



## Modern Education Philosophy Based on Empiricism

Lee Bih Ni\*

Faculty of Psychology and Education, University of Malaysia Sabah

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\*Corresponding author: Lee Bih Ni

Faculty of Psychology and Education, University of Malaysia Sabah

### Abstract

*This paper discusses modern philosophy in contrast to earlier philosophies such as Greek, Roman and medieval philosophy. Modern philosophy began when Western intellectuals changed their attitudes and ways of thinking. This means the birth of elements and doctrines of modern philosophy, which are elements and doctrines of philosophy that have new elements and characteristics in the structure of western thought. Researchers use the synthesis method to combine various elements, parts, highlights of the study to produce a comprehensive study. The results of this study found that in the 18th century there appeared a German philosopher, Immanuel Kant, who brought several doctrines, one of which was related to morals and ethics. For him, the discussion about morals and ethics for other modern philosophers is very orthodox. With that, he tried to bring the doctrine of the Element of unconditional order in his ethical philosophy. Tracing the development of the emergence of modern philosophy, there are several factors that encourage changes in the attitude and way of thinking of western intellectuals at that time. This means that he asserts the main principle of every empiricist is to see the science through the basis of sensory experience.*

**Keywords:** Modern philosophy, Western intellectuals, Empiricism, Contigent.

### Introduction

The word philosophy is taken from the English language 'Philosophy' which comes from the Greek word which is a combination of the word 'Philosophia'. 'Philo' means 'Love', 'Love' and 'Sophia' means 'Wisdom', 'Wisdom'. Therefore, 'Philosophia', 'Philosophy', and 'Falsafah' mean 'Love of Wisdom', 'Love of Wisdom'.

In Western history, in the Middle Ages, philosophy was used as a tool to bring religion closer to philosophy or reason to sacred texts. Philosophy in this era is used as a scientific basis to confirm religious doctrines. But this is rejected by modern philosophy. Modern philosophy tries to separate philosophy from religion. For these reasons, the meaning is different and we are faced with the difficulty of giving a more accurate meaning (Indriaty Ismail, 2003: 1).

#### Background of Immanuel Kant

Immanuel Kant was born on April 22, 1724, in Konigsberg in East Prussia. He is considered a great German philosopher. His father worked as a saddler (back seat pad) in the city, while his mother was a German citizen. Both of his parents held or followers of the

Pietist (religious followers) to the Lutheran church. As a result of this, it has had an impact on Kant's own education.

He received his early education at the Collegium Fridericianum school and continued his studies to a higher level at the University of Konigsberg. He was a theology student and had met a philosophy teacher (Martin Knutzen) at the university at that time. After graduation, he was appointed as a private tutor in East Prussia and at this time he was looking for opportunities to intensify his studies and learning.

In 1755 he was offered to continue his studies at the master's level at the same university and after successfully completing his studies he was appointed as a lecturer. Kant also taught several subjects such as physics, mathematics, logic, metaphysics, moral philosophy, and physical geography. In addition to teaching, he has also produced several scientific studies about humans, the air, and also the causes of earthquakes.

He is also a very disciplined person and does not like to waste time, in fact, he spends a lot of time creating. His extensive reading helped his understanding of logical philosophy and metaphysics. He is also said to be influenced by the trend of "Phetisme" from his mother, but he lived in the age of "Skepticism". He is also said to

\*Corresponding author: Lee Bih Ni

have been brought up as a pious person, but he was also Liberal in politics and theology. It is said that he died when he was around 80 years old (Edwards, 1967: 305).

### Works

His most famous work is *Observation on the Feeling of the Sublime and the Beautiful* (1764), *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781), *Critique of Practical Reason* (1788), *Critique of Judgment* (1790), *Metaphysics of Morals* (1797), and *Contest of the Faculties* (1798) (Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 1967: 305).

### Definition of Categorical Imperative

The Categorical Imperative is one of the theories discussed by him in the philosophy of ethics. Categorical Imperative is a theory that has been introduced in Kant's philosophy that discusses the difference between behavior that has been set by morality from other forms of instructions or regulations. For example, if you want x, then you need to do y, (If I want a taste that satisfies me, I must drink lemon water), (this Kant calls a hypothetical imperative) understood and done according to a moral command in an absolute form: "You shall not kill". Thus a person's manners and morals are understood as a form of objective demand, depending on a person's will and will (Flew, 1979: 53) Kant thinks that the created human being has a special position. He also believed that human morality can reach its peak through a good principle of all-natural actions and responsibilities.

Categorical imperative here means a form of instruction that is not absolute in the beginning but changes into something that is absolutely mandatory when someone does it according to a certain purpose. Imperative means to allow us to do something absolutely and without any exception. In general, the categorical imperative here is a form of command that forces us to do something like "do something morally".

In the categorical imperative, there are two things that need to be noted here, the first is imperative and the second every imperative must be categorical. According to Kant, there are two types of imperatives. An imperative element based on a hypothesis that says "You must do this and that if you want to achieve a goal". This imperative element says a specific action objectively (independently) without the need for us to calculate the goal to be achieved. According to Kant, this categorical imperative is synthetic and a priori, its characteristic is formulated as a legal concept. Therefore, what we can understand is that when we do something, do it by following certain instructions, purposes or intentions so that at the same time we are determined that it will become a law (Law). The actions we do start with intention and are controlled by ourselves. Therefore we must be morally responsible for the behavior we have done (Russel, 1946: 683).

Kant says he is not satisfied with moral philosophy today because he believes moral philosophy does not meet the level of the imperative hypothesis, for example: Cause or effect habitually can be imagined with murder is wrong, because the murder is not good but, this is not related to a person. Why is Murder bad? Kant presented the reason for the hypothesis of a moral system that does not believe in moral action or consider it as a basis for moral judgments because the Imperative is a basis that depends too much on a subjectively thoughtful attitude (based on self-evaluation) (Ensiklopedia falsafah, 1967: 317).

### The Law Of Categorical Imperative According to Immanuel Kant

In this concept there are three forms of formulas or principles that have been presented by Kant, namely:

#### The concept of duty.

Kant says that a moral position that is considered to be true is not bound by any particular circumstances. For example, a person cannot be considered to act morally by giving instructions such as "It is wrong for you to kill, but it is not wrong for me to do it", this is because the form of this instruction (imperative) is hypothetical. Therefore, an instruction must have a universal value and every moral can be used by everyone.

In this concept of responsibility, there are two parts namely perfect duty and imperfect duty. According to Kant, Perfect duty is not doing something by following a maxim (proverb, motto) as a logically contradictory decision, when we try to universalize it. For example, "it is wrong to steal money because if everyone does that, there will be no money left to use" the universal form here is that there will be no money left to use. In the same way, we can show that theft and murder are not good enough to be perfect duty. Therefore, we come to the conclusion that to be perfect duty never commit acts of stealing, killing and so on that are considered bad.

While imperfect duty also still belongs to morality. Imperfect duty is a responsibility to do something only with the maxim for us to be universal. For example, a person cannot give help to another unless it gives a benefit to that person (<http://ms.wikipedia.org/wiki/categorical>, 31 July 2006).

#### Reasons and Goals (Obligations)

Every rational action is evaluated through its principles and goals. Most of the goals depend on the will and wishes of a person and the evaluation is still in the form of hypotheses and assumptions, and the goals that want to be seen in an objective form must be in a categorical form. Kant stated that a person has intelligence, wisdom, power, wealth, and honor, courage, perseverance and other qualities that are good and desirable. Even so, these qualities cannot be considered good without conditions.

Focus is given and placed on a person's intention, purpose and motive, and not on what he does. An action will have moral value when done willingly if the action is a recognized moral responsibility. If the actions taken are purely for self-interest, this is considered morally wrong.

#### Duty: Autonomy for good will or will (The Autonomous Will)

According to Kant, autonomy will not be the subject of a certain will, it will only be the subject of the laws that have been formed for itself. Therefore, Kant has given an understanding to the Hypothetical Kingdom of Ends, where in this perception he suggested that every member of society should consider themselves as members as well as leaders. Kant explained further that we only do something which can harmonize our behavior with the Kingdom of ends. According to him again, we have a perfect duty instead of wanting to do something according to a maxim that only creates a natural relationship that is impossible and difficult to understand when we try to apply universal values to it. We also have an imperfect duty where we do not do something according to the maxim which leads to an unstable level and we do not want it in every relationship (<http://ms.wikipedia.org/wiki/categorical>, July 31, 2006).

### **Function of The Law Of Categorical Imperative In Thought**

According to Kant, the importance of following moral rules is not only in a hypothetical form but also in an absolute form. The categorical imperative concept was created to give understanding to the importance of behaving morally to achieve universal happiness, and when the universality of carrying out responsibilities according to moral rules can be achieved, then happiness and harmony in life will be achieved.

When we discuss the function of this principle, we can look at the purpose, holding, and goal that Kant has achieved. As we have already known, Kant is a person who is said to be a scholar in Christian beliefs and believes in the existence and greatness of God. Many of his works discuss this question, but he is quite a bit different from other philosophical figures in discussing it. Here we can know that he has discussed that to believe in God one must really understand and obey the moral rules that have been set. We must know that our every action is controlled and observed by God.

The function of the Law of Categorical Imperative is to discuss the form of moral behavior that fulfills the important requirements to ensure that all human beings who have common sense act according to their proper limits, so that every good thing is judged according to its level of goodness, and vice versa. Kant has also proven the concept of God by bringing his new idea that if the moral law is fulfilled well and full of responsibility will bring our understanding to the concept of God's existence.

Unfolding the discussion of educational philosophy with the understanding of empiricism is dependent. So various questions will come to mind, including what is empiricism itself? What does empiricism have to do with modern philosophy? How does this understanding of empiricism play a role in philosophy? Who is involved in discussing the understanding of empiricism and various other questions that arise from the chain of questions that have been stated and sometimes are not answered and are not exhausted to be discussed. This is what philosophy says is running away from ignorance, standing on the truth, and uncovering the veil of falsehood that covers the weakness of the mind. Therefore through questions and discussions using a philosophical approach can summarize human thinking that tries to understand the true nature of nature (Mohd Yusoff).

Philosophical discussions that are considered difficult to understand and always come out of the field of life. In fact, philosophy only hovers within the daily life of humans themselves (Mohd Yusoff). In further understanding the discussion of why empiricism belongs to the modern philosophical sect, it is better if we examine a little of the flow from which the concept of empiricism itself arose. When we discuss philosophical questions we will discuss the branches of philosophy. Philosophy has four branches namely metaphysics, logic, axiology and epistemology. In epistemology, we will throw ideas about the theory of knowledge, scope of knowledge, sources of knowledge and many more. Intuitive, rational/logical, authority and revelation are the sources in obtaining knowledge. Sources of knowledge based on revelation create religious beliefs. There are also religious beliefs that are not based on revelation, which are called non-heavenly religions. In building a belief that is based on human reason (non-heavenly religion), there will be differences of opinion, interpretation and understanding in certain matters in life. This is because every human being who thinks, reflects, perceives,

interprets and goes through different experiences has his own mind that sometimes goes beyond common sense. Therefore, rationalist and empiricist concepts were formed. (Abdul Rahman Md Aroff)

### **Definition of Empiricism**

The meaning of this empiricism can be defined in two scopes of discussion so that it is clearer and easier to understand. The first definition is directly from the language point of view, which is that empiricism is from the words 'empeiri' (Greek) and 'experimental' (Latin) and also from the English language 'experience' which means experience. The second definition is from the term point of view, which is that empiricism in application is the nature of thinking that emphasizes the aspect of sensory experience in acquiring and obtaining knowledge (Mohd Yusoff).

Analogously, the acquisition of electrical knowledge was initially through the observation of sensory experiences. Simply we see through the eyes (senses) the fan spinning in the ceiling of the house. When it is said that the fan moves due to the presence of electricity then everyone who sees it will agree with confidence. Despite the fact that the observer never sees the movement of electrical energy in the connected cable. How can this electrical science be accepted especially by empiricists? How can electricity be recognized as science? To answer this question empiricists need to be scientifically minded to prove the existence of electricity on the fan. Through experiments and tests, it is proven that there is a flow of electricity. Through evidence that cannot be refuted by other evidence, this empiricist concluded that there is electricity flow in the fan because that statement is proven based on the observation of the fan's senses as it rotates, not on the basis of seeing the movement of the electricity flow through the senses.

The acceptance of this theory experimentally led to the birth of a new theory that was developed based on the original theory. So new technologies exist such as mechatronics, semiconductors, electronics and so on. The development of this knowledge exploded a new revolution in the modern era pioneered by western countries.

In order to develop the sciences, empiricists have outlined several methods to test a science scientifically. The first method starts with a new problem or new issues or a new problem. Then the process of gathering information related to the problems, issues and questions presented. After getting enough information, you can propose an answer called making an inference or hypothesis. To prove the hypothesis, it is necessary to conduct a test or experiment to test the truth of the inference or hypothesis. After being proven correct, the experiment came out with a conclusion that formed a theory, law or principle. If it is not proven to be true then the experiment will be repeated until there is irrefutable evidence to produce a new scientific theory (Philo@Sopia).

In addition, three main characteristics of scientific and critical thinking have been outlined. The first is empiricism, which is what is proven by the five senses with the reality of nature (naturally evident). Second, rationalism, which is logical thinking that is not influenced by emotions and feelings. For example, if  $x = 2$  then  $x^2 = 4$  is accepted not based on emotions and feelings but built based on logic alone. Last but not least is the nature of always doubting and needing to renew one's opinion or theory. Investigating this nature leads to the development of ideas and the discovery of new theories during the course of a more logical and rational proof based on more obvious evidence. This way of thinking today is called skepticism. So through this guide, there is a new school of



thought that is no longer based on Christianity and the church that often distorts and restricts freedom of thought (Philo@Sophia).

Returning to the discussion of the characteristics of understanding and the field of discussion of empiricism is to discuss, study about pure science and social science to produce a study of natural phenomena. The research done is "Posterior" which means the truth exists after something has been proven. However, it should be noted that the research done is also "contingent" which means that the knowledge found is not absolute because a certain knowledge will only be accepted as long as there is no new evidence that can cancel the old evidence. The process of proving knowledge through the scientific method is called the "inductive" process. Scientific research combined with a critical way of thinking makes it difficult for empiricism to draw conclusions, issue theories, and confirm newly discovered knowledge. The above characteristics are present in every figure of empiricism including Aristotle. Aristotle also once asserted;

"State that the core empiricist tenet that human knowledge of reality is grounded sense experience"

This means that he asserts the main principle of every empiricist is to see the science through the basis of sensory experience. Therefore, this principle is contrary to the principle of receiving knowledge before modern philosophy (Wikipedia).

### **Modern Philosophy**

Tracing the development of the emergence of modern philosophy, there are several factors that encourage changes in the attitude and way of thinking of western intellectuals at that time. The first factor is the fall of the power of the church which leads to the failure of scholastic philosophers (Christian philosophy) to give intellectual answers to religious problems and explanations of religious issues are usually irrational and contrary to the nature of human thought. The emergence of the power and influence of science is the second factor. Science is a very effective outburst and has gained a place among western intellectuals. This is because of its effectiveness, its practicality, the appreciation of the truth visually (the senses), and using scientific methods to encourage thinking and researching activities. This is very contrary to religious practices that are dogmatic without question and stifle critical thinking. The third factor is the birth of a reflective spirit which is the tendency to practice the ability of the mind and observation of the senses. They observe themselves and the environment in search of the truth freely and rationally without any element of reward or sin (Mohd Yusoff).

Modern philosophy is generally shaped by a high belief in human abilities. Therefore, modern philosophy develops the issue of philosophical method, system formation, and humanity. Through this, modern philosophy emphasizes the issue of reason and the senses in discussing the limits of knowledge, the origin of knowledge, and the validity of knowledge (Abdul Rahman).

### **Summary And Evaluation**

What can be concluded through this idea of Kant is about morality which aims to give awareness to the society at that time about the concept of God that exists and not as a matter that becomes doubtful to humans. He emphasizes the concept of ethics and morality, which for him each person is responsible for a specific responsibility. A person should carry out a responsibility in the

right way so that a person is not blamed for what he has done. Every mistake made will be judged by the almighty God.

In terms of evaluation, what can be said here is that the concept that was founded by him is a good form to convey to the public so that everyone has the best morals and performs or acts morally. If you look at the previous philosophical figures who did not agree with this concept because they think that this concept is difficult for a person to do something perfectly based only on experience, logic and rationality alone.

As a summary, we can see that Kant is a German philosopher who cares about ethics and morality, which he rejected a lot of doctrines that differed from his doctrine. He said that responsibility is important to achieve a desired goal and that good and bad attitudes depend on the action itself. Moral goodness exists when one acts entirely on the basis of responsibility rather than mere intention. He is so concerned about human morality that any action taken must achieve one's goals. If something desired is not achieved then, the moral responsibility is not perfect. Intuitive, rational/logical, authority and revelation are the sources in obtaining knowledge.

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