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THE THEORY OF SYLLOGISM IN NYAYA SYSTEM OF INDIAN PHILOSOPHY

Smt.Mary Tessy TG

Assistant Professor

Department of Sanskrit

Maharajas College, Ernakulam, Kerala

Nyaya system is one of the six orthodox systems of Indian Philosophy. The term Nyaya is explained by Vatsyayana the commentator on Nyayasutra as the examination of the objects by the means of valid knowledge.¹ This system follows an analytic method. It applies a logical method for enquiry. They accept anything that can be proved by logical investigation. The statements of the vedas also critically examined with a logical approach. The critical evaluation of the objects is the distinguishing factor of this system. Dr. S Radhakrishnan viewed Nyaya as the science of science². In his opinion each science is a Nyaya as it literally means going in to a subject or analytic investigation. Nyaya system has developed theories on epistemology. As this branch of philosophy has given more importance to the pramana- the means of right knowledge it is known as pramanasastra. This system admits sixteen categories (padarthas) among them first one is pramana that indicates the significance of pramana in Nyaya system. The production of knowledge, the means of knowledge, the validity of knowledge etc are some of the most important topics on Nyaya system.

Inference (Anumana)

The Nyaya has accepted four pramanas (the means of valid knowledge) viz. Perception, inference, comparison and verbal testimony. Among the four pramanas the Anumana has been dealt with special attention. The word Anumana has two parts- anu and mana. Anu means after and mana means measure. So the meaning of the word anumana is measuring after something. Anumana is preceded by perception. Only seeing the sign or linga one can infer something. In order to infer a thing with the perception of the other thing there one must be aware of the unconditional relation of these two things. So in the knowledge of the sign and in the understanding of the unconditional relation between the two things we need the perception. Thus in this way we can say that Anumana is the measuring after perception. For example a person who sees the smoke with fire repeatedly and through his observation identifies the natural relation between the smoke and fire. After that when he sees the smoke alone he remembers the relation of the smoke with fire and he infers the existence of fire there. So perception is an inevitable part of Anumana. Vatsyayana also opines that without perception the inference is impossible.³

Perception is possible only related to the present time but inference has no such limitations because it relates to the past, present and future. Normally where the perception is possible there inference is not used. Vatsyayana has said that the inference functions neither with regard to the things unknown and nor with regard to the things which are known definitely, but it functions only with the things that are doubtful.

The inference is used to know the fact which cannot be known through perception. Bhasarvajna defines inference as the means of knowing a thing that cannot be known by the senses, through its invariable correlation with another thing. In the Tarkasamgraha Annambhatta has defined inference as the instrument of the inferential knowledge⁴. Inferential knowledge is that knowledge which arises from the reference (paramarsa). Paramarsa means the knowledge that the reason (hetu) existing in the subject is qualified by the invariable correlation. The knowledge that arises from this paramarsa is the inferential knowledge. The invariable correlation is the coexistence of two things or facts in one and the same substratum. This is known technically as Vyapti in Nyaya system.

CLASSIFICATION OF INFERENCE-

According to Annambhatta inference is of two kinds- inference for oneself (svarthanumana) and inference for others (pararthanumana). The inference for oneself is defined as the cause of one's own inferential knowledge- स्वार्थं स्वानुमितिहेतुः⁵. This kind inference can be explained with an example as the following way- a person sees repeatedly the



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coexistence of the smoke with fire. Through his repeated and continuous observation he arrives at understanding that there is an invariable correlation of smoke with fire. This can be expressed as where there is smoke there is fire. After that when he sees the smoke at somewhere (mountain etc) and then he remembers the vyapti or invariable correlation of smoke and fire which identified earlier. After the remembrance of vyapti there arises in him the knowledge that this place has smoke which has invariable correlation with fire. This knowledge of the smoke (hetu) is the paramarsa. From this the inferential knowledge arises that this place (mountain) has fire.

Inference for others

When a person after attaining the inferential knowledge himself imparts the same knowledge to others using the five membered syllogism then it is known as inference for others⁶. In the inference for others the application of the syllogism is the distinguished character. These five members are known as panchavayava technically. The five members of the syllogism are pratijna-proposition, hetu- reason, udaharana- example, upanaya- application and nigamana-conclusion. The syllogism is used to prove the existence of the predicate or sadhya in the presented paksha. In order to understand the inference properly knowledge of some technical terms are essential. For example – paksha, hetu, sadhya etc. Paksha (minor term) is the place where the presence of sadhya (that which has to be proved) is suspected. Hetu(middle term) by which the sadhya is inferred. Sadhya is that which is inferred in the minor term. The presence of the middle term in the minor term is known as pakshadharmata.

Pratijna-

Among the five members of syllogism first one is pratijna or proposition. It is defined as the declaration of the minor term along with the thing to be proved- साध्यवत्तया पक्षवचनम्⁷s. The proposition has two parts one is minor term and the second is the major term (sadhya). For example – the mountain has fire. Here mountain is the paksha and the fire is the sadhya. The

Hetu-

second avayava is hetu-reason. It states the existence of the middle term in the minor term.

Hetu is defined as the declaration of the mark (reason) ends in the ablative case (पञ्चमी विभक्ति)⁸. In the structure of inference the ablative case is used with reason. For example –पर्वतः वह्निमान् धूमात्, here smoke is the hetu which is used in the ablative case as धूमात्. In the Nyayasutra hetu is defined as “ the cause that establishes the sadhya (middle term) through its similarity with the example” उदाहरणसाधर्म्यात् साध्यसाधनं हेतुः⁹. For example – in the proposition – sound is non eternal because it is produced, production is the hetu. This hetu establishes the existence of the non-eternity through its similarity with the example the pot etc. Here in the pot etc there the production and non-eternity is seen. So in the case of the sound also production or creation can be the cause for proving the sadhya i.e non-eternity. In the Nyayasutra hetu is again explained as the cause that establishes the sadhya through its dissimilarity with example- तथा वैधर्म्याच्च¹⁰. In the case of the sound taking the soul (Atma) as the example, where in the absence of the production the absence of the non-eternity is said, there through the dissimilarity with the example Atma, the cause- production is capable of proving the non- eternity of sound.

Udaharanam- That which describes the invariable concomittance (vyapti) between the hetu and saddhya is udaharanam or example¹¹. Udaharana is of two kinds- affirmative(sadharmya) and negative(vaidharmya). In the affirmative example the hetu and sadhya are present. But in the negative example sadhya and hetu are absent. In the case of establishing as non eternal through the hetu -product a pot or a cloth etc can be used as affirmative example. The soul can be cited as the negative example in this case as there is the absence of both non eternity and product in the soul. In this way udaharana helps to understand the vyapti between the hetu and sadhya in a given statement.

Upanaya- it declares the presence or absence of hetu in the paksha or minor term. The sentence that explains the presence of hetu accompanied by vyapti with sadhya is upanaya¹². According to the example whether it is affirmative or negative



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the upanaya also will be in the form of affirmative or negative. In the case of sound is eternal because it is a product, upanaya with an affirmative example will be like 'it is also like that' ie sound is also contains the hetu- product like a pot.

Nigamana - restate of the proposition is nigamana. Declaration of paksha along with saddhya and hetu is conclusion. What is stated in the proposition or in the hypothesis is established in the conclusion. For example- in the case of proving the non eternity of sound, due to the existence of the hetu which is invariably related with the saddhya , and also sound is similar to example viz. Pot etc, in possessing the hetu and saddhya, it is concluded that sound is non eternal.

Conclusion-

The syllogism on Nyaya Philosophy is a better way to make aware of some theory or fact to others. Through the five steps any can easily grasp the ideas that are explained. It is a logical method of presentation. This theory has close resemblance with research methodology. Those who has acquainted with these five fold syllogism can analyse any hypothesis and will be able to arrive in a proper conclusion. Lets see how one can use these five steps in the case of testing a liquid whether it is acid or not, using a litmus paper-

1. pratijna- this liquid is acid
2. Hetu - because it turned blue litmus paper red
3. Udaharana- whenever blue litmus paper turns red, the sample contains acid as in the case of H₂SO₄.
4. Upanaya - Same condition remains in the given liquid
5. Nigamana - so the liquid is acid.

So in this way theory has a contemporary relevance and is useful to the society.

End Notes-

1. प्रमाणैरर्थपरीक्षणं न्यायः-Nyayabhashya of Vatsyayana 1.1.1. page No.
2. The system of which studies the general plan and method of critical inquiries may be called the science of science, Indian Philosophy, Vol.2 pg no.33.
3. Nyayabhashya, 2.1.31.
4. अनुमितिकरणमनुमानम्- Tarkasangraha, pg no. 88.
5. Tarkasangraha, pg. 92.
6. यत्तु स्वयं धूमादग्निमनुमाय परं प्रतिबोधयितुं पञ्चावयववाक्यं प्रयुज्यते तत् परार्थानुमानम्। Tarkasangraha, pg.no.95.
7. Tarkasangrahaddeepika- pg no.96.
8. पञ्चम्यन्तं लिङ्गप्रतिपादकं हेतुः- Tarkasangraha pg no.96.
9. Nyayasutra 1.1.34.
10. Nyayasutra 1.1.35.
11. व्याप्तिप्रतिपादकम् उदाहरणम्-Tarkasangraha Deepika- pg No.96.



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12. व्याप्तिविशिष्टलिङ्गप्रतिपादकं वचनमुपनयः -Tarkasangraha Deepika- pg No.96.

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3. S. Radhakrishnan - Indian Philosophy Vol-2, Oxford University Press, 1923.
4. Vinod Kumar M V- Essentials of padarthavijnan - Vol -2, Kriti publications Chathamangalam, Kozhikode, 2023.