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Research Article

Role Of Guru Nanak Philosophy in The Modern Era

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Abstract

The teachings of Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism, remain highly relevant in the contemporary world. His philosophy emphasized universal brotherhood, equality, social justice, spiritual devotion, and honest living. In an era characterized by materialism, social inequality, religious conflicts, and moral challenges, Guru Nanak's teachings provide guidance for building a peaceful and ethical society. This paper explores the key principles of Guru Nanak's philosophy and examines their significance in addressing modern social, ethical, and educational issues.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Guru Nanak (1469–1539) was a great spiritual leader, social reformer, and philosopher whose teachings laid the foundation of Sikhism. He preached the message of “Ik Onkar” (One God) and emphasized the unity of humanity beyond the barriers of caste, religion, and nationality.

Guru Nanak travelled widely to spread his message of peace, equality, and devotion. His teachings challenged social discrimination, ritualism, and superstition. Even in the modern era, his philosophy provides moral and ethical guidance for individuals and societies facing various social and cultural challenges.

2. Core Principles of Guru Nanak’s Philosophy

2.1 Equality of Humanity -

Guru Nanak strongly opposed the caste system and social discrimination. He taught that all human beings are equal in the eyes of God. This principle is reflected in the Sikh tradition of Langar, where people from all backgrounds sit together and share food.

In the modern era, this teaching supports values such as: -

- social justice
- gender equality
- human rights.

2.2 Honest Living (Kirat Karni)

Guru Nanak emphasized the importance of earning a livelihood through honest means. According to him, a person should work diligently and avoid exploitation or corruption.

In today’s world, where corruption and unethical practices are common, this principle encourages: -

- integrity in professional life
- ethical business practices
- responsible citizenship.

2.3 Sharing with Others (Vand Chakna)

Another key teaching of Guru Nanak is the practice of sharing one’s resources with others, especially the poor and needy.

In the modern era, this concept promotes: -

- social responsibility
- community welfare
- charitable activities.

2.4 Devotion to God (Naam Japna)

Guru Nanak encouraged individuals to remember God through meditation and spiritual reflection. This practice helps individuals maintain inner peace and moral discipline.

In today’s fast-paced and stressful life, this philosophy contributes to:

- mental well-being
- spiritual balance
- emotional stability.

3. Relevance of Guru Nanak’s Philosophy in the Modern Era

3.1 Promoting Social Harmony

Modern societies often experience conflicts based on religion, ethnicity, and cultural differences. Guru Nanak’s teachings emphasize unity and mutual respect, which can help promote social harmony.

3.2 Encouraging Ethical Leadership

The modern world requires leaders who demonstrate honesty, humility, and compassion. Guru Nanak’s teachings provide a moral framework for ethical leadership in politics, education, and business.

3.3 Addressing Social Inequality

Guru Nanak strongly opposed discrimination and social injustice. His philosophy supports modern efforts to create an inclusive society where all individuals have equal opportunities.

3.4 Relevance in Education

Educational institutions can incorporate Guru Nanak’s values such as:

moral education
respect for diversity
service to humanity.

These values contribute to the development of responsible and compassionate citizens.

4. Challenges in Applying Guru Nanak’s Philosophy

Although Guru Nanak’s teachings are universally valuable, several challenges exist in implementing them in modern society:

- increasing materialism
- social inequality
- religious intolerance
- lack of moral education.

Addressing these challenges requires integrating ethical values into education, governance, and community life.

CONCLUSION

The philosophy of Guru Nanak continues to hold profound relevance in the modern era. His teachings emphasize equality, compassion, honest living, and devotion to God. These principles provide guidance for addressing many contemporary social and moral challenges. By adopting Guru Nanak’s

philosophy, individuals and societies can work toward building a more peaceful, ethical, and harmonious world.

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