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Meaning, Scope and Nature of Philosophy

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Meaning of Philosophy The word philosophy literally means love of wisdom; It is derived from two Greek words i.e. 'phileo' (love) and 'Sophia' (wisdom). This tells us something about the nature of philosophy, but not much, because many disciplines seek wisdom. Since times immemorial there have been various pursuits for unfolding the mystery of the universe, birth and death, sorrow and joy. Various ages have produced different thoughts throwing light upon the mystic region. The ultimate truth is yet to be found out. This eternal quest for truth 'lends the origin of philosophy. A love of wisdom is the essence for any philosophy investigation.

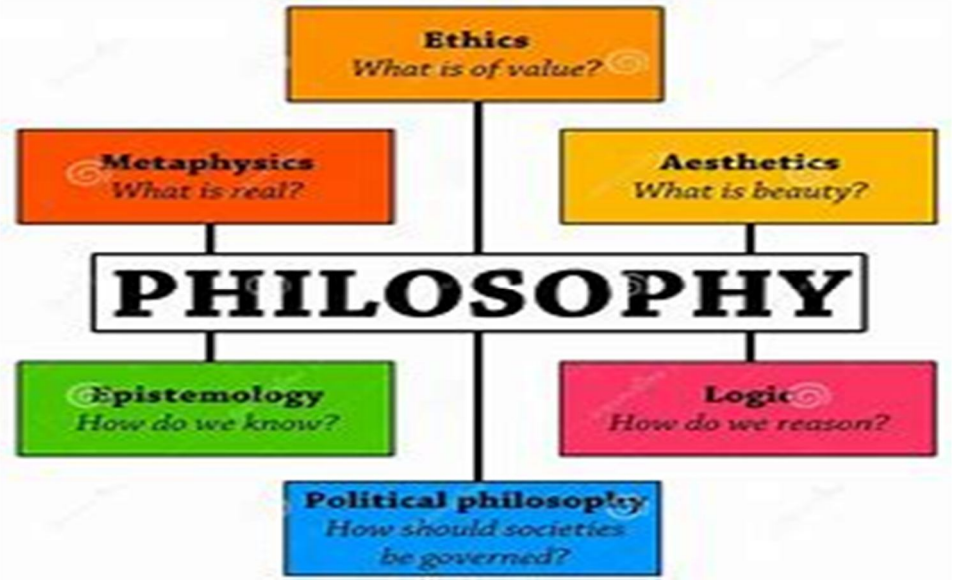
The subject of philosophical inquiry is the reality itself.

There are different schools of philosophy depending on the answers they seek to the question of reality. It is the search for understanding of man, nature and the universe.

There are different branches of philosophy-Epistemology, Metaphysics, etc.

There are different fields of philosophy such as educational philosophy, social philosophy, political philosophy, economic philosophy etc.

There are also different philosophical approaches such as idealism, naturalism, pragmatism, materialism, and so on.



I. CONCEPT OF PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION

All human societies, past and present, have had a vested interest in education; and some wits have claimed that teaching (at its best an educational activity) is the second oldest profession. While not all societies channel sufficient resources into support for educational activities and institutions, all at the very least acknowledge their centrality—and for good reasons. For one thing, it is obvious that children are born illiterate and innumerate, and ignorant of the norms and cultural achievements of the community or society into which they have been thrust; but with the help of professional teachers and the dedicated amateurs in their families and immediate environs (and with the aid, too, of educational resources made available through the media and nowadays the internet), within a few years they can read, write, calculate, and act (at least often) in culturally-appropriate ways. Some learn these skills with more facility than others, and so education also serves as a social-sorting mechanism and undoubtedly has enormous impact on the economic fate of the individual. Put more abstractly, at its best education equips individuals with the skills and substantive knowledge that allows them to define and to pursue their own goals, and also allows them to participate in the life of their community as full-fledged, autonomous citizens. Equips individuals with the skills and substantive knowledge that allows them to define and to pursue their own goals, and also allows them to participate in the life of their community as full-fledged, autonomous citizens.

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II. SCOPE OF PHILOSOPHY

The scope of philosophy of education is confined to the field of education. Thus, it is philosophy in the field of education.

The scope of philosophy of education is concerned with the problems of education. These problems mainly include -

1) interpretation of human nature, the world and the universe and their relation with man,
2) interpretation of aims and ideals of education,
3) the relationship of various components of the system of education,
4) relationship of education and various areas of national life [economic system, political order, social progress, cultural reconstructions.
5) educational values,
6) theory of knowledge and its relationship to education.

The above mentioned problems constitute the scope of philosophy of education and explain its nature. Thus, the scope of philosophy of education includes following.

a] Aims and Ideals of Education Philosophy Education critically evaluates the different aims and ideals of education.

These aims and ideals have been prorogated by various philosophers in different times.

They are character building, man making, harmonious human development, preparation for adult life, -development of citizenship, -utilization of leisure, training for civic life, training for international living, achieving social and national integration, -scientific and technological development, education for all, equalizing educational opportunities, strengthening democratic political order and human source development.

8 These and other aims of education presented by educational thinkers in different times and climes are scrutinized and evaluated.

b] Interpretation of Human Nature:- A philosophical picture of human nature is a result of the synthesis of the facts borrowed from all the human science with the values discussed in different normative, sciences.

The philosophical picture, therefore, is more broad as compared to the picture of man drawn by biology, sociology, psychology, economics and anthropology and other human science.

c)Educational Values:- Value is typically a philosophical subject since it is more abstract, integral and universal. Philosophy-of education not only critically evaluates the values but also systematizes them in a hierarchy.

Educational values are' determined by philosophical values.

Educational values propagated by different philosophers have been derived from their own world, view and their outlook on the purpose of human life.

.d] Theory of Knowledge:- Education is related to knowledge. It is determined by the source, limits, criteria and means of knowledge.

The discussion of all these falls within the jurisdiction of epistemology, one of the branches of philosophy, thus an important area of the functioning of philosophy of education is related to theory of knowledge.

e] Relationship of education and various area of national life and various components of the system of education:- One of the most important contributions of the philosophy of education to the cause of education is the provision of criteria for deciding the relationship of state and education, economic system and education, curriculum, school organization and management, discipline etc. These problems have led to the evaluation of different philosophies of education.

The criteria of judgment everywhere are determined by philosophy, therefore, philosophy of education provides the criteria for critical evaluation and judgment in these fields.

III. BRANCHES OF PHILOSOPHY

There are three branches of philosophy namely 'metaphysics, epistemology and axiology.

9 Metaphysics is a branch of philosophy that investigates principles of reality transcending those of any particular science.

It is concerned with explaining the fundamental nature of being and the world. Metaphysics is the study of the nature of things.

Metaphysicians ask what kinds of things exist, and what they are like.

They reason about such things as whether or not people have free will, in what sense abstract objects can be said to exist, and how it is that brains are able to generate minds.

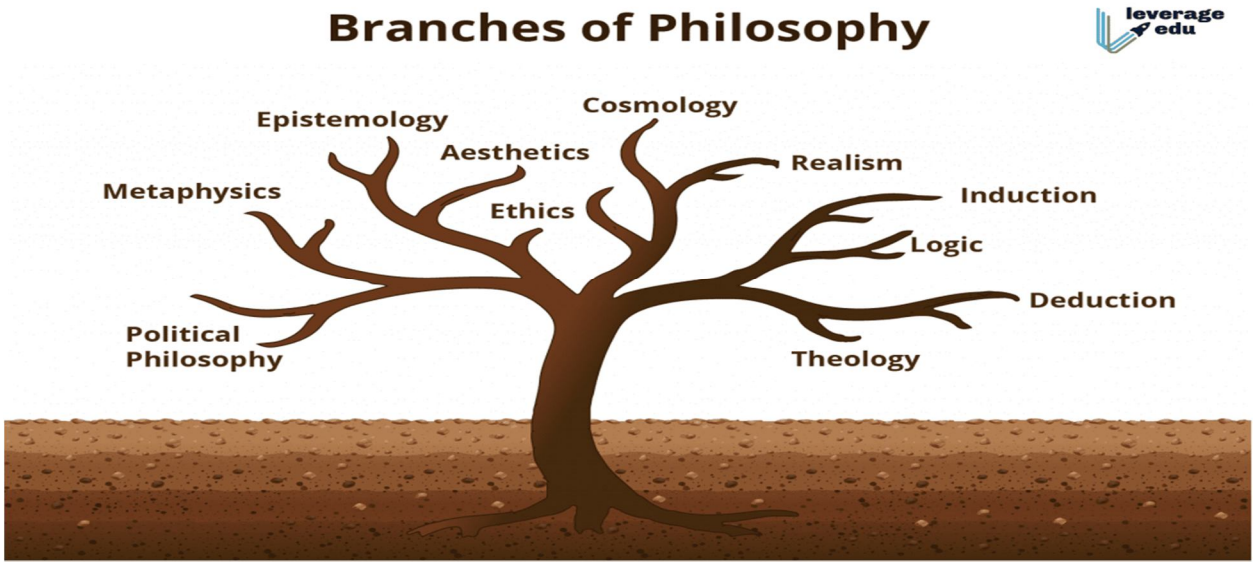
Axiology: the branch of philosophical enquiry that explores: o Aesthetics: the study of basic philosophical questions about art and beauty. Sometimes philosophy of art is used to describe only questions about art, with "aesthetics" the more general term.

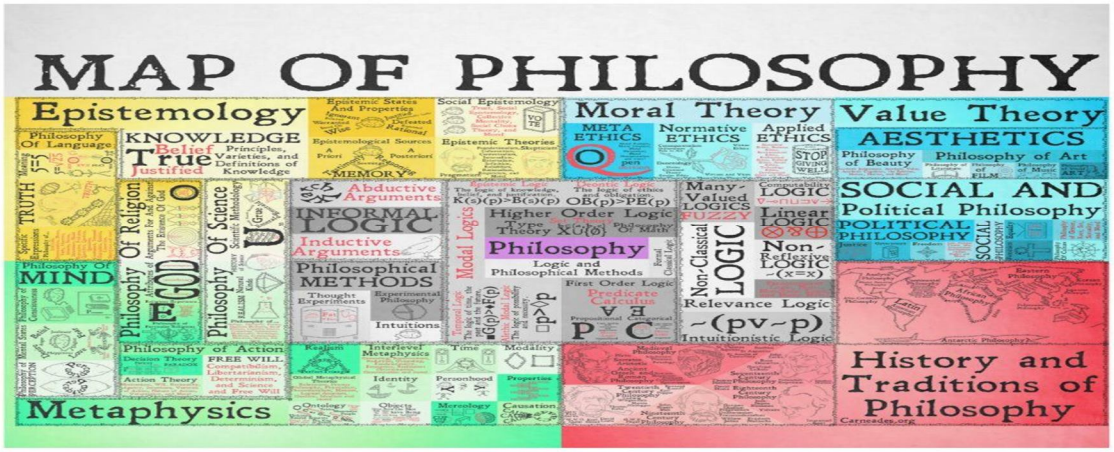
Likewise "aesthetics" sometimes applied even more broadly than to "philosophy of beauty" :to the "sublime," to humour, to the frightening--to any of the responses we might expect works of art or entertainment to elicit.

o Ethics: the study of what makes actions right or wrong, and of how theories of right action can be applied to special moral problems. Subdisciplines include meta-ethics, value theory, theory of conduct, and applied ethics.

Epistemology is the branch of philosophy that studies knowledge. It attempts to answer the basic question: what distinguishes true (adequate) knowledge from false (inadequate) knowledge?

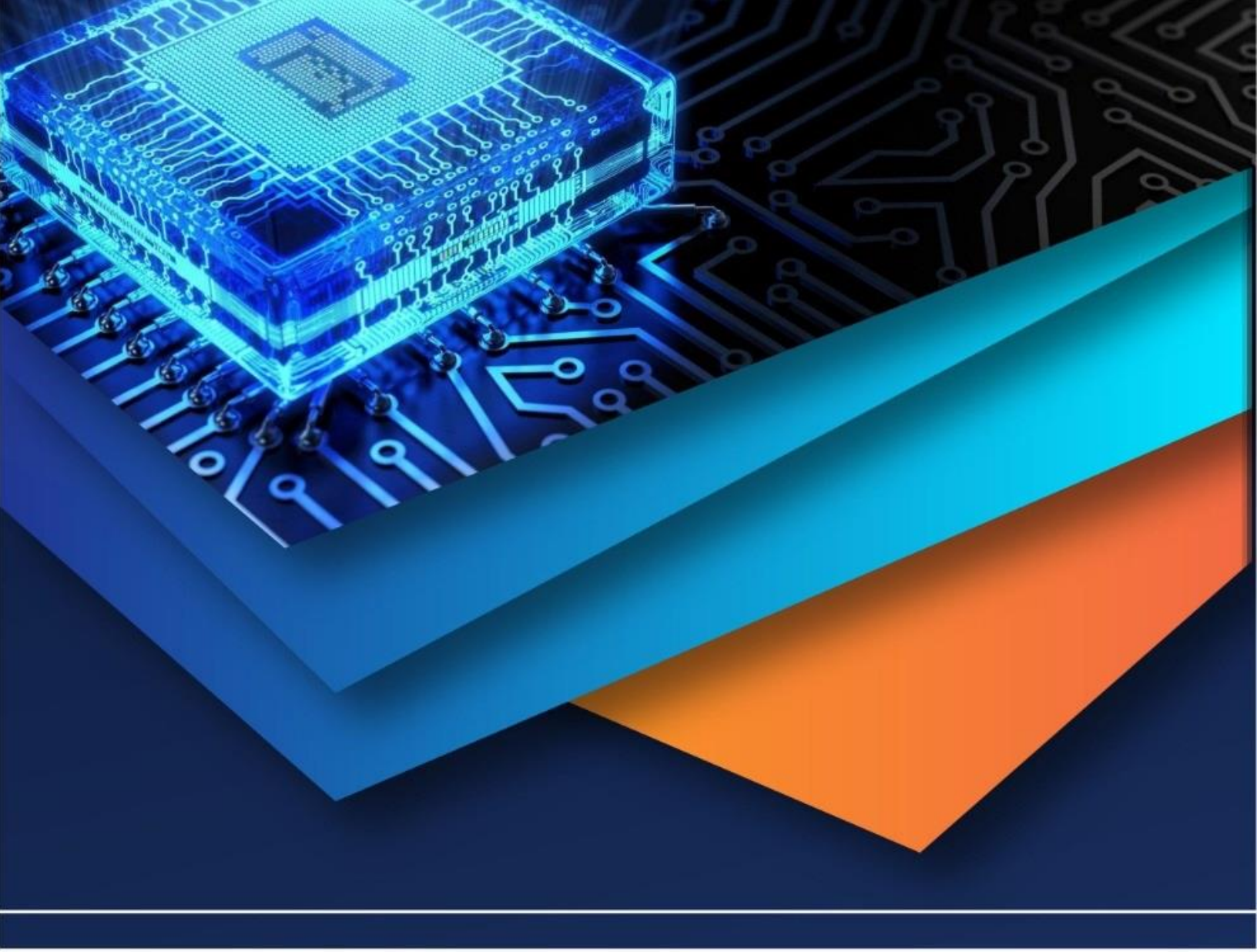
It also forms one of the pillars of the new sciences of cognition, which developed from the information processing approach to psychology, and from artificial intelligence, as an attempt to develop computer programs that mimic a human's capacity to use knowledge in an intelligent way.





IV. CONCLUSION

Aspects of each branch of philosophy can be studied in isolation, but philosophical questions have a way of leading to other philosophical questions, to the point that a full investigation ofany particular problem is likely eventually to involve almost the whole of the philosophical facts.



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