

RELEVANCE OF SANSKRIT ACROSS VARIED DOMAINS

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Abstract: Sanskrit is more than a language. The role of Sanskrit is not merely a language but also a distinct cultural system and way of experiencing the world. Thus, to the wider population, Sanskrit is experienced through the civilization named Sanskriti, which is built on it.

Sanskrit is a rich repository of knowledge that could be gainfully exploited in the area of classical science, including mathematics, astronomy, health and also other fields such as yoga, philosophy, spirituality, technology, culture, military strategy etc. Sanskrit literature also provides considerable scope for us to draw useful lessons for managing our day-to-day living. The relevance of Sanskrit for modern times is significant and multifaceted. We will briefly explore here the eternal relevance of Sanskrit language and literature for now and forever. A study of these treasures bequeathed to us by Sages and scholars of ancient times are absolutely relevant to us, in all aspects of our lives. The parents and the teachers say that learning Sanskrit broadens the linguistic skills of the children at an early stage and exposes them to widely differing world cultures.

Keywords: Sanskrit, science, varied domains, management, philosophy, spirituality

Introduction

Sanskrit is the best language for the latest generation of Artificial Intelligence machine-systems. The National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) has acknowledged the scientific importance of Sanskrit and are looking at it as a possible computer language, since the syntax is scientifically codified, with little room for error.

Science Domain - Vedic Tradition is in tune with Modern Science as well as accommodates all religion's spiritual elements. Vedic spiritual tradition nurtured the growth of all branches of science like Health, astronomy, cosmology, astrology, chemistry, biology, physics, health sciences, psychology and various technologies and also considered the scientists (Rishi's) as divine.

The concept of zero, the place value system of numeration, square roots etc were known to the ancient Indians. Brahmagupta's solution of second degree algebraic equations in two variables and his work on cyclic quadrilaterals predated the work of European mathematicians by a few centuries.

Long before Copernicus proved to the western world that Earth was revolving around the Sun, the Vedic Scientists has calculated very accurately the planets rotations.

Planet	Period in days for One revolution	
	Ancient System	Modern values
Earth	365.26868	365.256636
Moon	27.32167	27.32166
Mars	686.99974	686.9797
Jupiter	4332.27217	4332.5887
Saturn	10766.06665	10759.201

This is a simple proof of its Vedic Spiritual tradition's contribution to Astronomy.

The Constellation of stars were known, and basic aspects of the motion of the moon and the planets, as well as the occurrence and duration of the eclipses were understood. The heliocentric concept of our world was known in India centuries before it was accepted in other parts of the world.

Yajur Veda 33.43

“The sun moves in its own orbit in space taking along with itself the mortal bodies like earth through force of attraction.”

Classical works of the Indian medical system Ayurveda, like the Charaka Samhita and the Ashtanga Hridaya on medicine and Sushruta Samhita on surgery, are consulted even today by Indian medical practitioners. There is a recent spurt of interest in Ayurveda in the west.

In the field of medicine (Ayurveda), sage Divodasa Dhanwantari developed the school of surgery; Rishi Kashyap developed the specialized fields of paediatrics and gynaecology. Lord Atreya, author of the one of the main Ayurvedic texts, the Charak Samhita, classified the principles of anatomy, physiology, pharmacology, embryology, blood circulation and more. He discussed how to heal thousands of diseases, many of which modern science still has no answer. Along with herbs, diet and lifestyle, Atreya showed a correlation between mind, body, spirit and ethics. Sage Sushrut is known as the "Father of surgery". Even modern science recognizes India as the first country to develop and use rhinoplasty (developed by Sushrut). He also practiced amputation, caesarean and cranial surgeries, and developed 125 surgical instruments including scalpels, lancets, and needles. Sage Kanad (circa 600 BCE) is recognized as the founder of atomic theory, and classified all the objects of creation into nine elements (earth, water, light or fire, wind, ether, time, space, mind and soul). He stated that every object in creation is made of atoms that in turn connect with each other to form molecules nearly 2,500 years before John Dalton. Further, Kanad described the dimension and motion of atoms, and the chemical reaction with one another.

The contributions of ancient Indians in the metallurgy of Iron, Zinc, Copper and its alloys are acknowledged the world over. A blend of aesthetics and technical skill is reflected in the art made from brass and bronze, superb temple architecture, town planning including drainage systems and the architecture associated with the construction of roads, bridges, forts and ports was well developed.

Sound practices in irrigation and agriculture have been mentioned in our ancient texts. Good expertise existed in the areas of ship building and navigations. Ancient Indian expertise and supremacy in cotton and silk textiles is well recognized in the world.

Management Domain - The growth of trade and commerce, particularly lending and borrowing demanded an understanding of both simple and compound interest which probably stimulated the interest in arithmetic and geometric series. Brahmagupta's description of negative numbers as debts and positive numbers as fortunes points to a link between trade and mathematical study. Knowledge of astronomy - particularly knowledge of the tides and the stars was of great import to trading communities who crossed oceans or deserts at night. This is borne out by numerous references in the Jataka tales and several other folk-tales. The young person who wished to embark on a commercial venture was inevitably required to first gain some grounding in astronomy. The science of astronomy was also spurred by the need to have accurate calendars and a better understanding of climate and rainfall patterns for timely sowing and choice of crops.

Trade and commerce also flourished in those days. Most of the trade in Rig Vedic days was in the hands of Panis. Trade was carried both by land and sea. Majority of the trade was carried on with the help of the barter system and cow was a standard unit of exchange. Later on coins of gold and silver called nishka, shatamana, rajata and raupya were used as currencies.

In Sanskrit books we constantly read of merchants, traders and men engrossed in commercial pursuits. Manu Smriti, the oldest law book in the world, lays down laws to govern commercial disputes having references to sea borne traffic as well as inland and overland commerce. The Puranas also furnish references to merchants engaged in sea-borne trade. The Varaha Purana mentions a childless merchant named Gokarna who embarked on a voyage for trading purposes but was overtaken by a storm on the sea and nearly shipwrecked. But besides the religious works like the Vedas, the Epics, and the Sutras and Puranas, the secular works of Sanskrit poets and writers are also full of references to the use of the sea as the highway of commerce, to voyages, and naval fights.

Sanskrit literature in all its form - such as the Vedas, the Epics, the Sutras, the Puranas, poetry epic and dramatic romance etc. is replete with references to the maritime trade of India, which prove that the ocean was freely used by the Indians in ancient times as the great highway of international commerce.

In vedic period we had Wealth Management, Knowledge Management, Personality Management, Time Management, Quality Management etc., which were dealt in complete details with examples.

The modern management concepts like vision, leadership, motivation, excellence in work, achieving goals, meaning of work, attitude towards work, nature of individual, decision making, planning etc., are all discussed in the VEDAS with a sharp insight and finest analysis to drive through our confused grey matter making it highly eligible to become a part of the modern management syllabus. The Bhagavad Githa is an excellent guide to management. The Shastras, Vedangas and other parts deal with problems of life, health and happiness. Thus integration of Vedic concepts would ensure that Management becomes an instrument for bringing about progress and happiness to Man, Animal and Nature.

Spiritual Domain - The core message of Vedic Tradition is "Freedom", which is applicable in all aspects. "Ved" means to Know or Knowledge. Only through knowledge, Man can Self-realize the inner Freedom, the Spirit or Consciousness that is in

him is in fact the essential nature of this Universe. The ancient Vedic Scientists who realized this knowledge are seers of eternal Truth, who developed methods of inner enquiry into the mystery of the universe equally exact and reliable in practice as the most rigorous scientific study. They started their search from the simple body and sense organs and journeyed deeper and deeper to the core of the "Being". Through their ancient Scientific research, the Rishi's developed inner technologies like Yoga and Meditation through which not only physical and mental well being can be achieved but also the cosmic mystery of "Consciousness" can be realized.

They said that the human body is a miniature of the cosmos. Hence, the Vedic Scientists (Rishi's) proclaimed

"Yatha Pindae , Thatha Brahmandae"

"As is the Micro-cosm (human body) so is the Macro-cosm (Universe)".

This means that all the laws that govern this human body also govern the laws of Universe. Knowing Body and Mind of Human helps knowing universe and its creation.

This is the logical approach of Rishi's to know about the mystery of the Universe. By studying the human body they understood the physical characteristics of the Universe and by knowing the mind of the human body they understood how creation occurred.

To summarize, the Rishi's studied the body and mind of the human and discovered the mysteries of the cosmic body or Universe. What they found is that the physical nature of human body is similar to the physical characteristics of the universe and the Human mind and the events occurring in the Universe are also similar. Among these two facts, the fact the physical body is similar to the Cosmic physical nature is proved by modern scientists also.

Philosophical Domain - Indian philosophy distinctly exhibits a spiritual bent. The essence of religion is not dogmatic in India. Here, religion develops as philosophy progressively scales higher planes. The principles of Varna, Dharma and Karma have contributed to the growth of the Indian society as a whole in a systematic way. It has organized orderly performance of various functions needed to provide a quality of life to its people. It prepared an atmosphere for co-existence of different sections of the society – be it ruler or ruled, be it rich or poor. It served to give Indian society coherence, stability and continuity; and held together different castes and communities having diverse languages and practices for generations – thus making unity in diversity a reality.

Some of the fundamentals expressed in the Indian philosophy and the Western philosophy may be similar. However, Indian philosophy differs from the Western philosophy on several counts. While the Western philosophy deals with metaphysics, epistemology, psychology, ethics etc. separately, Indian philosophy takes a comprehensive view of all these topics. For an Indian philosopher, philosophy is something beyond an intellectual pursuit. The Indian philosopher exemplifies philosophy in his life. His intelligence, knowledge and wisdom are reflected in his life. This is why his life positively influences the life of masses.

The Indian philosophy uniquely describes four purusharthas of life - artha, kama, dharma and moksha.

(1) Artha: The Sanskrit word artha means 'that which one seeks.' Artha, in a broad sense, covers man's professional activities, job, business, wealth, property and all such earthly material helpful in maintaining his life.

(2) Kama: Man seeks pleasure in various activities and material objects. Pursuit of happiness and pleasure is a basic, natural instinct in man. This is kama. Man largely accumulates artha for kama. But artha and kama should be closely linked with the dharma. They should be directed towards dharma.

(3) Dharma: 'That which sustains' is dharma. Dharma sustains or maintains life. Dharma supports the society. Man lives in the society with fellow-men and various life forms. Dharma lays down duties and obligations expected of man. An individual and the society, for their conduct and actions, get guidance from dharma. Man has obligation to his own self, to the fellow-men and to the society, in fact, to the whole environment of the world. All the mutual obligations of these inter-relationships are spelt out by dharma.

(4) Moksha: Moksha means liberation or total freedom. The Sanskrit word moksha is derived from the root 'muk'. This root means 'to emancipate' or 'to release' or 'to free'. Indian tradition considers moksha as the ultimate goal of life. Having been completely free from all attachments, expectations and desires, the liberated soul attains moksha.

Domain of Honing Human Skills - Human values become "unfashionable", and we can see that such seemingly unshakable concepts as kindness, compassion, honesty, and modesty are starting to quietly but surely disappear from our lives. According to the Vedas, a personality is an eternal part of God. It is absolutely valuable and unique, and these qualities cannot be confined by

gender, nation, or religion. The Vedas teach us to see beyond the coverings of bodies, languages, and cultures, distinguishing the common spiritual nature of all human beings. Spiritual Vedic methods are able to uproot the very causes of crime: greed, lust, and selfishness. That way a person is not only freed from a criminal behaviour, but also from the very predisposition towards it. Replacing the lowest values with spiritual ones, the Vedas bestow a human being with the sense of profound happiness, inner integrity, and reliable protection from stress. The Vedic way of life is able to break the chains of drug-addiction and direct one's energy of desire from a destructive course. By teaching us to differentiate between our needs and our greed, the Vedas help us to live our lives feeling responsible at the face of all living beings for each and every step we take, now or in the future.

Conclusion - Sanskrit, is much more than a language. It is a complete knowledge system that embodies the great learning traditions of ancient India. Jawaharlal Nehru, once described Sanskrit language and literature as the "the greatest treasure that India possesses. He went on to say "this is a magnificent inheritance; so long as this endures and influences the life of our people, so long will the basic genius of India continue to flourish." The multi-faceted Vedic Hinduism or Sanatana Dharma has the ability to sustain the timeline through past, present, future and beyond. The core foundation of Hindu belief is that Vedas contain source of all knowledge – physical or metaphysical.

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