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THE INFLUENCE OF SANKHYA PHILOSOPHY ON THE PRESENT EDUCATION SYSTEM IN INDIA

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Abstract

Sankhya philosophy, one of the most ancient and systematic schools of Indian philosophy, provides a profound framework for understanding reality, knowledge, and values. Founded by the sage Kapila, it presents a dualistic theory of Purusha (consciousness) and Prakriti (matter). In the modern era, where education increasingly emphasizes material success and utilitarian goals, Sankhya philosophy offers a value-oriented and holistic perspective. This paper explores the influence of Sankhya philosophy on the present education system in India, particularly in fostering self-realization, moral development, and balanced personality growth. The study highlights the relevance of Sankhya's metaphysical, epistemological, and axiological aspects in shaping contemporary educational practices.

Keywords: Sankhya Philosophy, Education, Kapila, Purusha, Prakriti, Values, Indian Education

Introduction

Sankhya philosophy is one of the oldest and most influential systems of Indian thought. It is traditionally attributed to the sage Kapila and is deeply rooted in Vedic tradition. The philosophy is based on dualism, recognizing two ultimate realities: Purusha (pure consciousness) and Prakriti (material nature). Sankhya is also pluralistic, as it accepts the existence of multiple Purushas. The Sankhya system provides the theoretical foundation, while Yoga represents its practical application. In the contemporary educational context, Sankhya philosophy offers a meaningful approach to understanding human development, knowledge acquisition, and the ultimate aim of life—liberation (moksha). It emphasizes not only intellectual growth but also moral and spiritual development.



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Significance of the Study

Modern education emphasizes child-centered learning, development of individual potential, and holistic growth. These ideas resonate strongly with Sankhya philosophy, which focuses on the development of self-awareness, moral values, and inner balance. The relevance of Sankhya philosophy in present education includes: Development of innate potential of learners
 Promotion of ethical and moral values
 Reduction of social and cultural degradation
 Emphasis on holistic development (body, mind, and soul)
 Thus, Sankhya philosophy provides a strong philosophical foundation for value-based education.

Objectives of the Study

1. To describe the major aspects of Sankhya Philosophy (Metaphysics, Epistemology, and Axiology).
2. To analyze the influence of Sankhya Philosophy on the present education system in India.

Methodology

The present study is descriptive and based on documentary analysis. It relies on both primary and secondary sources, including classical texts, books, journals, and educational reports.

Features of Sankhya Philosophy

1. Metaphysical Aspect

Sankhya philosophy is based on dualistic realism, recognizing two ultimate realities:

Purusha (Self): Eternal, conscious, and unchanging

Prakriti (Matter): Unconscious, dynamic, and composed of three gunas

Three Gunas of Prakriti

Sattva: Purity, harmony, and knowledge

Rajas: Activity, passion, and movement

Tamas: Inertia, ignorance, and darkness

These three gunas are present in all objects and influence human behavior and learning processes.

Theory of Evolution



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Sankhya explains the evolution of the universe through stages: Mahat (intellect), Ahankara (ego), Manas (mind), sense organs, action organs, Tanmatras (subtle elements), and Mahabhutas (gross elements).

2. Epistemological Aspect

Sankhya recognizes three valid sources of knowledge (Pramana):

Perception (Pratyaksha) – Direct sensory knowledge

Inference (Anumana) – Logical reasoning

Testimony (Sabda) – Authoritative knowledge from scriptures

This aligns with modern educational practices that emphasize observation, reasoning, and textual learning.

3. Axiological Aspect

Sankhya philosophy emphasizes values and ethics, focusing on liberation (moksha) as the ultimate goal. It identifies three types of suffering:

Adhyatmika (internal)

Adhibhautika (external)

Adhidaivika (supernatural)

The removal of suffering is possible through discriminative knowledge (Viveka) between Purusha and Prakriti.

Sankhya also advocates moral discipline and Yoga practices, which help in achieving mental stability and self-control.

Influence on Present Education System

1. Holistic Development

Sankhya philosophy promotes the development of physical, mental, and spiritual aspects of an individual, which aligns with modern holistic education.

2. Child-Centered Education

The recognition of multiple Purushas reflects the individuality of learners, supporting child-centered education.

3. Value Education

Sankhya emphasizes moral values, discipline, and ethical behavior, which are essential in addressing modern social challenges.

4. Experiential Learning

The importance given to perception and inference supports activity-based and experiential learning methods.



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5. Mental Discipline through Yoga

Sankhya recommends Yoga practices such as Yama, Niyama, Asana, and Meditation, which improve concentration, emotional balance, and overall well-being.

6. Aim of Education: Self-Realization

Unlike modern systems focused on employment, Sankhya defines education as a means of attaining self-realization and liberation from ignorance.

Conclusion

Sankhya philosophy provides a comprehensive framework for understanding education beyond material success. Its emphasis on knowledge, values, and self-realization makes it highly relevant in the present era. By incorporating Sankhya principles, the Indian education system can achieve a balance between intellectual development and moral growth. Thus, Sankhya philosophy serves as a guiding force in creating a value-based, balanced, and harmonious society.

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