UNIT 13- CONCEPT OF SAMSKARA, VIVEK JNANA AND SIDDHI

UNIT STRUCTURE

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13.1 LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After going through this unit, you will able to

- Clarify the of Samskara
- Discuss the concept of Vivek Jnana,
- Explain the Siddhi.

13.2 INTRODUCTION

In the preceding unit, we learnt about the **Concept of Samyam and Vibhuti**. We have come to know about Antaranga Yoga and its practices through which we get the Vibhuti.This unit deals with the contributions of Samskara, Vivek Jnana and Siddhi. This unit will help you to understand the importance Samskara according to Patanjali's Yoga and related to Vivek Jnana and Siddhi.

13.3 PATANJALI'S SAMSKARA

In Patanjali's Yoga Sutras, the concept of samskara refers to the mental impressions, habits, or tendencies formed by past experiences and actions. These samskaras are the subtle imprints left on the mind, influencing thoughts, behaviors, and reactions in daily life. They play a crucial role in shaping an individual's character and personality.

Samskaras are formed through repeated actions and experiences, creating a kind of conditioning that affects how one perceives and interacts with the world. Positive samskaras can lead to constructive behaviors and spiritual growth, while negative samskaras may result in unwholesome patterns that hinder progress.

Samskara Saksatkaranat Purvajatijnanam (P.Y.S. III/18)

The Yogi is able to recollect the impression of past incarnations which have moulded his present life. In the continuity of life, instinct, memory and desire play an important roles. Memory belongs to the subconscious mind , and the fruits of desires to the unconscious.(pain and pleasures experienced in the present life as a result of good and bad actions in the past lives). When a Yogi is free from all the instincts and desires, he sees directly, independent of memory and of feeling of joys and sorrows. Through intuition in the orderly sequence of time, he actually sees his past lineage and future status.

Samskara are of two types: memory and Vasana. Memory is subconscious and Vasana is Unconscious. When in memory, the Samskara are arranged in a definite order; when in unconscious, they are not so arranged.The Samskaras which are giving rise to the fruits or effects are stored in the form of prarabdha, like sound in a gramophone record, By practicing samyama on the impressions that can be seen during the deeper stages of consciousness, the subconscious as well, as the unconscious can be proved. By practicing samyama on these samskaras, the yogi can have access to past births.

Patanjali emphasizes the importance of becoming aware of these samskaras in the journey of self-realization. Through practices such as meditation and mindfulness, individuals can identify and transform negative samskaras, cultivating positive ones instead. This process helps in purifying the mind and ultimately leads to liberation (moksha) from the cycles of rebirth and suffering.

By understanding and addressing samskaras, practitioners can break free from conditioned responses and develop a more profound sense of awareness and clarity, facilitating their spiritual evolution and deeper connection with the self.

13.4 VIVEKJNANA OR VIVEKAKHYATI

Attainment of knowledge is an ongoing process and not a one-time phenomenon. Knowing is one thing, abiding in knowledge is another. Constant reinforcement of knowledge strengthens our conviction. The stronger our conviction, the more spontaneously knowledge is another. Constants reinforcement of knowledge strengthens our conviction. When our knowledge is fully mature and our conviction firm, the flow of discerning power becomes incessant and effortless. We do not need to resort to logic to know what is right and wrong, what is healthy and unhealthy, fact and fiction, real and imaginary are brightly lit by the discerning power of knowledge. This discerning power is called Vivek-Khyati.

This Vivek-Khyati arises by stages, it does not suddenly burst like a bomb.

"Vivekakhyatih aviplava hanopayah." [P.Y.S. II/26]

"Tasya saptadha prantabhumi prajna" [P.Y.S. II/27]

According to this Sutra, consciousness is seven fold and it arises by gradual degrees.

i) **Gyeyasunya:** The first stage is the detection of the defect in the object or things; there is something wrong with the things and they are not as they appear to be. This is the first awareness that arises in a person.

ii) Heya Sunya: This stage is the discovery that there is a cause of this pain, that it hasn't come suddenly but has a reason. Without a cause there is no

effect. The discovery of the cause of this troublesome situation is the second stage of knowledge.

iii) Prapyaprapta: The 3rd stage **is** the recognition of a way out these causative factors. The Yogi although staying in this material world leans to be unaffected by the worldly matters.

iv) Sikirshyasunya: In this stage is the mind becomes aware of these stages as if it has slowly risen from the slumber of life and is now dreaming of the possibility of a higher experience. Just as, when we are sleeping we aren't aware that the Sun is about to rise. The awareness is felt subtly that the Day is dawning and this indicates that we are awakening.

v) Pragya: At this stage the intellect becomes inactive due to the practice of yoga. The mind loses control over the consciousness.

vi) Laya: At thisstage the gunas –Sattva,Rajas and Tamas is withdrawn and the complex –body-mind ceases to exit.

vii) Amala: The seventh stage is the return of the consciousness to itself, where the self becomes aware of what it is completely freed from all bondages. When there is complete purification of the mind by the practice of yoga, there is a spontaneous and automatic manifestation of consciousness in the direction of its freedom.

13.5 SIDDHI

In the context of Patanjali's Yoga Sutras, "siddhis" refer to supernatural powers or accomplishments that can arise as a result of deep meditation and advanced yogic practices. Patanjali outlines various siddhis in the context of the eight limbs of yoga (Ashtanga Yoga), particularly in the third chapter, known as "Vibhuti Pada." These siddhis are considered by some to be distractions on the path to self-realization, but they also illustrate the profound capabilities that can develop through dedicated practice. Here are some of the key types of siddhis mentioned by Patanjali.

1. Anima:

Anima is the ability to become as small as an atom. This siddhi allows the practitioner to reduce their physical form, enabling them to enter small spaces or become invisible. It symbolizes humility and the ability to transcend the limitations of the physical body.

2. Mahima:

Mahima is the opposite of Anima; it grants the ability to expand one's size infinitely. This power signifies the practitioner's capacity to embody vastness and greatness, representing the limitless potential of consciousness.

3. Laghima:

Laghima provides the ability to become light or weightless. This siddhi can be interpreted as a metaphor for transcending burdens and attachments, allowing the practitioner to rise above worldly concerns and experience a state of lightness in both body and mind.

4. Garima :

Garima is the ability to become as heavy as or the power to be ‘immovable’ physically and mentally. This siddhi allows the practitioner to give their physical form, enabling them to becomevery heavy or weighty. It symbolizes humility and the ability to transcend the limitations of the physical body to make it heavy.

5. Prapti:

Prapti is the ability to obtain anything desired, regardless of distance or barriers. This power emphasizes the interconnectedness of all things and suggests that through a deep understanding of reality, one can access what they seek.

6. Prakamya:

Prakamya refers to the power of will, enabling the practitioner to manifest their desires effortlessly. This siddhi highlights the importance of intention and focus, demonstrating how a concentrated mind can shape reality.

7. Ishita:

Ishita grants the ability to control natural forces or elements. This siddhi embodies mastery over nature and signifies a deep connection with the universe, allowing practitioners to influence their environment.

8. Vashitha:

Vashitha is the power to command others or influence their thoughts and actions. While this siddhi can be seen as a means of leadership or guidance, it also poses ethical dilemmas regarding free will and manipulation.

Conclusion:

This siddhi allows practitioners to fulfill their desires at will, indicating complete mastery over one's cravings and impulses. It represents a state where desires no longer control the individual, leading to liberation from attachment.

While these siddhis are fascinating and demonstrate the potential of human consciousness, Patanjali cautions that they can become distractions on the spiritual path. The ultimate goal of yoga is self-realization and liberation (moksha), not the pursuit of supernatural powers. Therefore, practitioners are encouraged to remain focused on their inner journey rather than becoming enamored with these abilities.

In essence, siddhis serve as markers of progress on the yogic path, illustrating the profound transformations that can occur through disciplined practice. However, true wisdom lies in recognizing that these powers should not overshadow the ultimate aim of yoga: attaining a deeper understanding of oneself and experiencing unity with all existence.

a) CHECK YOUR PROGRESS:

a) How does Samskara Form?

b) How many stages are there in Vivek-Jnana?

c) What happens in Greyasunya Avastha?

d) How many siddhies are there in Patanjali’s Yoga Sutras?

13.6 LET US SUM UP

- Samskaras are formed through repeated actions and experiences, creating a kind of conditioning that affects how one perceives and interacts with the world. Positive samskaras can lead to constructive behaviors and spiritual growth, while negative samskaras may result in unwholesome patterns that hinder progress.
- When our knowledge is fully mature and our conviction firm, the flow of discerning power becomes incessant and effortless. We do not need to resort to logic to know what is right and wrong, what is healthy and unhealthy, fact and fiction, real and imaginary are brightly lit by the discerning power of knowledge. This discerning power is called Vivek-Khyati.
- In essence, siddhis serve as markers of progress on the yogic path, illustrating the profound transformations that can occur through disciplined practice. However, true wisdom lies in recognizing that these powers should not overshadow the ultimate aim of yoga: attaining a deeper understanding of oneself and experiencing unity with all existence.

13.7 FURTHER READING

1)Saraswati,S.(1976).*Four Chapters On Freedom*, Yoga Publications Trust: Munger,Bihar, India.

13.8 ANSWER TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

a) Samskaras are formed through repeated actions and experiences, creating a kind of conditioning that affects how one perceives and interacts with the world.

b) Seven.

c) The first stage is the detection of the defect in the object or things; there is something wrong with the things and they are not as they appear to be. This is the first awareness that arises in a person.

d) Eight.

13.9 MODEL QUESTIONS

A. Short Questions

1. What are the affect of Vivek Jnana?

2. What is the importance of Samsara?

3. What is the concept of Samskara according to Patanjali?

B. Long Questions (Answer in about 300-500 words)

1. What do you understand by Vivek-Jnana? Explain its Types.

2. Describe the concept of Siddhis?

3. Discuss the term Swaroop Pratisthan according to Patanjali's Yoga Sutras.