

OMPU3112

PHILOSOPHY AND CURRENT ISSUES

SELF INSTRUCTIONAL
MATERIALS

ACADEMIC YEAR 2024

**FACULTY OF BUSINESS, HUMANITIES &
HOSPITALITY**

**BACHELOR OF COMMERCE (HONS) IN
INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS**

Topic 5 ► Psychology and Sociology (The Concept of Man, Part 1)

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this topic, you will be able to:

1. Compare philosophical and religious perspectives on the concept of man.
2. Explain the origin, nature, and roles of human beings in shaping a universal worldview.

► INTRODUCTION

Understanding the concept of man is central to philosophy, as it explores questions about human existence, identity, purpose, and behavior. Different disciplines such as philosophy, psychology, sociology, and religion provide unique perspectives on what it means to be human. These perspectives shape how individuals understand themselves, interact with others, and interpret their roles in society.

Philosophical perspectives often focus on human nature, reason, and freedom, while religious perspectives emphasize spiritual origins, moral responsibility, and the relationship between humans and the divine. Psychology examines human behavior, emotions, and mental processes, whereas sociology explores how individuals function within social structures and cultural contexts.

By integrating these perspectives, individuals can develop a more comprehensive understanding of human nature and their role in the world. This topic explores the concept of man from philosophical and religious viewpoints, as well as the origin, nature, and roles of human beings in shaping a universal worldview.

5.1 THE CONCEPT OF MAN FROM PHILOSOPHICAL AND RELIGIOUS PERSPECTIVES

5.1.1 Philosophical Perspectives on the Concept of Man

Philosophy has long explored the nature of human beings, focusing on questions such as: What is a human? What is the purpose of life? What distinguishes humans from other beings?

Different philosophical traditions offer varying views:

- **Rationalism**
Emphasizes human reason as the defining characteristic of humanity. Humans are seen as thinking beings capable of knowledge and logical reasoning.
- **Existentialism**
Focuses on individual freedom, choice, and responsibility. Humans are seen as creators of their own meaning and identity.
- **Humanism**
Emphasizes human dignity, potential, and value. It promotes the idea that humans have the capacity to improve themselves and society.

These perspectives highlight the importance of reason, freedom, and self-development in understanding human nature.

5.1.2 Religious Perspectives on the Concept of Man

Religious perspectives provide a spiritual understanding of human beings, emphasizing their origin, purpose, and moral responsibilities.

Common themes across many religions include:

- Humans are created by a divine being
- Humans have a spiritual dimension (soul)
- Life has a purpose beyond material existence
- Humans are accountable for their actions

For example, in many religious traditions, humans are viewed as **vicegerents or stewards of the Earth**, entrusted with responsibility to act ethically and maintain harmony in the world.

5.1.3 Comparison of Philosophical and Religious Perspectives

While philosophical and religious perspectives differ in approach, they share common concerns about human nature and purpose:

- Philosophy emphasizes **reason, logic, and individual autonomy**
- Religion emphasizes **faith, morality, and divine purpose**

Both perspectives contribute to a deeper understanding of humanity by addressing different dimensions of existence—intellectual, moral, and spiritual.

 **Example:**

A philosophical view may explain human behavior through rational choice, while a religious view may interpret it as guided by moral or divine principles.

 **Understanding both philosophical and religious perspectives provides a more holistic view of human nature.**

5.2 ORIGIN, NATURE, AND ROLES OF HUMAN BEINGS

5.2.1 Origin of Human Beings

The origin of human beings is explained differently across disciplines:

- **Scientific Perspective**
Humans evolved through biological processes over millions of years.
- **Philosophical Perspective**
Focuses on questions about existence and the meaning of human life.
- **Religious Perspective**
Humans are created by a divine being with a specific purpose.

These perspectives offer different but complementary explanations of human origin.

5.2.2 Nature of Human Beings

Human nature refers to the essential characteristics that define human beings:

- **Rationality** – ability to think, reason, and reflect
- **Emotional capacity** – ability to feel and express emotions
- **Moral awareness** – ability to distinguish right from wrong
- **Social nature** – tendency to live and interact within communities

These characteristics highlight that humans are complex beings with intellectual, emotional, and social dimensions.

5.2.3 Roles of Human Beings in Society

Human beings play multiple roles that contribute to the functioning of society:

- **As individuals**
Developing personal identity, values, and goals
- **As members of society**
Participating in social, cultural, and economic activities

- **As moral agents**
Making ethical decisions and taking responsibility for actions
- **As stewards of the environment**
Protecting and sustaining natural resources

 **Example:**

A teacher not only imparts knowledge but also shapes students' values and contributes to societal development.

5.2.4 Human Beings and Universal Worldview

A universal worldview refers to a comprehensive understanding of life that integrates different perspectives on human existence.

Human beings contribute to shaping this worldview by:

- Reflecting on philosophical and ethical questions
- Integrating knowledge from science, religion, and culture
- Promoting values such as justice, compassion, and responsibility

This worldview helps individuals understand their place in the world and guides their actions toward the common good.

 **Human beings are rational, moral, and social beings who play essential roles in shaping society and the world.**



SELF CHECK 5.1

Compare philosophical and religious perspectives on the concept of man, and explain how the origin, nature, and roles of human beings contribute to a universal worldview.

► CONCLUSION

In this topic, we learned that:

- the concept of man is explored through philosophy, religion, psychology, and sociology;
- philosophical perspectives emphasize reason, freedom, and human potential;
- religious perspectives emphasize spiritual origin, purpose, and moral responsibility;
- human beings possess rational, emotional, moral, and social characteristics;
- humans play multiple roles in society and the environment;
- understanding these aspects contributes to the development of a universal worldview.