

Meanings, and significance of philosophy

Meaning

Philosophy, “Philo” “sophy” is derived from two Greek words meaning Love of Wisdom. Philosophy has been called the mother of the sciences”.

Philosophy considers the relation of each to all the others, so it is known as the ‘queen’ and mother of them all.

Herbert Spencer has defined philosophy “a system of completed and united knowledge. (Foster and Hughes, 1990). The philosophy is also called the study of eternal truth, realities and general principles. The example of philosophy in Islam is Fiqh.

Philosophy is the systematized study of general and fundamental questions, such as those about:

- existence,
- reason,
- knowledge,
- values,
- mind, and
- language.

Philosophical methods include questioning, critical discussion, rational argument, and systematic presentation.

According to John Dewey, "Whenever philosophy has been taken seriously, it has always been assumed that it signified achieving a wisdom that would influence the conduct of life."

Example: The concept of philosophy can be understood by this example. The aim of education in Islam is to produce a **noble person**. NOW:

- What is meant by noble in Islam?
- How can such an individual be recognized?
- What would be the qualities of his knowledge, skills, and habits?

Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Al-Farabi, Al-Ghazali, Dewey, Iqbal and others, all made significant contributions in the search of eternal truth and to find out answers to many complicated and important questions.

Significance of Philosophy

The study of philosophy helps us to enhance our ability to solve problems, our communication skills, our persuasive powers, and our writing skills. Below is a description of how philosophy helps us develop these various important skills.

General Problem Solving Skills:

The study of philosophy enhances a person's problem-solving capacities. It helps us to analyze concepts, definitions, arguments, and problems. It contributes to our capacity to deal with questions of value, and to extract what is essential from large quantities of information.

Communication Skills:

Philosophy contributes uniquely to the development of expressive and communicative powers. It provides some of the basic tools of self-expression - for instance, skills in presenting ideas through well-constructed, systematic arguments - that other fields either do not use or use less extensively. Philosophy helps us express what is distinctive in our views, it enhances our ability to explain difficult material, and it helps us to eliminate ambiguities and vagueness from our writing and speech.

Persuasive Powers:

Philosophy provides training in the construction of good arguments, and appropriate examples, which leads to creation of persuasion for others. It, thereby, helps us to develop our ability to be convincing. We learn to build and defend our own views.

Writing Skills:

Writing is taught intensively in many philosophy courses, and many regularly assigned philosophical texts are also excellent as literary essays. Philosophy teaches:

- interpretive writing,
- comparative writing (fairness to alternative positions),
- argumentative writing (developing students' ability to establish their own views),
- and descriptive writing (detailed portrayal of a topic with concrete examples).

Structure and technique, then, are emphasized in philosophical writing. Originality is also encouraged, and students are generally urged to use their imagination to develop their own ideas.

Understanding Other Disciplines:

Many important questions about a discipline, such as the nature of its concepts and its relation to other disciplines, are philosophical in nature. Philosophy of science, for example, is needed to supplement the understanding of the natural and social sciences. Philosophy of art (aesthetics) is important in understanding both the visual and the performing arts. Similarly, e.g. when we want to study the relationship between different concepts belonging to sociology and economics; or education and sociology etc. Since all fields of knowledge employ reasoning. Epistemology is central in all fields of studies.

Development of Sound Methods of Research and Analysis:

Still another value of philosophy in education is its contribution to our capacity to frame hypotheses, to do research, and to put problems in manageable form. Philosophical thinking strongly emphasizes clear formulation of ideas and problems, selection of relevant data, and objective methods for assessing ideas and proposals. It also emphasizes development of a sense of the new directions suggested by new hypotheses and questions one encounters while doing research. Philosophers regularly build on both the successes and failures of their predecessors.

philosophers can do different things. They can do research on a variety of subjects. They can get information and organize it. They can write clearly and effectively. They can communicate well, usually both orally and in writing. They can generate ideas on many different sorts of problems. They can formulate and solve problems. They can persuade people to take unfamiliar views or novel options seriously.

These abilities are quite general, but these help philosophers directly on the range of careers for which they are prepared. Philosophers have the skills necessary for an enormous range of both academic and non-academic jobs. The kind of basic education which philosophical training provides is eminently useful in many occupations.

Evaluate the role of philosophy in educational policy and practice.(activity)

Philosophy and Aims of Education

Philosophy and the Curriculum

Philosophy and Teacher

Philosophy and Method of Teaching

