

Concept of Karana-Karya (Cause-Effect) in Indian Philosophy

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Abstract: Every effect is result of certain cause. This relationship between cause and effect is discussed in detailed in Indian philosophy (darshana). Indian philosophy examines the existence of causes before and after exposition of effects. As in Sankhya, all materials are said to be Trigunatmaka, but everything cannot be produced from anything. It deals with existent stage of both cause and effect. Whereas Nyaya has hinted that in all causes, effect is non-existent before exposition. The relationship between Karya-Karana (effect-cause) is only established after exposition of effect. Whether effect is Sat or Asat, it is not thought before exposition of effect. Details of Satkaryavada and Asatkaryavada theory covers all other theories advised for causal relationship of effect.

Keywords: Karya, Karana, Darshana, Cause, Effect, Indian Philosophy, Nyaya, Sankhya, Vaisheshika, Vedanta.....

Man is the animal of connected logical discourse¹. Aristotle finds interesting weaving of rational and irrational aspects in humans as inseparable and based on cause and origin². It means nothing happens without cause/s³. Number of times matters are taken as effect which are formed after certain causes³. Hence, a person or thing that gives rise to an action, phenomenon or condition is termed as cause (*Karana*)⁴ and an effect of cause is *Karya*⁵. On certain occasions, numbers of causes appear for any effect (*Karya*). Some of them may be right even, but whatever is present till the performance of action, is considered as real *Karana*. It is invariably antecedent to some product and is not otherwise constituted⁶. Indian philosophy has contradictory theories on *Karya-karana*. *Shankhya Darshana* suggested *Satkaryavada Siddhanta* while *Nyaya* and *Vaisheshika Darshana* refers to *Asatkaryavada Siddhanta*.

According to *Nyaya*, theory of causality is called as *Aarambhvaada*, because effect is originated by causes. This origin is from within the causes. *Nyaya Darshana* has emphasized more on *Nimitta Karana*. They are inseparably connected. Two types of *Avayava* (components) are considered in *Nyaya* viz., *Aarambhaka* and *Anaarambhaka*. Those components giving rise to effects are called as *Aarambhak* while which cannot produce effect, is called as *Anaarambhaka*. Example: Effects are produced by complete article or material in complete form, but when material is broken, effects cannot be assumed.

Ayurvedic classical texts have tried to apprehend the philosophy of cause and effect to translate in terms of maintenance of health as *Charak Sutrasthana* 1/53 deals cause and effect in respects to causative factors needed for maintenance of equilibrium of tissue elements for healthy beings¹¹. *Charak Vimansthana* 8/68 considers knowledge of *Karana* (cause) as an important topic along with various other topics for any physician to accomplish desired object¹². So, discernment of concept of relationship between *Karana-Karya* is essential.

Karana

The *Karana* is that precedes an effect or action (*Karya*). It is doer or an agent for any *Karya*^{12,13}. It has direct relation to the conception of reality. It is justification for existing.

Characteristics of Karana: *Karana* possesses following characteristics (lakshana):

- i. **Purvavartitva:** Causes present just before the effects are termed as *Purvavartitva*. Example: When an infected (with chikungunya virus) *Aedes aegypti* mosquito bites a person then only person gets infected with chikungunya.
- ii. **Niyattva (Invariability):** Causes invariably present before the effect are called as *Niyattava*. Example: When biscuit is given to a dog 5 minutes after ringing a bell, the dog starts watering mouth. It doesn't mean that watering is caused by ringing. Even without ringing also if biscuits are shown to dog, water will come to mouth. Water in mouth is invariably present in dog's mouth.
- iii. **Ananyathasiddhatva (Unconditionality):** Those causes which are not having direct relationship with existing effect are called as *Ananyathasiddhatva*. These are constituted by questions in result. This is based on *anvaya* (affirmative reasoning) or *vyatirek* (negative reasoning). Example: Lethargicness causes contagious diseases. In

this case, there is not direct relationship of leathargicness with infection. But cleanliness is having connection with both of them. Five types of *Ananyathasiddhatva* are discussed as causes based on quality of material, not the material, causes based on relation to other causes, causes based on knowledge of other preexisting causes, causes without thorough knowledge of origin and other than these, but necessary and based on previous notion

Classification of Karana^{14,16}: It is classified in three kinds according to distinction in substantial:

I. Samvayi Karana (Inherent/Intimate/Material Cause): Samvayi Karana is that where effect is intimately or inherently related to cause. It is eternal in nature. It cannot be separated from effect e.g., disequilibrium in doshas brings diseases (rogotpatti). Diseases are caused by disequilibrium in doshas as intimate cause. The reasons for disequilibrium may be one or many but ultimately this is turning to alteration in normal physiology. Another example of Samvayi Karana is dravya in which karma and guna are inherited.

Five things are said to be inseparable as²¹: the parts and the whole, quality and substance, motion and that moves, generality and individual things and specialty and eternal substances.

II. Asamvayi Karana (Non-inherent/None-intimate/None-material Cause): Asamvayi Karana is that which is present in specific site of either of inherent cause or of effect. It is cause which produces effect through material cause (Upadana) e.g., specific disease is not only caused by disequilibrium of all doshas, but it is caused by disequilibrium in specific dosha or amount of disequilibrium of particular dosha and their relationship with other dosha. Karma and guna of any dravya are another examples of Asamvayi Karana.

III. Nimitta Karana (Efficient/Instrument Cause): Any cause other than or distinct from Samavayi and Asamvayi is called as Nimitta Karana. These causes are universally concurrent causes. Example: Diagnostic tool and pathologist are efficient cause in diagnosing any disease.

Karya (Effect/Action)

Action/effect is one whose object is accomplishment and with that doer proceeds to act¹⁵. It countermands its own antecedent as non-existence¹⁷. It means *Karya* is absent or non-existence before its origin from *Karana*. But with existence of effect, antecedence disappears.

Classification of Karya²²

I. Bhavarupa Karya: These are complete and pure effects and they get discontinued after exposition. *Samvayi*, *Asamvayi* and *Nimitta* causes are required for these effects.

II. Abhavarupa Karya: These are complete and pure effects which are continued even after existence. Only *Nimitta* causes are required for these effects.

Karana-Karya Siddhanta

Siddhanta is demonstrated conclusion of an argument under the established line of reasoning. It is true logical conclusion or established truth¹⁹. Four types of siddhanta are suggested in *Charak Vimansthana* 8/37²⁰ viz., *sarvatantra siddhanta* (universal theory), *pratitantra siddhanta* (restricted theory), *adhikarana siddhanta* (implied theory) and *abhyupgama siddhanta* (hypothetical theory). Various types of siddhanta are discussed to establish cause and effect relationship.

1. Satkaryavada Siddhanta: *Satkaryavada* mentions the existence of effect in material cause. So anything produced is result of process of causation only and these causations are noted by their effects only. *Asat Karya* cannot be done as *Karya* is *Sat* before its origin even. It seems to be theory of preexistent effect^{7,8,9}. *Sankhya* has accepted the theory of *Upanishada* and *Srimadbhagwadgeeta* in which *Asat* cannot get originated. It deals *Karana* and *Karya* as two stages in which one is not underdeveloped while other is developed. They are only practically different for distinguished purposes only. Fundamentally both are identical. *Yoga sutra* 3/14 deals with property of subject, characterized by capabilities. The existence of these capabilities are latent in number of causes. The relationship of

these capabilities establishes the differentiation of the unmanifested cause²³. The effects are exposed only once hindrances are cleared. Other than hindrances, some other factors are also suggested as accessory causes viz., *De*

-sh, *Kala* and *Aakar*. These are more related to suitable conditions. Whenever suitable conditions are acquired, then only effects are observed. Example: Microbes of many of infectious diseases are present on this earth, effects in forms of diseases are observed only when they get suitable conditions in human bodies.

Shankhya has divided *Karana* in two kinds viz., *Upadana* and *Nimitta*. *Upadana Karana* appears in to effect after manifestation while *Nimitta Karana* leaves the impacts on effects being outside and *Nimitta Karana* separates itself from effects after exposition of effects.

Karya is accepted as *Sat* in both *Nyaya* and *Shankhya*, but *Shankhya* considers the *Karya* (effect) as *Sat* in both before and after origin while *Nyaya* mentions *Karya* as *Asat* before origin which changes to *Sat* after exposition. *Ishwara Krishna* has countered the *Asatkaryavada* using five *Hetu* which further justify the *Satkaryavada* and can be taken as basis of this principle as²⁴:

i. **Asatkaranad:** Non existing things cannot produce anything which is existent. If there is no *Karya* in *Karana*, then after efforts even *Karya* cannot be produced viz., with efforts oil from *Tila* (sesame) can be expressed as oil is present there, but even with mechanical energy or any effort, oil cannot be expressed or produced from sand as it is absent in sand.

ii. **Upadanagrahanat:** The origin of *Karya* is attachment links (*Upadana*) with *Karana*. Existent effect is related with existent causes, but non-existent effect is not related with existent cause, so for any specific effect, an attachment link is required for particular cause e.g., milk is attachment link for curd, not water. It means effect is present in cause even before its exposition.

iii. **Sarvasambhavaabhavata:** As before exposition of effect, cause is non-existent, then effect and cause are irrelevant. In this case, the concept of specific effect from specific cause cannot be adjudged. It means possibility of everything specifically irrelevant is delusive e.g., sugarcane many not produce salt while soil cannot produce clothes.

iv. **Shaktasya Shakyakaranat:** *Nyaya* considers cause as arrangement for effect even after being irrelevant. Only specific cause has ability to produce specific effect. Irrelevant cause cannot produce specific effect which means effect is existent before exposition even and existent cause is related with existent effect e.g., even a clever goldsmith can prepare a gold chain from gold only, not from iron.

v. **Karanabhavat:** The effect bears the nature of cause. As the cause is *Sat* (existent) so effect is essentially existent e.g., seed of mango is having nature to produce mango tree, not banana tree.

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2. Asatkaryavada Siddhanta: *Asatkaryavada Siddhanta* mentions that effect is not preexisting in material cause but is produced during the process of causation. *Vaisheshika Darshana* 1/2/1-2 cites the mandatory presence of cause for any effect, but causes may be without effects too. *Sat* is produced from *Asat* by removing *Asat*^{8,9,10}. *Nyaya* has taken all those *Hetu* to counter the logics of *Sankhya*, those were used to oppose the *Asatkaryavada* and are mentioned above as basis of principle of *Satkaryavada*.

Shankhya has compared *Asatkaryavada* with *Shashringa*, one cannot produce anything like *Asat Karya* cannot be produced before its origin. However, *Nyaya* has only explained that *Karya* is *Asat* only before exposition. *Karana* is *Pragbhava* of *Karya* which means that nonexistence comes to an end when the object in question is brought into being. *Nyaya* never consider complete *Asat* as from complete absence, nothing can be produced. So, *Nimitta* is referred to appropriate effect or *Karya*. Similarly, *Asat* becomes *Sat* only after exposition as basis of *Satva* and *Asatva* is same.

Upadanagrahanat doesn't mean that *Karya* is *Sat* before its exposition. Even *Nyaya* also believes in *Upadana-Upadeya*. *Nyaya* seems to be more logical in this case as the knowledge of *Upadana* is based on experiences. Unexpressed presence of effect in cause cannot be taken as *Upadana-Upadeya*. Actually *Upadana* depends upon experience, nature of material, behavior and *Anvaya-vyatireka* (positive and negative concomitance) relationship e.g., for oil *Tila* is taken not the sand. *Anvaya-vyatireka* relationship is stored in mind with experiences which guides the specific material to be taken for individual effect. It doesn't mean that for *Upadana-Upadeya*, *Ka-*

rya must be *Sat*.

Shaktasya Shakyakaranat of *Sankhya* deals with the abilities of specific causes to produce specific effects, so relationship of *Sat Karya* is established with *Sat Karana*. Even followers of *Nyaya* also believe that specific causes with abilities can only produce specific effects, but it doesn't mean only after considering the *Karya Sat* that relationship is constituted. *Nyaya* conceives that these abilities are not separated from those causes, so once relationship of causes are expressed, no need is there to relate with abilities of those causes.

Sankhya deals the fifth *Hetu* based on principle of non-separation of nature from the material which means if material is *Sat*, so nature is also *Sat*. *Nyaya* deals this differently as nature is only acknowledged once effect of that nature is exposed which before exposition, *Asat* converts to *Sat* after illustration of effect.

3. Swabhavavada and Yadrikshavada^{25,26}: *Shwetashwatar Upanishad* has dealt with *Swabhavavada* and *Yadrikshavada*. Neither of these two theories accept the supernatural power ruling the world and bring the effects. *Yadrikshavada* doesn't believe in causality and explains about the effect as coincidence. All rules or arrangement in this world are out of chance only.

Charvaka accepts the *Karana-Karya* theory, but believes that changes occurring in materials is after the nature (*Swabhava*) e.g., by nature fire is hot while water is cool. *Swabhavavada* believes in effect of anything as subsequent result of nature. Nature governs the effect. External causes are never affecting anything to bring any effect. *Swabhavavada* follows the application of empiricism and negates any reason which is not seen. *Swabhavavada* conceives the doctrine of life but refuses the existence of soul and reincarnation. It believes that four mahabhuta viz., *Prithvi*, *Jala*, *Vayu* and *Agni* have created everything. The combination of these mahabhuta is by chance and by nature that combination brings the effect. These all happens by chance. So, there is no space for any third power. As these theories emphasize on existence of effect after exposition only, so they are more close to or categorized under *Asatkaryavada*.

4. Vavartavada: The word, '*vivarta*' means for alteration or modification²⁷. The theory of *Vivartavada* is based on changing names and forms from cause to effect. The *Advaita Vedanta* philosophy believes in constant changing phenomena of causes to effects²⁹. Once *Karya* is originated, *Karana* automatically destroys as these are different forms. *Shankaracharya* in this theory first frames the identical relationship (*tadatmya*) of *Karya* and *Karana*, thereafter, for that *tadatmya*, *Karya* is proved as *vivarta*, means as modified form of *Karana*. Fundamental truth behind origin of everything is referred in this theory. That truth is said to be *Param Brahma* and *Brahma* is truth. *Brahmasutra* 2/1/18 refers that 'if anything is not real, it cannot be originated'²⁸. It means this theory is based on *Satkaryavada*. Sometimes, *Vivartavada* is considered as next step of *Satkaryavada*.

5. Parinamvada: According to *Sankhya*, *Karya* (effect) is real *parinam* (result) of *Karana* as curd is result of milk. This theory emphasizes on result. The changes of *Karana* to *Karya* are based on condition, quality and signs and accordingly, three types of *parinam* are suggested as:

- i. *Avasthaparinam* (changes in condition as new or old or unborn)
- ii. *Dharmaparinam* (changes of quality)
- iii. *Lakshanaparinam* (changes in appearance)

There are two types of *Parinamvada* as:

- a. *Prakriti Parinamvada* (*Prakriti* changes to various forms)
- b. *Brahma Parinamvada* (*Brahma* itself changes to various forms of *Jagat*)

These *parinamvada* are based on *Satkaryavada* where existents are assumed. Further apprehension of *Sankhyakarika* 15 commends with *Avyakta* as root cause of effect or creation and this *Avakta* is considered to be *Prakriti* or *Brahma*. Five considerations are given to support the idea as *Bhedanam parmanat* (One cause is related with another and ultimate cause reaches to *Avyakta*), *Samanvayat* (Sameness in diversity exists and everything reaches to *Avyakta*), *Saktitak Pravrittesh* (Effect depends upon potentiality of the cause), *Karana-Karya vibhagat* (The distinction occurs between cause and effect) and *Vaishwarupasya Avibhagadat* (Continuity of diversity remains).

Discussion: Directly or indirectly all these theories establish the relationship between causes and effects. Broadly, it's *Satkaryavada* and *Asatkaryavada* which governs the cause-effect relationship. This relationship can be implied in every field of life including in terms of diseases once apparently understood. As disequilibrium of dhatus (tissue elements) leads to disorder while the maintenance of equilibrium is health¹⁸. Maintenance of equilibrium is effect (*Karya*) based on qualities of *Dravya* which causes tissue elements to get in state of balance¹¹.

Even for the understanding of manifestation of a disease, knowledge of *Karana* gives the *Hetu* and its state provides *lakshanas*. The mode of manifestation deals with causes converting to effect. It means development of diseases from etiological factors. All these information advocates the *Samprapti*.

Tarka, *Prameya*, *Pramana* etc. all are based on *Karana-karya* theories only. Even knowledge of *Shodash tattva* based on *Karana-karya* relationship is related with salvation. Indian philosophy has not raised any questions on this relationship, only the way of expressions changes from one *darshana* to another. Still scientific apprehensions have option to unfurl more details of this relationship with respect to every taken theory.

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