CHAPTER-VI

Conclusion

Philosophy is a concept with multiple spectrums of branches and having endless sources. There have been countless thinkers or philosophers in the world over and India has been leading the world in the area of philosophy. Many wise heads have contributed in their own ways to understand the term ‘philosophy’ as also identify its prominent sources. Here, our main focus is on the concept of jnana (knowledge) in Indian philosophy from the analytical point of view of epistemology. Epistemology is considered as an integral part of philosophy. With the pace of development, the interest of scholars and philosophers has largely increased in the field of epistemology. The result is that epistemology has become the subject matter of all philosophical debates in various Schools of thought. Literal meaning of epistemology is the study of knowledge i.e. what does knowledge constitute, what are its defining features and the limits of knowledge and what is the worth of knowledge. Knowledge is acceptable as a valuable source but question arises how it is acquired. One of the renowned philosophers says that philosophy is divided into ontology and epistemology and he hints that valid knowledge is an important arena of philosophical theory. Knowledge is quality. It is generated in the soul of man. The souls are the loci of knowledge.¹

It is held that knowledge is one of the key issues related to life and the world and it has been recognized as an important trait of personality of an individual. Knowledge is also a source to obtain Moksa and is able to distinguish between real and unreal, temporary and permanent, good and bad etc. Knowledge may be valid or invalid. Valid knowledge (prama) is defined as the right apprehension of an object (yatharthanubhava).² When a person gets spiritual awareness, it is called jnana. Different Schools have studied the concept of jnana or knowledge from their own view points. Knowledge is termed as understanding, apprehension, concepts judgment, awareness and cognition. As the light of lamp shows physical things, in the same way knowledge personifies all objects which come across it. Valid knowledge is called yathartha and false knowledge is ayathartha. Jnana is comparable to sunlight which has quality and at the same time it has the
spectrum of colours. It is commonly said that knowledge is produced in the soul when it comes in contact with another soul. It is the result of relationship between two souls or soul with the body. Knowledge consists simply in the manifestation of objects. True knowledge is also called prama and untrue knowledge is called aprama. Valid knowledge is one which represents the real character of its objects.

The four great Vedas in the Indian Hindu philosophy are the oldest sources of secret knowledge in the world. All the six Brahmanical systems (Mimamsa, Vedanta, Samkhya Yoga, Nyaya, Vaisesika) accept Vedic authority. Jnana denotes all types of knowledge, true or false, which a man comes across. If we go into the views and thoughts of various Schools, we find the events of similarity as well as diversion. According to Nyaya, knowledge is a revelation of objects. According to them, knowledge is cognition, apprehension, consciousness or manifestation of objects. Gautama has used the term jnana and uplabdhi as definite synonyms of buddhi, sufficient for understanding the nature of knowledge. Mimamsa said that knowledge is the mode of self. It is described as an act or process. It is known only through inference and not through introspection. Valid means of knowledge raise the problem what is not to be accepted and what is to be accepted as a means of knowledge. The valid means of knowledge is self-evident. Truth does not require any proof and whatever is always true is not beyond knowledge. Nyaya states that there are four important aspects of epistemology. These are pramatra, prameya, pramati, and pramana. Although all these four aspects are equally important yet pramana is the most important. The Supreme importance of pramana is due to its being the direct cause of real knowledge. Pramatra is subject of adequate knowledge. Prameya, an object of adequate knowledge says that valid knowledge implies some prameya or object to which the process of knowledge refers. The object of knowledge may either be existent or non-existent. To know an object, we need means of knowing it. Therefore, every knowledge object has some characteristics. Pramati is the resulting state of cognition. It is the piece of adequate knowledge. Pramana is the means of valid knowledge and instrument of presentative knowledge. As per Vaisesika Sutra, means of knowledge are direct knowledge and inference. Pratasatapada in Bhasya on the Vaisesika Sutra nowhere defines valid knowledge but he distinguishes between valid cognition and invalid cognition. Valid cognition
includes perception, inference, and also the intuitions of seers. Cognition includes doubt, illusion, indefinite cognition and dream. Samkhya states that all valid knowledge has the factors like pramata, prameya, and pramana. Purva Mimamsa maintains that an act of knowledge has four causes: (1) the knower, (2) the object of knowledge, (3) the instrument of knowledge, and (4) the result of knowledge. However, according to Prabhakara, there are three factors called triviti means the knower himself, the known object, and the knowledge of itself. Advaita and Pratsatapada consider three distinguishing features of all valid knowledge, viz. (1) The objects are not remembered as having been previously known. (2) It conforms to the real nature of its objects. (3) There is a feeling of conviction regarding its conformity with the real object. According to Advaita, valid knowledge is one which possesses non-contradictions and novelty. The cognition has the three elements (i) the knower (ii) the object, and (iii) the cognition.

_Prama_ or right knowledge is one which has not been contradicted by experiences. Mimamsa says that the root ‘prama’ means real or actual experience. It shows the knowing of an unknown element. According to Kumarila Bhatta, pramana is definite and assured cognition of object which does not require confirmation by cognition. It has been defined as karana or instrument or means of knowledge and right cognition. Prama is directly related to Pramiti. Nyaya recognizes the special cause of knowledge (pramana) as the important factor. Vatsyayana defines pramana as a source of valid knowledge. Vatsyayana, commenting on the first Sutra of Gautama says that study of sources of knowledge (pramana) is necessary because through it we can know the reality and thereby guide our actions to attain the desirable and avoid sufferings. According to Samkhya Karika of Isvarakrsna, pramana is defined as an object proved to exist and it is of three kinds namely sense cognition, inference and reliable testimony. Yoga also holds a similar view.

There are certain things which do not give us any clue of definite knowledge. They create hindrances in getting the true knowledge. The following terms constitute the obstacles in the way of definite knowledge. Doubt is an unpleasant state of mind in which a person is double minded, whether to agree or not to agree. It is reflection of uncertainty and is not valid knowledge. Error shows misrepresentation, wrong state of mind, wrong perception or false guess work. It is a sort of misapprehension. Theories of illusions or errors are called khyatis, such as Satkhyati, Ramanuj,
Atamkhyati, Viparitkhyati, Akhyatkhayti, Anirvachinakhayti. Indian theory of knowledge is divided broadly into two classes called svatha pramanaya and praratha pramanya. According to svatha pramanaya, whenever knowledge arises, it is presumed to be right. According to praratha pramanaya, knowledge by itself does not validate anything or proves its truth or falsity. It is to be known through some text. The Mimamsakas and Naiyayikas in their opinion differ about the validity of knowledge. Among the various means of knowledge are perception (pratyaksa), inference (anumana), comparison (upamana), testimony (sabda), presumption (arthapati) and non-existence (bhava). Among them, the Nyaya School of Indian philosophy has recognized perception, inference, comparison, and verbal testimony as the different sources of true knowledge. The Vaisasika School, on the other hand, recognizes only two sources of true valid knowledge - perception and inference. The Samkhya accepts the three pramanas of perception, inference and scriptural testimony. Yoga School says that there are three independent sources of knowledge, viz. perception, inference, and scriptural testimony. Mimamsa School, in addition to perception, subscribes to five other sources of knowledge namely inference, comparison, testimony, arthapatti (implication) and anupalabdhi (non apprehension). The Vedanta School recognizes perception, inference, comparison, testimony, presumption and non-existence as the sources of knowledge.

The concept of perception has been studied deeply in the second chapter of this study. Perception is considered to be an important source by all the orthodox Schools of Indian philosophy. All the Schools have contributed significantly in the field of perception. The concept of perception has been accepted as a major source of true knowledge. All Schools of Indian philosophical thought have done a lot of brain storming on the concept of perception or pratyaksa as a source of valid knowledge. The word 'pratyaksa' constitutes pratya and aksa which indicate towards the sense organs in respect of their real objects. Sense organs find a place of value in the theory of perception. The contact of the sense organs with the objects is termed as nimata karana or cause of perception. God has given us five prominent sense organs such as eye, ear, nose, tongue and skin. Perception knowledge is indubitable, presentative and immediate. The Indian Schools of philosophical thought have defined perception in their own manner. Gautama defines
perception in *Nyaya Sutra*. He defines perception as non-erroneous cognition which is produced by the intercourse of the sense organ with the objects, which is not associated with a name and which is well-defined.\(^5\) Another authority of Nyaya School, namely, Uddoytarkara *pratyaksa* holds that perception is related to the senses. The view given by Gautama of the same School was almost accepted except by other Nyaya philosophers at the latter stage. Vaisesika says that perception enables us to apprehend substance, qualities and action about anything. It is a kind of knowledge that generates from within the self. The self-mind, sense organs and objects and contacts between them are necessary for perception. There can be no perception unless self is in contact with *manas* and subsequent manas with the sense organs. The old School of Nyaya defines sense as contact object. However, Nyaya School deviating from the old Nyaya School says that perception is direct and immediate knowledge but it is not derived from the channel of some other knowledge. It is, therefore, quite evident that perception has direct relationship with the sense organs. Yoga, which is an allied system of Samkhya philosophy, also recognizes that perception is an independent source of knowledge. Samkhya system is known for three different additions about the definition of concept of perception: first is initiated in the *Samkhya Sutra* by Kapila, the founder of the form of object being related to it; the second definition is given by Vindyavaswamin who says that the sense organs come in contact with their respective objects and is accordingly modified in the form of object; and the third definition given by Isvarakrsana says that perception is determinate knowledge in respect of every individual object. So, knowledge of all types is the function of the attributes of *buddhi*. *Buddhi* means sense of both, the actual agent of mind and the means of knowing. Mimamsa School defines perception in terms of sense objects contact. In *Mimamsa Sutra* 1.1.4, Kumarila Bhatta says that the definition of direct knowledge will be the knowledge obtained by a person as a result of right functions of the sense organs with reference to their objects. Prabhakara of this School holds that perception is the direct cognition of an object which is the immediate knowledge of the subject. His theory of perception is called *triputikaravada* which he has called *Brhati*. It is related to an object, the self and the cognition. Jaimini of the same School says that perception is a cognition produced in the self by sense objects contact. It apprehends the existing things and not the super sensual morals. The theory of Prabhakara of triple perception has been again elaborated by Slinkanta Misra in his Rjuimala and Prakarakarna
Pancika. Slikanta Parkarana Pancika defines perception as direct apprehension of the object through sense contact. The perception of Vedanta on the subject is identical with the object as he feels that both have the same consciousness. However, the subject and the object remain separate in order to cover ignorance by the direct union of arthakarana, through the sense and the form of the object highlighted by the covering of ignorance.

Having gone through all the definitions of six Schools of different philosophers, it is concluded that sense objects contact is the essential nature of perception. All of them have tried to analyze perception in various ways. From a particular angle perception contains two distinguishing features of ordinary and extraordinary or laukika and alaukika. In the ordinary perception knowledge comes from contact of the sense organs with the object. But immediate knowledge can also be obtained from extraordinary perception. There are two classes of ordinary perception, viz. determinate and indeterminate perception. Determinate perception is the perception of an object as qualified by certain attributes, while indeterminate perception is primary cognition of an object, just as looking real without any characterization as something. There is no association with a name of the indeterminate perception. But determinate perception has association with name. Samkhya has defined indeterminate perception as vague awareness but it comes clear and distinguished latter on through analysis, synthesis and interpretation. They refer to indeterminate perception as the immediate pure, simple cognition of an object. Advaita and Samkhya both admit that at the nirvikalpa level, the relation between the object and qualities is not present. Advaita accepts indeterminate perception knowledge but not its substances and qualifying attributes. However Nyaya and Mimamsa recognize the validity of both these types. Ordinary perception has further been segregated as internal and external. Nyaya and Mimamsa have mentioned that there are six sense organs out of which five are external and one is internal. Among the external are visual, tactual, auditory, olfactory, gaustory, and internal is manas (mind). On the other hand, Samkhya system adds five more senses, viz. sense of action, locomotion, speech, hand, feet, rectum and the sex organs. All these perform functions of speaking, grasping, hearing, locomotion, evacuator and reproduction. These views have also been accepted by Vedanta. Extraordinary perception is of three kinds- Samanyalaksana, Jnanalaksana and Yogaja. The relation in samanayalaksana has
the feature of generality of the class nature. When we perceive of particulars of the class, we also perceive in general and without it we cannot explain universal propositions. We can explain negative judgment only with the help of indirect contact. *Jnanalaksana* acts as a contact in the perception; *laksana* denotes the nature of *savrupa*. The contact in which *jnana* becomes essential is called *jnanasaninkarsa*. In it, the object is not indirectly presented through sense organs, but it is indirectly presented in the sense with the previous cognition of it. It is also called initiative perception or immediate sense relation to some supernatural power in *jnana*. The Mimamasakas do not support the theory of Yogic intuition, by which the yogis are said to apprehend objects which are past and future, imperceptible and distant. All the systems of Indian philosophy have the authority of the scriptures and have mostly accepted it.

In third chapter, an effort has been made to develop *anumana* as a source of knowledge, ‘*anu*’ means ‘after’ and ‘*mana*’ means ‘knowledge’, meaning thereby the cognition which becomes true knowledge. This view accepted by inference is explained in two parts, namely, *Vyapti* and *paksadharamata*. For example, when we find some children dressed in a School uniform, coming out of building or when we listen to the melodious music, ringing in a street, we can infer that there must be celebrations. Thus, there is some happening or *Vyapti* or there is sweet music of a happy occasion. Inference is a process of reasoning in which we know some unperceived character of a thing through the medium of mark which is present in the thing. It is known to be universally related to that character, when we listen to the melodious music. It is a mental judgment that there is some happy occasion. So, it is observed by listening. If there is a celebration, but we don’t listen by music, therefore, we cannot infer that there is some happy occasion. Orthodox systems of Indian philosophy define *anumana* as a process of knowing the truth not by direct observation but by means of knowledge of *Vyapti*. Nyaya system has defined inference as the knowledge of an object not by direct observation, but by means of the knowledge of the sign and symbol which has universal relationship with the objects of inference. It is an independent source of knowledge. It is concerned either with what is absolutely unknown or what is surely known. It relates to objects which are of doubtful means or objects which have reason to believe but which have not yet been correctly corroborated. Inference is knowledge of an object
due to a previous knowledge of some sign. Anumana is that knowledge which is preceded by perception. Inference is used for two things, namely, inferential cognition anumiti and instrument of informational cognition (anumiti) and instrument of informational cognition (anumitikarana). According to Uddyoyotakara, inference etymological means that from which such valid knowledge results come latter. He also says that valid inferential knowledge comes from the right ascertainmet of the probans, which is invariably related to the probandum. Inferential knowledge is the instrument of knowledge of desirability. Anumana is sometimes defined as knowledge which is preceded by perception. According to Advaita, inference, strictly speaking, follows only from the knowledge of a concomitance expressed in a universal affirmation proposition as where there is smoke, there is fire. Gautama refers to a triple classification of inference. The term denoting the three classes’ Purvat, Sesavat, and Samanayatodrsta. Purvat is the inference of effects from the cause Sesavat. In the cause of inference, we perceive the consequent and infer the antecedent. Samanayatodrsta inference provides knowledge of any unperceived object. Inference is of two-fold; one that which resolves a doubt in one's own mind (svarth), and the other that which does so in another's (prartha). In inference there are five syllogisms, i.e., 1. Pratijna or the proposition; the hill is on fire; 2. Hetu, or the reason; because it smokes; 3. Udarana; or the explanatory example, whatever shows fire shows smoke, e.g. a kitchen; 4. Upanaya or the application; so is this hill; 5. Nigmana, or the statement of the conclusion; therefore the hill is on fire. Mimamsakas recognize only three members of syllogism. The different constitutes of inference are; the thing we infer is called Sadhya, i.e., probandum in the above example, it is fire, 2. the thing that with whose help we infer is called Hetu, i.e., 3 the locus or the place in which we prove, i.e., the Paksa, the subject of the inference; whenever we infer, we have to pass through three stages.

According to Bhasarvajna, quoted in Nyaya Sara, inference is a means to know things beyond the range of sense with another thing within the same range. Vaisesika states that the knowledge of inference is acquired from the mark from which the existence of probandum is inferred. Kanadas, the founder of Vaisesika systems holds inference as the knowledge of probandum got from the knowledge of probans. As per the definition of Samkhya Sutra, inference
as a source of knowledge is invariably associated with Vyapta through the knowledge with
invariable association. Gautama of the Nyaya Sutra has also held it by the same meaning as the
system of Samkhya Yoga. Samkhya also says that anumana is the knowledge taken from sign and
signate. In Yogabhasa of Vyasa, it is modification of citta brought about by the relation which
exists in the objects of homogeneous nature and does not exist in the objects of heterogeneous
nature. It ascertains mainly the generic nature of the objects. According to Sabara, inference is the
knowledge of an unperceived object, which is not present in a sense organ. Inference has been
defined by Jyayatirtha in Nyaya Suddha as flawless reasoning from a mark to a certain conclusion
on the basis of invariable relationship which subsist them. According to Vedanta, inference is
made by the notion of concomitance (Vyapti jnana) between two things, actions through specific
past impression (sanskara). The Samkhya, the Yoga, the Mimamsa and Vedanta systems regard
inference as the perceived through knowledge of the other term which is not perceived and
explicitly understood as invariably related to the first term. Majority of philosophers have held that
Vyapti and paksadharmata are the main basis of inference which is generally a judgment of
perception, (when smoke can be perceived in the hill if there is inference of fire there) and this way
with concomitance of the reason can be left with predicate.

According to the Sanskrit language, vyap means to pervade. Vyapti is known by single
observation of the co-presence of the proban and probandum. It is known by repeated observation
of their co-presence and co-absence. Vatsayayana considers that Vyapti is the logical ground of
inference. Vyapti means the co-presence co-absence, co-presence- absence of hetu and Sadhya.
Vacaspati, Jayanta, Udayana and Varadaraja have defined Vyapti as uniform, unconditional,
natural relation between the reason and the predicate. Vyapti serves as basis of Nyaya syllogism.
Vaisesika says that Vyapti is a relation between a cause and effect. Samkhya Sutra says that Vyapti
can be positive and negative. According to Mimamsa School, Vyapti is a simple assertoric
judgment but a necessary judgment. Kumarila, states Vyapti is induction per simple enumeration.
It is extracted from a limited number of observed cases. Advaita Vedanta opines that Vyapti is
taken from the uncontradicted experience of agreement present between two things. Facallcy is
called hetubhasa and it means that a hetu or reason appears to be real or appropriate in reality but it is not so.

Comparison as a source of knowledge has been critically examined in fourth chapter of the current study. *Upamana* has been dealt within chapter four in this degustation, which is considered as an important ingredient of *jnana*. *Upamana* has also been a matter of great discussion and mind blowing exercise at the end of many philosophers and scholars. It has acquired a prominent place in the science of philosophy dealing with *jnana*. According to Nyaya School, the third kind of valid cognition is *upamati* and its means is called *upamana*. It is that knowledge which is obtained from comparison. *Upamana* is accepted as valid source of knowledge by Advaita, Nyaya and Mimamsa Schools but there are some Schools such as Vaisesika, Samkhya Yoga which do not accept *upamana* as an independent source of valid knowledge. It is defined in various senses as comparison, identification, analogy, knowledge by similarity. It is also defined as the source of our knowledge about the relation between word and its denotation. But such kind of knowledge depends upon authority of a person. Otherwise also, *upamana* is made of two words such as “upa” meaning ‘sadrṣya’ or similarity ‘mana’ means knowledge. It has an important role in our daily life. It is a process of reasoning by which we know that a word means a certain class of objects on the basis of authoritative statement.

According to Advaita, *upamana* is a source of valid knowledge. Mimamsa defines that the instrument of knowledge is the result of cognition of similarity. This differs from Nyaya view which describes *upamana* as the relationship between a name and an object denoted by it. The Purva Mimamsa and Advaita Vedantists are on the one side and Naiyayikas on other.

The founder of the Nyaya School, Gautama first introduced *upamana* by name. According to Naiyayikas *upamana* is one of the four pramanas. It, however, remains a controversy whether it is an independent pramana or not. It is the identification or previously unknown object from its description given by a reliable person. Therefore, Nyaya says that *Upamana* is a way of knowing the denotation of words and solving the problem from identification. Vatsyayana is the first person who gave clarification about the idea of the utility upon *upamana* by establishing the relation
between the naming word and object. Such analogies are of great practical value in everyday life and many things are known through *upamana*. Therefore, *upamana* is an efficient instrument of valid knowledge and so it should be regarded as instrument of valid knowledge and also as separate *pramana*.

According to Bhasarakara, the purpose of *upamana* is the knowledge of a relation with the corresponding object. But Uddyyotkara has a different opinion and he says that the mere knowledge of similarity cannot lead to the knowledge of the relation of the name with the particular class of objects. Gangesa defines comparison as the knowledge that a word denotes the generic character of an unfamiliar object which co-exists with its similarity or dissimilarity with known object. Gautama argues for it not being perception and says that its contents include a reference to the linguistic usage of that which cannot be perceived. Vacaspati Misra’s views about *upamana* are the same as those of Gautama and Vatsayayana. He, however, emphasizes that the essential value of knowledge by similarity consist in a definite identification of an object by a certain name. The Advaitins differ with the Naiyayikas in their definition of *upamiti*. *Upamiti* is defined as the knowledge derived through similarity between two things. *Upamiti* is not obtained through the knowledge of dissimilarity.

According to Mimamsakas, it is a separate *pramana*. Knowledge of similarity about absent object is obtained by means of known utility of *upamana*. It helps us to get the knowledge of sacrificial details in case of rite. According to Mimamsakas comparison may be brought under two leads, namely, comparison by similarity and comparison by dissimilarity. Kumarila interpretations say that *upamana* is the cognition of remembered things qualified by its similarity to perceive things. Varadaraja has given a wide definition of *upamana*. According to him it is the cognition through the perception of an object denoted by a name accruing in the statement of an authoritative person who does not know the meaning of name. It should not be restricted to the perceptive of similarity alone. Uddyotokara introduces the element of *vardayana* as basis of *upamana* in addition to *sadsayajñana*. He justifies his aphorism and comprehends *vardharmya* as well.
The most common and effective source of valid human knowledge i.e. testimony has been studied analytically in the sixth chapter. Orthodox School of Indian Philosophy (tradition) accepted Sabda as deemed valid source of knowledge. Sabda is also known as agama as well as authoritative statement. Verbal testimony or the knowledge of object derived through words Apta (the testimony of trustworthy person) is known as valid testimony. When meaning of Sabda has been properly and carefully understood on that time it is deemed valid. Mimamsa pays much important to Sabda pramana. (It is the knowledge of supra sensible defects which is produced by the comprehensions of the meanings of words). The verbal testimony includes not only the scripture (the Vedas) but also the statement made by worldly person who knows the truth and communicates it correctly.

Vedanta states Sabda Pramana as agama and aptavakayas. Nyaya finds it as a reliable statement. In Nyaya Sutra 1.1.7 Gautama defines testimony as the instruction assertion of a reliable person. In Nyaya Darsna testimony is the direction of an apta, i.e., the one be he a seer or a man of culture or a savage, who possesses true knowledge is truthful.

Verbal testimony is the statement (srutis) of the reliable (apta) is defined in Samkhaya Karika. There are two kinds of Sabda: (1) the reliable person, and (2) the scripture. All these things are derived via words. Vatsayayana defines in Nyaya Bhasya word as an instruction of a trustworthy person intending to convey the sense understood from elders nevertheless.

Samkhya Sutra defined the relation between a word and its meaning which is determined by three means; first, the direct instruction of the competent teachers; second, the practice of the experienced person; third, association of the word with another well-known word or association with the words already known. The relation between a word and a word sense is determined by God, according to Nyaya School.

Mimamsakas upholds the theory of the eternality of the word and the Naiyayikas regards the word as non-eternal. It seems that Mimamsakas and the Naiyayikas differ from one another regarding eternality of words. The Samkhyas, like holds that the relation between the word and the
object stated is learnt from elders and is natural. For example, the child knows the denotative relation with reference to the object which is in operation and the activity and the desisting from activity is possible in case of an individual object only, so it is cleared that Samkhya defined word denotes a *vyakti* and his theory is known as *Vyativada*. Nyaya states that the relation between the word and its meaning is not due to nature, but it is due to convention. Our experience of acquiring knowledge also says. So, Vedanta says that the relation between a word and its meaning is natural and eternal, and not conventional.

Nyaya defines that words are not eternal and language is due to the divine will or the convention. On the other hand Mimamsakas refutes this view and points out that only the sounds and the symbols are created and destroyed, while the real words are eternal. According to Mimamsakas, the words are created in the form of sounds by human effort. The Naiyayikas holds that the words do not exist before they are produced by human effort. According to Mimamsakas, sentence may be of two kinds; first those uttered by men; and second belong to the Vedas, which becomes a valid means of knowledge, when it is not uttered by untrustworthy persons. Mimamsakas accepts that Vedas are not composed by any person, these are self-revealed and had no beginning in the time or at the end were eternal, their authority was not derived from the authority of any trustworthy person or God and their words are valid in themselves. Samkhya defines the Vedas are not eternal because they themselves speak of their production. Supreme Isvara is the eternal author of the Vedas as considered by Annambhatta, Vatsyayana and later Naiyayikas. *Samkhya Sutra* accepts that Vedas are not eternal; no person can be their author because they themselves speak of their production. However, Vedantists are of the opinion that the *Vedas* are the creation of God.¹⁴

The meaning of a sentence depends on (i) ākānksā, mutual need or interdependence, or the inability of a word to indicate the intended sense in the absence of another word, (ii) Yogyata, or compatibility or fitness or the capacity to accord with the sense of the sentence and not render it futile and meaningless, (iii) Sannidhi, propinquity, juxtaposition or the utterance of words in quick succession without a long pause between one word and another. Gangesa adds a fourth condition, namely, knowledge of the intention of the speaker.
A statement, a cluster of words or *padas*, is arranged in a certain way. A word is a group of letters arranged in a settled order to express meaning. However, if contribution of each is evaluated to the cause of *jnana* as a source of knowledge, it is found that *sabda* has upper edge over others it is the domination source of knowledge. The perception (*pratyaksa*) is confined to the sense contact only and that contact is very limited. Philosophers have tried to use perception on scientific lines but it has not been able to cross the limit of our experience and sensation. The inference (*anumana*) according to the Indian tradition is also dependent on the perception. Many times we fail to make proper inference due to lack of required method. The comparison (*upamana*) is, no doubt, an interesting source of knowledge in practical life because many things are known by comparison of different things which seem to be similar in sense object but *upamana* cannot be used in case of heterogeneous things or where homogeneous unit of the things being compared are not available. For example by comparing one son of a person with his second son we cannot say are physically strong; *upamana* is possible only in a well-structured arrangement. The scope of the *sabda pramana* is quite open and not confined to any particular area of philosopher thought. We constantly get varied information, direction and knowledge through words. Right from School days to this moment we use words as valid and effective means of bringing about awareness of things, ideas or emotion. Books, magazines, movies, newspapers, letters, conversation, songs, chats, radio, television etc. - all depend on words for use. Therefore, we cannot do without *Sabda*.

The circle of verbal knowledge and scope is expanding day by day with the advancement of modern sciences. *Sabda pramana* is a subject matter unending study and it is likely to continue till eternity to contribute to knowledge. *Sabda* is most valuable source of knowledge as it is uttered by a most reliable or trustworthy person. *Sabda* is therefore credited with everything which enables a man to find solace in this materialistic world and ultimately attain the much contemplated ‘*Moksha*’. While concluding, it can be said that epistemology, the study of knowledge, is an essential part of philosophy. The valid knowledge can only be attained through its study. Gautama while emphasizing upon the significance of knowledge states that study of sources of knowledge is necessary through it we can know the reality and thereby guide our actions to attain the desirable and avoid suffering, Perception (*pratyaksa*), Inference (*anumana*), Comparison (*upamana*),
Testimony (sabda), Presumption (arthapati) and Non-existence (bhava) are the various means of knowledge recognized by different schools of Indian Philosophy. However, it is found that sabda is the most effective and valuable means of knowledge in the present day. The four important aspects of epistemology include Pramatra, Prameya, Pramiti and Parmana. The study provides that all these aspects are equally important, yet Parmana is the most important due to it’s being the direct cause of real knowledge.
References

6. Ibid., p.196.
8. Ibid., p.57.
9. Ibid., p.460.
13. Ibid, p.35.