality and practice gives human beings support for a better life.

Key words: wisdom, enlightenment, ultimate happiness

Introduction

Buddhist philosophy is intended to have positive effects in the world. The main thing of Buddhists would like to show is compassion (awareness and understanding) to others in the world. In fact, it is a faith which promotes positive attitudes and behavior, for people to live together better than they do at the movement.

So, Buddhist philosophy rests upon the cultivating a non-harmful attitude towards self and other people. It means being kind, gentle, considerate and respectful towards self and others. To state what is non-harming is the same as to state what is constructed as “good conduct”. This includes love, compassion, and kindness and giving, delight in the joy of others and all acts of selflessness and generosity. So Buddha advices: “To do well, avoid evil and keep the mind pure”.

Buddhist philosophy is essentially practical in that it is only a means to the final goal of ultimate happiness. According to traditional Buddhism, the foundation of Buddhist ethics for laymen is the five precepts: not to kill, not to steal, not to lie, not to sexual misconduct, and not to intoxicants. These precepts of disciplines are nothing but gentle guides to show the direction in which the Buddhist ought to turn to final liberation on his way.¹ So Buddhism as a practical philosophy of life and a global world view whose essential component is a spiritual discipline with an outlook of finding the final solution of the riddle of existence.

Thus, to some extent, Buddhists employ reason and they do so primarily in order to advance the empirical investigation of phenomena. Buddhism is considered by many to be more of a philosophy or “way of life” than a religion, as the Buddha did not involve the concept of God.

The Role of Reason in Buddhist Philosophy

According to Buddhist philosophy may distort one’s reasoning and can lead to prejudices. Buddhist ethics is interested in three primary sources of suffering such as greed (*lobha*), hatred (*dosa*) and delusion (*moha*). These three greed, anger and delusion are called the three fires of the world. Therefore, people should quench these fires whenever and wherever they appear by correctly judging, by strictly controlling the mind in the face of the unsatisfactory things of life, and by good will and kindness. To get rid of these fires, one must cultivate the four sublime states of the *BrahmaVihara* (*Metta, Karuna, Mudita and Upekkha*); observe the precepts and practice concentration of mind and attain wisdom. Cultivating the

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¹ Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia. (2014). *Buddhist-ethics*. Retrieved August 30, 2016, from <http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Buddhist-ethics>.

four sublime states of mind and observing moral precepts will remove the impurities of greed; right concentration of mind will remove the impurities of anger; and wisdom will remove the impurities of delusion. The evil tendencies towards greed, hatred and delusion must eventually be overcome and substituted by the forces of generosity, loving-kindness and wisdom.

The Buddha explained that there is craving for worldly pleasures or desires for existence. There is no way one could escape from suffering. Desire is important for existence. People often ruin their lives in the attempt to satisfy desires. Suffering, says the Buddha, is a disease and can therefore be cured completely when purity or perfection is attained. The destructive emotions such as greed, hatred and delusion should be brought under control according to Buddhist ethics and they can be controlled through knowledge and wisdom. From Theravada Buddhist perspective destructive emotions should be controlled under wisdom (*Panna*).

The Four Noble Truths in Buddhist Philosophy

There are evidences to prove the fact that Buddhist philosophy is also rationalistic. These evidences will be from the very first sermon of the Buddha and some of the Buddhist mottoes which are to guide the action such as *Yoniso manisikara* and *AttahiAttananatto*. The evidences of rationality in Buddhist ethics can be explained in the first sermon of the Buddha, *Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta*. Buddha delivered this first discourse to the five monks after his enlightenment; *Dhammacakkappavattana* means the exposition of the establishment of wisdom.¹

Dhamma may also be interpreted as truth, and *cakka* as wheel. *Dhammacakkappavattana* means; the Establishment of the wheel of Truth. In this Sutta, Buddha had expounded the Middle Path (*Majjimapadipada*), the Four Noble Truths and the Eight Noble Paths. The Middle Path which he discovered forms the essence of his new teaching. He opened the discourse to avoid the extremes of self-indulgence (*Kamasukhallikanuyoga*) and self-mortification (*Attakilamathanuyoga*). He said: “self - indulgence is low, vulgar, ignoble and harmful, and self-mortification is painful, ignoble and harmful- both are profitless”.²

One extreme was the constant attachment to sensual pleasures. The Buddha described this extreme as base, vulgar, worldly, ignoble, and profitless. The other extreme is the constant addiction to self- mortification. Buddha realized this Middle Path through his personal experience. He laid down the Middle Path which is most practicable and beneficial. “To observe this path or to find out the Middle way, one needs reason to know it. Reason plays an important role in setting Buddha’s teaching to practice. The Buddha termed his new system *Majjimapadipada*-the Middle way.”³ The Middle Path produces spiritual insight and intellectual wisdom to see things as they truly are. Furthermore, this Middle way leads to the control of passions which results in peace. The Middle Path is a righteous way of life, an ethico- philosophical system and is the path of freedom and reason. Buddha pointed out the path to liberate from the two extremes (Self-indulgence and self-mortification). To avoid these extremes, he had himself discovered the Middle Way. The knowledge of this path, according to the Buddha, will lead to the knowledge of the four noble truths and also the Eight Noble Paths.

The First Noble Truth deals with *dukkha* which is rendered as suffering or sorrow. All are subject to birth, and consequently to decay, disease and finally to death. No one is free

¹Thera Narada Maha.,(1973). *The Buddha and His Teachings*. Singapore: Buddhist Meditation Centre. p.52.

²H. Saddhatissa. (1970). *Buddhist Ethics*. London: George Allen& Unwin Ltd. p.69.

³Thera Narada Mada.,(1973), *The Buddha and His teaching*. p.46.

from these causes of sufferings. In brief the composite body itself is also a cause of suffering. The Second Noble Truth is the origin of suffering which is craving or attachment (*tanha*). Buddha said that craving leads to repeated births. So this Second Noble Truth indirectly deals with the past, present, future births. The Third Noble Truth is the complete cessation of suffering. The Third Noble Truth is that emancipation (*niordha*) from misery is possible by abandoning self-craving. The Fourth Noble truth states that there is a way to be free from the suffering.

Again, the *Dhammapada* statement; “Avoiding the doing of all evils, the accomplishing of good, purifying one’s own mind” is the teaching of the all Buddha”¹. Torefrain from evil, Buddha pointed out the Eightfold Noble Paths. The Eightfold Noble Paths is the path leading to the cessation of suffering and growing towards wisdom. This path or method is classified into three stages. They are *Sila* (morality), *Samadhi* (concentration) and *Panna* (wisdom). The Noble Eightfold Paths (*sammaditthi*), Right Thought (*sammasankappa*), Right Speech (*sammavasa*), Right Action (*sammakammanta*), Right Livelihood (*sammaajiva*), Right Effort (*sammavayama*), Right Mindfulness (*sammasati*) and Right Concentration (*SammaSamadhi*). Among the Eightfold Noble Paths, the first two are group in wisdom (*Panna*), the Second three in morality (*Sila*), and the last three in concentration (*Samadhi*). Morality (*Sila*), development of a well-trained mind (*Samadhi*) and the attainment of supreme wisdom (*Panna*) are the basic principle in human life. Discipline, good conduct, precepts and morals are all synonymous with this world “*Sila*”. Precepts are useful for cultivating human qualities and virtues. These are qualities important for maintaining peace and happiness.

Samadhi is the second principle. It is concentration or cultivation of the mind. In order to maintain a good standard of moral conduct, it is also essential to practice meditation, which is to get *Samadhi*. The remaining two factors, namely Right view and Right Thought constitute Wisdom.

The Role of Wisdom in Buddhist Philosophy

Wisdom is the key point in Buddhism. Wisdom (*Panna*) is not only knowledge, one gains knowledge after listening, reading and observing many things in this world but it is not wisdom in the real sense. Many people are intelligent but their behavior however is not reasonable, as some are not tempered, egoistic, emotional, jealous, greedy and temperamental. “Wisdom” in Buddhism is about experiencing a deeper truth and reality (through mediation and mindfulness) rather than simply relying on belief or an intellectual interpretation of the world around us.

Wisdom is based on right view and right Thought, the realization of universal law and the development of insight. When experience, understanding, realization and purification are complete, this wisdom, comprising of the highest perfection, will arise and be seen. To seek the truth, the Buddha gave his famous exhortation to the *Kalamas* in the *Kalama Sutta*. Buddha said:

“Do not believe in anything on mere hearsay; do not believe in anything that is traditional just because it is old and handed down through generation; do not believe in rumors or anything because people talk about it; do not believe simply because the written testimony of some ancient sage is shown to thee; never believe in anything because the custom of many years leads thee to regard it as true; do not believe in anything on the mere authority of thy teachers of priests.”²

¹U Silananda. (2011). *The Essence in the Buddhist words*. Kuala Lumpur: Triple Gen Publishing.p.115.

²Ashin Thittla.(1986). *Essential Themes of Buddhist Lectures*. Bangkok: Jame Patrick Steward Rose. p.17.

From this epistemological outlook one can infer that Buddhism is also a scientific explanation of the natural laws of life and not a set of dogma laid down authoritatively; there is no dogma in Buddhism. Hence the Buddha *dhamma* is not based the fear of the unknown, but it is founded on the bedrock of fact which can be tested by ourselves and verified by experience. Buddhism is, therefore, rational and intensely practical.

The rational element in Buddhist philosophy can be seen some reflections on the *Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta* and these are mentioned by *Narada* as follow: 1. Buddhism is based on personal experience as such it is rational and speculative. 2. The Buddha discarded all authority and evolved a golden mean which was purely his own. 3. Buddhism is a way or a path-*magga*. 4. Rational understanding is the keynotes of Buddhism. 5. Blind beliefs are dethroned. 6. Instead of belief and dogmas the importance of practice is emphasized. Mere beliefs and dogmas cannot emancipate a person.¹

Another guide to action in Buddha's teaching will be explored from some verses of *Dhammapada*, Verse 165 shows as follows:

It meant that by oneself indeed is evil done and by oneself is one defiled; by oneself is evil not done and by oneself is one purified. Purity and impurity depend entirely on oneself; no one can purify another.² It is necessary to know what *Theravada* Buddhist believes and how they practice. One's liberation is absolutely bases on personal performance. One should rely on oneself in order to practice the *Dhamma* in accordance with the teachings of the Buddha. Each one can purify another. Each one has to try for oneself. This message is vital in Buddhist philosophy. It is really a guide to action. Everyone should have a deep respect and concern for the well-being of other being.

The Buddha expounds the four virtues conducive to a lay man's happiness: They are (1) *Saddha*: he should have faith and confidence in moral, spiritual and intellectual values; (2) *Sila*: he should abstain from destroying and harming life, from stealing and cheating, etc.; (3) *Caga*; he should practice charity, generosity, without attachment and craving for his wealth; (4) *Panna*; he should develop wisdom which leads to the complete destruction of suffering to the realization of Nibbana.³

Human behaviors are largely a reflection of their beliefs. Consequently, all superstitious customs and practices are the result of an irrational state of mind issuing logically from wrong beliefs. It is one of the glories of Buddhism that it appeals to reason and science, and not to blind faith and authority. The practice of morality consists in the observance of moral precepts; in feeling fear, shame and remorse at the smallest violation of any of them; in not giving room for blame or disgust; in practicing those deeds which lead to moderation and contentment, and in endeavoring to induce all man being to abandon evil and practice virtue. Buddhism is rationalistic because it rejects supernatural revelation of any sort and also because of the pre-eminent place given to logic and pure reasoning in it. So in general sense, Buddhism is rationalistic and its approach is rational. Not being dogmatic, it addresses to one's reason for critical examination of facts.

According to Buddhist teaching, *Law of Karma* plays a very important part in lives. In a cycle of cause and effect, a first cause is unconceivable for the cause ever becomes the effect, and the effect in turn becomes the cause. It is important to discuss the doctrines of *kamma* and rebirth in order to realize that one is the master of own destiny. The Kammic law is a natural, universal law and is not created by any supreme being. There is a fundamental law of *kamma*

¹Thera NaradaMaha. (1973), *The Buddha and His Teaching*. p.53-54.

²Daw Mya Tin. (2003). *The Dhammapada*. Yangon: Myanmar Pitaka Association. p.230.

³WalpolaRahula. (1959). *What the Buddha Taught*. London: The Gordon Fraser Gallery Limited Bedford. p.83.

that Buddha expounded and it would bring about consequential reaction of evil begetting evil, and good yielding a harvest of goodness.

The Buddha advised people not to blindly accept what even he taught, but research on them before accepting themselves. For this reason his teachings have remained unaltered and valid for all times and under all circumstances. Buddhism teaches that wisdom should be developed with compassion. The highest wisdom is seeing that in reality, all phenomena was incomplete, impermanent and do not constitute a fixed entity. True wisdom does not simply believe what we are told but instead experiencing and understanding truth and reality. Wisdom requires an open, objective, unbigoted. Possessing great wisdom and enlightenment enables us to truly know all that is infinite.

Practical and Scientific Outlook in Buddhist Philosophy

Buddhism is a rational, liberal and noble doctrine for those who want to understand the reality of life. It is a righteous way of life for man to do well, and lead a happy life. The Buddha addressed the last words to his disciples:

“All conditioned things are subject to decay; strive with heedfulness.”¹

So the ethical teaching of Buddha is rationalistic but also practical. Moreover the aim of Buddhism is to guide everyone to lead a noble life without harming anyone, to cultivate humane qualities in order to maintain human dignity, to radiate all-embracing kindness without any discrimination, and to train the mind to avoid evil and purify the mind to gain peace and happiness.

The Practical Outlook in Buddhist Philosophy

Buddha is an empiricist because he thought that we understand reality by means of experience that includes sense experience and meditation experience. He also calls attention to the universal nature of the Buddha's teaching. Buddha has constructed a code of morality. Buddha's theory is the preliminary ideals of a virtuous life. So the practice of the moral life is the very core and essence of Buddhism. Everyone is the architect of his own fate. One shall reap in the future, in this life or the next, what one sows now in this life. To win the final victory of perfection, it is necessary for each one to defeat the three great internal enemies, namely, selfish, desire, anger and delusion. To defeat these three enemies it is necessary to live a life of charity, to extend one's love towards all beings and to develop the spark of wisdom into its fullest power. When three great enemies are defeated, the final victory of liberation is won. One shall have real and everlasting peace and happiness. According to the teaching of Buddha, a man is in bondage when he is under the sway of his feelings, emotions, habits and inclinations. One is not free from the influences of the emotions. The main problem of Buddhism is concerned with the extinctions of human passions, because this distorted the state of mind and is considered to be source of all the evils of human life. In cultivating oneself there is the role of wisdom or reason. One can conclude that in Buddhist philosophy one will find the coordinating process of emotion and reason, emotions being negative and reason leading to wisdom as a positive factor.

There are also some emotive factors concerning with human feeling. There is *Brahmavihara Dhamma* that has been there before Buddha's time. Buddha himself had preached to cultivate these positive factors such as *Metta* (universal love), *Karuna* (compassion), *Mudita* (sympathetic joy) and *Upekkha* (equanimity). So the Buddha wants to lead a rational, noble way of life and use human intelligence for the benefit of all. Hence, the Buddhist way of life is reasonable and practical for all times and in any society and country. It

¹Ashin Thittla. (1986) *Essential Themes of Buddhist Lectures*. Bangkok: Jame Patrick Steward Ross.p.12.

promotes harmony and does not create hostility or disturb the followers of other religions. So Buddhist ethical principles are very noble and in an ideal world their practice would lead to peace and harmony. The central message of the Buddha is that 'true happiness may be achieved not by gaining what we seek to possess, but by cultivating a state of non-attachment with regard to our desires.

The Scientific Outlook in Buddhist Philosophy

Buddhism is an empirical doctrine, perhaps, even on a par with science. There is an affinity between Buddhist methodical approaches to the search for ultimate truth and the scientific endeavor to formulate a unified theory explaining the working of reality. Both are possible only because their starting point is a kind of philosophical faith that ultimate knowledge is a logical possibility. Science aims at eventual objective verification of its theories which scientific method than traditional, faith-based religion, the *Kalama Sutta* insists on a proper assessment of evidence, rather than a reliance on faith, hearsay or speculation.

So Buddhism did not assert or depend upon the existence of God. Buddhism was a superstition free moral ideal; it conformed to the (*Dhamma*). Buddhism posited no belief in gods who could alter the workings of this natural law. Buddhism was a religion of self-help with all depending on the individual working out own salvation.

So Buddhism had unique advantages for someone who rejected their faith due to its authoritarianism and unscientific outlook. Buddhism is a combination of both speculative and scientific philosophy. It advocates the scientific method and pursues that to a finality that may be called Rationalistic. The religion of the future will be cosmic religion. It should transcend a personal God and avoid dogmas and theology. Covering both natural and spiritual, it should be based on a religious sense arising from the experience of all things, natural and spiritual and a meaningful unity. Buddhism answers this description. If there any religion that would cope with modern scientific needs, it would be Buddhism.

Conclusion

The philosophy of the Buddha can be considered as the reconciliation of reason and emotion. According to the teaching of Buddha, the feeling, perception and disposition are transitory and they tend to the evil. These emotions or feelings can be controlled by the help of wisdom. Buddha's view had avoided the two extremes and he had preached the Middle Path. The preaching of the Buddha is concerned with human morality and it is useful to mankind.

According to Buddhist philosophy, the environmental crisis nowadays is an indication of moral crisis in man. One should concentrate and meditation is also another way to remedy the above crisis. Intellectuals, scientists and the other persons in the world tried to solve the environmental problems in the best ways. In order to decrease such crisis, the teaching of Buddha can also be of a good help.

Buddhist way of living is suitable and possible to solve such unpleasant events and makes man to attain calm, peace and serenity of mind. This way or practice is called the Middle way which consists of three stages, morality, concentration and wisdom. Of these three moralities is the most basic stage and man should practise it. People should cultivate the four noble virtues; loving- kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy and equanimity. They can make less greed, less hatred, less passion and less emotion. They can be regarded as the source of various kinds of suffering including environmental crises.

In conclusion, Buddhist philosophy is a practical ethics which is mainly associated with the Noble Eightfold Path. This path is acceptable for individual and societies. For this reason, the objective of Buddhists daily life is to reexamine their moral action (bad and good action)

through the middle path. Buddhist philosophy is applicable to the social dimension of modern societies so as to generate well-being for all beings.

Morality in Buddhism is essentially practical in that it is only a means leading to the final goal of ultimate happiness. So Buddhism places a great emphasis on mind and it is mental anguish such as remorse, anxiety, guilt etc.; which is to be avoided in order to cultivate a calm and peaceful mind in daily life.

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Philosophy of Education as the System of Thought in Education

Kay Thi Htwe*

Abstract

The aim of this paper is to show the importance of philosophy of education in educational society. Philosophy of education indicates the scope of theory of knowledge. It is the study of education from the philosophical point of view. It means the application of philosophical ideas to education problems. This paper will contribute to understanding of educational philosophy that provides guidance towards laying down a set of values for developing the intellect as well as the moral character of youths.

Key words: philosophy of education, knowledge, education

Introduction

In the Twenty-First Century, societies and ways of life have changed rapidly. The increasing complexity of demands and opportunities of the contemporary world will require even well-educated person and better thinking skills. One of the important tasks of education is to promote critical, analytical and creative thinking in the search of knowledge. To pursue knowledge just collecting, learning, and memorizing of facts have given rise to many ethical and social problems, especially for the young. Good educational system provides essential guidelines for the future and well-being of this world. Therefore, it is necessary to promote the criteria of education. Today, philosophy of education is the most essential for practical life. That is to say, philosophy of education is the application of philosophical ideas to education problems. Besides, the practice of education leads to a refinement of philosophical ideas.

However, with the advances and changes of education has become more urgent to be able to provide intellectual and moral guidance for all. A study of philosophy of education is crucial today because people are in a critical era of transition. In this age, it is not easy for people either to embrace more and more changes with little thought to eventual consequences or to resist changes and keep old values no matter what. Educational philosophers suggest that the solutions to our problems can best be achieved through critical and reflective thought.

It can be said that philosophy of education is the application of philosophical ideas to educational problems. So, educational philosophy is not only a way of looking at ideas but also of learning how to use them in the best way. Today, academic freedom became more widespread. It necessarily requires for the development and quality assurance of education. By developing new ways of thinking, traditional ways of education must be changed today. Philosophy of education can guide to develop the new ways of education. Therefore, philosophy of education is needed to have the new fashion of the educational progress.

Philosophy of Education

Philosophy of education is one of the fields or areas of philosophy like other related fields of philosophy such as philosophy of history, philosophy of science, philosophy of culture, philosophy of law, philosophy of religion and so on. Philosophy of education implies the field of theory of knowledge. It is systematic investigation and study of truth of education. Indeed, philosophy of education is the study of education from the philosophical point of views.

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Philosophy of education began when people first became conscious of education as a distinct human activity. People came to use education for a variety of purposes. Today, philosophy of education is the most essential for practical life. That is to say, philosophy of education is the application of philosophical ideas to education problems. Besides, the practice of education leads to a refinement of philosophical ideas.

Development of Philosophy of Education

In the history of Western thought, most philosopher interested in education. In fact, the critical study of education started since the Greek period. The Sophists were the first profession or private teachers. They advocated a system of education which would promote the happiness and insure the success of the individual. The Sophists based their education upon training in debate and oratory. They wanted young men trained to argue well and convincingly before their followers so that they might win their cases.

Socrates (469- 399 BC) was an ancient Greek philosopher. He said that

“Knowledge is virtue’ and virtue is knowledge.”¹

He was a great teacher who devoted himself to the practice of education. He believed that education make a man better citizen and there by a happier individual. He teaches that the most valuable thing for a man is knowledge. Such knowledge can be obtained by agreement of all men. His famous doctrine is “Know –thyself”.

Plato, (348-347 BC) founded the Academy in Athens, the institution often described as the first European University. He stated the first fully developed philosophy of education. In his “Republic”, he explained the ideal system of education which leads to insure a happy and just State. For Plato, education is the chief method of reforming both the individual's character and the State. He said that “education is an inseparable part of the art of politics.” For Plato, there are three distinct abilities for all human beings. They are, appetite, spirit and reason of intelligence. He accepted that true knowledge is the same in every place at every time. Education like truth should be unchanging.

In *the Republic* Plato said that:

“Education would help bring about a world in which individual and society are moved as far as they are capable of moving toward the good.”²

He described his educational ideal in the Republic, one of the most notable works of Western philosophy. His Republic describes a model society, or republic, ruled by highly intelligent philosopher kings. Warriors make up the republic's second class of people. The lowest class, the workers, provides food and the other products for all the people. In his educational system, each class would receive a different kind of instruction to prepare for their various roles in society. He explained the ideal system of education which leads to warrant a happy and just State.

Aristotle, (384-322 BC) was the Academy's most prominent student. He holds that the aim of education should be to make man virtuous. He proposed to give training for the development of an individual. The program of training should consist of literature, music, gymnastic and the like. For him, education is a State matter and should be controlled by the State. The State should apply education in order to develop citizens who could defend the State and make it better.

¹ Theodore, Brameld. (1965) Education as power. New York, Fawcett Publications, P-13

² Ozmon & Craver (1986) Philosophical Foundation of Education. London A bell & Howell company, p-4

Aristotle's 'Politics' is directed to a consideration of issue in education. Some questions of Aristotle remained unanswered. What should be the character of public education? How should young person be educated? He suggested that education should be based upon three principles; the principle of golden mean, the principle of possible and the principle of the becoming.

For him,

“Good education helps to achieve the golden mean and thereby promotes the harmony and balance of both soul and body.”¹

He believed that humans are the only creatures endowed with the ability to think, their purpose is to use the ability. In fact, the proper perspective is the golden mean, a path between extremes.

Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679 AD) was a British modern philosopher who takes great interest in education. This interest led him to argue that the ruler should have right to determine the kind of education fit for his subjects and this subject must accept the educational system set up by the ruler. According to him, education is one of the absolute rights of the sovereign power. It will serve to strengthen the State and therefore should be watched carefully and controlled at all times. Every child should be trained in order to serve the State better.

John Locke (1632-1704 AD) was a British philosopher of education and his treatise “Some Thoughts Concerning Education” is still read with interest and profit by student of the philosophy and history of education. For the development of the mind, he studies deeply and raised some ideas such as trust in God, politeness, reading, memorizing, writing, drawing, foreign science, social science, method of study and the art of teaching in education.

Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778) was a French philosopher. He was famous for his work, 'Emile' which is dealt with educational ideas. It was widely read and studied by scholars interested in education. His work 'Emile' stated that “Plants are improved by cultivation and men by education.” For him, education comes to us from nature, from men or from things”. The education of nature can make to develop men's faculties and organs. His 'Progressive Education Movement' shows the importance of education in Western society.

Friedrich Froebel (1782-1852 AD) was a German philosopher. He was the founder of the first kindergarten. He said that,

“The primary educational methods focused on gifts, songs and games.”²

He accepted firmly that the nature of the child was good and that it should be allowed to grow naturally. Education was a process of permitting and making this natural growth of the child. He called his school the 'Kindergarten', the garden of children. The teacher should permit and help the children to grow, just as the gardener helps the flowers to grow. In this way, society recognized the necessity of education for its preservation.

For John Seiler Brubacher (1898-1988) in his book namely “The Challenge to the philosophize about Education” discussed some educational problems in American education. His attempt is to make the students to broader, more basic and more important considerations.

Some argued that philosophy of education is not needed because there is education concretely. In fact, the study of philosophy of education is overdoing. It is completely false. Again, philosophy of education makes criticism, evaluation and comments on education so that education and educational thought have been developed.

¹ Ozmon & Craver (1986) Philosophical Foundation of Education. London A bell & Howell company, P.4

²Ibid., P.51

So, education philosophers and their interest in education, their effort for the rise of good ideas in education, their valuable suggestions lead to develop for the citizens and society. Therefore, philosophy of education is necessary, useful and important in a country. Besides, philosophy of education makes the student to examine his current beliefs dealing with education. If the students read philosophy of education critically pondering its meaning for education and for himself, he can find its vital. Vice-versa philosophy of education becomes a strong subject due to education.

Therefore, it is required and important in academic field of study. Most philosophers are interested in philosophy of education and explained the nature of philosophy of education. They wanted to know what should be taught the young and how should be taught? In this way, education becomes a major concern of philosophy. Finally, philosophy of education develops from Greek period to contemporary period. By developing new thought, traditional ways of education must be change today. Philosophy of education can guide to develop the new ways of education. Therefore, philosophy of education is needed to have the new fashion of the educational progress.

The Importance of Philosophy of Education

The importance of philosophy of education is directly related to the question why study philosophy of education? Most philosophers interested the nature of philosophy of education. They attempt to answer some of the ultimate questions concerning education. They seek to establish the principles of educational system that can be used in directing the educational progress. They hope to find answer to such question as: What is education? What is the philosophy of education? What are the proper ends for education? What means should be used to attain these ends? What is the relationship between science and education? How should the curriculum materials be selected? What should be the character of public education? Is academic freedom necessity? Etc.

Therefore, the study of philosophy of education can be an exciting and challenging venture. It shows to encounter some of the great ideas of human thought. Besides, the function of philosophy of education is to dig up and bring about into the light for critical examination of the assumptions which are made about education.

Most educational philosophers are explained the various theories for the educational problems. By studying the various problems, philosophy of education can also guide about the human nature, intelligent, virtue, morality, social life and so on. In fact, educational philosophy is not only a way of looking at ideas but also of learning how to use them in the best way. Therefore, philosophy of education is one of the vital sources of human culture.

Traditionally, education is a civilizing aspect of the nations. For a sound education, each nation needs must have clear philosophy of education. Philosophy of education can also guide to solve the educational problems, the nature of knowledge, learning, teaching and so on. If there is no philosophy of education, educational system will lack the development of mind and body of citizen. To be successful, an educational philosophy should be consistent with the educational thought and practice of the country. So, the philosophy of education is essential field in philosophy and pivotal to the teaching and learning process.

Conclusion

Education plays one of the basic activities of people in all human society. Especially, the more emphasis on education, the more developed and civilized the nation. In order to build an advanced society, education is one of the requirements in the field of human rights. Although most philosophers explained many definition of education, the main point is that education is to cultivate the intelligence, knowledge and to know the right conception of

human excellence. So, education can contribute to the welfare of the society. Education can give people the high position of intelligence and the invaluable knowledge. Education is necessary to live in a good, dignified and civilized life, no doubt.

In fact, education is learning to think for oneself. Nevertheless, education is teaching – learning process and process obtaining physical and spiritual development. Both Western and Eastern philosophers explained the importance of education and philosophy of education from their own stand points. The problems of education are themselves of a philosophical character. In laying down educational policies it is necessary to first consider philosophic problems such as (i) the nature of a good life which education should lead, (ii) the nature of human being who is to be educated and (iii) the nature of society because education is a social process.

Philosophy of education is the study of education from the philosophical point of view. Indeed, philosophy of education can also help to solve the educational problems well. It can describe about the nature of man in this worlds, about knowledge, values and the good life. Furthermore, philosophy of education is concerned with the theory and practice of education. Philosophy of education is a philosophy about education. It is concerned with issues of how to nurture the intellect as well as the moral character of the youth. In fact, both Western and Eastern philosophers are indicated the basic requirement of philosophy of education and opinion of education. Therefore, the concepts of education and philosophy of education are very important in educational society for individual life as well as the progress of nation.

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Origin and Development of Democracy

Wai Wai Oo*

Abstract

Democracy is loved by most people in the world except the royalists, tyrants and terrorists, autocrats, militarists, and communists. Some socialists and communists modify their concepts with democracy such as democratic socialism, democratic communism, etc. To achieve democracy, there are many evidences of challenges by scarifying their lives individually or in mass. For example, the French Revolution, American Revolution, and English Puritan Revolution emerged for the achievement of democracy. The French Revolution had failed to build democracy against monarchy but the American and the England had obtained victories for democracy. After American Revolution, the Americans could construct the constitutional government first in the world as well as the English could set up the Constitutional Monarchy first in the world. In this paper, the origins of democracy in the east and west, and development of democracy had been described by using descriptive and evaluative methods. This paper will contribute to people to acknowledge the values of democracy and to protect it.

Key words: Direct Democracy, Representative Democracy, and People's Rule.

Introduction

Aristotle said that man is a social and political animal. Man cannot live alone for his existence and survival. In order to survive his life he needs foods, drink, clothing and resident. He must fill those requirements of his existence. So, whether he wants to relate the other persons or not he must relate them who produce these physical materials of foods, drinks, clothing and resident which are necessary for his existence. The other human beings also relate mutually for their survival of life. Thus, men's mutual relation and community naturally occur in cultures.

But, man is an egoistic and freedom-loved person. Those characters are man's natural instincts. So, whenever the opportunities arose, man has desire to fulfill and enjoy his egoistic impulses and freedom. Like him, other persons will attempt to fulfill their egoistic desires and freedom. Then, there will be antagonism and the community will become unstable and unnecessary evil events will follow consequently. If the people can control their ethical behaviors; in other words, if they can control their egoistic greed, hatred and ignorance the community can save its stability. But, no one can guarantee to control men's greed, hatred and ignorance. Men will inevitably enjoy opportunities which are arisen by their urge of ego. So, in order to control men's extreme egoism and desire the community needs a powerful person who can control and guard the stability and peace of the community.

Thus, the community automatically demands to change from the ethical and social situations to political situations embedded by political power. The men search for a person who can govern their community in peace and security. Then, they see the elder of their kin and they appeal him to guard the community. And by doing so, the members will offer him a kind of share of foods, drinks, and clothing in return. Thus, the system of chieftain ruling came into being in history. That system had brought the communities in fair and just situations for a long time.

However, when the post of chieftain had been accepted successively by his elder son when his father died, it became as a custom and tradition. When a long times later, from that tradition of successive acceptance of chieftain post, the monarchy system became rooted in

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history. From the monarchic system it developed into absolute monarchic system and people had been lived under the rule of absolute monarchy. Though people lost their freedom totally under the absolute monarchy, some monarchs had good moral characters and could govern the community in fair and justice. So, people had satisfied under his rules. However, when people meet cruel monarchs, they could not bear their cruelties and made revolutions often. When the kings' cruelties came into extreme, the ministers dethroned the king and governed the country by themselves with association last of all. Thus, from the monarchy aristocracy (rule of intelligent group) came into being.¹

The government of aristocracy could keep the country well at the beginning but later the aristocracy changed into oligarchy because wealthy persons took place into it. When the oligarchic system could not govern the country well tyrants came into the political field. The courageous civilian abolished the oligarchy and ruled the country by himself. Thus, aristocracy, oligarch systems ended and tyranny emerged in history. The tyrants had ruled nearly one hundred years in Greece. The tyranny was very cruel than those of monarchy and oligarchy.

Thus, people reconsidered their past history of governments. First, state power was vested in the monarchs and the monarchic governments had been good at the beginning but ended with evil doings. Then, the state power had been captured by the aristocrats and aristocracy had been existed. That system had been also good at the beginning but end with evil doings. After then, state power had been robbed by the tyrants and tyranny came into being and tyranny also had been good at the beginning but it ended with cruelties and bloodsheds in history. So, people decided that the state power should not be handed over other persons or group but they themselves would hold it and they would govern their affairs. Thus, people's authority in government came into being in history and it is called "Democracy", meaning "People's power, People's Rule".

Thus, the first American President, Jefferson defines democracy as "Democracy is the government of the people, by the people, and for the people".²

In this paper, democracy has been presented in two units. In the first unit, meaning and kinds of democracy are described and in second unit, origin and development of democracy has been portrayed by east and west thoughts.

In this paper, descriptive and evaluative methods are applied and this paper will contribute the people value and knowledge of democracy.

Meaning and Kinds of Democracy

Democracy is a form of government in which the common people hold political power and can rule either directly or through elected representatives. It is derived from the Greek words *dēmokratiā*, *dēmos* (people) and *kratos* (rule) "rule by the people". It is a form of government in which the people have the authority to choose their government. In political system, there are freedom of assembly, freedom of speech, freedom of voting, equality and right to life, etc. Thus, Democracy means a system of government where the citizens of a state exercise power to rule the state, either directly or through electing representatives. Generally, there are two kinds of democracy: direct and representative. In a direct democracy, the people directly think and decide on legislature. In a representative democracy, the people elect representatives to think and decide on legislative, executive and judicial affairs in parliamentary and it is called **Republic** in another name.

¹ Gettell, Raymond G. (1961). *History of Political Thought*. London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd. p.34

² W. Phillips Shively. (2014). *Power & Choice: An Introduction to Political Science*. UK: 14th edition. McGraw-Hill. p.39

Origin and Development of Democracy in the East and the West Cultures

The essence of Democracy is the governmental system ruled by the people's power. When the meanings of democracy and its sources are examined they can be found in the ancient cultures of China and India. Their contemporary ancient Oriental cultures such as Hebrew, Egypt, Assyria and Persia had been ruled by theocratic and despotic monarchs. The monarchs were considered as the agents or descendants of the gods and were worshipped by the people. Thus, there had been ruled by theocratic governments. However, Hindu and China cultures had separated religion and politics. The kings were not worshipped as gods.

In the Chinese culture the sources of democracy can be found in Confucius' the political thoughts. In the writings of Confucius, political ideas were not only democratic but also revolutionary. Confucius had taught equality among men and right to revolt the cruel kings. Confucius said that as for government, there are the three requisites: they are: "sufficiency of food, sufficiency of military equipment, and the confidence of the people in their ruler". He said that the most important is the people's faith in their rulers. This is the foundation of the state and it cannot exist without it. According to Confucius, government is a tool to bring out the best of its people. Government is responsible for the well beings of its citizens. In order to properly carry out its role, government must be looked upon by its people for leadership and be respected. It must not lose the faith of its people.

Mencius also said that "the most important element in a state is the people; by observing the nature of the people's aspirations we learn the will of Heaven. It means that people's desires are identical with the will of Heaven. Those evidences show the people's authority in the rule of the state.

Democratic thoughts are most obviously to be found in Hindu's political thought and Buddhism. As early as the fourth century B.C. a Hindu empire was established. In contrast to the other Oriental political systems, the Hindu states were not theocratic. Religion in India did not dominate politics. The state was independence of the religion.

According to Hindu political thought, the ruler as a person was subject to restraint and responsible to punishment as similar with every other individual. Though the king was possessor of sovereignty if he behaved as evil doers to justice or if he had abuse or mistreatment the possession of this power was dangerous. If he acted wisely, it was the greatest deal to the people, but if he exercised it thoughtlessly or arbitrarily, he was himself responsible to removal and punishment. Hindu political thought advocated active resistance to arbitrary authority. They justified revolution of the people. One of their greatest political writers said "the unity of opinion possessed by the many is more powerful than the king. The rope that is made of many threads is strong enough to drag the lion".

Thus, Hindu's politics set up limited authority of king and not absolute monarchy. It favored a system of checks and balances. Many Hindu writers upheld democratic institutions, popular assemblies, communal undertakings, and personal liberty. The ideals of human brother-hood and of personal equality were frequently expressed.

The democratic thoughts are obviously to be found in the Buddha's teaching at the fifth century B.C. The seven rules of *apaeihaniya* of the *Licchavi*, which are based on democracy characters and they will increase the well-being of a kingdom. They are as follow:

The seven rules of *aparihaniya* of the *Licchavi* princes

1. Consultation in a body (conference for exchange of information and advice)
2. Acting by consensus

3. Behavior in accordance with the law Respect for the admonishments of superiors No oppression of women
4. Respecting the rites of the spirit guardians of the towns and villages
5. Protection for the monkhood

The meaning of the “*aparithaniya*” is “what cannot be diminished or destroyed”. It can be said that the rules of *aparithaniya* are the rules of progress. Among these elements of progress, that which is called *sannipata*, the rule of the assembly; that which is called *samagga* on the conduct of business in agreement is the legal system known as “democracy”.

Democracy, the rule of people in fact began with the development of civilization though most of the scholars regarded its beginning had been in Athens city-state of the ancient Greek civilization.

Before the civilization began, human beings had been lived under the helpless conditions without peace and security at that primitive age. The principle of might is right had been influenced. So, in order to escape those conditions men began to search for a leader who could protect their lives. The people elected a leader as chieftain in their kinships and appeal to guard them. In return, the people promised him to offer foods and drinks as a share from their possessions but at a time when the chief had lacked his duties they would elect another person in that position; in Myanmar term he may be called “*MaharThamata Min*”. Thus, the rule of chieftain system had been existed for a long times. When the chieftain had died his elder son continued his father’s duty. When the times passed, it became a tradition and from that hereditary succession of the post the monarchy system had been rooted in the ancient cultures. Thus, it may say that human beings’ cultures had begun with Democratic character. However, the beginning of democracy had been historically recorded at the Greek city-state of Athens in 508-507 BC.

Athenian democracy took the form of a direct democracy, and it had two distinguishing features: the random selection of ordinary citizens to fill the few existing government administrative and judicial offices, and a legislative assembly consisting of all Athenian citizens. All eligible citizens were allowed to speak and vote in the assembly, which set the laws of the city state. However, Athenian citizenship excluded women, slaves, foreigners, and men under 20 years of age.

Athenian democracy was not only *direct* in the sense, decisions were made by the assembled people, but also the *most direct* in the sense that the people through the assembly, and courts of law controlled the entire political process. A large proportion of citizens were involved constantly in the public business.

A citizen participated in the assembly, which was the supreme organ of government. More than ten times each year citizens over twenty met together to consider the state of public affairs. Decrees of this assembly were law and superseded action taken by the Council of Five Hundred or by the magistrates.

The Council of Five Hundred was a body representative in character. Members were nominated by local districts. Five hundred were chosen by lot to serve for a year. As the council was to represent the people the theory was that “each is ruled by all and in his turn each rules over all.” Powers of the council included those associated with the executive branch of government.

Associated with the council were *boards of magistrates*, composed of ten members who were chosen from each of the ten tribes. Such administrative powers as they had were severely limited by the assembly, the council, and the courts.

More favorably situated was the Board of Generals. This group of ten military leaders held a special place in Athenian society. Its members were elected directly by the citizens. Legally, its powers were restricted to purely military matters.

Roman Republic Politics

As in the Greek cities, the general tendency in early Rome was toward a more democratic form of government. About 500B.C., with the expulsion of the last king, a republic was established; and for two centuries the patricians and plebeians carried on a contest for control of the state, the result of which was the fusion of the two classes into a common citizen body, having equal political and civil rights. The civil and military authority of the king was vested in two consuls elected annually by the *comitia centuriata*. Other magistrates, such as the praetors and the censors, were created later to assist in the administrative and judicial functions of the consuls. Besides in time of emergency provision was made for the temporary establishment of a dictatorship. At first only patricians were eligible to these offices, but the plebeians worked steadily to secure admission. Meantime the plebeians created their own assembly, the *concilium plebis*, and chose their own officers, chief of whom was the tribune, who had the right to intervene on behalf of the people and to veto acts of the consuls.

As the two classes were gradually amalgamated, the plebeian organs were fused into the government of the city. The plebeian assembly, with name changed to the *comitia tributa*, became the chief law-making organ. The *comitia centuriata* chose the consul, held them responsible for their acts in office, acted as the final court in criminal cases, and decided questions of peace and war. The old patrician *comitia curiata* survived only as a formal body in control of certain religious matters. The Senate, however, retained its aristocratic character and came to be composed of those who had held high administrative office. While in theory its functions were advisory only, in practice it exercised large powers: the regulation of finances and of political and social privileges was in its hand, and through its control of foreign relations and of dealings with the allies and with subject nations, its powers increased with the growth of the empire.

After the conclusion of the challenge between patricians and plebeians, the satisfactory workings were followed by the republican government to the city. And then the attention of Rome directed to the expansion of foreign territories. The golden empire of Roman was distinctly arisen in the world history. However, how much glory and fame it had last of all it had been collapsed by the attack of its enemies. Though its material achievements were fallen down, the system of republic government which had been constructed by the Romans was distinctly recorded in the history of world.

After the fall of Roman Empire, the Medieval Age came into being. In that period, the Scholasticism had influenced and the state had been under the authority of the church. Thus, political authority had been seized by the church and there had not been democratic elements.

In the Modern Periods, the state and church had separated. In that period, the political thoughts had advocated the values of humanity, human beings' equality, fraternity and liberty. Especially in France, under the evil restriction of absolute monarchy, the political philosophers such as Rousseau, Voltaire, and Montesquieu had emerged and they launched the slogan of "Equality, Fraternity, and Liberty". That slogan had been a searching fire for blast of French Revolution in 1789. Consequently, the absolute monarchy had been abolished by the revolutionary group and they set up people's assembly of democracy. But, it was not successful and Napoleon's military dictatorship had arisen at last.

However, the American Revolution (1765-1783) had achieved to build democracy. The Americans could construct the constitutional government in the world firstly. In their written

constitution they put in individual rights, freedom and right to people's revolution if it were unjust government.

In England, during the period of power struggle between king and parliament, the parliament had triumph over the royal palace. In that period of power struggle, two opposite social contract theories of Hobbes and Locke appeared. Hobbes' theory stood on the side of the king's power but Locke's theory was on the side of people representative assembly. Due to those social contract theories democratic elements of today were born. If those theories were not appeared no historical recorded democracy of today could be occurred. The social contract theories described the state of nature, natural rights of human beings and exchanges of natural rights and guarantee of people's security and peace.

The famous social contract theories which laid down basic of democracy are those of Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau. What are contained in them should be studied.

Thomas Hobbes' Theory

According to Hobbes, man is living originally in a state of nature without the benefits of government. Individual egoism and the goal of self-preservation controlled all actions. It was a period as "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short." During this period, nothing could be just or unjust because there was no law or notion of right and wrong. There was only "force and fraud".

Such a condition might have continued indefinitely except for two factors inherent in man – **reason** and **fear** of violent death. Man's reason discovered that peace has more utility than war, and fear of violent death brought man's passions into line with his reason. Men agreed to two fundamental rules which are prerequisites of peace. **The first** is that "every man ought to endeavor peace. **The second** is that he must "be contented with so much liberty against other men. On this basis it was possible for men to agreement together one with the other, to establish a sovereign force to whom all authority was transferred. This force might be one man or a group of men. Its only essential characteristic was that it be all-powerful. The person or body who received this power was agreement and was consequently above it. This left him free to exercise an unlimited power which could not be taken from him. Thus, Hobbes stood on the side of the king's power.¹

Locke's Theory

In contrast to Hobbes, Locke stood on the side of the parliament's people power. According to Locke, the original state of nature was one in which peace and reason prevailed. It was pre-political, but not pre-social. It was not lawless, since men lived under natural law. Under the law of nature all men were equal and possessed equal natural rights. Locke defined these as **the rights to life, liberty, and property**. Of these three, property properly came first and was the most important. Locke believed that the right of property included the right of man to his person and that this was the basis of his rights of life and liberty.

In this natural state, there was absence of any agreement. And to what constituted the law of nature and of any judge to settle is disputed. The inability of the individual to maintain his natural rights against injustice, led to uncertainties which became intolerable. Accordingly, the individuals, by means of a social contract, formed a body politic, giving up their personal right to interpret and administer the law of nature in return for a guarantee that their natural rights to life, liberty, and property would be preserved. The contract was thus specific and

¹Sabine, George H. (1963). *A History of Political Thought*. New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers. p.67

limited. Moreover, the power given up was not vested in a single man or organ, but in the community as a whole. Even the sovereignty of the political community, or state, was to protect natural rights for the people. Thus, Locke's social contract involved the necessity of majority rule. Each individual surrendered to the community his right to execute natural law. Hence, the minority must be bound by the will of the majority, who might use force if necessary.

Locke viewed the legislature in which people represents are involved is the supreme organ of government. Behind it, there stood the community, which retained its natural rights.¹

Jean-Jacques Rousseau's Theory

The theory of Rousseau was based upon the conception of a pre-political state of nature, in which men were equal, self-sufficient, and contented. *Their conduct was based, not on reason, but on emotions of self-interested and pity. With the progress of civilization, evils arose.* The division of labor that followed the development of the arts and the rise of private property created distinction between rich poor that broke down the happy natural condition of mankind. Rousseau taught that reason was the outgrowth of the artificial life of man in organized society. *The "noble savage" was Rousseau's ideal.* The state was an evil because it was arisen by inequalities of men.

Rousseau held that each individual gave up all his natural rights to the community as a whole. Each person in the state gained back under the protection of the state the rights he had given up. According to Rousseau, the will of each individual was combined into a general will. The general will corresponded to the common interest of all members of the community.

The acts of the general will alone were proper laws. Laws, therefore, must deal with general interests and must come from the people. The distinction between state and government was consistently pointed out by Rousseau.²

The state was the entire body politic, manifesting itself in the supreme and sovereign (ruler) general will. In the government included the individuals chosen by the community to apply the general will (people will).

By means of political thoughts of Locke, Rousseau, Voltaire, Montesquieu today's democracy has been born and world people enjoy the values of democracy.

Conclusion

When the origin and development of democracy is summarized, the knowledge of democracy is not unfamiliar to the people because the governing system of cultures had been started by democracy when it is studied in depth. Both most of the east and west communities began with democratic system. In China, the elements of democracy had been described by Confucius' thoughts in larger amount. In India, Hindu's culture and Buddhism had portrayed about democracy in the early human beings' communities. *Hindus' MaharThamata Min* in *Manuasastras* and the Buddha's teaching of the seven rules of *Aparihaniya* of the *Licchavi* princes are very well-known.

In the western cultures, the governmental system had been started with chieftain rule since the cultures developed. But, by the recorded history, Athens had been called father of democracy and Athens had carried out direct democracy in the world. At the age of Rome, indirect democracy (representative democracy) called Republic system had emerged. Thus,

¹Sabine, George H. (1963). *A History of Political Thought*. New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers. p.87

²Sabine, George H. (1963). *A History of Political Thought*; New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers. p.131

today there are only two kinds of democracy such as direct democracy and representative democracy (Republic).

In modern period, the practical application of democracy is American Revolution and Puritan Revolution (the power struggle of king and parliament).

After the American Revolution, the Americans could remarkable reveal the “Written Constitutional Democracy” first in the world. After the Americans, other Europeans countries of the world followed the American System of Written Constitutional Government, which is written with people’s agreement.

In England after the triumph of the parliamentary party over the king’s authority, they established the “Constitutional Monarchy” first in the world. Today’s there are many constitutional monarchy, which the combination of parliamentary democracy and monarchy. In that Constitutional Monarchy, legislative power is held by the parliament where people representatives are involved and the king has no power in that matter. The king posits as a figure head of the country. The countries which adhere the traditional monarchy have applied the Constitutional Monarchy; the distinct countries of today’s which hold that system are Thailand and Japan.

Today’s, the most popular and leading country which holds the democracy is well-known the United States of America. In America, there are two competing parties of “Democratic and Republic”. The logo of the Democratic Party is horse and that of the Republic Party is elephant. The people directly elect their president from those two parties. The election is held four years in once. The elected president possesses the administrative power, the congress in which both elected Democratic Party members and Republic Party members are included. The congress possesses the highest power of legislation. The High Court possesses the Judicial Power. Thus, in America in order to safeguard the justice and to be checked and balanced of power they separated the state power into Administrative Body, Legislative Body, and Judicial Body. American has been known as an ideal country in applying the democracy in the world.

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Emotional Intelligence and Moral Behavior

Mai Tin Moe Khaing¹, Zaw Hein Htet²

Abstract

This paper presents the relation between emotional intelligence and moral behavior. The research problem is “Why it can be regarded that emotional intelligence plays a vital role to develop moral behavior.” The hypothetical solution is that intelligence, wit, judgment and the other talents of mind are good. But they may become extremely bad and mischievous. Emotions play an enormous role in the moral development, moral judgment, and moral behavior of individuals. Kant holds that if a man's will is good, his conduct will be good. The descriptive method will be used to achieve the aim of the research. An evaluation will be made by the principle of reciprocity. This paper helps us to understand the nature of emotional intelligence and moral behavior. Moreover, emotional intelligence benefits people in ways such as, mental well-being, social relationships, success, and leadership abilities.

Key words: Emotional Intelligence, Moral Behavior, Good Will

Introduction

This paper attempts to find out an appropriate way of supporting moral behavior of individual and society. In order to achieve the aim, it is focused on the two concepts such as ‘emotion’ and ‘intelligence’. Indeed, it cannot be deniable fact that eradicating the personal feelings and emotions is not easy for most human beings although they understand that human intelligence can give the proper guidance to be morally good person.

With regard to emotion, there are good and bad emotions. Bad emotion is the emotion which can motivate man to do bad conduct. As bad conduct produces or generates bad consequences or results, it contradicts human happiness, and leads to suffering. If one is jealous of others, he is more likely to do bad conduct. If one is angry with others, he is more likely to do harm. If one hates others, it is hard for him to do good which benefits others. One's emotion that motivates him to do what is not beneficial for others is also bad emotion. In short, emotions of jealousy, anger, hatred and being unable to be pleased with another's success or are joyful at other people's misfortunes are to be regarded as bad emotions.

Otherwise, good emotion is emotion which can motivate man to do good conduct. As good conduct produces or generates good consequences or results, it can lead to human happiness. If one is able to cultivate loving kindness, his mental, verbal and physical actions are more likely to be actions that produce common good of society in which self-interest and public-interest are balanced. Emotion which is concomitant with loving kindness is to be conceived as good emotions. Similarly, emotion which is concomitant with compassion or sympathy and joy at another's success can motivate people to do good deed that leads to good consequences. Hence, loving kindness, sympathy, compassion and joy at another's success are good emotions.

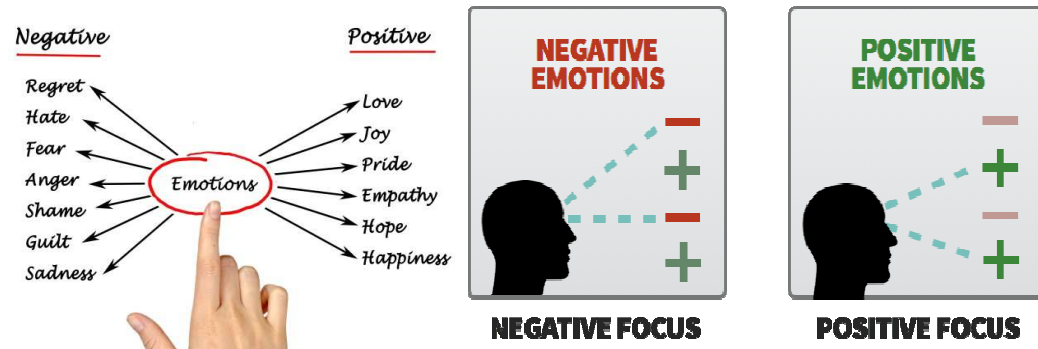
It is accepted that both good and bad emotions are concerned with human nature, and people are required to cultivate good emotion and to decrease bad emotion as much as they can. In other words, even if people are unable to remove bad emotion totally as it is human nature, bad emotion should be controlled by intelligence in order not to be motivated to do bad conduct.

Good emotion and bad emotion can function or serve as good will and bad will respectively. However, whether one can cultivate good will which is associated with good

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emotion depends on his social environment. This means that one who lives in good social environment is more likely to cultivate good will because he is influenced to some extent by his good social environment. On the other hand, one who lives in bad social environment may face some difficulty when he tries to cultivate good will. This is because bad social environment may affect him. This shows that one's ability to cultivate good will is more or less determined by his society which is ethically good or bad.



Figures 1 and 2 (Positive Emotions and Negative Emotions)

It is necessary for an individual to make not only himself or herself but also one's society ethically good. If he is able to do so, his conduct will be ethically and socially acceptable. This implies that in a society in which the majority of people do not value or appreciate what is ethically good, and distinguish what is social from what is ethical, one who lives in such a society, even if he wants to do something ethically and socially acceptable, may not be free from the influences of an ethically bad environment. Perhaps, he may regard what is ethically bad as good. So, it is clear that an individual as part of society is ethically and socially responsive.

For an individual, it is necessary to understand that an ethically good society cannot be built if an individual is unable to distinguish bad emotions from good ones and good will from bad will, and that an individual as a member of society has ethical and social responsibility or obligation to contribute to the welfare and stability of a society. To know one's ethical and social responsibilities is to have not only ethical consciousness but also social consciousness. Having ethical consciousness and social consciousness depends on an understanding the role of emotional intelligence.

Moreover, the ability to distinguish good emotion from bad emotion, good will from bad will depends on human intelligence by which one can know what is the cause of an action, and can predict what sort of consequences it will lead to. With the help of the intelligence, one can know that he needs to cultivate good will, good emotion, to do good conduct which will lead to good consequences.

It is found that intelligence and emotions are reciprocal. Although they are different and opposed to each other they are interrelated and interdependent in human nature. Moral behavior depends on a proper balance between emotion and intelligence of an individual. In Western traditions, there are many teachings that emotional intelligence should be emphasized so as to make people a moral being since the Greek period. Daniel Goleman, the author of "*Emotional Intelligence*" states that "Socrates' commands "know thyself" is the keystone of emotional intelligence. It can be said that "know thyself" is the awareness of one's own feeling.¹

¹Daniel Goleman.(1995). *Emotional Intelligence*. New York: Published in the United State and Canada. p.46.

Moreover, many philosophers have come to realize that human moral behavior is motivated by emotional intelligence. Thus, people should find out the ethical way which leads to happiness, by studying the role of emotional intelligence. Under this heading, the significant ideas of emotional intelligence and moral behavior advocated by Kant are discussed.

The Role of Emotional Intelligence in Kant's Ethics

Generally, emotions can be divided into positive and negative. Commonly, people are influenced by negative emotions rather than positive emotions. So people need to understand the nature of negative emotions. Psychologist, Dylan Evans illustrates that,

Higher cognitive emotions include the followings:

- Love
- Guilt
- Shame
- Embarrassment
- Pride
- Envy
- Jealousy¹

Most philosophers acknowledge that positive emotions are love, charity and so on and negative emotions are avarice, anger, envy and lust etc. Avarice is an immoderate emotion where one fulfills one's own selfish desire. It can lead to injustice, to lust for power and to hardness of heart against one's neighbor.

Anger is the inordinate inclination to revenge. It is contrary to patience and meekness. At times it reaches the point of violence and fury, causing damage to others. Lastly anger can degenerate into hatred and vengeance. Envy is discontent over the good of one's neighbor. It offends against brotherliness and magnanimity. Every act of envy is regarded as evil. Lust is the inordinate craving for sexual gratification and is against chastity. It is considered evil because the object itself is evil. Negative emotions mostly lead to evil.

Emotion plays a vital role in human life. Daniel Goleman, the author of "*Emotional Intelligence*" makes a discussion on the ability, which he called emotional intelligence. According to him, emotional intelligence includes self, control, zeal and persistence, and the ability to motivate oneself.² The feelings of human beings are very obvious. The awareness of these inner states is called self-awareness by Goleman. When Aristotle uses the term 'character' it is a characteristic which is required in moral conduct. Self-discipline is the basis of character. Hence philosophers since Aristotle have an understanding that the basis of the virtuous life is self-control. A certain person who has good character is able to motivate and guide oneself so that one can control his or her emotions. The emotional skill that urges to control appetites and passions is called 'will' at one time in the west. Hence, the skill of controlling, managing or directing the emotions is necessary because it can open up the way to empathy. Emotional intelligence and virtue is the same thing. Kant's moral theory illuminates the connections between morality and emotional intelligence.

According to Daniel Goleman, there are five keys to it:

1. Self-awareness

¹Dylan Evans. (2011). *Emotions, the Science of Sentiment*. New York: Oxford University Press. p.29.

²Ibid., p.XII.

2. Self-regulation
3. Motivation
4. Empathy
5. Social skills

1. Self-awareness

If people are self-aware, they always know how they feel, and they know how their emotions and actions can affect the people around them.

2. Self-regulation

Leaders who regulate themselves effectively rarely verbally attack others, make rushed or emotional decisions, stereotype people, or compromise their values. Self-regulation is all about staying in control.

3. Motivation

Self-motivated leaders work consistently toward their goals, and they have extremely high standards for the quality of their work.

4. Empathy

For leaders, having empathy is critical to managing a successful team or organization. Leaders with empathy have the ability to put themselves in someone else's situation. They help develop the people on their team, challenge others who are acting unfairly, give constructive feedback, and listen to those who need it.

5. Social Skills

Leaders who do well in the social skills element of emotional intelligence are great communicators. They are just as open to hearing bad news as good news, and they are expert at getting their team to support them and be excited about a new mission or project. Leaders who have good social skills are also good at managing change and resolving conflicts diplomatically.

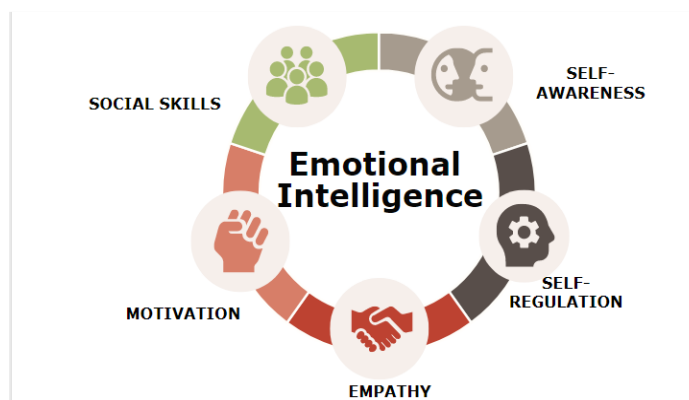


Figure 3 (Emotional Intelligence)

For Kant, good will guide human behavior. It seeks to promote the good of others. It does not promote emotional attachment and is full of mercy and charity. The good will is a key for human society. People should make a concerted effort to serve others, to seek and promote what is good for them with great patience, kindness, and selflessness. Good or evil emerges

from human will. He states that people should not live in accordance with personal desires. To build good moral character, people ought to live in accordance with the good will. To develop a morally good character, people must have good will, because human actions arise from human will.

Human beings seek the highest good for themselves. There is no one who has no desire in the world. Thus, it can be said that the desire is the fundamental motivation of all human actions. However, it cannot surely be known that whether all personal desires are good or evil, moral or immoral. For that reason, people need intelligence to control their extreme desires.

Human beings are considered as social beings because no one can live alone to survive a variety of sufferings in their lifetime. Everyone look for the most appropriate way how to grab hold of pleasure or how to keep away from pain or suffering in their daily lives. However, in search of the way to fulfill their desires, they could commit wrong action once too often. Accordingly, ethics have emerged for human society and give principles or rules for human beings to harmonize among themselves, in the interest of peace and development in human society.

Furthermore, human beings, to better their life, are always search for knowledge and they had gained the knowledge through life experiences and reason. On the other hand, human beings are commonly influenced by emotions. Therefore, emotions are an integral part of human behaviors whether one's behavior is good or evil. At this juncture, moral rules are needed for controlling human personal or extreme emotions in order to be morally good conducts to sustain social welfare. For that reason, it can be said that morality and emotion are intimately related. Human emotion involves physiological arousal, subjective experience and expressive behavior. In psychology, emotion is a complex state of feeling that results in physical and psychological changes that influence thought and behavior. Feeling means anything that can be experienced through touch, smell, sight or any other sensory organ such as the feeling of warmth, cold, and so forth. Charles Spielberger states that emotions have been defined as short-lived responses to events in the environment that involve changes in body physiology, subjective experiences, and expressive behaviors.¹

Emotions are an integral part of human behavior. Human behavior is considered as conditioned by a person's understanding and will, choice and intention. Extreme emotions can cause great damage to individual and society. If one adopts extremely negative attitudes toward another, then it leads to consequences such as hatred and even violence.

No human being can live alone to survive and flourish. But in seeking to fulfill human needs conflicts arise and if they are not kept down, human life would be endangered. This danger was foreseen by a few wise and thoughtful people who can give the suggestions needed for social and moral rules. In this way morality and ethics have emerged for human society. Morality and ethics give principles or rules for human beings to harmonize among themselves or between one another, in the interest of peace and development in human society.

Furthermore, human beings, to better their life, are always search for knowledge and people handed down the knowledge they had gained through life experiences and there took the form of belief, traditional customs and religious faith from their life experience for later generations. But, as human beings matured intellectually they came to realize that their traditional beliefs can be evaluated. They learnt to make distinctions between truth and falsity, right and wrong or good or bad. For Kant, moral behavior depends on good will. Good will is only the matter of leading one's life in the right way. Thus, human beings should conduct themselves in accordance with good will.

¹Charles Spielberger. (2004).*Encyclopedia of Applied Psychology*. USA: Elsevier Academic Press.p.11.

People are moral if they have the good will. Generally, everyone wish for the good things even though everyone cannot do the good actions. Therefore, to make the judgment about one's action whether it is good or evil, it is in needs of moral code or moral law so that an act is morally good when it is in conformity with moral laws. For that reason, in order to obtain the good things people need to understand the nature of human actions and how to do morally good actions. Human actions are either in agreement or in disagreement with the dictates of intelligence.

Human nature possesses subjective impulses, desires and inclinations. Human behavior is motivated by non-rational elements. Moral behavior can only be motivated by good will. On the other hand, Kant accepts that rational faculty can motivate people to have a good will. Other things describe as good, such as power, rich and the general well-being, are not always good because they can be used for immoral purpose by the person who possesses them. So, a good will is the only thing that is always good. Kant states that a good will is good not because of what it performs or effects, not by its aptness for the attainment of some proposed end, but simply by virtue of the volition; that is, it is good in itself, and considered by itself is to be esteemed much higher than all that can be brought about by it in favor of any inclination, nay even of the sum total of all inclination.¹

It can be understood that although a good will often does not produce good effect, it is moral virtue. Human will is good when it wills the good and only good will is good. Human action is good or bad depending on the motivation of their action and not on the goodness of the consequences of those actions. When actions are determined by reason, people are self-determined because reason is human inmost nature. When one acts according to his desires, feelings and emotions he is determined by the phenomenal mind, it does not appear in its own nature.

Kant accepts that morals require freedom. Freedom is self-determination or rational determination. Moral determination is not external causal determination where reasoning, deliberation, conscious and intelligent. In moral determination people are not pushed by external forces. In moral determination people choose actions after conscious and intelligent valuation, reasoning and deliberating every aspect of the various alternative actions. People can choose to perform a certain action. Choice is made by one's own self. Moral actions are self-chosen. Kant accepts that actions must be performed in accordance with a sense of duty. Kant describes that a sense of duty is moral law.² Kant states that there is a fundamental difference between inclination and rational desire. All action requires both emotion and desire, but in an action done from duty the feelings and desires are rational not empirical emotions and desires. In fact, moral action involves a rational desire. Kant does not accept that the foundation of morality involve sympathy or empirical emotion or desires. This emotion cannot give the kinds of objective and universal principle.

Kant asserts that moral virtue involves not only the avoidance of emotion but also the control of what Kant calls "affects." An affect is a sudden access of feeling, as of fear, anger, or joy and people control their emotional affects by rational power. He maintains that someone lacking certain kinds of emotions; respect, love of human beings, moral approval and disapproval, conscience – simply could not be a rational moral agent.

Moreover, Kant regards conscience as distinct both from the awareness of moral principle and from the faculty of moral judgment, which are the sources of the moral

¹ Immanuel Kant.(Thomos Kingsmill Abbott.(Trans,)). (2010). *Fundamental Principles of the Metaphysics of Morals*. (A Penn State Electronic Classics Series Publication). University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press.p.10.

² Ibid., p.53.

knowledge that is to be implemented in the process of self-examination. Conscious is one of the moral feelings and Kant's principal theory of conscience is the process of self-examination, self-knowledge and self-judgment. In other words, conscience is a morally motivating feeling. Concerning this point, Allen W. Wood states that the feeling of this kind that Kant emphasizes. Kant distinguishes four distinct feelings that arise from pure reason: (a) moral feeling, (b) conscience, (c) love of human beings, and (d) respect.¹ It can be understood that moral feeling consists in a feeling of pleasure or displeasure attached to actions, either performed or contemplated, and whether performed by another. Conscience as a feeling is the outcome of a specific process of moral reflection. Kant regards duties of love and duties of respect as two complementary classes of duties to others. It can be understood that duties of love include not only duties to benefit others.

From mentioned above, it can be concluded that possessing emotional intelligence make people more efficient, productive, and successful in the workplace. Emotional intelligence is often defined by the way people can manage their emotions. This can include working well under stress and handling the relationships. Kantian moral theory helps us to better understand the nature of emotional intelligence. Moral concern helps one to be emotionally intelligent. Indeed, virtue, i.e., Kantian virtue, and emotional intelligence are closely intertwined concepts.

Conclusion

Living a good life depends on people's ethical knowledge. It can be said that some emotions like sympathy, love, generosity, joy at another's success can mostly motivate people to conduct themselves to benefit not only the agents but also the other members of their society. People are required to cultivate good emotions in order to do good and this reap good consequences which can be shared by all members of society. People are required to eliminate bad emotions with the help of intelligence so as to achieve peace and tranquility as well as common good of people.

When emotions are regarded as the animal aspect or bodily aspect, these are bad so that emotions must be eliminated from human life. But when emotions are regarded as nature or being part of human nature, they are either good or bad in accordance with the way these are controlled or used in the moral life. The aim of moral thought or ethics is to guide people ethically and to make them understand what is good or bad, and right or wrong, and to give them reasons of why they should follow or observe moral principles.

Moreover, it can be said that Western philosophers do accept the relationship between emotional intelligence and moral behavior. Specifically, this paper deals with philosophical analysis and literature review or survey, focusing on the role of emotional intelligence. It is clear that, Kant, one of the Modern philosophers accepts that only by using intelligence, can an individual work out what one's duty was. It is found in Kant's ethics that good will alone is good, regardless of good consequence or bad consequence of an action. It is to be noted that moral judgment depends on whether one wills the good or bad. If one does his action through good will, it is not necessary to examine whether such action produces good or bad results. Kant accepts that the only good thing is good will.

If everyone has a will and is able to neglect self-centered emotions, and impulses then the society he or she is engaging will have social benefits. Such actions will open up the way to compassionate, empathetic and altruistic society. Hence in some Western moral thoughts especially Aristotle, advice is given to keep extreme emotion under the control of reason.

¹Allen W. Wood. (2008). *Kantian Ethics*. Cambridge. Cambridge University Press. p.183.

Life is full of many choices. People don't always make the right choices or the right thing. Sometimes people make a wrong decision or a wrong choice. Learning to make choices begins at birth and is a growing process. As human beings grow and get older, their choices become more important and become our patterns of behavior. Human action is sometimes done by emotion alone. Thus, people should find out the ethical way which leads to the highest good, by using their emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence is the ability to understand and manage emotions. People with a high degree of emotional intelligence know what they're feeling, what their emotions mean, and how these emotions can affect other people. For leaders, having emotional intelligence is essential for success.

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