

Necessity Of Samskaras In Modern Society

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Abstract: The present paper is an attempt to explore the importance of human and moral Saṃskāras in the global society. Human society may not significantly sustain without Saṃskāras. Hence, it is necessary to talk on the subject and bring about awareness of Saṃskāras in modern society. We are in the conviction that the loss of modern world is education and educator due to the deficiency in the education methods or the methods that are not responding to the needs of the age. The current era is full of controversies; one of the biggest is related with education. All these current problems are reasoning from incorrectly interpreting the needs of century. However, the solution way is hidden in the problem itself i.e. good education. Whenever the minds of young brains are not lit adequately, opinions and beliefs have met with constant dispute that followed hatred among generations and nations. Such vicious circles have reasoned from ignorance and not been educated well. The main source of solution for the future of globe lies in founding and opening schools at every corner of the world which are devoted to Saṃskāras and respectful to all humankind and opinions. With the help of these institutions and devoted educators, mobilization should be declared against ignorance, intolerance and disrespectfulness towards universal values and besides preconceived ideas should be subject to critics so as to give and acquire an innovative viewpoint in such concepts and sciences.

Keywords: Saṃskāras, Modern, Society, Culture

I. INTRODUCTION

Saṃskāra are rites of passage in a human being's life described in ancient Sanskrit texts, as well as a concept in the karma theory of Indian philosophies. The word literally means "putting together, making perfect, getting ready, to prepare", or "a sacred or sanctifying ceremony" in ancient Sanskrit and Pali texts of India. In the context of karma theory, Samskara are dispositions, character or behavioral traits either as default from birth (previous lives in some schools of Hinduism), or Samskara are behavioral traits perfected over time through Yoga, through conscious shaping of inner self, one's desire, sense of moral responsibility and through practice. In some schools of Hinduism, the psychological concept of Saṃskāra is also known as vāsanā.

These are viewed as traces or temperament that evolves through the refinement of an individual inner consciousness and expressed personality, and is a form of "being-preparedness" in Vedantic psychology. In Samkhya and Yoga schools, Saṃskāra – also spelled as Samksara – are

impressions or residues that affect an individual's Gunas (behavior attributes). In Nyaya school of Hinduism, not all Samskara are psychological. Rites of passage, other actions, studies, diligent preparation and inner resolutions trigger impressions or dispositions in the psyche of an individual, in these schools of Hinduism, and these influence how the individual acts, perceives self and the manner in which the individual responds to or accepts the karmic circumstances and the future.

II. SIGNIFICANCE OF SANSKARA

Saṃskāras have been a central concept in the social sciences since their inception. They play a vital role in the society, for they are said to be the basis of human beings for leading a better life. It is believed that all holy books of all religions contain the values of good life. The importance of Saṃskāras is frequently cited in relation to the global and national problems, whether it be in debates in international

assemblies, in studies criticizing "value-free" approaches to research, or in discussion of quality of life and individual fulfilment. Thus, Saṃskāra are deemed especially important in questions of cultural development and are central to concern for the preservation of cultural heritage.

It is to be mentioned that importance of Saṃskāra is seen right from the childhood of a person. Preschool is the first stage or period that lays the foundation of information on Saṃskāra. Because information about the values of life is a continuous process found in the society. However, the first information not only gains in earlier periods that begin and end in the period to adolescence but also continues personality. From now on, there can be changes on these values, but basic values have been developed. Changing child's wrong behaviour is more difficult than trying to develop a new behaviour. It is critical to develop the child's personality in a planned and systematic process in order to prevent the wrong development of values education.

There are different factors which affect Saṃskāras in the life of an individual and the society. Value education starts from families and it is continuous at schools with the help of educators. Because of this, families, teachers and educational programs are crucial to the development of Saṃskāras. Families are the first source of information so they should be careful about their behaviours and attitudes as children see them as a model. Cooperation within families and teachers is very important for the thing that affects the children most is what the teacher does in the classroom. Besides this, education programs must be reorganized according to this cooperation. Also in this period by the help of educational activities like seminars, conferences; families can take an active part in organizing these programs. So that, there can be an effective harmony among families, educators and educational programs. It may be mentioned that Saṃskāra is a theory about "what things in the world are good, desirable, and important." (S.C. Sinha, 1990).

There are two variations of Saṃskāra namely individual morality and social morality. Individual morality provides the basis of decisions of and judgments by the individual: honesty, loyalty, good faith, being responsible. Social morality means fairness, which is one basis of law, which helps to govern society and to control individual behavior. Social morality considers whether an action threatens society's well-being. Thus, Saṃskāra possess a significant position in the society. Saṃskāras are a cognitive structure that describes the ideals of life of individuals, their preferences, priorities, principles and the behaviour of a cognitive. Saṃskāras are the effective cultural elements which shape the elements around the point of view of individuals, members of a community that holds together. In line with the protection or disregarding of these values by individuals in a society, the Saṃskāras will be lost in time or they will be continued many years by transferring. Continuing and being permanent of these values depends on individuals' general acceptance and internalizing. But, together with the Saṃskāras that show differences in cultures, there is a case of values which are universal and ethical that are accepted in all cultures. Truth, respect, kindness, benevolence, patience, tolerance, peace, democracy, etc. are expected to be universal human values throughout globe. It is

a universally accepted view that without these Saṃskāras human society will not sustain for a long time.

We, human beings receive information through our five senses, and it is the Saṃskāras that help us to discriminate from right and wrong, good and bad. We have access to information readily however, transformation is slow without practice of human values, and this is where the importance of Saṃskāras plays a significant role in bringing solutions to the global problems such as ecological problems, moral problems, global warming, etc. In this present global human society we almost see only the demoralizing values.

What the genuine cause of the degradation of these values could be is an important question to be asked. According to philology, the word ethics are derived from the Latin „Ethos“, which means character. It is a question of moral value. In this way, ethics is the science of character, habits of activity or behaviour of human beings. Moreover, social values are certain qualities and beliefs that are shared within a specific culture or group of people. These traits can be religious, economic, political, educational, historical etc. Indeed, social and moral values are essential elements of the collective life of any community. Social values are that which an individual considers to be of value in their social existence. These are the standards by which one operates or is understood as an everyday function.

It is a known fact that man, a member of a society, is a rational animal. This simple truth provides a sort of foundation for ethics, and much of the history of moral philosophy involves attempts to do justice to both aspects of the human: rationality on the one hand, animal nature on the other (Roger Teichmann, 2011). So, humans are animals first and rational being second. The area of philosophy traditionally known as „ethics“ or „moral philosophy“ is the attempt to arrive at an understanding of the nature Saṃskāras, of how we ought to live, and of what constitutes right conduct in the society.

III. SANSKARAS AS RITUALS

Saṃskāras in Hinduism are rites of passage that begin with one's birth, celebrates certain early steps in a baby's growth and his or her welcome into the world in the presence of friends and family, then various stages of life (Ashrama (stage)) such as first learning day, graduation from school, wedding and honeymoon, pregnancy, raising a family, as well as those related to final rites associated with cremation. These rites of passage are not uniform, and vary within the diverse traditions of Hinduism. Some may involve formal ceremonies, yajna (fire) ceremonies with the chanting of Vedic hymns. Others are simple, private affairs involving a couple, with or without friends, other family families or a religious person such as priest or pandit.

Saṃskāras are not considered as end in themselves, but are means of social recognition as well as the passage of a person from one significant stage of life to another. Various elements of Saṃskāras and rituals of life's passage are mentioned in Vedas of Hinduism, one of the oldest known scriptures in the world. The most extensive, but divergent discussions of these rites of passage are found in the numerous Dharmasutras and Grhyasutras from the 1st millennium BCE.

Many of these rites of passage include formal ceremonies, with ritual readings of hymns, chants and ethical promises, aiming to orient the individual(s) to that which is considered part of dharma (right, good, just, moral, true, spiritual, responsible, duties to family members or society in general), and essential actions such as those associated with last rites and cremation, charitable works, or out of sraddha or items of faith.

IV. CULTURE & SANSKARA

When we use the word culture, we immediately have images of cultural programmes held in schools and at associations where children do folk dance and sing classical songs. It's all about performance of some traditional art form. But is that all culture is? A performance meant to entertain us during festival. Something nostalgic and quaint, far removed from the daily grind of the workplace. It is at best an ornament, good to have, not essential.

When we use the word sanskaar, the reaction is rather different. For sanskaar refers to upbringing in India. It is the Key Performance Indicator of parenting to most Indians. It is an indicator of family values. It shows how civilized and cultured we are. The word Sanskaar is a wordplay typical of Sanskrit. It is a combination of three roots: First: saras, which means fluid. Second: sama, which means cyclical or closed loop. Third: ka, which means questioning, an indicator of humanity as well as divinity in the Vedas. Samskāra is then how the human mind makes sense of this cyclical world of birth and death, which we all inhabit. It is an indicator of the value placed on human existence by the family one belongs to. Every organisation needs sanskaar to show the world whether it is connected to society at large and to the environment as a whole.

In India, sanskaar is created by simply following rites of passage, also called sanskaar. In other words, both the means to create culture and culture itself mean the same thing. Typical Samskāras are: marriage, childbirth, piercing the child's ear, tonsure of the child's hair, the first eating of solid food, first day at school, and finally, death. Samskāras are also linked to how festivals are celebrated, how food is served, how the house is kept, how daughters, sons, elders, guests, servants, strangers and enemies are treated. Most rituals, like all rituals, have symbolic meaning or have no meaning at all. The action needs to be performed, but what is key to the ritual performance is the underlying emotion of the action – the bhaav. Ritual with bhaav is advised. Ritual without bhaav is tolerated. Bhaav without ritual is unperceivable.

Modern management ignores bhaav as that cannot be measured. It focuses on rules (niti) and tradition (riti). In this approach, culture becomes not an expression of ideas but a rigid code of conduct that the modern man has to revolt against in order to be free. At best it becomes something to turn to nostalgically. And it is this approach to culture that is increasingly becoming popular.

In the Puranas, Shiva is unable to appreciate the sanskaar of his father-in-law Daksha for Shiva values emotions more than rituals while Daksha values rituals over emotion. The confrontation is violent.

Culture is an outcome of any human interaction. There cannot be an organisation without culture. There are levels of human culture of course in the Puranas.

- ✓ The default culture (Level 0) is the animal culture where natural instincts (prakriti) is indulged, where might is right, where domination and conflict thrive and it is all about packs and herds and grabbing nourishment and security. This is seen in organisations where there is breakdown of leadership.
- ✓ The next type of culture (Level 1) is one where the human-animal is domesticated using rules and rewards and recognition. This is seen in highly controlled workspaces.
- ✓ Another type of culture is one where one abandons all things material and gives up all relationship – the monastic culture (Level 2).
- ✓ Then comes the ecosystem (Level 3) where people are continuously encouraged, not compelled, to be sensitive to others voluntarily for their own emotional and intellectual wellbeing. This is sanskriti, where everyone knows how to behave with men, women, those older and younger, those related and unrelated, strangers and colleagues. This is aspirational.

The questions to ponder over are: is cultural critical? Do modern institutions think of culture only when the going is good? Do they see culture as a lever that enables success? More importantly, if the going is bad, does culture matter? Will culture help tide over a crisis, or will it be the cause of crisis?

In stories, sanskar is not always profitable. In the Ramayana, Surpanakha's sanskaar allows her to approach a married man for pleasure; Sita's sanskaar compels her to risk personal security and feed a hungry sage who turns out to be demon; Ram's sanskaar forces him to abandon his beloved innocent wife as she is deemed queen of stained reputation. In the Mahabharata, Draupadi abandons all sanskaar and becomes violent and bloodthirsty when she is publicly abused and all family decorum is abandoned by her vile brothers-in-law, the Kauravas. Yet, this very same Draupadi recalls sanskaar when she forgives her sister-in-law Dushala's lecherous husband, Jayadratha, even though he tries to abduct her.

As long as culture is treated synthetically as an ornament of the good times it can never ever add real value. Only when we recognize culture as sanskaar, an indicator of our humanity, does it becomes a critical to organisational survival.

V. SAMSKARAS IN MODERN SOCIETY

Crisis of Samskāras is one of the burning problems in our daily life. Dowry system, divorce, abortion, animal sacrifice, superstitious beliefs, etc. are the burning problems in the present human society. These are ever growing problem. In order to uproot these, we provide value orientation classes so that, we may develop the optimum level of thinking. Women are actually facing existential crisis due to insecurity because of gang-rape, molestation, etc. Some people violate social norms, morality and ethics, penal code, constitutional and legal norms and people very often utilize freedom in the

ultimate sense, consequence upon which we are facing problem in the society. Everybody is going to fulfil his or her need by utilizing ultimate freedom. He or she forgets the responsibility to society and tries to enjoy freedom in the ultimate sense. This is really a serious value crisis being faced by the present society.

Therefore, every person should be aware of removing the social problems which are deep-rooted in the human society. The values like truthfulness, kindness, honesty, law, justice, patriotism, humanism, etc. are to be preserved in society in order to regulate human life in a well-ordered manner. Saṃskāra-crisis has emerged due to not understanding its proper role in our human society. To some thinkers, epistemological crisis and identity crisis are the two main crises of value which create the major problems like suicide, murder, robbery, extortion, rape, insurgency, or extremist problem and caste and class conflict, etc. The problem of value deterioration in our society can be stored out, if we are socially conscious about the deep-rooted values in our society. This awareness is possible only when we will flourish our philosophizing or spiritualizing force to assess the value in our life.

The case of Saṃskāra contrasts sharply with that of world problems. Where it is common and meaningful to ask "do you have a problem", it is unusual and generally unacceptable to ask "do you have a Saṃskāra". The term is not common across languages and is not an early part of any vocabulary. It is far from being an immediate concern in any normal programme of action. And yet there is an intimate relationship between problems and Saṃskāra.

Problems tend to be explicit, whereas Saṃskāras tend to be implicit. But both are artifacts of the human mind. Despite being treated as concrete, problems as such (like Saṃskāra) cannot be photographed. People interpret certain (photographable) conditions as problematic. But the future will recognize other problems in photographs of conditions today, which may now appear problem-free. It may be argued that awareness of a problem-value polarity is borne of exposure to certain conditions that cause some form of suffering. In different ways this suffering engenders learning through which sensitivity to a (new) Saṃskāra allows the suffered conditions to be constellated into a problem. In summary, whilst problems tend to be concrete, relatively unambiguous, detailed features of normal organized activity, Saṃskāras are much more ambiguously defined and less easily related to specific programmatic steps. Problems, provide focus through their concreteness and specificity in dealing with the present through established channels. Saṃskāras provide focus through their inspirational value and their prescriptive potential in creating a more desirable future irrespective of established views.

VI. CONCLUSION

One of the primary causes of crime today is the lack of virtuous people. Those who are honest try to follow moral principles in their private lives, but at times have to abandon morals under the pressure of poverty. Eventually they may find themselves in the dock of the accused, charged with

committing theft. The law is not concerned with the poverty which forced them to steal, nor, indeed, does the law make provisions for the maintenance of their families if they are given a prison sentence. As a consequence, their children will have to become pickpockets and petty thieves and their unfortunate wives have to embrace an ignoble and sinful life in the underworld, because they have to survive. It is a tradition to give preference to social value over human Saṃskāras. The spiritual revolutionaries want to strike at the root of this custom. For them, Saṃskāra takes precedence over social value. Human beings form the society, and hence human Saṃskāras must lay the foundation for the social value. In other words, those who show respect to Saṃskāras will be entitled to social value. Indeed, human value means nothing but to treat the joys and sorrows, hopes and aspirations of human beings sympathetically, and see them merged in Cosmic Consciousness and established in divine majesty.

Saṃskāra is generally known to be a moral standard of human behaviour. Social and moral values are essential elements of the collective lives of any community without which the present modern human society may not be able to continue to sustain. Therefore, Saṃskāras should be preserved and protected. Looking at today's human society, one can see that it is deeply engrossed in materialism. Saṃskāras are beginning to lose their importance. The craze of materialism has been quite detrimental to the traditional social and moral system. The spirit of personal freedom has brought about the degradation in the moral life of the human community. Loss of moral integrity has always been responsible for the destruction of civilization in the past. There should be a general awareness being created by socio-cultural groups concerning the value of traditional customs and heritage. Today, many researches and publications should be done on several aspects of the society which help to perpetuate the human values of the human community in the post-modern era. Saṃskāras may be treated as keys to the solution of the global problems.

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