

PSYCHOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF FREE WILL IN THE FIELD OF MORAL JUDGMENT: THE PHILOSOPHICAL PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract:

The advancement of human civilization has been occurred due to intellectual desire of human beings and self- inquiry created in our minds from this curiosity. Thus the questions arise, what is free will? Do we have any free will in the actions that we performed in our daily life? Is free will always accepted in moral judgment? And so on, in Indian and Western philosophy, various philosophers explain free will in psychological perspective, where free will is accepted or rejected as a criterion for moral judgment? However, various philosophical problems arise in connection with the questions between free will and moral judgment.

We observed in Kantian ethics, he accepts free will as a fundamental postulate of morality. In this context, he stated that if there is no completely freedom in the performance of an action, then that action cannot the subject to normal judgment. A person becomes truly free, only when he is guided by his own judgment and wisdom and he performs a voluntary action without being controlled by another person.

We observe that, free will is accepted in Indian philosophy and many western thinkers like Aristotle, Locke, Berkeley, Leibniz, Plato, Descartes, and Epictetus accept free will of moral judgement. However, none of them accepted free will to mean arbitrariness. Free will is controlled by inner power not by external forces. Form a Psychological perspective, we cannot declare any individual person is good or bad, if that person does not perform any action by freely or voluntary. They said, every man is an individual entity. Every individual person works to fulfil their own needs, desires and self satisfaction. People can choose one option from among various alternatives, because the cognitive process works in decision making.

Hence, from the perception of philosophers, it seems, if we deny free will in our daily life then moral judgement will not be possible and we will not be able to distinguish between good and evil. Many thinkers accepted free will from their own perspective, but it cannot always be accepted in our daily life. If we accept free will with their perspective, then we cannot establish Karmavada and authority of God or Parramatta or supreme self or absolute soul.

Keywords:

Free will, Moral judgment, Fundamental postulated of morality, Karmavada, Janmantarabada or Rebirth, Moksha, Perspective of Indian philosophy, Perspective of Western philosophy.

1. Introduction:

This article intends to examine whether free will can be accepted as a standard of morality. In this article psychological analysis of the problems arise from accepting the free will from a philosophical perspective, has been made examine to how free will is interpreted in both Indian and western philosophy, as well as how it is critiqued as a fundamental postulate of morality. A critical analysis has also been presented, of how the individual existence of a person is denied by various philosophical doctrines.

2. Critical Analysis:

Sometimes, in real life, the actions we perform are driven by free will. We have complete freedom in all actions that we do voluntarily. But sometimes, critical situation arise in human life when people perform any work against their will. For example, unable to bear the cries of her hungry child, a beggar mother stole food for him, although she had no desire to it. In this difficult situation, she commits the wrongful act. Can we call this action a voluntary act? Can we say that, she had free will in performing this act? Since, the women compelled to do this work. Nor can it be said that, she performed the act under the direction of others. On the other hand, a person whose profession is stealing, he commits wrongful acts by nature. He feels no hesitation in doing this work. In both situations, even though, the two individuals persons are the agents of their actions and do not act guided by someone, it cannot be said, the first person had free will to do this work. The women did the work, because there was no other way. Therefore, the women cannot be found guilty, since, that not a voluntary act. In fact, free will is a voluntary action where I decide I can work or not. So, we can say that, even if a person is not controlled by others and she acts voluntarily, he had no free will.

Generally, we understand that, the moral judgment is right either wrong. That is, the evaluation of human behaviour. We see that, Indian philosophical schools and some western philosophers are emphasizing free will in action. In western ethics, three presuppositions are cited as the basis of morality. These three presuppositions are:

- i) Personality
- ii) Reason
- iii) Free will

According to western ethics, these three elements that must be present when making a moral judgment of an individual's actions are:

- i) The agent will be able to identify itself as the doer of his actions.
- ii) There will be the ability to distinguish between which is right or wrong.
- iii) The agent shall have free will in his actions.

These three are necessary postulate of moral judgment. The western philosopher Kant accepts free will in moral judgment. He says, every man has free will in his own action. So, people can choose what is good for them. However, by free will, he meant a good will. He stated that, the actions we perform, driven by compassion, affection and love, even if accompanied by good intentions, do not constitute free will (Autonomy will); rather, they are heteronomy will. Since, in this case, people are not guided by pure reason. So, people are not independent. Furthermore, we observe that, the categorical imperative of which Kant speaks, it is unconditional command. Categorical imperative is that which people are bound to obey. So, if a person is compelled, then we cannot say that, he possesses free will.

On the other hand, if we accept free will as the slandered of morality, then Karmavada is not accepted. According to Karmavada, people experience suffering or happiness according to his actions. The lives of all people in the world are not the same. In this world, some are happy, while others are unhappy. If we perform good action, then I experience happiness, where as if we perform bad action, then we have to suffer. There is no liberation for human beings until the consequences of all actions have been fully experienced. This is the actual purport of Karmavada.

It is often observed that, an honest person despite performing good deeds in society suffers misfortunate. As opposed to a dishonest person remains happy even after committing bad deeds. But generally, this is not supposed to happen. So, the question may arise in our minds, why does this happen? The reason for this is the actions of a previous life. Even if a person performs good deeds in their present life, they suffer due to the bad deeds committed in their past life. Conversely, in the present life, a person may remain happy despite engaging in dishonest deeds, by virtue of having performed good deeds in a previous life. Therefore, we cannot refrain from action. And a person must reap the consequences of our deeds.

From Indian philosophical point of view, only the liberated soul performs actions without expectations, attachment, or desire. Therefore, he is not reap by the fruits of action; because, liberated soul doing action for universal weal fear being (Lokasamgraha). Therefore, Karmavada must be accepted. For the entire life of a living being is determined by its actions.

People can suffer in present life for her past life activities and people will suffer in the future by present life. Hence, one must admit that human beings do not have free will.

If I say that in present life, we have free will in actions; but how is that possible regarding the actions of a previous life? Because, the same body is not exists. Moreover, desires may vary depending on the human body. Suppose, a man, he is honest in previous life and he is doing good work, according own free will; and same Jivatma (individual soul) doing bad work in present life by own will. Now, the man is happy for past life good activities and the same man will be suffering in the future, for present life bad activities. Now, if we accept free will, then we must recognize two different situations in past and present life. Since, he reaps the consequences of his past actions.

Therefore, it must be said that, the entire life of a person is determined solely by the fruits of actions. However, if the entire life of a person is determined by her actions, than people will controlled and we cannot accept free will of people. If we accept free will is then Karmavada must be denied. And if I deny Karmavada, than how can I describe reincarnation or rebirth? And the diversity of human life (someone is happy or someone is unhappy) cannot be explained.

Furthermore, if I do not accept rebirth, then I cannot accept the existence of liberation. Because, we know that, until the all fruit of actions are not completely exhausted, a human being must assume a new body and undergo rebirth. This doctrine has been accepted by Nyaya-Vaisheshika, Samkhya-Yoga and Vedanta schools in Indian philosophy.

In the Yoga philosophy, it is stated that the soul is bound by the Panchklesh and experiences the fruits of actions in accordance with its sins and virtues. In the Mimamsa philosophy, although the existence of God and rebirth are denied, the doctrine of Karmavada is accepted.

In Buddhist philosophy, the twelve nidanas of dependent origination are cited as the cause of the worldly suffering of the peoples, revolving cyclically through past, present and future life. However, Buddhist philosophy asserts that there is no eternal soul. Therefore, it must be said that there is no eternal will.

In Vedanta philosophy, it is stated that from a spiritual world, only Brahman is real. The soul and the world are bound by Maya. So, it must be said that the will of the soul is also bounded by Maya. On the other hand, from a spiritual perspective as well, the concept of will cannot be accepted. Since, Brahman is formless and devoid of attributes. In Vedanta philosophy,

liberation (Moksha) is accepted. According to this view, the individual soul cannot attain liberation until it realizes the true nature of the self. Upon the destruction of ignorance, the individual soul attains liberation. All schools of Indian philosophy accepted Moksha, escape of Charvaka and Mimamsa. Therefore, if we accept liberation, we must accept the doctrine of reincarnation; and reincarnation cannot be explained without accepting the doctrine of Karmavada. In that case, free will is rejected.

In the Nyaya-Vaisheshika philosophy, we see that, God is the controller of Jivatma (every individual person). God guides every person in accordance with their destiny. So, individual existence of person cannot be established. So, how can we accept the free will? In Samkhya philosophy, it is stated that, Purusha is not active; so, it cannot possess will. Purusha is neither cause, or nor effect. Only Prakriti is cause. On the other hand, Samkhya philosophy accepted Satkaryavada. According to this concept, everything is pre-existing. Hence, it can be said that, in Samkhya philosophy, free will does not exist.

In Vedic period, we see that, everything is controlled by Rta. Rta is the sustainer and directory. Western philosopher Spinoza said that, there is no free will. Everything happens by God's will. God is the only cause of the world. According to determinism theory, everything is governed by cause. A person's voluntary actions are driven by their heredity, environment and physical and mental conditions. So, after reviewing all these aspects, we can conclude that, there is no free will in reality.

3. Concluding remarks:

The objective of this article is to analyze and discuss critically the free will as a criterion of morality from philosophical perspective. In this article, the theory of ethics in Indian and Western philosophy has been discussed. This demonstrates the philosophical problems encountered when accepting free will. In this context, Karmavada, rebirths, Moksha, God, the twelve nidanas, Brahman, Adrishta, Prakriti- Purusha, Rta, determinism theory have been discussed and through these all theory, free will has been denied. This critical discussion through various arguments, has been refuted the existence of free will.

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