

OMPU3112

PHILOSOPHY AND CURRENT ISSUES

SELF INSTRUCTIONAL
MATERIALS

ACADEMIC YEAR 2024

**FACULTY OF BUSINESS, HUMANITIES &
HOSPITALITY**

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

Topic 6 ► Psychology and Sociology (The Concept of Man, Part 2)

LEARNING OUTCOMES

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

1. Examine the relationship between man and nature from a philosophical perspective.
2. Explain ecological and cosmological concepts and their philosophical implications.
3. Describe the fundamental concepts and scope of metaphysics in understanding reality.
4. Analyze philosophical perspectives on the relationship between man and God.
5. Evaluate different ideologies and their influence on human thought and society.

► INTRODUCTION

Metaphysics is one of the central branches of philosophy that explores the nature of reality, existence, and the universe. It seeks to answer fundamental questions such as: What is real? What is the nature of existence? What is the relationship between humans, the universe, and the divine?

In understanding the concept of man, metaphysics extends beyond physical existence to examine deeper relationships between man, nature, the cosmos, and God. It also considers how belief systems and ideologies shape human understanding of reality and influence behavior in society.

This topic builds on earlier discussions about the concept of man by exploring metaphysical dimensions of human existence. It highlights the interconnectedness of humans with the environment, the universe, and higher realities, while also examining the role of ideology in shaping perspectives and actions.

6.1 MAN AND NATURE

6.1.1 Relationship Between Man and Nature

The relationship between humans and nature has been a central concern in philosophy. Humans depend on nature for survival, yet they also have the capacity to alter and impact the natural environment.

Philosophical perspectives on this relationship include:

- **Anthropocentrism**
Views humans as the central and most important beings, with nature serving human needs.
- **Ecocentrism**
Emphasizes the intrinsic value of all living and non-living elements of the ecosystem.
- **Biocentrism**
Recognizes the inherent value of all living organisms, not just humans.


6.1.2 Ethical Implications

The way humans perceive nature influences their actions toward the environment.

- Anthropocentric views may lead to exploitation of natural resources
- Ecocentric and biocentric views promote environmental protection and sustainability

Example:

Deforestation for economic development reflects anthropocentric thinking, while conservation efforts reflect ecocentric values.

 **The relationship between man and nature reflects ethical responsibilities toward environmental sustainability.**

6.2 ECOLOGY AND COSMOLOGY

6.2.1 Ecology: Philosophical Perspective

Ecology studies the relationships between living organisms and their environment. From a philosophical perspective, it raises questions about:

- Human responsibility toward nature
- Balance and harmony in ecosystems
- Sustainable development

Ecological philosophy emphasizes that human actions have consequences on the environment and future generations.

6.2.2 Cosmology: Understanding the Universe

Cosmology is the study of the origin, structure, and nature of the universe. It explores questions such as:

- How did the universe begin?
- What is the nature of space and time?
- What is the place of humans in the universe?

Philosophical cosmology complements scientific explanations by addressing the meaning and implications of existence.

6.2.3 Philosophical Implications

Ecology and cosmology together highlight:

- The interconnectedness of all existence
- The limitations of human knowledge
- The need for humility in understanding the universe

Example:

The vastness of the universe in cosmology can lead individuals to reflect on human significance and purpose.

 **Ecology and cosmology emphasize the interconnectedness of humans, nature, and the universe.**

6.3 METAPHYSICS

6.3.1 Meaning of Metaphysics

Metaphysics is the branch of philosophy that studies the nature of reality, existence, and being. It goes beyond the physical world to explore deeper questions about what is ultimately real.

6.3.2 Key Concepts in Metaphysics

- **Being and Existence**
What does it mean to exist? What kinds of things exist?
 - **Reality**
What is real, and how do we distinguish reality from illusion?
 - **Time and Space**
What is the nature of time and space? Are they absolute or relative?
 - **Causality**
What causes events, and how are they connected?
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6.3.3 Importance of Metaphysics

Metaphysics is important because it:

- Provides a deeper understanding of reality
- Shapes philosophical and scientific inquiry
- Influences beliefs about life, existence, and purpose

Example:

Questions about whether reality is objective or subjective are central to metaphysical inquiry.

 **Metaphysics explores the fundamental nature of reality beyond what is physically observable.**

6.4 MAN AND GOD

6.4.1 Philosophical Perspectives on Man and God

The relationship between humans and God is a central topic in both philosophy and religion.

Different perspectives include:

- **Theism**
Belief in a personal God who is involved in the world.
- **Atheism**
Denial of the existence of God.
- **Agnosticism**
The belief that the existence of God is unknown or unknowable.

6.4.2 Implications for Human Life

Beliefs about God influence:

- Moral values and ethical behavior
- Purpose and meaning of life
- Attitudes toward life, suffering, and death

Example:

A theistic perspective may guide individuals to act according to religious teachings, while an atheistic perspective may emphasize human reasoning and ethics.

 **Beliefs about God shape human values, purpose, and worldview.**

6.5 IDEOLOGY

6.5.1 Meaning of Ideology

An ideology is a system of beliefs, values, and ideas that influences how individuals and societies understand the world and organize themselves.

6.5.2 Types of Ideologies

- **Political ideologies** (e.g., democracy, socialism)
- **Economic ideologies** (e.g., capitalism)
- **Religious ideologies**
- **Social ideologies**

6.5.3 Influence of Ideology on Society

Ideologies shape:

- Political systems and governance
- Social norms and values
- Economic policies
- Individual behavior and identity

 **Example:**

Capitalism emphasizes individual ownership and economic freedom, influencing how societies organize markets and resources.

6.5.4 Critical Evaluation of Ideologies

While ideologies provide structure and direction, they can also:

- Limit critical thinking if accepted blindly
- Create conflict between different belief systems
- Influence bias and perception

Therefore, it is important to critically evaluate ideologies and understand their implications.

 **Ideologies shape how individuals think and how societies function, making critical evaluation essential.**



SELF CHECK 6.1

Explain the relationship between man, nature, and God, and evaluate how metaphysics and ideology influence human understanding of reality.

► CONCLUSION

In this topic, we learned that:

- metaphysics explores the nature of reality and existence;
- humans have complex relationships with nature, the universe, and God;
- ecology and cosmology highlight interconnectedness and human responsibility;
- beliefs about God influence values, purpose, and worldview;
- ideologies shape societal structures and individual thinking;
- critical understanding of these concepts helps individuals make informed and responsible decisions.