Chapter 1

Introduction

Everybody is familiar with the word knowledge. This term is used most commonly by everyone but in different context. The honorific aspects knowledge is something with a considerable degree of familiarity, gained through experience or contact or association with the individual or thing, so known. When we say ‘I know’ or ‘I am aware’ or ‘I am acquainted’ we refer to our knowledge of that particular entity. So knowledge may be defined as familiarity gained by actual experience, practical skill and acquaintance. We can speak of knowing in the sense of being familiar with, a person or a place, or knowing something in the sense of having had prior experience of it. By knowledge, we mean acquaintance with the facts or we can say knowledge is the intellectual experience with perception of truth. Therefore without intellect there is no knowledge, without feeling there is no knowledge, and without doing and experiencing the effects, the self and its object of this doing, there is no knowledge.

Russell analysis mind do not create truth or false hood. They create belief. Rhyle has pointed out that by our knowledge we may also refer to our capabilities. Shefali Gupta emphasize that knowledge is something more than belief or opinion. Knowledge has got an observational foundation. The observation is natural of interpretation. Ayer says that there, is on the subjective side, no difference in kind between knowing and
believing or alternatively that knowing is a special sort of mental act. He concludes that the necessary and sufficient conditions for knowing something are, first that what one has said to be know be true, secondly that one be sure of it and thirdly that one should have the right to be sure.

Something becomes knowledge when some one knows it. The totality of ideas is conserved by human knowledge. The knowledge is the universe of ideas. Knowledge is the some total of what is known. The whole body of truth, fact, information, principles or other objects of cognitions are acquired by mankind. Man has always longed to communicate to share the ideas and experiences with others, to create new ideas, concepts and things and to preserve them for the benefit and use of posterity. This innate desire of man has made him a superman, a rational thinker. It is rationally brought to him volumes of information, which collected together is known as 'knowledge'. The ability of human beings to think, acquire, learn, organize and decimate knowledge in infinity of variations differentiate them (as Homo sapiens) from other animals. There are many sources like, perceptions, senses and intention from which knowledge emerges.

Man is the only living animal who attains knowledge and distributes knowledge. Man has got an ability to reason and analyze: Man always comes in contact with new thoughts and with the development of their new thoughts knowledge also develops. Thus when man, i.e. knower, knows the entities i.e. knowee, then knowledge is established. There can be no
knowledge without a knower. Man may know not all things, but things beyond man’s knowledge are knowable. Thus the knowledge extends to all things knowable to all kinds of knower, to all the modes of knowledge, and all the methods of knowing. When a man or knower accepts the things or concepts, the knowledge is created.

The simplest mode of knowing is for the knower to perceive the knowee with the aid of one of the primary senses. This action may be called primary perception. In due course the mode of knowing goes beyond perception and association, it includes reasoning. Thus when a man concentrate on a concept and with the help of experiments and analysis comes to a conclusion then it is called systematic knowledge. In other words we can say that when abstract knowledge becomes concrete knowledge it is called systematic knowledge. We can say that knowledge is universe of ideas. Knowledge is the result of human urges, for food, shelter and cloth and for spending comfortable life. The object of knowledge is different from one another and varies according to their qualities. This each cognition is of specific nature, which is determined by the qualities of the object. On this basis, the nature of knowledge may be rational, intuitive and scientific.

Knowledge is relative to reality, coherent, organized and systematic with a unity in tendency. Man is an intelligent animal, which has the ability to think, reason and analyze always increases his stock of knowledge. We can say that knowledge is the intellectual achievement of man. Knowledge is
the outcome of human mind. The knowledge, that we have today is the outcome of sources perception, intuition etc.

The knowledge that we have today is the resultant outcome of our total experiences gained through perception, intellect and intuition. Knowledge is the totality of information preserved for posterity. The word knowledge is an assured belief or that which is known. When knower and knowee are brought in to relation the knower knows the knowee, knowledge emerges. Impact between the two gives birth to knowledge. The knower is always man and knowee is made up of entities i.e. things or concepts. When man knows the entities, knowledge is established. Knowledge is the study of objects. On the basis of characteristics of objects, different persons classify knowledge, at different times in different ways in to various classes.

From the time immemorial man has been trying to arrange and systematize knowledge. Different persons approached knowledge from different angles and different viewpoints. Each one is having his own way of thinking about the systematization of knowledge. Mind is the chief instrument of knowledge. The man is above all and has intelligent will. He knows his object, the things known as he acts upon it, moves it, moulds it, makes or destroys or modifies it and he himself moved or otherwise affected by it. Different philosophers and scientists have classified the universe of knowledge in to various disciples or broad subject areas.
Knowledge is a result of human urges and develops through research. Knowledge is the result of human endeavors and past experience accumulated through generations. Knowledge is the sum total of known and unknown entities and acquired from generation to generation, civilization to civilization.

As thinking animal man has got an ability to reason and analyze. With this ability he continuously increases his stock of knowledge. Man always comes in contact of new thoughts, and with the development of new thoughts knowledge also develops. Man has got longer life. He lives for three generations in a family within society. So he has to face a lot of problems. And this is the vital force behind the emergence, development of new aspects of knowledge. In fact the history of man on earth is the history of knowledge. Man acquires knowledge and so he is greatest of all living beings. He is an intelligent animal. He observes the things around him, acquires knowledge about them applies intellect on it and brings out new discoveries. It is the intellect in man that has put him to the path of thinking, reasoning and analyzing slowly but steadily. Thus man is continuously generating knowledge. He can require, return, communicate and apply knowledge. He acquires knowledge in a number of ways.

Man acquires knowledge with the help of five senses viz sense of sight, sense of hearing, sense of smell, sense of taste and sense of touch is called perception. The organs concerned with these senses are eye, ear,
nose, tongue and skin. When we come in contact of an object, one of these sense organs gets stimulated and we acquire about the properties of that particular object. For example, we touch a table and we touch a book and through sense of touch we acquire knowledge that the hardness of the table is more than that the hardness of the book. In this method we acquire knowledge by direct observation through sense organs like lime is sour and flower is pink.

As a conclusion we can find that there are two allied powers in man; knowledge and wisdom. Knowledge is so much of the truth seen in a distorted medium as the mind arrives at by groping.

Knowledge is the result of human thoughts, human needs and human achievements. Man’s desire to know more and more about this world has led him from primitive superstition to modern scientific knowledge.

The Problem of epistemology in India

The theory of knowledge in different schools of Indian philosophy is an elaborate one. Because everywhere we can see the idea, knowledge alone is real. Or every schools of philosophy erected their ideas on the basis of knowledge. What is the ultimate reality? What is the absolute truth or through which way we can attain that reality, are the problems, which they had been, faced everywhere. On the basis of this idea Indian philosophy developed.
A natural and necessary tendency in human beings, to know themselves and the world in which they live, lead them to seek the ultimate reality.

Knowledge is a cognitive experience and it is different from non-cognitive experiences such as willing, feeling etc. which are derived from emotional states or voluntary acts. The notion of truth and falsity imply that knowledge is a mode of consciousness, which is determined solely by the object.

Knowledge is the result of human thoughts, human needs and human achievements. Man’s desire to know more and more about this world has led him from primitive superstition to modern scientific knowledge. Ayurveda says that, food, sleep, fear, sex are the things, which are common in animals and also human beings. But knowledge is extra quality in human beings. Hence men without knowledge are equal to animals.

Knowledge is so much of the truth seen in a distorted medium as the mind arrives at by groping. What men call knowledge is the reasoned acceptance of false appearances? What is false appearance? And what is
real appearance? And what is the criteria behind this acceptance and how to accept?

The Naiyāyika cum Vaiśeṣika says that a sense organ comes in contact with the object and, mind is conjoined to the soul, the perception of an object follow (आल्ला मनसा संयुक्ते मनमिन्द्रियेण इत्रियम्यथा)⁷. Mind has atomic size therefore the perception of many object at a time is excluded by the above process of perception. Knowledge does nothing else except removing ignorance. Sāstra only generates right knowledge. Saṅkara repeatedly asserts that the absolute can be realized through knowledge and knowledge alone.

Man’s discoveries of certain subjects are called knowledge. It may be true or false. The distinction between true and false or the awareness of this distinction naturally leads him to enquire into the origin and validity of all knowledge. Such a study is a systematic reflection concerning knowledge and which takes knowledge itself as the object of science is epistemology. It is clear that the acquirement of knowledge is common to all men but the process of acquiring may be different. In India the first epistemological analysis is to be found in Gouthama’s Nyāyasūtra. And in India for a few centuries epistemology came to be regarded only as an important but an indispensable part of the philosophic discipline. As a science of knowledge which it is accepted to be on all hands, epistemology has to be considered in
its relation to such other sciences as metaphysics, psychology and logic, which also treat of the same subject.

An examination of knowledge, such as epistemology undertakes, provides however a method of metaphysical enquiry and criticism, and we find that in the history of philosophy, whether consciously or unconsciously it has been used as such. This is most true of our own times, when all metaphysical problems are attacked through an analysis of knowledge; and again all philosophical criticism is usually based upon epistemological ground. The same conception is implied in the term pramāṇa in Indian philosophy, which signifies both means of knowledge and means of proof. The beginnings of the analysis of knowledge in Indian philosophy, first psychological and then epistemological were due to a need on the part of the thinkers to find means of proof for the beliefs which they had come to hold, for their own satisfaction, but still more for producing conviction in others. This is evident from the fact that systematic logic in India took its rise from such rules and forms of debating as we found in some of the works of the early period. In practical we find that while works on epistemology confine themselves to a general treatment of the means of knowledge and the criterion of truth, those on logic undertake a detailed analysis and classification of the forms of knowledge and error, such as rules of definition and division, syllogistic inference, the classification of fallacies, although in this respect for the practice varies greatly. In Indian philosophy
epistemology was always treated as a part of logic. It is intimately connected with psychology because discussing the validity of the various means of knowledge this has to depend upon an analysis of the mental process leading to them.

To come to the details of the analysis of knowledge in Indian philosophy it may be said that the means of knowledge which have been considered possible and have been discussed are, प्रत्येक्षम् (perception) अनुमानम् (inference) उपमानम् (comparison) शब्दम् (testimony) अर्थ्रूपि (presumption) अनुपलब्धि (non-apprehension) साम्यम् (implication) and ऐतिह्यम् (tradition).

The first distinction in the analysis of knowledge, the signs of which are tracable even as early as some of the Hymns of the Rgveda, was that between knowledge of things immediately present to the sense (प्रत्येक्षम्) and those remote from the senses (प्रत्येक्षम्). Of these the latter were supposed to be known by divine testimony, or by reflection.

The first treatment of the means of knowledge, which forms the nearest approach to the later systematic exposition of the same in Nyāyasūtras is to be found in the Caraka Samhitā, in which there is also a remarkable discourse in the limitations of sense cognition and the need of having recourse to verbal testimony and inference. The classification of knowledge as found in the Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra of Budhism is extremely complex and confused. The one point to remember about the results of the
influence on one school on another is that it was mostly the formal aspects of logic that was affected; the main epistemological doctrines of each school remained unchanged.

Besides works, which strictly belonged to the category of logic, there were others which owed their origin to a different class of literature but which also contain valuable matter on epistemology. Such are some of the works of the Mīmāṃsā and the Vēdānta Schools. Not much epistemology can be found in the Mīmāṃsa and the Vēdānta themselves but the later exponents of their doctrines like Kumarilla and Prābhākara of the Mīmāṃsa School and Saṅkara and Rāmānuja of the Vēdānta have made distinct contributions to epistemological thought. And as they lived and wrote in times when the philosophical doctrines of the various schools had been more or less consolidated and zeal to defend them against the attacks of opponents was at its highest level. Some portions of their works contain acute metaphysical speculation and show a fairly high standard of epistemological criticism. Gāṅgēśa represents the culminating point in the development of the epistemological analysis. In his hands the study became rather formal and it continued to be so in the works if his followers for a long time. There grew up, however after Gāṅgēśa another set of authors, who tried to combine the logic of the Nyāya and Vaiśeṣika schools by writing short manuals and reverted to the old practice of dealing with the means of knowledge (प्रमाण) along with the objects of knowledge (प्रमेय).
The only sources of our knowledge of this materialistic system are the chapter dealing with it in the Sarvadarśanasāṅgraha of Madhāvacarya and a few references in some other works. From the account of the system in the Sarvadarśanasāṅgraha we know that it accepted sense cognition as the only means of knowledge. The other means of knowledge including inference were rejected on the ground that they could not establish a universal and necessary connection (अविनाभावम्) and could therefore provide no ground for such universal proposition as ‘wherever there is smoke there is fire’. And the opponents of the Cārvāka School, especially Caraka, deeply discussing on the limitations of perceptual knowledge. And some scholar of Nyāya School argued that the exact position of a thorough going Cārvāka materialist that it is absolutely impossible to determine either the exact number or the exact character of the means of knowledge (प्रमाणम्) and the objects of knowledge (प्रमेयम्).

The philosophical background in the early literature.

During the period of Vēdas it is evident that there is no epistemological ideas. What do we find is the notions about the nature of the universe and an effort to analyse them led to the formulation of definite ideas about the nature of consciousness and the ways and means of acquires knowledge. At first the analysis was mostly psychological and in the period of philosophical sūtras the epistemological viewpoint was positively attained.
In Rgvedic hymns we can see the first appearances of this ideas. These verses prove that there are two kinds of objects. Firstly those which are immediately present to the senses; that is to say, those that are remote, secondly that those which are immediately present to the sense are, of course, known through the senses; but those which are remote are not known by means of senses and hence there must be, if any, some other means of their knowledge, and thirdly that the knowledge of those remote objects can be had either by means of divine testimony, for nothing is remote to God or by reflection. It will appear that we find in the texts of these verses, the germs of the distinction between what came to be known later on as direct knowledge (प्रत्येक्षाम्) and indirect knowledge (परोक्षाम्). But it may be noted that the author was conscious of a distinction between the world of appearance and that of reality, and the verses contains a reference to the knowledge of these two kinds of reality. The conception of mind in the early literature led to the formulation of epistemological ideas. And we can trace the development of epistemology through the psychological notions. In the Rgveda for example we read of mind as the cosmic principle of which desire is said to be the creative energy.

It is better to think that from the conception of mind even the conception of soul is derived. Actually the concept of soul is difficult to be attained. It is comparatively something highly intellectual. Therefore the
concept of mind may be originated before the concept of soul, or soul is derived from mind.

**The process of getting knowledge.**

According to Nyāyadarśana the process of knowing is, soul comes into contact with mind; mind with the sense organs and later with the objects concerned. Each of them participates in the process equally. Among them soul plays the first and important role. Knowledge is located in Ātman. Though the Budhists rejects this idea, most of the schools of Indian philosophy insist that soul is the knower of everything. According to Sāṁkhya, the Budhi directly serves the purpose of the self (पूर्वार्थम्) and makes him enjoy the pleasures and pains and finally it is the very same budhi that helps him in distinguishing between the primordial matter (प्रकृति) and the individual self (पुरुष), as a consequence of which he attains salvation (कैलयम्).

In the view of the Mīmāṁsakas, the self is an entity, which has a form both distinguished (यावृत्तम्) and common (अनुगृत्तम्) though in its nature it is of one form, it gets distinguished by its particular states of pleasure and pain.

In the Śaṅkarite opinion the self (आत्मा) does not have any activity. Neither does it act nor is the enjoyer of the fruit of the action. He says either the consciousness as determined by the mental mode (वृत्तचिन्तित्वेतत्त्वयम्) or the consciousness as reflected in the mental mode (वृत्तचिन्तित्वेतत्त्वयम्) is the knower (प्रमाता). the logicians proved the self by being necessary to accommodate
consciousness (शान्ति) in it. No other dravya else but the self is capable of holding it consciousness is a property which has to reside somewhere and hence the self has be accepted.

However each of the sense organs including mind and soul equally shares the responsibility to know. An individual has five organs of perception. The organ of hearing, the organ of sight, the organ of touches, the organ of taste and the organ of smell. Sensory experience is accordingly of five different types, auditory, visual, tactual, gustatory and olfactory. Each organ has a particular location except the organ of touch extends all over the body. Fundamentally, there are five objects of perception; sound, touch, sight, taste and smell.

According to Sāṇkhya knowledge is the inevitability of the soul. And he acquires knowledge of the object, through mind and other organs. Mind is connected with the organs by means of the central nervous system. It is through the mind that the light of consciousness is transmitted to the sense organs. The light of consciousness radiating from the mind enables the organs to function. All perceptions, all actions, are due to the radiance of consciousness received by the organs from the luminous Self (आत्मा) through the mind. In dream state when the radiance recedes from the body none of the ten organs can function, but the mind continues to operate. In deep sleep when the radiance recedes even from the mind all-mental operations is dividing egoism comes to a dead stop. Says Vīḍyāraṇya, “Mind, the leader
of ten organs is seated in the orb of the lotus of the heart. It is the inner instrument (अन्तरकरण) since it cannot by itself deal with external objects without the organs” 10. Vedāntins stresses the cognitive and takes into account its four states or functions (वृत्ति); deliberation (manas) determination (बुद्धि) egoism (अहंकारम) and recollection (वित्तम). In every external perception these four are involved. On seeing a flower, a person does not at once determine it as a flower. In the beginning he is vaguely aware of it as something. He is in an indecisive state. So he cogitates what is it? This function of deliberation is manas. Then he searches within and recalls some past impression akin to it. With this recollection he cognizes the object as this is a flower. This function of determination is budhi. The function of recollection is citta. With the knowledge this is a flower arises the knowledge ‘I know the flower’. This is the function of egoism. The four functions represent four different states of mind. As held by Sānkhyā school mind is all pervading. But then the Naiyāyikas rejects this idea. Vedānta distinguishes the individual mind from the cosmic mind, which belongs to Brahma, the universal soul, who presides over the cosmos. According to both Sānkhyā and Vedānta mind is a product and therefore, not eternal. The five sense organs are ear, skin, eye, tongue and nose and their functions are to perceive the knowledge of sound, touch, colour, taste and smell. Likewise the five motor organs are वाक्याण्विकादपयूपस्थम and their function is to
create the feeling of वचनादनविहरणोत्सर्गनन्दनम्. And each of the organs and soul participates equally in the process of perception.

As we have seen mind has an important role to play in the production of knowledge and the process of cognition is that the soul comes in contact with the mind, the mind with the sense organ, and later with the objects concerned. According to the Nyāya School mind is infinitesimal (अणु) partless (निर्वक्तम) and eternal (नित्यम्). Since it is infinitesimal and partless it cannot be connected with more than one organ at a time. So in Nyāya view, an individual does not perceive more than one thing even when all the five sense organs are connected with their respective objects, in such a case his mind may move so fast from one sense organ to another that it will appear to him that he perceives by them simultaneously.

But according to Vēdānta, mind is infinite, that is, of medium magnitude (मध्यमपरिमाणम्). So it can be connected with one or more organs at the same time. Therefore a person can perceive different objects one after another or simultaneously. For instance one can perceive a flower and enjoy its fragrance at the same time. Similarly the five organs of action can operate one after another or simultaneously. Indeed both types of organs can function together. For instance, an actor sees, speaks and acts at the same time. Anyhow mind plays an important part in the cognition of external objects too in collusion with the sense organs. It is only then that knowledge
is produced in the soul. Mind like the sense organ is a sense organ but it is internal. And mind is only a conveyer of knowledge.

Several definitions have been proposed for the mind by epistemologists. The logicians defines it as the internal organ responsible for the perception of pleasure etc. \( \text{सुखाद्वृतनश्वादनमिन्निग्रहणम् मनः} \)^11 The Mīmāṃsakas defines it as the seat of contact of the immaterial cause of cognition, which cause is different from the soul. The mind is only a particular cognition for the Buddhist. It is a mere cognition; it will not be able to restrain the cognition of the individual to a particular object of perception. To the Jaina, mind is the instrumental cause of the apprehension \( \text{ग्रहणम्} \) of all objects. By the word \( \text{ग्रहण} \) in the definition he executes Ātman, which is the agent of apprehension (and not its instrumental cause). It is also designated \( \text{अनिन्दित्रणम्} \) or that which is not a sense organ (something different from a sense organ). All knowledge, that belongs to sense organ or otherwise is produced by the mind. Thus the knowledge of words also comes under its scope. To the Advaiṭa vṛddāntins, the mind is an internal organ \( \text{अत्तकरणम्} \). The seat of pleasure, pain etc. and its forms are desire, doubt etc. but it does not fall under the category of the sense organ. Whatever the implication may be it must be admitted necessary to hold the mind as a sense organ as pleasure pain etc cannot be produced directly by the sense organs, which are external. Hence mind should be sense organ though pleasure etc at times is cognized by the Sākṣin. The Rāmānuja views, mind as a sense organ like the logician
and unlike Sāṅkarite. It exists in the heart. This is the sense organ, which is
the immediately preceding cause of recollection etc, when cognition is to be
produced, the self comes in to contact with the mind and soon and so forth as
the logician does\(^\text{12}\).

The logician also gives the properties of the mind. It is one (in the
case of each individual body), eternal, atomic in size and super sensuous
(अतिनिधियम) As it is one in each body ‘mind’ is plural, in really of infinite
number. It is considered atomic in size. But the Mīmāṁsakas, mind is all
pervading. It is the seat of contact, which is the non-material cause of
cognition. Mind is eternal for the logician. It is not a perceptual object, but
to be inferred. But the Jaina considers mind as physical ultimate of atoms.
The mind is possessed of activity and speed and as such it is a corporeal,
substance (सूतद्रव्य). The Sāṅkhyas opine that the internal organ has three
constituents the intellect (बुद्धि) when it doubts, is called Mind, Budhi, when it
determines things, Citta when it thinks and egoism (अहंकार) When it
displays ego. Here cognition is only a semblance but not a property of the
intellect as it is insentient. The Advaitin hold that the internal organ is
responsible for the modification (बृहति), which is responsible for perception
etc. Mind on the other hand is considered as one of its modifications. When
it is of the form of decision (सद्यक्ल्यम) and doubt (विकल्पम) it is called mind.
Mental modes like pride, fear, egoism etc are its different forms and forms of
the internal organ. It is possessed of the two properties of contraction
(साध्यत्वम्) and expansion (विकासम्) an account of which it gets velocity. It extends from one place to another while being in the body. It is non-eternal as all objects of the world are, but pleasure pain etc. is perceived directly by the witness (साक्षि). It goes out and take the form of the object etc. with which it comes in to contact. In the case of perception the य्यृत्ति goes outside to the object, but in the case of other means of knowledge is inference etc, it would not i.e. when it doubts it is called mind, Budhi, when it determines things, Citta when it thinks and egoism (अहंकारम्) when it displays ego (eg. I know the pot etc).

The nature of knowledge

The word ज्ञान is derived from the root word ज्ञा to know. The word ज्ञान can be derived in more than one ways from the root ज्ञा by adding the कृत suffix ल्यूट. This suffix ल्यूट generally comes in three meanings.

1) Instrument (करणम्)

2) Locus (अधिकरणम्)

3) Act (भावम्)

But it is enjoined in other meanings as well by the Sūtras of Pāṇini (कृत्ययुक्तोत्तुल). Thus if we take in to account the first meaning ज्ञा + ल्यूट- ज्ञान, ज्ञान may mean ‘the instrument of knowing (अबोधनकरणम्) through कारणयुक्ति. That is to say in this sense ज्ञान means the instrument (करणम्) (the one after the action of which the result ‘knowing’ is produced). In such a case it would
mean the sense organ (through contact with the object) in the case of
perception and consideration (परामर्शम्) in the case of inference etc. The
second meaning of लघु as 'Iocus'. Here by ज्ञान is meant the Iocus of
knowing (a rare meaning). The third meaning of लघु is भाव. It means the
‘act of knowing’. It is with this meaning of the word ज्ञान we are presently
concerned. By act here (basic meaning) virtual root ज्ञा (to know) is meant.

According to Nyāya theory, knowledge is a production that arises
from the contact of the self with the mind or from the connection of the self,
the mind, the sense organ and the object. But knowledge is not a
production or it cannot be produced or destroyed. The nature of knowledge
is only discovery and not an invention. The real knowledge of an object is
inherent in the object itself. We perceive it in different modes, because of
ignorance. When ignorance removed, knowledge illumines.

Knowledge arises when there is a modification (कृति) of mind (अन्तकरणम्)
in the form of the object. It is an expression of pure consciousness, through
the mental mode (अन्तकरण कृति) corresponding to the object being thus
illumined; the mental mode manifests the object to the self. According to
Vēdānta knowledge is pure consciousness. Its expression through the mental
mode is called knowledge. It is in the sense of this consciousness (कृतिवेष्ठिन्यम्
or कृतिज्ञानम्) that the term knowledge is generally used. The same basic
consciousness assumes various forms through different mental modes
corresponding to different objects. Thus a person has knowledge in many forms, knowledge of a thing, knowledge of an attribute, knowledge of an action etc. By taking the forms of diverse objects, mind causes variations in knowledge or consciousness but does not generate it. Therefore knowledge or consciousness is not a product. The manifestation of consciousness or knowledge lasts as long as the mental mode lasts. It may be valid or invalid. Since the mental mode determines the form of cognition in each case it is figuratively designated as knowledge. Knowledge in itself (स्वरूपज्ञानम्) as pure consciousness is unvaried, without beginning and end and it is self established (स्वविद्यम). There cannot be any question of validity or invalidity with regard to this. It is the ultimate presupposition of all means of knowledge.

Knowledge according to Rāmānuja School of Viśiṣṭādvaita is an intrinsic quality of the self. But according to Advaita Vēdānta knowledge as self-shining consciousness is the vary essence of substance of the self (आत्मा) and not its attribute. Knowledge as it is cannot be regarded, as a quality inherent in mind, for mind is by nature devoid of consciousness.

Knowledge is simple awareness of an object. It is not an action directed to the object. According to Mīmāṁsakas and Budhist, knowledge is an activity of mind with regard to an object. But Śaṅkara rejects this. Knowledge must conform to its objects. As the object is, so is its cognition. Knowledge does not act upon an object, but reveals it. The manifestation of
knowledge depends not upon the cognisers option, but upon the right means of cognition. Knowledge spontaneously arises when the object and the appropriate means of knowing are present. It does not rest on the cognizers choice to know or not to know, or to know otherwise. For e.g. one can select the knowledge of what he necessitates. This points that knowledge is revolutionary. It discovers, it does not create, it apprehends an object as it is, it does not contract or transform.

Knowledge is a result of human urges and develops through research. It is the result of human endeavors and past experience accumulated through generations. Knowledge is the sum total of known and unknown entities and acquired from generation to generation, civilization to civilization. Pramāṇas are the means of knowledge. Like knowledge its means also is important. The pramāṇas supply the corner stone of the philosophy of the world. In India, every school of philosophy has its own theory of knowledge. Epistemology has been confined to the investigation of the different sources of knowledge and the problem of truth and error. The declared object of such epistemological investigation was the ascertaining of the true method of the knowledge of reality, which was always conceived to be the way to liberation.
In the present thesis, a sincere attempt has been made to present the chief aspects of the pramāṇas. The interest of the thesis is primary epistemological and its method is analytical.
References.


5. Śaṅkara on Brahmasūtrabhāṣya 1.4.


13. Ibid.