

# THE PHILOSOPHY OF WELFARE ECONOMICS OF MAHA VEERA

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## INTRODUCTION

Generally, every school of thought has two branches; i.e., ethics and metaphysics. Ethics relates to the code of conduct; metaphysics refers to the mode of thinking. The history of western philosophy, informs us that Plato and Aristotle took help of politics and ethics for philosophy in the ancient period. Philosophers of the middle age borrowed the help of theology to study philosophy. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century Newton and Francis Bacon took the help of History, politics and science.

But Indian philosophy is free from these western influences and developed on account of bounty of nature and largely land protected by Himalayan mountains in the north, by sea in west, south and east. Indian philosophy is evolved by intuitions of sagas and it is basically spiritual in nature.

In Indian tradition *Darsana* is the nearest equivalent meaning of philosophy. So Indians accepted *Darsana* is similar to their philosophy.<sup>1</sup> Haribadra, a Jain saint and writer of various books of Jain philosophy had used the this word in 6<sup>th</sup> century in his book titled *Saddarsana Samuccay*<sup>2</sup>. Latter, Madhwacharya, advocated 15 schools of philosophy in his work *Sarva Darsana Samgrah*<sup>3</sup>. The system of philosophy for Indians is an insight or *Darsana*, it is the vision of truth and not a matter of logical argument and proof.

Jain thinkers advocated *Darsana* as a system of philosophical thought.<sup>4</sup> By receiving visual sensation they 'see' things. Then mind works on it and converts it into 'perception'. Dr. Radhakrishnan says that, 'the perception includes within its scope, conceptual knowledge and intuitional experience'<sup>5</sup>. This religion is capable to give success in worldly affaires as well in spiritual affaires and emancipation. Religion teaches the different stages of spiritual evaluation of soul. According to Dr. Hari Satya Bhattacharya, "Man is more than his empirical self and his relations to society. There is his spiritual self, his true and real self, the self as it is in itself, cleared of all relationships with matter."<sup>6</sup> The philosophical aspect is important in economics as well as in religion for the concept of welfare.

In economics, "welfare" means 'health', 'happiness', and 'fortune' of a person or group. It can also be understood as an organized effort aimed to promote the basic wellbeing of people in need. The "welfare" of human is most important task for economists. According to Alfred Marshall, "the economist like everyone else, must concern himself with the ultimate aims of man". "Welfare economists" think on the line of maximizing the human happiness without making others to suffer. Jeremy Bentham advocated 'association principle' and

<sup>1</sup>Haribadra, translated by K. Sathischandra Murthy., *Saddarsana Samuccay*, p.no 56.

<sup>2</sup> K. Sathischandra Murthy, *Philosophy of India*, p.no,3-7.

<sup>3</sup> K.L. Joshi, (translated), *Sarva darsan Samgrah of Madhwacharya*,

<sup>4</sup> Nathal Tatia, *Studies in Jain Philosophy*, p.no 149.

<sup>5</sup>S. Radhakrishnan, *Indian Philosophy* vol.1,p.no.43.

<sup>6</sup> Hari Satya Bhattacharya, *Jain Moral Doctrine*, p.n.83.

'greatest happiness principle'. Pareto, an Italian economist thought for welfare of man.<sup>7</sup> Marshall agreed for 'morality' in every economic activity. John Rawls, Harsanyi, and Kenneth Arrow were distinguished economists to think in term of welfare.

The philosophical aspect is important in economics for the concept of 'welfare'. The question of 'moral' and 'justice' is important according to Amartya Sen. Amartya Sen's favourite subject is "Welfare" of human. He has discussed this in works like, *Collective choice and social welfare*, *Development as freedom*, *Inequality Re-examined* and *Poverty and famine*. Aristotle considered problems of ethics in connection with the social life of the people.

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The religion is a most inseparable part in the life of man. The economics is a day-to-day force to live the life. It was a question how to correlate the thing in right prospects. Both the subjects are carrying the main theme of welfare for man. Mahaveera correlated the religion and economics in human life and has shown how to have peace, happiness in the life. His welfare economic model is **Nonviolent Life Style (NVLS) Model for Sustainable Development**. A lifestyle typically reflects an individual's attitudes, values or world view. It means the forging a sense of self and to create cultural symbols that resonate with personal identity with some social constraints which limits the lifestyle choices available to the individual and the symbols he or she is able to project to others and the self<sup>8</sup>. Sustainable living in other words is the application of nonviolence in every aspect of life. In Jainism, nonviolence is the core practice of religion. Mahaveera preached nonviolence and said: "Donot kill any living being; do not cause pain to anybody; donot impose yourself on anybody; do not bind and enslave anybody. This is the principle of equalitarism. This is the religion of Ahimsa. This is the eternal religion."<sup>9</sup>

There are two categories of Indian philosophy. They are divided into two distinct sections; *Non Sramana Tradition* or *Brahmanical Tradition* and *Sramana Tradition*. Six traditions were known as Brahmanical tradition having faith in God. *Sramana Tradition* is non-Brahmanical of three systems known as Jain, Buddhist and Ajvika. Sramana tradition did not believe in God.

Jain have firm conviction that world is eternal and there is no creator or destroyer. In Jain religion, the Omniscient-Tirthankara was authority. Tirthankara was the human but with "Keval Jnana". Mahaveera is the 24<sup>th</sup> Tirthankara. He was known as omniscient. The meaning of omniscient is "the knowledge of soul is in full capacity and able to know quality and modes of all living and non-living things in the universe through past, present and future sense of the term"

Lord Mahaveera has laid 12 vows for human being for living their life in peace and prosperity. These are the basic elements for sustainable development is nonviolence. The main aim of these vows is to self-restraint, nonviolence in every activity and detachment to materiality. Following are the brief description of 12 vows: -

### 1.Vow of Nonviolence

**One of the basic elements for sustainable development is nonviolence.** This vow recognizes all living form with equality. Violence is of two types: - necessary violence and unnecessary violence. The violence which is done with some purposeful target and is necessary that is known as necessary violence, whereas violence which is done in anger, anxiety that that is termed as unnecessary violence. Even the followers of 12 vows are

<sup>7</sup> Amartya Sen, *Collective choice and Social Welfare*, p.n.21.

<sup>8</sup> Spaargaren, G., and B. VanVliet, 'Lifestyle, Consumption and the Environment: The Ecological Modernization of Domestic Consumption,' *Environmental Politics*, 9(1), 2000, p. n.50-75.

<sup>9</sup> Ganadhipati Tulsi, Uvasagadasao, Edit. Acharya Mahapragya, Jain Vishwa Bharti, Ladnun, 2010, p. n.46-47.

not untouched by necessary violence, but for him the concern is that he should retrain himself from unnecessary violence<sup>10</sup>. By following this vow of nonviolence in our day to day life will bring a limit to unnecessary violence, increases the virtue of equanimity and amity. This will help in restoring the resources usage in positive manner and restricting the use of available resources for unnecessary usage.

## 2. Vow of Truthfulness

Another Vow laid by Lord Mahaveera is vow of Truthfulness. Truthfulness can be described as 'That Which is'. It means present the things as there are. Do not try to manipulate them. Few major areas where this vow needs to be maintained are<sup>11</sup>

- One should not make a false blame or react on spot immediately without knowing the real fact and information.
- One should not open the secret or private talk of someone, if share with him confidently
- Private talk with spouse should not be disclose to others, as it can bring disrespect or guilt feeling for the other partner whose things has been disclosed in front of others.
- One should not give wrong suggestions or misguide any one. If he is not aware of that thing, then he should not guide them.
- Lay follower should not indulge in fraud paper making or fraud signatures for making wrong benefit.

## 3. Vow of Nonstealing

Stealing is taken as what is not given, what is not earned legitimately or what is not inherited. This vow establishes the faith in the truth by practicing morality in behavior. The main guidelines of this vow are<sup>12</sup>

- One should not purchase the material which is procured through stealing, due to greediness of cheaper rates.
- One should not do or promote any activity which is indulged in smuggling or any illegal activities.
- One should not enter the area or zone which is being prohibited by any government or other authorized person, neither supply any product which is being prohibited.
- Lay followers should not do the manipulation in the weight measurement of any product.
- One should not adulterate any product for increasing its quantity and gaining the profit.

## 4.Vow of Chastity

Chastity is the bridge for the attainment of sacredness. These vows say that one should try to control and limit the desires. This vow says<sup>13</sup>

- One should not promote or get indulged in prostitution and similar kind of activities.
- One should not make the relations other than his/ her spouse
- One should not play with natures role by performing act not meant for them like Gay, lesbian etc.
- Don't play the role of mediator in marriage fixing.

<sup>10</sup> Ganadhipati Tulsi, Uvasagadasao, edit. Acharya Mahapragya, Jain Vishwa Bharti, Ladnun, 2010, p.n. 46-47.

<sup>11</sup> Ganadhipati Tulsi, Uvasagadasao, p. n. 39.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid, p.n,44.

<sup>13</sup> Ganadhipati Tulsi, Uvasagadasao, p.n. 45

## 5. Vow of Non Possession

Possession of wealth is only acceptable for sustaining life. The attachment with wealth along with the accumulation of material increases the addiction, indulgence dishonesty, cruelty and deception. It is necessary to have this vow in life for establishing fairness and equality. It says<sup>14</sup>

- One should control the possession of land, property etc.
- One should control the possession of gold, silver, diamond etc.
- One should control the possession of money, storing food grains etc.
- One should control the possession of stuff which is used in daily routine of household life. Mahaveera has also laid 14 vows in this regards.
- One should control the possession of animals, slaves, birds etc.

## 6.Vow of Restricting Activity to a Limited Area

This vow of fixing the geographical limit is excellent and to be respected because it aids the reduction of one's greed, which is at the root of attachment of possession. There are main 3 types of direction: - up side, down side and on ground side; it contains 4 directions north, west, south, east. This vows state<sup>15</sup> -:

- Upside: -today science and technology has find out the way through which we can go up in air with airplane, jet plane etc, even we have reached moon. So one has to limit the direction in which he has to move.
- Down side: - one should also restrict itself and limit the area of underground earth, sea depth, mining's etc.
- One should limit the movement in 4 directions also.
- One should not cross the limits of boundaries if made restricted.
- Another main area which needs to be restricted is the memory. People go back in their deep memories of sadness and bad time, so one should restrict themselves in going back in memories.

## 7. Vow of Restricting Objects of Enjoyment

The means of enjoyment are countless, and the mind's longing for them are infinite. However, the fulfillment of desire can lead to incomparable violence. May there be successful control of objects that are used one such as food, and objects that are used repeatedly such as furniture, clothes, jewelry and vehicles. Occupation involving great bondage of karma:-to undertake business and industry for earning livelihood, involving great violence and great possession which lead to bondage of karma<sup>16</sup>.

## 8. Vow of Refraining from Evil Activities

Wishing evil on others in your mind is an evil contemplation, while the act of carelessness is the first step on the path of violence. We should renounce all those tendencies that cause unnecessary, meaningless and evil actions and activities. It mentioned that

<sup>14</sup> Ibid, p. n.46-47.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid, p.n. 46-47.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid, p.n. 46-47.

- One should not use the words which provoke sensually.
- One should not state anything which makes any person laugh, blowing whistle.
- One should not speak any think without thinking. Non sense talk should be restricted.
- One should not get involved in dealing with weapon or part of weapons<sup>17</sup>.

### 9.Vow of Equanimity

Dharma is equanimity whilst lack of equanimity is the basis of evil. This in essence is the basis of the Jaina doctrine. Having renounced violent activities let it help us in crossing the ocean of the cycle of birth and death. Perform the rite of blissful equanimity. Equality can be defined as one who treats every one equal, who is not effected by love or hate, like or dislike. It covers following points<sup>18</sup>

- One should not involve himself in illegal and sin related work.
- One should not use abuse language
- One should not do the excess movement of body parts when not require
- One should recall himself every time that I am in the mode of equanimity.

### 10. Vow of Further Limiting the Area of Movement

- Having made renunciation of violence, possessiveness etc a part of our life, and in order to confine any movements, we should take the vow of restricting our activities and our movements
- One should not enter the area which is being prohibited.
- One should not send any one on his behalf in the prohibited area.
- One should not allow anyone to act on his behalf of any activity which is being restricted<sup>19</sup>.

### 11. Vow of Temporarily Living as an Ascetic

Whilst Fasting It is an important vow which says that when you do fasting, not taking food for 4 cycle then this help in increasing the moral of nonviolence. While doing the fasting one must act in a way an ascetic is living. This will further help in increasing your tolerance, compassion.<sup>20</sup>

### 12. Vow of Sharing with Ascetics

Last vow says that we should develop the habit and attitude of sharing. It contains<sup>21</sup>

- Sharing of foods
- Sharing of positive gestures like giving respect, greet to other etc.
- Maintain the ethics in business.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid, p.n.47

<sup>18</sup>Ganadhipati Tulsi, Uvasagadasao, p. n.52-53.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid, p.n.56

<sup>20</sup>Ibid.p.n. 58

<sup>21</sup>Ibid, p.n.67.

These vows can be practiced by individual in his day to day life and are very useful in contributing towards sustainable development goal. As individual is the basic unit and centre of sustainable development by which we can bring major changes in the universe and can approach for a better balanced life.

These vows are the base of NVLS model. Hence for sustainable living, a practical life style is required which attempts to achieve the goal of sustainability and that life style is nonviolent life style.

**NVLS Model has six components which are mutually interrelated. These components are**

1. Non-Violent Thought process
2. Non-Violent Action
3. Non-Violent Communication
4. Non-Violent Culture and Way of Earning
5. Non-Violent Environment
6. Non-Violent Media

### **1. Non-Violent Thought Process**

Nonviolent thought process is an application of nonviolence in thought process. It is a training through which thoughts are motivated by the virtues of nonviolence continuously so that when any action comes to the implementation phase, it would contribute in creating the environment of harmony, happiness and peace. Lord Mahaveera said 2600 years ago 'Nanassa Saram Ayaro' i.e. "right conduct is the essence of knowledge". Thus right faith and knowledge is essential in building the thought process. Mahaveera understood the roots of violence in the human psyche. His warning was against absolutism and dogmatism. For injecting the value of nonviolence at thought level, training in nonviolence is must. Training in non-violence includes training in behavior infused with morality and humility.

### **2. Non-Violent Action**

Nonviolent action refers to the action having non-violence characteristic to the utmost extent possible. Jainism believes that life is dear to all beings<sup>22</sup>. Violence is of two types: - necessary violence and unnecessary violence. The violence which is done with some purposeful target and is necessary that is known as necessary violence, whereas violence which is done in anger, anxiety that is termed as unnecessary violence. Person should try to minimize all types of violence in daily activities but necessarily, he should retrain himself from unnecessary violence<sup>23</sup>. Violence includes violence with nature, animal, human as well as with resources. Sustainable development urges for optimum utilization of natural resources which is nothing but to minimize the violence with nature.

### **3. Non-Violent Communication**

Man is the only living being which is gifted with the thinking ability. For sustainable development, lot of interaction is needed among various groups and individuals to form plans and policies. After formulation, there is requirement of clear and precise communication at the application level so that they are applied in same manner with which they are formulated. Further communication is required to ensure that plans are properly

<sup>22</sup> Mahapragya, Acharya, Acharanga Bhasyam, Jain Vishwa Bharti, Ladnun, 2001, p.n.2.64.

<sup>23</sup> Ganadhipati Tulsi, Uvasagadasao, 2010, Sutra 1.30, p.n.38.



implemented and then feedback to know the success or failure. Hence communication is the lifeline of sustainable development. Nonviolent communication is the way of communicating in nonviolent ways, i.e. expressing gracefully without hurting /insulting other's sentiment and to respect the other's thought.

#### **4&5. A Nonviolent culture and way of learning**

A nonviolent culture can be termed as set of virtues which aims at maximizing the happiness of all. Happiness doesn't mean the possession of things but it is the mental state of person. Sustainable development perquisites require peaceful, harmonically social environment liaison with fulfillment of basic needs of current and future generation. Jainism tries to shape the attitude toward nature by prescribing humane and nonviolent approaches to everyday behavior. Jainism inspired its followers to safeguard the ecological perspective. Jainism promotes tolerance in behavior as it is virtue that makes peace possible, and contributes to the replacement of the culture of war by culture of peace<sup>24</sup>. Tolerance is an active attitude prompted but the recognition of universal human rights and fundamental freedom of others. Mahaveera introduced a vital concept: the denial of livelihood<sup>25</sup>. There should not be any denial of food and water. Means of livelihood need to be provided.

#### **6. Non-Violent Environment**

Peace is a positive state of affair; it is not brought about merely by eliminating of war. Therefore, we should be directing our efforts to produce peace, cooperation among nations, states and parties and not to eliminate conflicts with them. In general, the purposeful actors ( individual/ group), by agreeing or disagreeing with each other on compatibility of their ends , means or both, can create the following 4 types of relationship<sup>26</sup>.

- a) Co-operation: compatibility of both end and means
- b) Competition: compatibility of end and incompatibility of means
- c)Coalition: incompatibility of end, compatibility of means
- d)Conflict: incompatibility of both ends and means

#### **7. Nonviolent Media**

Now a day's popularity of media can't be ignored for any cause. It is very powerful medium of expressing the vision, thoughts, opinion to larger masses and to distant destinations in people's local language. A nonviolent media refers to media system which without fear or favour, keeps its readers fully informed, provides space to a plurality of views, promotes thoughtful social values, present violence with due care and restraint and all under the umbrella of truth and fairness. This virtue of nonviolence is to be considered by the media while reporting in times of conflict since events do not travel. It is the report of an event that arouses passions among millions of readers and television watchers. The event is witnessed hardly by a score of persons. According to Adorno, the media culture of advanced capitalism typically creates new 'life-styles' to drive the consumption of new commodities<sup>27</sup>. Due to easy access to people, media own a greater responsibility on its shoulder for maintaining harmony, developing culture of peace and contributing towards achieving the goal of education and awareness of common people.

<sup>24</sup> Mahapragya, Acharya, Dr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, The Family and The Nation, Harper Collins Publishers, New Delhi, 2008, p.n. 109.

<sup>25</sup> Mahapragya Acharya, Economics of Mahaveera, Adarsh SahithyaSangha, New Delhi, 2003, p.n 39.

<sup>26</sup> World Encyclopedia of Peace, edit. Linus Pauling, 1986, p.n. 440-441.

<sup>27</sup> World Encyclopedia of Peace, edit. Linus Pauling, 1986, p. n. 441-442.

The injustice in society responsible for the protest of Mahaveera. Mahaveera's dissent and protest to vedic religion should be understood from his vehement opposition to the sacrifice of animals in the name of rituals. Lord Mahaveera as an advocator of "*welfare economics*", had propagated the principle of non-killing or ahimsa. This was liked by majority of people of the society and especially women. Women opposed to cook and to eat the meat. They preferred to remain vegetarian. Mahaveera introduced number of eye-catching changes in the society and brotherhood in society. He emphasized the moral life in place of ceremonial life. Mahaveera did not believe in caste system and stood for social equality.

The philosophy of Mahaveera contains many useful thoughts for man to achieve his economic welfare and spiritual goal. "*Economic Welfare*" or 'Material prosperity' is connected with *Vyavahara Nyaya* and emancipation of soul is connected with *Nischya nyaya*. *Vyavahara Nyaya* teaches house holder how to live life with material prosperity through religious practice. It describes various ways and means for the welfare of man. Society at large. *Nischya Nyaya* teaches how the ascetics and householders should lead their life and to follow for final goal of emancipation of human consciousness. So Mahaveera's philosophy is a perfect combination of *Vyavahara Nyaya* and *Nischya Nyaya*. *Vyavahara* is the procedure for good becoming and *Nischya* is the procedure of wellbeing. Mahaveera's philosophy believes in ethics and moral as a part of his principles. The main principles of Jain religion are *Ahimsa* or non-killing, *Satya* or Truth, *Astheya* or non-stealing, *Brahmacharya* or Celibacy and *Aparigriha* or non-hoarding. The application of these principles is strongly advocated by Mahaveera in the economic activities of man. According to him this will result as likely equality; man will be less egoistic due to the virtue of love, humbleness, develop tolerance, ready to help helpless people and create brother hood.

Mahaveera's Jain Philosophy relates his welfare policy in many ways. Mahaveera advocated six types of living beings on earth. Jain religion is highly devotional and logical. He emphasizes on ethics and donation of virtues and not material wealth. Mahaveera proposes the use of money as per religious guidelines. Mahaveera's welfare economic concept has given more attention towards the welfare of both man and material or total eco system. His philosophy is humanitarian in nature of perfect bliss and perfect happiness. In this process, one has to follow three spiritual steps. These three steps show the way for emancipation of soul. They are known as *Samyak Jnana*, *Samyak darsan* and *Samyak charitha*.

Mahaveera's Jain philosophy gives importance to good economic deed or *karma*. Annihilation of all *karmas* is necessary to obtain emancipation of soul. Lord Mahaveera taught the religion for thirty years and organized the system of ascetic and house holder. During Mahaveera's time, people were mostly engaged in agriculture and dairy industries, the small portion of population was engaged in trade, commerce, small-scale manufacturing, mining, forestry and day-to-day service providers and warrior.

Mahaveera propagated community welfare programmes in his welfare economics. They were; *education, health, welfare, places of pilgrimage* etc. The Jain Sanghas used to run hospitals for the people. These hospitals were open to all communities. Mahaveera was always with open heart and not to restrict the humanitarian benefits of these hospitals to his community. Jains run hospitals for animal, birds. They work for causes preventing the animal and bird's cruelty. They work for saving the healthy animals meant for slaughter house. These activities give tremendous boost to donate for the benefit of society.