

Beyond Binary Thinking: How Jain Anekāntavāda Challenges Modern Polarization and Dogmatism

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Abstract:

The atmosphere today in most of the so-called societies is marked by polarization of positions, extreme right and left ideologies, disintegration of societies, and the rise of digital “echo chambers” in which binary thinking has become the norm. These circumstances can foster reactive behavior, bigotry, and opposition to other perspectives that can negatively impact conversation and deliberation around democracy. To tackle these challenges, the relevance of the Jain philosophical concept of Anekāntavāda as an alternative epistemology that would assist in dealing with the dogmatic thinking and polarization in modern times has been explored. Previous studies that explore Anekāntavāda focus mainly on religion, philosophy, pluralism and interfaith dialogues; few studies have explored the ways in which Anekāntavāda could help address the understanding of current socio-political conflicts, and the communication environment of digital media.

The research design for this study is qualitative research in conceptual and comparative methodology following the philosophical analysis, hermeneutic interpretation and critical analysis of interdisciplinary literature on Jain philosophy, polarization in politics, epistemic humility and democratic discourse. The writer presents a systematic analysis of the basic tenets, relation, and comparison of Anekāntavāda, Syādvāda and Nayavāda with that of binary thinking which is used in current day’s discussions. The analysis reveals that Anekāntavāda refutes absolutist statements of truths by address the partial and conditional nature of human knowledge, thus cultivating intellectual humility, perspective-taking and open-mindedness about different truths.

From these observations, the present study proposes an Anekantic Model of Dialogue involving two components: recognition of partial knowledge and acceptance of various points of view, as well as reflective engagement and collaborative understanding. The results suggest that the tenets of Anekāntavāda is a philosophical tool that can contribute to attaining a degree of polarization reduction, increase the deliberation of democratic processes and create a more conducive positive space between polarized ideologies. The study presents an old epistemology of Jainism in combination with today's social and political issues to offer a new interdisciplinary thinking regarding the reconceptualization of dialogue, tolerance and co-existence in polarized societies.

Keywords: Anekāntavāda, Jain Philosophy, Polarization, Dogmatism, Epistemic Humility, Deliberative Democracy, Dialogue Ethics, Pluralism.

1. Introduction

Political divisions, icons of those ideologies and social divisions now rise to their highest level in the societies of the past 100 years. Digital communication technology and social media have brought about great transformations in the ways people obtain information, participate in public dialogue and cultivate social identity. These improvements have improved connectivity but have also given rise to platform and community echoes, filter bubbles and over-polarised communities where conflicting ideas are suppressed, not abated, and are rarely the subject of critical analysis. Hence, public discourse is increasingly marked with binary thinking; either one is a right and another one is a wrong, or one is a us and another one is them, or one is a truth and another falsehood. This absolutist mentality often can lead to intolerance, dogma and conflict with each other, which can leave the roots of constructive dialogues and democratic deliberation vulnerable (Dasgupta, 1975)

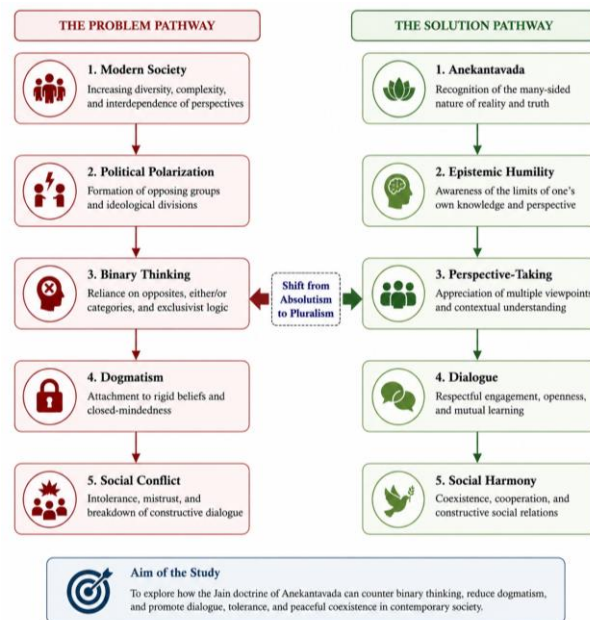


Figure 1. Research Framework of the Study

In the current growing trend towards binary thinking, there has been considerable scholarly attention to finding frameworks of philosophy and ethics that could help promote open-mindedness and understanding. At this point, the Jain philosophy of Anekāntavāda the doctrine of Multidimensional view of truth or non-absolutism gives a special touch to the concept of truth and knowledge. The concept of Anekāntavāda is derived from the teachings of Mahāvīra and is based on the idea that there are multiple perspectives and no one explanation is complete. Human know-how is a subjective, limited and context-dependent one. Therefore the doctrine upholds a multiperspectival approach and repels dogmatic commitment to the one perspective on reality.

While extensively studied from a Jain perspective and as part of Jain religious ethics, the applicability of Anekāntavāda to today's challenges like political polarization, dogmatic beliefs and digital misinformation is barely explored. Much of the research on its role has been centred on religious tolerance, pluralism and interfaith dialogue, while its epistemological principles have mostly been overlooked as applied forces in the management of contemporary social and political differences, so far as understanding goes. This is

important given the current climate of polarisation unprecedented in its negative effect on social cohesion and democratic participation (Dundas, 2002; Ganeri, 2001).

Thus, this study explores the possibility of using the concept of Anekāntavāda as a tool to question binary thinking and counter-insurgent dogmatism in today's society. The study investigates and analyzes the core principles of Jain epistemology and evaluates them against the current trend of polarized discussions in order to prove the relevance of Anekāntavāda as a tool to foster intellectual humility, constructive conversation, and peaceful coexistence in our polarized world (Haidt, 2012).

2. Literature Review

Anekāntavāda's philosophy has been studied in depth as one of the most unique and significant facets of Jainism in the realms of epistemology, ethics and pluralistic thinking. It does not promote dogma or dogmatic view of truth, but is more concerned with the polyvocality of the world and the limits of human understanding. It is a philosophical approach which has come into focus in the current debate on ideology polarization, critical thinking, and democratic communication.

Indian philosophy values rational enquiry and ethical consideration as means to achieve truth, says Hiriyanna (1993). It is in this context that Jain philosophy stands apart from other philosophies by focussing on the notion of 'causality' and the idea that there is no fixity to it, implying that reality is manifested through several viewpoints. Likewise, Jaini (1979) offers an extensive exploration of Jain teachings which proposes, along with Syādvāda and Nayavāda, that Anekāntavāda serves as the epistemological basis of Jainism because it promotes intellectual modesty and "situation consciousness", instead of certainty.

Also, according to Long (2009) and Sangave (2001), the declaration of Anekāntavāda philosophy is about co-existence and tolerance involving the partial truth of various declarations, and there are some who believe that such an attitude can be a source for conveying an important message. Anekāntavāda is the main philosophical belief of Jains, which was stated by Mukerjee in 1954, and says that knowledge is always provisional and incomplete. Similarly, Radhakrishnan and Moore (1957) address the epistemology of the Jains in the context of Indian philosophy, noting its importance for promoting inclusive thought and discussion.

During the past few years Anekāntavāda has been the subject of theological research, the scope of which has widened its application beyond the religious context. In Laude (2017), reality and perception are connected within the traditions of contemplation of the East and West, and the multiplicity of the perspectives deepen, rather than dim, our grasp of the truth. Similarly, Schwartz (2018) claims that Jain metaphysics offers a useful way to discuss religious pluralism and recenters the notion of truth as one and absolute.

Vaidya (2018) reiterates the relevance of the philosophical principles in the modern age as she believes that Jain epistemology plays an important role in critical thinking education by fostering open-mindedness, reflection, and the assessment of alternative concepts. In an environment of ideological conflict and misinformation, these are factors that become more and more central.

In addition to Jain philosophy, there is also theoretical support from the modern period literature on political and social polarization. This is because, according to Sunstein, group polarization and echo chambers are factors that make people become more polarized along ideological and very extreme lines while avoiding viewing these contrasting views and opinions. Likewise, Haidt (2012) provides evidence

that subjective feelings (or intuitions) and group identities tend to affect political disputes more than rational thought, helping to deepen political divides.

Modern polarization has been shown to have its philosophical basis in Anekāntavāda and there are several studies on the causes of polarization, however few studies have combined these two together. Accordingly, the current study aims to investigate the possible epistemological framework of Anekāntavāda to confront binary thinking, minimise dogmatism and promote a dialogic approach to democracy in the current socio-political context.

3. Theoretical Foundations of Anekāntavāda

Anekāntavāda stands at a central place among Jain philosophy and is one of the most unique Jain epistemological tenets. Anekāntavāda literally means an (not), eka (one) and an (absolute or exclusive viewpoint), which is an expression of the Sanskrit word anekanta, meaning “no one-sidedness” or the “negative view of one”. The doctrine was developed by Jain philosophers and was first given a fuller expression by Mahāvīra's teachings and the teachings of subsequent philosophers. The view here is that there are numerous attributes and modes to the reality, and none of one particular statement or perspective can give an exact and comprehensive account of the truth.

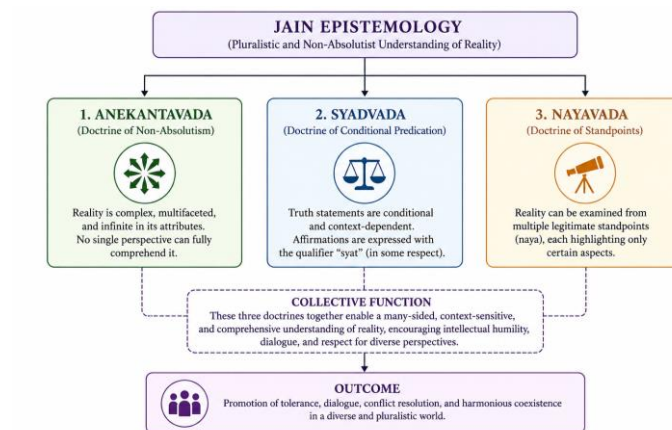


Figure 2. Core Components of Jain Epistemology

The teaching of Anekāntavāda is based on the philosophical premise that MAN's knowledge is limited and depends on particular angles of viewing. People have different cognitive, cultural, social and experiential windows through which they view the world, and thus have incomplete, rather than true, understandings of what is the reality. This does not mean, however, that each perspective is entirely false; it is possible that each perspective has some truth even if it's not the entirety of the truth. This epistemological stance fosters intellectual modesty by explicitly challenging people to recognize the particular nature of their own viewpoints, generation, and context, and stay receptive to developing their sense of the evolving nature of the world.

The doctrines of Syādvāda and Nayavāda are closely related to Anekāntavāda, and offer a methodology to understand and articulate many-sided reality. Syādvāda (also called the doctrine of conditional predication) states that no proposition can be deemed valid, except under a specific condition or viewpoints. Syādvāda doesn't make unconditional statements, but rather, contextual qualifications, acknowledging that knowledge is conditional. Likewise, Nayavāda could stress the need to consider reality from different views, at each of which a different facet of the reality of a larger reality is unveiled. These

doctrines provides a overlaid framework, which is surprisingly non-specific and that can interface with a variety of phenomena.

Most important from a modern perspective, perhaps is the power of its frame of thought, in contrast to some social and political arguments which are curt and linear and logical. Through the shaping process, the doctrine fosters dialogue, respect and critical engagement between the people who encounter differences of opinion and interpretation. It focuses on the co-existence of various perspectives, as a philosophical basis for solving ideological conflicts and for an enabling communications process. Anekāntavāda is thus not only a religion, but an entire epistemological approach that can provide impetus and enrichment to the current debate on knowledge, diversity and social harmony.

4. Modern Polarization and the Rise of Binary Thinking

There is more political, social and cultural polarization in part modern societies. It is more than today for societies that are political, social and cultural polarized. Polarization is a process whereby individuals and groups increase their separation of ideas, further develop feeling of tight group and often hostility to opposing worldviews. While disagreement is a normal element of democracy, it has grown in intensity, length, and capacity to influence public discussion more in recent times and has become more polarized. Social media and algorithm-driven information systems are becoming digital communication tools and the profound divisions have been made more apparent by them, creating an environment where people feel a sense of belonging and need to conform.

One of the main impetors for polarization will likely be binary thinking, the mental habit of chopping things into opposing poles that fall under the "define and divide" temptation. The dualistic approach is conceiving the issue in binary terms, i.e., 'right' or 'wrong', 'conservative' or 'liberal', 'believer' or 'non-believer', 'friend' or 'enemy', etc. For one thing, these abstractions are helpful to the brain, but they undermine students' awareness of and appreciation for what social and political issues are for another. This is let to the marginalization of nuanced views, and the limitations of opportunities for considering dialogue.

Binary thinking is further reinforced by social media as they create echo chambers and filter bubbles that highlight and amplify opposing viewpoints. Algorithms often favour content that shares the users' views and beliefs, which reduces exposure to a range of Alternative perspectives. Contingency: depending upon ideologically similar people to conjure a feeling of certainty about ideology and/or reinforce group identity. In the long term, this process can result in a polarizing phenomenon in the way the person thinks (cognitive polarization): the individual may end up believing that his own thoughts are irrationally valid and others have beliefs that are non-sensical and therefore irrational, when actually, these views stem from healthy rational thoughts and feelings. These situations can create misinformation and personal rhetoric and oppositional rhetoric.

Polarization doesn't just end in political disagreement. Fanning anti-social attitudes can erode social bonds, undermine confidence in institutions and limit ability to solve problems together. Polarization can have the potential to lead to discrimination, social conflict, and political turbulence at the extreme end of the spectrum. Also, as the conflict has become more polarized, as a moral and existential battle with the other, it is less likely for activists and others to engage in constructive work through conflict resolution across differences. Thus, it is important to grasp the connection between polarization and binary thinking, as well as the various philosophical and ethical issues that can facilitate communication and understanding. The

ideas of Anekāntavāda can therefore be applied to the generation of new modes of public communication in learning and questioning the dichotomies of absolutism.

5. Comparative Analysis: Binary Thinking versus Anekāntavāda

There are two ways of seeing reality, knowledge and human interaction which are clearly seen when one compares binary thinking with Anekāntavāda. The binary thinking is based on exclusiveness and views problems in terms of polarisation, absolutisation. Its primary tenet is the belief that a single point of view is right and different one is wrong. Such a system can tend to promote certainty, partisanship and negative modes of interaction. In the current political and societal rhetoric, binary thinking takes the form of binary narrative that creates oppositions worldviews and polarities between opposing groups, confronting individuals who are less inclined to compromise or make accommodations for one another.

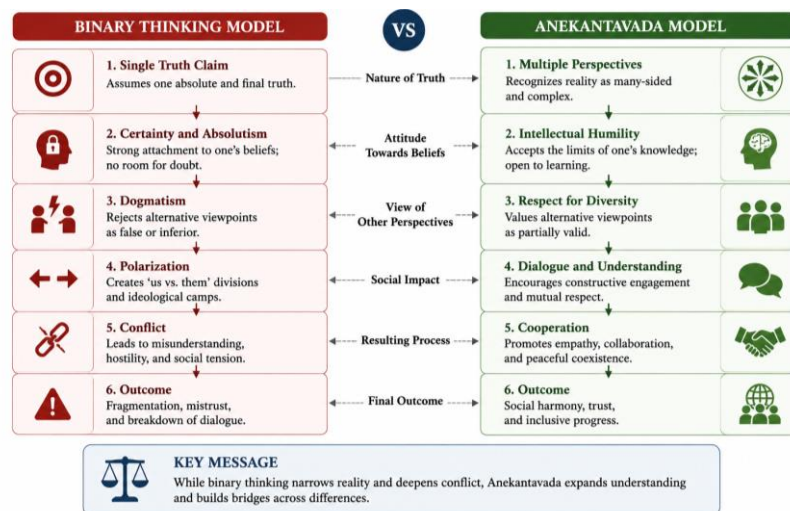


Figure 3. Binary Thinking vs Anekāntavāda Model

Anekāntavāda (aka multiplicity of aspects) on the other hand believes that no one view or perspective can capture the whole of reality. In the Jain epistemology, reality is intricate in itself, multidimensional and is seen as having a host of attributes impossible to be apprehended solely through one perspective. Therefore, even if there is more truth than meets the eye, from different perspectives different aspects of that truth can be regarded as legitimate, even if the overall truth remains unrecognized. This does not imply that it is all right, but that each opinion is its own unique and only criterion of the validity and partiality of the understanding of the person, like of any other phenomenon, is determined by specifics. What Anekāntavāda emphasizes is the shortcomings of the human mind and its ability to be refracted differently. I don't know about anyone else, but there's another big difference, so far as I'm concerned, in how they deal with disagreement. There are times when disagreement is seen as wrong, not knowing or assailing behavior when using binary thinking. This is understandable that different opinions are not even considered, but rather they tend to be ignored. This attitude makes social situations more conflictual and constructive dialogue more and more challenging. But, in the philosophy of Anekāntavāda, disagreement leads to a broadening of understanding and the development of a deeper appreciation for reality, by including multiple points from converging together. It gives the opportunity to acknowledge the validity of both viewpoints - Syādvāda & the Nayavāda - without a dogmatic state of judgment.

Furthermore, dogmatic certainty, and an allegiance to group versus valuation of differences, disagreements can also cause polarization and conflict and are different. In addition to this, there is dogmatic certainty towards a group loyalty, and this is other than valuing differences and disagreements. The philosophy of Anekāntavāda encourages a way of living together, dialogue and thinking through, as well as recognising that truth may take different shapes and forms in various viewpoints. This encourages people to communicate with each other politely and without being successful. With the advent of Eristicism, polarization and social fracturing, a philosophy called Anekāntavāda seemed developed as an alternative to that adverse thinking, which is a behind-the-back wiggling artifact, a binary way of thinking. Anekāntavāda seems like a philosophy that has sprung up as an alternative to that ill repute, a behind-the-back wiggling, a binary way of thinking in the era of ideological extremism and widening social divides. It has something to do with multiplicity, with the awareness of context, with intellectual modesty, with thinking—with themes of contemplation that could help us in our attempts to make public conversation more meaningful and more inclusive.

6. Anekāntavāda as a Framework for Countering Polarization and Dogmatism

With the rise of polarization and dogmatism all over world these days, there is a need to experiment with different solutions that enables dialogue, understanding and cohesion rather than denialism and disunity. In that regard, the philosophy of Anekāntavāda is an interesting insight regarding the inadequacies of the "yes/no" or "true/false" thinking style. The idea of a multiformity of reality and a partiality of human knowledge is used to break peoples' dogmatic predispositions as well as it is used for constructive dialogue of with other points of view.

Epistemic Humility is one of the most valued principles of Anekāntavāda. The polarized environment can often engender over-fortified attitudes to one's beliefs and a corresponding willful lack of considering other belief systems. To counteract this tendency Anekāntavāda advises people to remind them that there is no complete perception of reality. When you realize you don't know more than anyone else there's not so much reluctance about seeking out others to learn from. Such a modesty is not only required for it to be possible to discuss healthily in a pluralistic society that is having debates over issues often not readily answered by a single, decisive yes or no but rather by a "no, but ...".

One of the aspects of conflict resolution and of democratization is also the consideration of other points of view which can be facilitated by the use of Anekāntavāda. The doctrine encourages people to think differently and not only take into consideration their own views. It develops nurturing sensitivity and empathy for others' experience, values and concerns that affect their viewpoints. Anekāntavāda fosters mutual understanding and acceptance transcending ideologies, ensures less antagonism and promotes problem solving.

Moreover, those ideas of Anekāntavāda have the potential to make positive public discourse in information technologies. There are many social media platforms that have the power to further divide and conquer society by promoting sensationalism, outrageous content and ideologically consistent content and messages. However, in the digital communication, Anekāntavāda is an invitation to look critically at issues before finally making any decision, and it promotes respect of being able to engage in conversations with people who do have different viewpoints. Individuals are asked to reflect on the context and perspectives that are expressed instead of seeking the "right" or "wrong" perspective.

Deliberative dialogue must be grounded in a philosophy, and Anekāntavāda is that philosophy in democratic societies where consensus building and collective decision making is an important aspect. It

encourages the thought that helpful answers arise out of a combination of diverse points of view rather than the tyranny of one. Therefore, the doctrine is an optimistic one to address ideological conflicts, to facilitate social harmony and to make participation in democracy more robust. Anekāntavāda is a questioning of dogma, an openness for plurality, and remains very relevant in our world of today.

7. Proposed Anekantic Model of Dialogue and Conflict Transformation

Based on the principles of Anekāntavāda, the present work aims to propose a model of dialogue and conflict transformation, which is called Anekantic model of dialogue and conflict transformation to help in overcoming the challenges of polarization, rigidity of ideologies and dogmatic thinking in today's society. The model is an attempt to translate the theoretical principles of Jain epistemology in to its use strategy (oral communication, public talk, democratic participation). The main idea of it is that there is a dialogue between people in their interactions when they are aware of their own shortfalls and willing to hear what others have to say.



Figure 4. Proposed Anekantic Model of Dialogue and Conflict Transformation

The first part of the model is based on partial knowledge to be recognized. Participants recognise that their own knowledge of an issue is always subject to their own perspective, experiences and cultures. The key here is testing the idea of absolutes and laying a good groundwork for other discussion. In the second step, the tolerant learning stage, people will find it important to accept several views, those that are different from their own but which may have valid points. This means not necessarily agreeing, but being willing to think in terms of possible discrepancy in different views.

The third level is for people to "unpack" their assumptions and biases. Reflecting allows a person to build the ability to recognize the difference between reasoned and emotional/ideological motivations. Dialogical interaction is the fourth stage which focuses on communication to understand with respect to not humiliating opponents. There is a common quest for convergence with active and nuanced discussion of the issues of difference.

In the fifth step, the "integration of perspectives", the perspectives are integrated with one another, resulting in a more comprehensive, complex view. This model does not extend any of the "truths" an edge, but allows for taking several dimensions. Collective understanding in the 6th step – Collaborative Action leads to collective decision making and solutions. This phase underlines the social and political significance of Anekāntavāda, as a way to solve conflicts and social cooperation.

The attempt in the proposed model is to systemize the application of Anekāntavāda in a novel way but without a philosophy to regard it as a philosophical concept. It encourages intellectual modesty, intelligence and discussion, and provides a simple way to abate polarization and provide for better democratic discussion. Coexistence, mutual respect and conflict resolution in societies that are becoming more divided can be facilitated by Anekantic Model of Dialogue and Conflict Transformation.

8. Discussion

The result of this research makes it clear that the Anekāntavāda has a very interesting religious and philosophical answer to the polarization they built up in today's societies and who wants to go to extremes and believes in dogma. Anekāntavāda, in contrast to the binary perceptions of right or wrong, absolute truth and truth claims and the rigid binary opposition of categories, embraces a pluralistic view of reality that allows for a more multifaceted understanding of reality because of multiple points of view. It can be especially important in the context of the growing social polarization, political tensions and low levels of public confidence in an age of greater fragmentation.

The findings indicate that there are important parallels between the concepts of Anekāntavāda and the contemporary notions of deliberative democracy, communicative ethics and pluralism. Theorists of deliberative democratic government object that valid collective decisions are only produced through discussion, and when the citizens are prepared to listen to the various points of view. Likewise, with Anekāntavāda one must take other views into account and understand the shortcomings of local knowledge. In both cases there is no dogmatism and dialogue instead of dogma to reach a better understanding and social cooperation.

The study also emphasises the concepts of epistemic humility and the relevance of Anekāntavāda for the current discussion of epistemic humility. In recent years, a growing number of scholars in philosophy and political theory have begun to shout out the need for intellectual humility in order to have a constructive conversation in a variety of societies. Anekāntavāda looks forward to this wisdom, claiming that no one's point of view can bring the full picture. The doctrine thus facilitates open-mindedness, a self-projection, and open-mindedness towards new evidence or perspectives. This can be particularly helpful to alleviate cognitive polarization that may develop in the course of political polarization.

However there are hindrances in the application of Anekāntavāda. If a lot of people are against the focus of many of these positions, they can argue that there may be a deincentrification of ideas and a demoralization of moral (and political) convictions. But Anekāntavāda is not propagating the doctrine of relativism. Rather, it recognises that validities may be fragmented and yet have significance in relation to

'critical reflection' and as background. The doctrine is an attempt to reconcile awhile atmospheric sperm with a rational inquiry and so to avoid absolutism as well as total relativism.

Overall, it indicates a viable approach to re-thinking public discourse in polarised society—approach embodied in the mind of Anekāntavāda. An appreciation of intellectual humility, dialogue and perspective taking offer great material for promoting democratic involvement, minimizing ideological polarisation and building a culture of respect. Anekāntavāda not only harmonizes with social issues today but also provides a timeless application of the old philosophy to the modern dilemmas of humanity, making it relevant in the 21st century for fostering a more inclusive and constructive human interactions.

9. Practical Implications

Today Anekāntavāda isn't just something worth talking about, it can also be used in education, politics, the media, conflict resolution and democracy. In a time of polarization and radicalization of societies and ideas the concepts of "non-absolutism" and "perspective pluralism" could be useful tools for constructive participation and harmony in society.

The concept of Anekāntavāda can also be utilized in the learning field relating to students' critical thinking and intellectual humility. Learning systems tend to teach knowledge and little attention is paid to the boundaries of the subject matter in terms of limits of learning. Including the tenets of Anekāntavāda as part of curricula can help inspire pupils to consider problems in different ways, to value diversity of ideas, and to respect and empathise with others' ideas that are different to their own. This can help develop information-literate, tolerant, citizens who can function in an increasingly complex social and political world.

Politically, the doctrine provides a means for decreasing partisanship and encouraging deliberative democracy. Such polarization often results from the sense that one's own and opposing views are wholly wrong or unacceptably wrong. Anekāntavāda can contribute to more dialogue both between opposing actors and towards building consensus because it allows for the inculcation of a recognition that there are half-truths within both sides' competing narratives. This has the potential of making policymaking in these areas better because that it allows for a wider variety of interests and experiences to be taken into account. Concepts of Anekāntavāda are not only applicable to digital communication and media settings, but are just as important there. Within social media, sensationalization, conformity, and polarized debate frequently tend to pave the way for the rapid spread of these messages. Social media may contribute to polarization, ideology and sensationalization that can help these messages to spread quickly. When using acronym Anekāntavāda in digital interactions it encourages those to consider information critically, be open to different perspectives and not make hasty judgments. These practices can help counteract the impact of misinformation, echo chambers, and hostility encountered online.

Moreover, the doctrine has significant meanings for conflicts resolution and intercultural relations. Value, belief and worldviews are often cause for conflict in multi-cultural societies. Anekāntavāda exemplifies empathetic thinking & understanding as it asks people to see the validity of alternative viewpoints in their context. This orientation can contribute to an improved negotiation process, improved community relations and peaceful coexistence among groups with different identity and interests.

As such, the Utility of the application of Anekāntavāda in solving many social issues in the modern world is shown. The doctrine promotes intellectual openness, conversation, and collaborative participation, which can help to create more inclusive, democratic, and harmonious societies.

10. Conclusion

Political polarization, rise of extreme ideology and social disintegration have become one of the most emerging issues which faces the modern societies. In general, that binary thinking is so prevalent in public discourse that it comes across as dogmatic, intolerant and spurns alternative viewpoints on complex issues. This disposition detracts from democratic deliberation, impedes constructive dialogue and helps fuel community and institutional polarization. The vision of this research was to learn in what way the Jainism's Anekāntavāda can become a framework of philosophy that can challenge the Absolute which is one of the obstacles to gaining a true grasp of knowledge and truth, and can open the way to accept a wider awareness of truth and knowledge. To meet these challenges, the relevance of the Jain philosophy of Anekāntavāda as a basis for its development in philosophy and its ability to question the absoluteness of thought and to encourage a more inclusive understanding of knowledge and truth was explored.

The analysis of the four principles of Anekāntavāda, Syādvāda and Nayavāda showed that the Jain epistemology provides a unique perspective to understand the reality as multi-faceted and complex. In Anekāntavāda, reality is not known from any one perspective, but is viewed as something that exists in a variety of ways and perspectives relative to the context. This check promotes intellectual modesty, accommodation of different perspectives and intent to engage in valid discourse. The attributes are polaristically opposite to certainty and dogmatism that are often present in social and political divides.

The findings of the comparative analysis in this study have emphases upon the restrictions of binary thinking and examples of how the teaching of Anekāntavāda can help in more positive ways of engaging. The doctrine helps in developing one's point of view, enquiry, and respect for others, thus offering valuable tools to deal with ideological conflicts and promote a better form of democratic discourse. In addition, the Jain philosophy's understandings can be rendered in practice with the use of the Anekantic Model of Dialogue and Conflict Transformation, a conceptual framework that can be used to facilitate communication and conflict solution as well as participatory decision-making.

Finally, it is suggested in this study that Anekāntavāda is not just a traditional religious and philosophical context for understanding the philosophy behind it, but also has a larger relevance in modern times. It places importance on both plurality and non-absolutism and fosters a spirit of dialogue as reasonable counterpoint to polarisation and dogmatism in the modern world. Disagreement is not Siloi's end goal but it is a means by which disagreement can become opportunity for learning, understanding and cooperation. This study builds upon the insights of existing social scientists and the inspiration from the ancient philosophical tradition in introducing a discussion of this research to contemporary issues of social scientists, such as pluralism, democratic involvement, and peaceful coexistence. Anekāntavāda's tenets can be used as an important intellectual tool to develop more tolerant/reflective/dialogical human relations in a society that is becoming ever more divided and polarized.

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