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**Moral Education of Jainism Philosophy: A Preamble**

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**ABSTRACT**

Jainism promotes self-control and spiritual independence, two attributes deemed essential for spiritual growth. The well-known philosophy from India's unconventional school of thought is Jainism. It is among the oldest religions still in existence. It is not a branch or offshoot of any religion, nor is it associated with any religion. Its contributions to the world at large and to Indian philosophy in particular include the ideas of truth, nonviolence, and peaceful cohabitation. It is both a significant Indian philosophical school and a religion. Jainism approaches life from a comprehensive perspective. According to Jainism, liberation, or Nirvana, is the ultimate end or goal of existence. According to Jainism, we cannot achieve liberation by our own actions, knowledge, or faith alone. Together, the three of us should walk the route. Therefore, in order to attain the goal of freedom, knowledge is essential to Jainism's spiritual growth. One religion that rejects the existence of God is Jainism. They practically revere the founders of their religion. Jainism promotes self-control and spiritual independence, two attributes deemed essential for spiritual growth. In this article, moral education of Jainism philosophy: a preamble has been discussed.

**Keywords:** *Moral, Education, Jainism, Philosophy.*

**INTRODUCTION**

Although Jainism has lofty educational objectives, it says very little about how to educate them. It encourages focus as a method of education and information gathering. Mental focus is the foundation of education. The strength of concentration, as stated by Jainism is the only path to unlocking the wealth of knowledge. It makes the case that mental focus, not knowledge gain, is the fundamental component of education. To see the best in everyone is one of Jainism's main teaching tenets. It believes in highlighting and identifying an individual's strengths.

This is the best strategy for that person's development. Consequently, Jainism condemns all negative sentiments and attitudes. Jainism is a religion with admirable educational objectives but nothing to say about instructional strategies. It encourages focus as a method of education and information gathering. Mental focus is the foundation of education. The only key to the intellectual treasure trove, according to Jainism, is the power of attention. It makes the case that mental focus, not knowledge gain, is the fundamental component of education. A fundamental tenet of Jainism's teachings is to see



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the best in everyone. According to this theory, the best way to develop a person is to identify and highlight their strong points. Consequently, Jainism condemns all negative sentiments and attitudes. Without practice, religion lacks purpose. The educational system should plan and implement activities that will assist students in developing these skills. Globally, modern educational approaches advocate for children to be active learners rather than passive receivers of knowledge. This objective has led to the creation of numerous exercises. According to Jainism, we could use our daily obligations as the basis for developing educational activities both at home and in the school.

There are internal discussions within the Jain community about how to understand and apply Jain ethics in the modern era. In keeping with the fundamentals of Jain ethics, the study emphasizes the necessity of finding a balance between maintaining customs and adjusting to contemporary circumstances. (Babb, L.A., 2004)

### **MORAL EDUCATION OF JAINISM PHILOSOPHY**

The teachings of Lord Mahavira, the 24th Tirthankara (spiritual leader) of Jainism, are the source of the historical growth and evolution of Jain ethics. The philosophy and ethical precepts of Jainism were systematized by Mahavira; however, the religion itself has considerably longer roots, dating back to the ancient Indus Valley culture.

People believe that the intellectual concepts and practices of Jainism originated around the ninth century BCE, if not earlier. Early Jain thinking is supposed to have its roots in the ancient Indus Valley culture (c. 2600–1900 BCE), where archaeological evidence points to the existence of certain Jainist symbols and rituals.

Lord Mahavira was instrumental in forming the intellectual and ethical tenets of Jainism in the sixth century BCE. He was born in what is now Bihar, India, and at the age of thirty, he gave up his life as a prince to pursue a life of intense spiritual devotion. He became the 24th Tirthankara of Jainism after achieving spiritual enlightenment via 12 years of abstinence and meditation. (Pal, P., 2023)

The idea of ahimsa, or nonviolence, served as the foundation of Jain ethics and a key component of Mahavira's teachings. He advocated kindness and nonviolence toward all living things, including microscopic organisms, plants, and animals—in addition to humans.

Lord Mahavira established the Five Vows (Mahavratas), the ethical precepts of Jainism, which serve as rules for living a moral life. Among these were the vows of brahmacharya (celibacy), asteya (non-stealing), satya (truthfulness), ahimsa (nonviolence), and aparigraha (non-possessiveness).

During Mahavira's lifetime, Jainism attracted a sizable following that kept growing thanks to devoted monks and nuns. Jain monasticism played a significant role in preserving and spreading the ethical principles and practices of the tradition.



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Jain scholars and philosophers added treatises, philosophical writings, and commentary to the tradition over the ages. The compilation of the Agamas, or Siddhantas, the canonical Jain texts, included lessons on spirituality, metaphysics, and ethics.

Even though Jain ethics have ancient roots, they are still applicable today. Numerous social and environmental movements have found resonance in the values of compassion and nonviolence. Jain groups continue to uphold the ethical practices that emphasize vegetarianism, nonviolence, and humble living. (Rani, V., 2021)

Jainism's emphasis on compassion, nonviolence, and ethical living has impacted global ethical discourse. In order to address concerns about animal rights, environmental sustainability, and conflict resolution, academics and professionals from a variety of backgrounds have taken inspiration from Jain ethics.

Over the course of thousands of years, Jain ethics has developed from the teachings of Lord Mahavira to become a timeless moral philosophy that continues to motivate people and communities all over the world. The ethical precepts of compassion, nonviolence, and moral behavior are still relevant today and contribute significantly to discussions about ethics and the quest for a more compassionate and peaceful world.

Three fundamental qualities form the basis of Jain ethics: dharma (ethical principles), compassion (anukampa), and nonviolence (ahimsa). These ideas are fundamental to Jain philosophy and are the cornerstones of living a positive and moral life.

The main and most important Jain principle is ahimsa. It promotes treating all living things with nonviolence in voice, deeds, and thought. Jains hold that all living things have souls, or jiva, and that harming any living thing has negative karmic repercussions. In their dealings with people, animals, plants, and even microscopic beings, Jains so aim to foster compassion and nonviolence. Ahimsa encompasses more than just abstaining from bodily harm; it also involves abstaining from violence in the form of harsh speech, hostile conduct, and malicious purpose. It cultivates a deep respect for life and an attitude of care and respect for all living things.

Another essential Jain ethical precept is anukampa, or compassion. It places a strong emphasis on developing compassion, understanding, and empathy for all living things. Beyond pity, compassion entails taking selfless steps to actively lessen others' pain. Jain teachings encourage people to practice kindness, generosity, and assistance as well as to think about the feelings and welfare of others. Anukampa serves as a cornerstone for fostering social peace, harmonious relationships, and advancing the well-being of all living things.



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According to Jain philosophy, dharma is a collection of moral precepts and rules for living a noble life. The foundation of these moral precepts is the Five Vows (Mahavratas), which are Ahimsa, Satya, Asteya, Brahmacharya, and Aparigraha.

Jains can reduce negative karma, purify their souls, and advance on their spiritual path to emancipation (moksha) by keeping these five vows. These moral precepts serve as the cornerstone for leading an ethical life, practicing self-control, and developing spiritually. Jain ethic's combined emphasis on ahimsa, anukampa, and dharma offers a thorough moral theory that encourages a kind, peaceful, and moral manner of living. In addition to encouraging a strong feeling of interconnectivity, respect for all living forms, and a dedication to the welfare of others and the environment, these values direct Jains in their quest for spiritual emancipation. With its focus on compassion, nonviolence, and moral values, Jaina ethics provides insightful guidance for building a more peaceful and caring world.

In Jaina ethics, the Five Vows, or Mahavratas, are essential moral precepts. These vows are vital because they give Jains a thorough manual for moral behavior and self-control that directs their behavior and actions in day-to-day life.

The most important and essential vow in Jainism is ahimsa. Jains pledge to hurt no living thing by engaging in nonviolent thinking, speech, and action. This idea promotes empathy, compassion, and regard for all living things. By urging Jains to abstain from hostility, anger, and violence, the vow of ahimsa fosters peace and harmony with all living things.

The vow of truthfulness emphasizes the importance of sincerity and honesty in both speech and deeds. Jains pledge to tell the truth and refrain from lying, dishonesty, and deception. Satya lays the groundwork for sincere and meaningful relationships by encouraging openness, reliability, and integrity in social and personal interactions.

The promise to refrain from stealing or taking is known as asteya. Jains promise not to accept anything that is not earned or offered freely. This rule goes beyond actual belongings and prohibits stealing the concepts, time, or reputation of another. By promoting thankfulness for what one has and respect for the rights and belongings of others, Asteya promotes contentment and disengagement from worldly aspirations.

Brahmacharya emphasizes the vow of chastity or self-control, particularly when it comes to sexual behavior. Monastics practice Brahmacharya, which is total celibacy, while householders practice self-control in their marriages. This commitment fosters mental clarity, self-control, and directing energies toward spiritual endeavors.



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Aparigraha is a vow that promotes non-attachment to material desires and possessions as well as non-possessiveness. Since attachment to worldly stuff breeds greed, selfishness, and suffering, Jains vow to refrain from accumulating wealth and belongings in excess. Aparigraha promotes a modest and uncomplicated way of living that emphasizes charitable giving and spiritual endeavors.

The Five Vows have a profound impact on Jains' lives by encouraging moral behavior and self-control. Jains seek to purify their souls, reduce the accumulation of negative karma, and advance on their spiritual path to emancipation (moksha) by keeping these vows. As guiding principles, the vows help people develop their moral character and impact their behavior, choices, and relationships with others. Jains live out these vows in a variety of ways throughout their daily lives, including being vegetarian (to uphold ahimsa), speaking and acting honestly, cultivating contentment and disengagement from material belongings, and treating all living things with respect and compassion. Jains strive to live a life of compassion, harmony, and spiritual development by upholding the Five Vows, all the while making a positive impact on the community and the wider world. As a result, the Five Vows provide a thorough ethical framework that helps Jains navigate the challenges of everyday life with self-control and moral clarity. (Flugel, P., 2005)

A fundamental component of Jaina ethics is the Twelve Anuvratas, sometimes referred to as Minor Vows. The Anuvratas supplement and build upon the Five Vows (Mahavratas), which serve as the fundamental tenets. They offer helpful advice for moral behavior and self-control in day-to-day living. Both ascetics and lay Jains (householders) observe these Anuvratas, which are important in forming people's moral character. The practice of nonviolence in daily interactions and acts is emphasized by the Anuvrata of Non-violence (Ahimsa Anuvrata). It exhorts Jains to develop compassion and respect for all living things and to refrain from harming any of them. The Anuvrata of Truthfulness (Satya Anuvrata) encourages sincerity, honesty, and expressing the truth in every circumstance. Respecting this commitment promotes integrity and trust in interpersonal and social interactions. Asteya Anuvrata, or the Anuvrata of Non-stealing, promotes abstaining from stealing or taking things that are not properly earned or given. Jains foster contentment and respect for other people's property and possessions by abstaining from stealing. Both lay Jains and ascetics observe the Anuvrata of Celibacy (Brahmacharya Anuvrata) to varying degrees. It entails controlling sensuous cravings and channelling energy into spiritual endeavors. Jains are encouraged by the Anuvrata of Limited Possession (Aparigraha Anuvrata) to live a simple and modest life and to have as little attachment to material belongings as possible. It encourages contentment and disengagement from worldly cravings. Limiting consumption to necessities, avoiding excesses, and practicing moderation in food, clothes, and other areas of life are all part of the Anuvrata of Limiting Consumption (Parigraha Parimana Anuvrata). The Anuvrata of Limiting Acquisitions (Anarthadandaviramana Anuvrata) counsels against engaging in harmful or needless activities, accumulating material belongings, or participating in acts that can cause violence or harm to others. The Samsayik-





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viraman Anuvrata, also known as the Anuvrata of Avoiding Useless Occupations, tells Jains to stay away from risky or uncertain activities and instead focus on tasks that lead to clarity, understanding, and positive outcomes. Eating small amounts of prepared food is an Anuvrata of Eating Limited Pre-cooked Food (Niyam-sevan Anuvrata), which reflects moderation and attention in food consumption. In order to promote self-control and restraint in sensory pleasures, the Anuvrata of Abandoning Tasting (Ras-tyag Anuvrata) counsels Jains to refrain from indulging in excessive or superfluous taste sensations. The Anuvrata of Giving Up Extra Sensory Pleasures (Vyanjan-tyag Anuvrata) tells Jains not to indulge in complex or excessive sensory pleasures beyond what is needed for survival. By observing voluntary fasting on designated days, the Anuvrata of Voluntary Fast (Ati-viraman Anuvrata) encourages self-control and introspection. Jainism has always placed a strong emphasis on the ahimsa concept, which includes nonviolence in speech, action, and thought. This fundamental idea encourages a profound regard for all living things as well as a peaceful and kind relationship with the environment. By adopting a nonviolent stance, Jains hope to establish a society devoid of pain and suffering, where compassion and empathy govern all human dealings. In addition to ahimsa, the concept of anukampa, or compassion, inspires Jains to develop compassion and understanding for all living things. By acknowledging the intrinsic worth of every individual in the web of life, Anukampa cultivates a deep sense of oneness. This compassionate approach reflects a holistic and inclusive ethical vision, extending not only to fellow people but also to animals, plants, and even the smallest of organisms. The ethical precepts (dharma), represented in the Five Vows (Mahavratas), provide a thorough manual for leading a moral life. By upholding these principles—nonviolence, honesty, non-stealing, celibacy, and non-possessiveness—Jains aim for self-control and moral behavior in all spheres of life. Spiritual development, inner peace, and personal well-being are the results of dharma practice. The results of the study demonstrate the continued applicability of Jaina ethics in the modern world. The values of compassion, nonviolence, and ethical living provide important perspectives for dealing with urgent global issues like social injustice, environmental degradation, and violence. Communities and people are motivated by Jaina ethics to advance social justice, sustainable living, and ethical consumption. Despite its long history, Jaina ethics is still relevant to people from a wide range of backgrounds and adds to the global ethical conversation. Students and professionals learn a lot from Jain philosophy and apply its tenets to a variety of domains, including social welfare, animal rights, environmental preservation, and dispute settlement. Nonetheless, the study also takes into account criticisms from outside sources as well as internal discussions within the Jain community. It might be difficult to maintain the fundamentals of old traditions while adapting them to contemporary settings. Finding a balance between asceticism and social interaction raises concerns regarding the applicability of Jaina ethics in the modern world. (Laughlin, J. C., 2003).



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## **CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, it highlights the timeless wisdom and usefulness of Jaina ethics in fostering a world that is more compassionate, peaceful, and just. Jains and people of all backgrounds can help create a world marked by respect, empathy, and mutual care for all living beings by embracing nonviolence, developing compassion, and upholding ethical ideals. Jaina ethics is a timeless manual for creating a more enlightened and cohesive world society. It encourages people to strive for a more moral and compassionate way of living. One is raised from the common level by the methodical moral discipline established by Jaina philosophy, which enables him to know and live the truth via a very moral and spiritual path of action. Jainism regards the three priceless tenets of right belief, right knowledge, and right behavior as its foundation. On the other hand, adopting those recognized as genuine and unchangeable in life defines right conduct. Adopting these big vows, or the atomic vows, in life is recognized as proper behavior since Jaina philosophy in moral education acknowledges bondage and considers the powerful vows as the only way to achieve Moksha from bondage.

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