

Education and Happiness in Ancient Asian Wisdom: Reflections from Indian & Chinese Classics

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<Abstract>

The purpose of this study is to explore not only the principles and aims of education, but also the concepts and principles of happiness in ancient Asian wisdom, especially Indian and Chinese classics as well as religious sutras. In order to investigate this article systematically, three research questions are addressed: First, what are educational principles and aims of the Upanishads and the Brahma-Sutras vs. the Analects and the Mencius? Second, what are happiness concepts and principles of Bhagavad Gita vs. Tao Te Ching? Last, what are significant similarities and differences of education and happiness appeared in ancient Indian and Chinese classics? To defend the above three research questions, the researcher utilizes a descriptive content analysis method, with a cross cultural approach. One of findings of this study is: the Gita provides happiness concepts spiritual, religious, and pragmatic, while the Tao Te Ching offers happiness ones naturalistic, ethical, and metaphysical. Based on the research results of the study, the author suggests that the principles and concepts of happiness as well as the principles and aims of education may seem to impart the useful resources and valuable theories of happiness or well-being education to contemporary educational practitioners and theorists in order to establish the sound morals of individuals, societies, and nations. For future research, it is recommended that the study be broadly undertaken to investigate the merits of educational, philosophical, and religious thought in the classics of both worlds.

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I. Introduction

Happiness is the ultimate goal and purpose of every human being. For all times and spaces, education has been mainly utilized as a means to cultivate oneself or to obtain wisdom and knowledge, but it has been ultimately used and recognized as an important tool to seek after happiness. In the ancient religious sutras and the classical literature, although there is a little difference of terms, 'teaching and learning' has been acknowledged as a significant factor or an essential element to pursue truth and to achieve nirvana or beatitude, as well as self-cultivation, self-actualization, pursuit knowledge, and wisdom development. This cultural and academic tradition has been continued to the present time, and has been researched and developed in various academic fields. Particularly, in the field of education, the studies of happiness and education have been practiced variously and widely (Arzeni, 2009; Chen, 2012; Cunado & de Gracia, 2012; Gibbs, 2014; Hu, 2014; Lee, 2009a; Lee, 2009b; Lee, 2011; Lee, 2012; Michalos, 2008; Noddings, 2003; Roberts, 2013; Smeyers et al, 2007; Steel, 2015; Topping, 2012; Verducci, 2013).

With this tendency to research, the purpose of this study is to explore not only the principles and aims of education but also the concepts and principles of happiness in ancient Asian wisdom, especially Indian and Chinese classics as well as religious sutras. In order to investigate this article systematically, three research questions are addressed as follows:

First, what are educational principles and aims of the Upanishads and the Brahma-Sutras vs. the Analects and the Mencius?

Second, what are happiness concepts and principles of Bhagavad Gita vs. Tao Te Ching?

Last, what are significant similarities and differences of education and happiness appeared in ancient Indian and Chinese classics?

To defend the above three research questions, the researcher utilizes a descriptive content analysis method, with a cross cultural approach. The limitations and procedures of this study are as the following:

This study is focused on ancient Indian and Chinese religious sutras and classics. Educational principles and aims are firstly restricted to ancient Hindu Sutras, the Upanishads and the Brahma-Sutras, versus to ancient Confucian classics, the

Analects and the Mencius. Happiness concepts and principles are secondly limited to a classical Hindu Sutra, Bhagavad Gita versus to a Taoistic classic, Tao Te Ching. Lastly, the important similarities and differences of education and happiness are compared between the Indian and the Chinese classics.

The significance of this study is to provide useful resources and basic theories regarding happiness or well-being education for the contemporary educators and theorists of the West and the East, finding valuable wisdom about happiness and education in the ancient Indian and Chinese classics.

II. Educational Principles and Aims: Upanishads & Brahma-Sutras v. Analects & Mencius

A. Principles and Aims of Education in the Upanishads and the Brahma-Sutras

Education in ancient India, especially the Vedic period (1500 BC-600 BC), was mainly grounded on Vedas, religious texts, and scriptures. In the Vedic society, education became more discriminatory according to the rigid social system, the social strata position system on the basis of occupation and duty, and oriented into the most privilege class, the priest caste (*Brahmins*) (Gupta, 2007; Sen, 1999). Brahmanical education in the priest caste was imparted the knowledge of religion and philosophy, with discussing the Vedas, Sutra literature, and Epics (Mookerji, 2011).

In ancient India, the Vedas, as their scriptural orthodox (*astika*), written in Vedic Sanskrit consist of the oldest scriptures of Hindu religion as well as the oldest layer of Sanskrit literature (Flood, 1996; Flood & Martin, 2014). In Sanskrit word, "*veda*" as a common noun means "knowledge, science, wisdom" derived from the root *vid-* "to know, to see" (Gonda, 1975; Monier-Williams, 2006). In pre-Hindu tradition, the Vedas called *sruti*, "what is heard," which organized four canonical collections (*Samhitas*) of metrical texts (*mantras*). The four Vedic Texts (*Samhitas*) are the Rigveda, Yajurveda, Samaveda, and Atharvaveda. The first three *Samhitas*, called "*trividya*" (the triple sacred knowledge) contain hymns and formulas to be recited or chanted by priests related to the religious sacrifice performance, and the fourth Veda (Atharvaveda) written in early Vedic language,

Manusmṛiti, includes a collection of incantations and spells, apostrophic charms and speculative hymns concerning the healing of mistakes, the curing of diseases, the ruin of enemies, and the production of long life (Apte, 1965).

In the broad meaning, the Vedas include *Samhitas*, *Brahmanas*, *Aranyakas*, and *Upanishads*. *Samhitas* are mainly related to religious sacrifice (*yajna*), *Brahmanas* to action and deeds (*karma*), *Aranyakas* to deeds and wisdom, and *Upanishads* to wisdom (*jnana*). In Vedic texts, "*karma*" means religious performance of sacrifice, while "*jnana*" means transcendental wisdom to grasp the metaphysical elements of religious sacrifice as well as the ultimate reality of being. The second three Vedic texts, the *Brahmanas*, *Aranyakas*, and *Upanishads*, frequently discuss polytheistic and ritualistic *Samhitas* to examine core metaphysical and metaphorical ideas, such as *Brahman* (the Supreme Self, the Highest Reality, the Great Cosmic Spirit, the Absolute), *atman* (inner-self, soul, the first principle), *purusha* (being, spirit), *moksha* (emancipation, liberation from rebirth), and *samsara* (rebirth, the cycle of rebirth)(Bloomfield, 2014).

First of all, the *Upanishads* among the Vedic texts are simply discussed. Etymologically, '*Upanishad*' in the Sanskrit language translates to "sitting at the foot (u=at, pa=foot, nishad=sitting down)" (Monier-Williams, 2006). It refers to the disciplinarian sitting down by the teacher while learning esoteric knowledge and secret doctrines (Jones, 2007, p. 472). The texts including not a few mystic and spiritual interpretations of the Vedas discuss mainly philosophical and spiritual issues with exploratory learning process, using the teaching methods of reasoning and questioning (Jones, 2007; Scharfe, 2002).

Most of the classical *Upanishads* have been attributed to several authors and kept secret for centuries, being passed down in oral tradition (Mueller, 1962; Radhakrishnan, 1956). The exact date of composition about the texts is different according to researchers, but they largely insist that the early *Upanishads* were formed around 1200 to 500 BC, which called "*Vedanta*" as the putative end and essence (Jones, 2007; King & Acarya, 1995). The meaning of *Vedanta* is 'the end of Vedas' or 'the goal of Vedas'. According to Shri Adi Shankara (early eight century?: 788-820 AD?), a prominent Hindu philosopher and theologian of the *Vedanta* school, the *Upanishads* are mainly discussed *Atmavidya* (knowledge of the Self), *Moksha* (the character and form of human salvation), and *Brahmavidya* (knowledge of the ultimate Reality) to reveal the knowledge of the supreme spirit, that is, *Sruti* (truth) (Monier-Williams, A Sanskrit-English Dictionary, 2006). Several sutras of the *Upanishads* related to the above topics are cited as the following:

In *Isavasya Upanishad 9: Vidya (knowledge)*

Those who worship *avidya* (karma born of ignorance) go to pitch darkness, but to a greater darkness than this go those who are devoted to *Vidya* (knowledge of the Devatas) (trans. Swami Madhavananda).

In *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad I-iii-28: Immortality*

From evil lead me to good. From darkness lead me to light. From death to immortality. When the Mantra says, 'From evil lead me to good', 'evil' means death, and 'good' immortality (trans. Swami Madhavananda).

In *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad II-iii-6: Truth*

Now therefore the description (of Brahman): 'Not this, not this'. Because there is no other and more appropriate description than this 'Not this'. Now its name: 'The truth of Truth'. The vital force is truth, and it is the Truth of that (trans. Swami Madhavananda).

In addition, happiness related to truth and infinite is issued in Upanishads. For instance, in *Chandogya Upanishad, Chapter VII, xvii-1 to xxiii-1*:

When one understands, then alone does one declare the truth. Without understanding, one does not declare the truth. Only he who understands declares the truth....

I desire to understand happiness. That which is infinite, is alone happiness. There is no happiness in anything finite. The infinite alone is happiness. But one must desire to understand the infinite (trans. Swami Madhavananda).

In particular, Shankara synthesized and rejuvenated this doctrine of *Advaita* (not-two in Sanskrit), which refers to the identity of *Atman* (the true Self) and *Brahman* (the highest Reality) (Nakamura, 1990; Potter, 2008). Followers of the Vedanta schools seek liberation by acquiring the knowledge (*vidya*) of the doctrine of *Advaita* (Nakamura, 2004).

More than 200 Upanishads are known, and all Upanishads are associated with one of the four Vedas—Rigveda, Samaveda, Yajurveda, and Atharvaveda. Among them, the oldest and most principal Upanishads are Mukhya Upanishads, approximately the first ten of the total Upanishads (King & Acarya, 1995). The Mukhya Texts provide a basis on the later

schools of Vedanta, with Brahma-Sutras and Bhagavad Gita (Ranade, 1926; Kalupahana, 1975). The three texts--Upanishads, Brahma-Sutras, and Bhagavad Gita--are called "*Prasthanatrayi*" as the core canonical texts of all Vedanta schools (Nakamura, 1990). The schools of Vedanta pursue answers about the questions related to the world and *Brahman* as well as *Atman* and *Brahman* (Radhakrishnan, 1956).

Secondly, Brahma-Sutras (Brahmasutra) will be briefly reviewed. The Brahma-Sutras, as one of three canonical texts in the Vedanta school, are called the Vedanta-Sutras which explain the teachings of the Vedanta, especially interpretation and teaching of the Upanishads, and known by other names: Nyaya-prasthanana (explanation about the teaching of Vedanta in logical order), Uttara Mimamsa-Sutras (investigation of the final sections of the Vedas), Sariraka-Sutras (exploring the nature and destiny of the embodied soul), and Bhikṣu-Sutras (most inquiry into the *sannyasins*).

Etymologically, the term "sutra" means "thread", and thus the Brahma-Sutras literally put a stitch in and together the teachings of the Vedas as well as the Vedanta teachings--particularly the path of wisdom (*jnanakanda*), the path of action (*karmakanda*), the role of action (*karma*) and God, and various doctrines--into a systematic and logical whole. The author of the Brahma-Sutra is known as Krishna Dwipayana Vyasa, the arranger or compiler of the Vedas, the author of Mahabharata (Radhakrishnan, 2011). The Brahma-Sutras are attributed to Badarayana. The Brahma Sūtras consist of four chapters (*adhyayas*): the first chapter (*Samanvaya*: harmony) reviews Brahman, the ultimate reality; the second chapter (*Avirodha*: non-conflict) argues the possible objections to Vedanta philosophy; the third chapter (*Sādhana*: the means) explains the way of ultimate emancipation; and the last chapter (*Phala*: the fruit) discusses the state achieved in final freedom. Each chapter is divided into four parts (*pāda*), and each part has several groups of sections (*Adhikaraṇas*) or topical sections. Each section has one or several aphorisms (*sūtras*). According to Adi Sankara, the Brahma-Sutras consist of 192 sections and 555 aphorisms.

The Brahma-Sutras are also reviewed several topics such as the nature of Brahman, the men of knowledge, the blissful one, and the nature of freedom. Several sutras of Brahma-Sutras concerned with these topics are cited as follows:

In Brahma-Sutras Chapter 1, Section I, Topic 1-3, The Nature of Brahman:

Hence (is to be undertaken) thereafter a deliberation on Brahman. That (is Brahman) from which (are derived) the birth etc., of this (universe). (Brahman is omniscient)

because of (Its) being the source of the scriptures. (Or) (Brahman is not known from any other source), since the scriptures are the valid means of its knowledge (trans. Swami Gambhirananda).

In Brahma-Sutras Chapter 1, Section I, Topic 6, 12-13: The Blissful One

The Blissful One is the supreme Self on account of repetition. If it be argued that (the Blissful (One) is not Brahman, owing to the use of a word (suffix) denoting modification, we say no, for the word is used in the sense of abundance (trans. Swami Gambhirananda).

In Brahma-Sutras Chapter 4, Section II, Topic 10, 18-19: The Soul follows the Rays of the Sun

(The soul of the man of knowledge) proceeds by following the rays of the sun. If it be argued that the soul departing at night can have no progress along the rays, then it is not so, since the connection between the nerve and the rays continues as long as the body lasts; and this is received in the Upanishad (trans. Swami Gambhirananda).

In Brahma-Sutras Chapter 4, Section IV, Topic 1-3: Nature of Freedom (Liberation, Emancipation)

Having reached the 'highest Light', the soul becomes manifest in its own real nature because of the use of the term "in its own" (in the Upanishad). The soul then attains liberation, that being the (Upanishadic) declaration. The Light is the Self as it is obvious from the context (trans. Swami Gambhirananda).

From the viewpoint of the above two texts, the Upanishads and the Brahma-Sutras, the terms of knowledge and wisdom in both texts are frequently written in various words, while education and pedagogue are rarely used. In general, the principle of ancient Indian education, as a tool or means for ultimate liberation from life bandages and for achieving salvation, placed emphasis on both this worldly life and the other worldly life. However, the latter was put an emphatic point of the intellectual and spiritual pursuits for achieving ultimate emancipation. Under this principle, as Altekar (2011) points out in his book, "Education in Ancient India", the main aims of ancient Indian education in the Vedic period

are summarized as the following:

Religiously and spiritually intellectual development, physical and social development, inculcation of civic and social values and duties, preservation and transmission of knowledge and culture, development of pious personality and character, promotion of social efficiency and happiness, and preparation the different castes of people for their actual and religious needs of life.

B. Principles and Aims of Education in the Analects & the Mencius

Education in China has a long history as Chinese cultural tradition. This study focuses on ancient Chinese education in the period of Zhou Dynasty (1045 B.C. to 256 B.C.). During the Zhou Dynasty under the social rank system, ancient Chinese education was naturally monopolized by the upper class people, such as the loyal family as well as the aristocrats and nobility (Wu, 2015). According to *Liji* (the Book of Rites) which is one of ancient Chinese classics, there were five national institutions and four other schools for them, and the institutions mainly gave instruction and training in the Six Arts: rites, music, archery, charioteering, calligraphy, and mathematics (www.ctext.org/liji, Retrieved on Dec. 08, 2015).

It was the Zhou Dynasty period (1045 B.C. to 256 B.C.) that the origins of classical Chinese thought had been systematized and developed by quite a number of philosophers, and that ancient Chinese education was also more systematized and flourished, with the advent of Confucianism (Gernet, 1996). At that times, various intellectual thinkers combine to create ancient Chinese educational legacy (Lee, T., 1999). As the founder of Confucianism, Confucius (Kongzi, 551 B.C.-479 B.C.) was a great educator and philosopher. Furthermore, Confucianism had an important effect not only on the curriculum of the Chinese educational system as the main frame of the imperial examination which was a public official examination system for selecting the national bureaucracy, but also on later generations of the Chinese people and a great many of East Asian people as moral philosophy individually, socially, and politically (Wang, 2013).

With Confucius who also collected and arranged ancient Chinese classics, Mencius (Mengzi, 372-289 B.C.), as supposedly a pupil of Confucius' grandson (Zisi), is called one of two pillars of orthodox Confucianism. In this paper, the two books of Confucius and Mencius, as two great thinkers and exemplars of Confucianism, are primarily reviewed: one is the Analects of Confucius (the Analects), and the other is the Book of Mencius (the Mencius).

The Analects is a collection of sayings and ideas attributed to Confucius and his contemporaries, and the Mencius is a collection of anecdotes and conversations with the Chinese kings of the times.

First of all, Confucius in the Analects asserts moral virtue, such as humanity (*Ren*/benevolence), righteousness (*Yi*/justice), rituals (*Li*/rites, propriety), wisdom (*Zhi*/knowledge), loyalty, and rectifying name, to achieve self-cultivation, to build social harmony, and to make political rectification. Confucius insists that learning or education is not only an essential tool to develop the above ethical values and concepts, but also a gateway to achieve the Way (*Tao*/the ultimate Truth). In the Analects, the Way is the main body of the four ethical values or principles, while the virtue is appeared as a practical example. Humanity is conceived as a core value of virtue, and knowledge is also an important means to achieve self-cultivation as well as to obtain wisdom (Lee, 2001, p. 170). In Confucius' view, humanity and propriety have unavoidable relationships: the former is broadly related to all people, whereas the latter closely related to one's family and community. Confucius succinctly summarizes that learning is closely interrelated with the improvement for oneself and others (Ch. 14, 24). In addition, knowledge or wisdom can be obtained by constant practice and learning. Several chapters of the Analects concerned with these major topics are cited as follows:

In the Analects, Book 2, Chapter 15: Learning

Learning without thought is labour lost; thought without learning is perilous (trans. James Legge).

In the Analects, Book 2, Chapter 3-1: Righteousness (Justice)

If the people be led by laws, and uniformity sought to be given them by punishments, they will try to avoid the punishment, but have no sense of shame.

In the Analects, Book 2, Chapter 11: Knowledge

If a man keeps cherishing his old knowledge, so as to continually to be acquiring new, he may be a teacher of others (trans. James Legge).

In the Analects, Book 3, Chapter 3: Humanity & Propriety

If a man be without the virtues proper to humanity, what has he to do with the rites

of propriety? If a man be without the virtues proper to humanity, what has he to do with music (trans. James Legge)?

In the Analects, Book 4, Chapter 2: Virtue

Those who are without virtue cannot abide long either in a condition of poverty and hardship, or in a condition of enjoyment. The virtuous rest in virtue; the wise desire virtue (trans. James Legge).

In the Analects, Book 12, Chapter 17: Politics/Rectification

To govern means to rectify. If you lead on the people with correctness, who will does not to be correct (trans. James Legge)?

In the Analects, Book 15, Chapter 24-1: The Golden Rule

What you do not want done to yourself, do not do to others (trans. James Legge).

In the Analects, Book 17, Chapter 8: Learning/Moral principles

In the love of benevolence, without the love of learning, the defect is foolishness.

In the love of wisdom, without the love of learning, the defect is vagueness.

In the love of faith, without the love of learning, the defect is loss.

In the love of straightness, without the love of learning, the defect is entanglement.

In the love of courage, without the love of learning, the defect is confusion.

In the love of power, without the love of learning, the defect is violence.

-Cited in a translation by Galt, 1929, p.83.-

In the Analects, the last Chapter of the last Book emphasizes the moral and ethics of an ethically well-cultivated man (a morally superior man). To cultivate the man of virtue is the primary principle and aim of Confucian education in ancient China. In terms of principle, a morally superior man is on the bases of an ethical principle and of a teleological viewpoint. Individual's moral cultivation is the foundation for building a morally harmonious society as well as achieving an ethically superior man. The core factors of Confucian educational concepts are humanity (benevolence), righteousness (justice), propriety (ritual), and wisdom. Confucius regards education as an ethical or moral quality necessary for individual and socio-political perfection (Lee, 2001, p. 169). The last Chapter of the last Book says:

Without recognizing the ordinances of Heaven, it is impossible to be a superior man.
Without an acquaintance with the rules of propriety, it is impossible for the character to be established.

Without knowing the force of words, it is impossible know men (trans. James Legge).
-Cited in the *Analects*, Book 20, Chapter 3.-

Secondly, the Book of Mencius will be briefly reviewed. According to Zhu Xi (1130-1200 A.D.) who is one of important Chinese thinkers of Neo-Confucianism, the *Analects* and the *Mencius* are the most important works for students pursuing the Way. Mencius argues human nature is inherently good (*The Mencius*, Gaozi I, Chapter 2). Humanity and righteousness are mainly advocated in his ethical and political theories, with the concepts of loyalty and filial piety (Lee, 2008). In the *Mencius*, he regards education as an important means not only to awaken the innate abilities of the human mind but also to rule one's people with justice. In particular, he advocates the rule of righteousness on the basis of humanity. As Confucius emphasized four ethical principles to cultivate oneself, Mencius also stressed the four principles (*The Mencius*, Gong Sun Chou I, Chapter 6), and developed his ethical, social, and political theories systematically. Several chapters of the *Mencius* related to these topics with eloquent remarks are cited as the following:

In the Mencius, Gaozi I, Chapter 2: Inherently Good

The tendency of man's nature to good is like the tendency of water to flow downwards. There are none but have this tendency to good, just as all water flows downwards (trans. James Legge).

In the Mencius, Gong Sun Chou I, Chapter 6: Four Principles

The feeling of commiseration is the principle of benevolence.
The feeling of shame and dislike is the principle of righteousness.
The feeling of modesty and complaisance is the principle of propriety.
The feeling of approving and disapproving is the principle of knowledge.
Men have these four principles just as they have their four limbs (trans. James Legge).

In the Mencius, Li Lou I, Chapter 27: Filial Piety

The richest fruit of benevolence is this: the service of one's parents.

The richest fruit of righteousness is this: the obeying one's elder brothers.

The richest fruit of wisdom is this: the knowing those two things, and not departing from them.

The richest fruit of propriety is this: the ordering those two things... (trans. James Legge)

In the Mencius, Liang Hui Wang I, Chapter 1: Political Theory

There never has been a benevolent man who neglected his parents.

There never has been a righteous man who made his sovereign an after consideration.... "Benevolence and righteousness, and let these be your only themes. "Why must you use that word, "profit?" (trans. James Legge)

In the Mencius, Gaozi I, Chapter 11: The Great End of Learning

Benevolence is man's mind, and righteousness is man's path. How lamentable is it to neglect the path and not pursue it, to lose this mind and not know to seek it again!... The great end of learning is nothing else but to seek for the lost mind (trans. James Legge).

In the Mencius, the primary principle of education is the realization of moral society on the basis of personal moral accomplishment to seek largely benevolence and righteousness. A Great Morale (the passion-nature) shown in Gong Sun Chou I of the Mencius is one of major aims of Mencius' education. The Great Morale is the mate and assistant of righteousness and reason, and it fills up all between heaven and earth (The Mencius, Gong Sun Chou I, Chapter 2, trans. James Legge). Mencius in his book asserts Confucius' moral concepts, such as humanity (benevolence), righteousness (justice), rituals (propriety), wisdom (knowledge), loyalty, and filial piety, to make a morally righteous state as well as to achieve a morally individual self-actualization and a harmoniously moral society. These individual and socio-ethical concepts are also regarded as Mencius' educational and political principles.

III. Happiness Concepts and Principles: Bhagavad Gita v. Tao Te Ching

A. Happiness Concepts and Principles in Bhagavad Gita

The Bhagavad Gita in literally meaning is the Song of the Bhagavan, which often referred to as briefly the Gita, or the Song of the Lord (Davis, 2014; Zaehner, 1969). The Gita, which is classified as a Smṛiti text, consists of 18 chapters and a 700-verse Hindu scripture. It was probably composed between 5th -4th century B.C. in the post Buddhistic era (Zaehner, 1969, p. 7). The author of Bhagavad Gita is known as Krishna Dwipayana Vyasa (Veda Vyasa), the arranger or compiler of the Vedas, the author of Mahabharata (Fowler, 2012). The Gita is not only as a part of the Prasthanatrayi including the Upanishads and the Brahma Sutras, but a part of India's Great Epic, Mahabharata's Bhishma Parva, with a didactically narrative framework of a dialogue between Pandava's prince Arjuna and his *guru* (guide, master) Krishna, an incarnation of god (Easwaran, 2007; Fowler, 2012; Schweig, 2007; Stroud, 2001).

The orthodox *Bhagavad Gita*, as a synthesis of ancient Hindu religion, philosophy, and life, shows: the Brahmanical concept of Dharma; the concepts of the impersonal spiritual monism with personalistic monotheism; the yogic ideals of *moksha* (the attainment of liberation, spiritual freedom) through *jnana* (union due to pure knowledge, transcendental wisdom), *karma* (transcendence of action based on the teachings of the Gita), and *bhakti* (loving devotion to God); and Samkhya philosophy (Deutsch, 2004; Fowler, 2012; Johnson, 2009; Johnston, 2014; Raju, 1992; Scheepers, 2005). In addition, the Gita presents a typology of three major trends of ancient Indian religion: devotion-based theism, enlightenment-based renunciation, and dharma-based life (Encyclopedia Britannica, Jan. 20, 2016 retrieved, [www. britannica.com/topic/Hinduism](http://www.britannica.com/topic/Hinduism)). Based on the three major trends of ancient Hindu religion appeared in the Gita, this paper is mainly focused on the concepts and principles of happiness (*Sukham*/ bliss, pleasure). In this study, liberation and nirvana are reviewed in the category of happiness.

With the concept of liberation, the concept of nirvana is one of important principles in the Gita. In the ancient Hindu religion, *nirvana* is traditionally synonymous with *vimukti*, *mukti*, *moksha* (emancipation, liberation), perfect freedom, and highest happiness with it being the liberation from *samsara* (the cycle of death and rebirth) (Balslev, 2014). In this study, however, the researcher assumes liberation (supreme perfection, absolute freedom, perfect freedom, supreme peace) as an ultimate goal, nirvana as a beatific stage in the process of liberation, and

happiness (*Sukham*/pleasure) as the athletic state for nirvana. In addition, the writer presumes liberation as supreme happiness, nirvana as beatific happiness, and pleasure as happiness.

In the Gita, Chapter 18 (Way to Renunciation and Relinquishment), three kinds of happiness (*Sathvika*, *Rajhasika*, and *Thamasic*) are enunciated as the following:

That happiness which is like poison at first, and becomes like a nectar in due time, which is born out the intellect, which in turn is born out of self realization, Is termed as the *Sathvika* happiness (Ch. 18, 37/trans. P. R. Ramachander).

That happiness which arises due to senses, which is like a nectar at the beginning, and slowly turns in to poison, Is termed as the *Rajhasjka* happiness (Ch. 18, 38/trans. P. R. Ramachander).

That happiness arising from sleep, laziness, miscomprehension and result in delusion, Is termed as the *Thamasic* happiness (Ch. 18, 39/trans. P. R. Ramachander).

Happiness in the Gita is classified into three quality states: *Sathwa* in higher spheres, *Rajas* in middle spheres, and *Thamas* in lower spheres (Chapter 14, 18) . The author of the Gita asserts that every individual personality is the mixture of goodness, emotion, and delusion, and that one's personality is determined by which of these predominates (Chapter 14). From this viewpoint, happiness is classified into three quality states. If the researcher presumes that happiness (*Sukham*) is the athletic state for nirvana, nirvana is in the higher state than *Sukham* toward salvation with absolute freedom. In order to reach the state of nirvana, Chapter 5 presents the way specifically as follows:

He who has well being within him, [he] who has joy within himself, [he] who is enlightened within himself, That Yogi is the Brahman even when he is alive, [and] would get salvation by becoming absolutely free (Chapter 5, 24/ trans. P. R. Ramachander).

Those sages within whom, sins erode, [within] whom senses are under control, [and] who wants only to do well to all others, [would get salvation with absolute freedom (Chapter 5, 25/ trans. P. R. Ramachander).

Those sages who get freedom desire and anger, [who] have mind which is peaceful and contented, [and] who are able to realize their souls, [would get salvation within this and in other world (Chapter [Ch.] 5, 26/trans. P. R. Ramachander).

Under the state of nirvana, the person who has a mind which sees the same Brahman (Ch. 6, 29). He who sees Brahman everywhere, and sees everything within Him (Ch. 6, 30). As Zaehner (1969) mentions, the basic dogma of the Gita is that knowing both the self and Brahman who are one mode of being, changeless, and undivided (p. 30). In addition, he insists that in the Gita there are two stages in the process of liberation: firstly, the realization of the self as eternal, and secondly, the discovery of God as identical in eternal essence but as distinct in power and personality (Zaehner, 1969, p. 31). In the nirvana state, the pre-liberated person who has already passed from the spheres of *karma*, into the state of *jnana* (great wisdom), and after one attains 'Great Peace' soon (Ch. 4, 39).

As Zaehner (1969, p. 29) also points out, liberation in the Gita is appeared in various concepts and aspects: release from the bondage of works, from old age and death, and from material Nature itself (Ch. 2, 39; Ch. 9, 28; Ch. 7, 29; Ch. 13, 34); as the way by which one approaches Brahman, to become Brahman, and itself the highest way and home (Ch. 2, 72; Ch. 5, 6; Ch. 5, 24; Ch. 8, 15; Ch. 8, 21); the beatific state near to God Himself (Ch. 4, 9; Ch. 4, 39; Ch. 5, 26; Ch. 7, 23; Ch. 9, 25; Ch. 10, 10; Ch. 11, 15); never to be born again (Ch. 8, 16); participates in His mode of being (Ch. 8, 5; Ch. 13, 18; Ch. 18, 54); and enters into Him (Ch. 11, 54; Ch. 12, 8; Ch. 18, 55).

In the Gita, liberation is achieved various ways: using the great power and strength of *yoga* (Ch. 8, 10), those great souls who have attained (Ch. 8, 15), through practicing *jnana*, *karma*, and *bhakti* (loving devotion to God)(Ch. 11, 55), knowing which the sages attain supreme salvation (Ch. 14, 1), practicing the art of meditation (Ch. 6, 15), considering the Brahman as the supreme goal (Ch. 11, 15), being within

the Brahman (Ch. 5, 24-25), attaining the state of great wisdom (Ch. 4, 39), practicing the way to renunciation and relinquishment (Ch. 18), etc.

Zaehner (1969) briefly states three ways of achieving liberation (supreme perfection, absolute freedom, supreme peace): "by the integration of matter into spirit, by purification of the total self, and by achieving that original oneness which is characteristic of the self in-itself as it is of Brahman"(p. 31).

In sum, the way of reaching absolute freedom (ultimate liberation, supreme peace) in the Bhagavad Gita is the core principle as well as the essence of teaching. Synthesizing the context of the Gita reviewed, as the researcher hypothesized in this paper, the absolute freedom (supreme peace) is viewed as the highest happiness, nirvana as beatifically tranquil happiness in the process of ultimate liberation, and pleasure as happiness toward the exercising state for nirvana.

B. Happiness Concepts and Principles in Tao Te Ching

The Tao Te Ching, as the Classic Book of Taoism, which consisted of two parts: the *Tao (Dao) Ching* (Chapter 1- Chapter 37) and the *Te (De) Ching* (Chapter 38- Chapter 81) with about five thousand classical Chinese characters in 81 chapters. The book was written in the poetic style, and it is ascribed to Laozi (6th-5th Century B.C. ?) in the Chou Dynasty (Kaltenmark, 1969). However, the authentic authorship and date of compilation are still debated (Eliade, 1984). In literally meaning: *Tao* shows 'Way' which is the essential and unnamable process of the universe; *Te* presents virtue, moral, and virtuosity; and *Ching* means classic, great book, or cannon. Thus, *Tao Te Ching* means the classic of the Way and virtue. In the Tao Te Ching, '*Tao*' is a semantically ambiguous and complex word which has various meanings, but it is used symbolically and metaphorically. '*Tao*' is viewed as 'a spiritual state of mind cultivated', or 'happiness and harmony', while '*Te*' is regarded as *Tao's* inner nature virtue which is the active living or cultivation of the *Tao* (Bodde & Fung, 1997; LaFargue, 1992; Marinoff, 2014; Maspero, 1981).

In the Tao Te Ching, the 1st Chapter begins '*Tao*' as eternally nameless, that is, the nature of ineffability which is the underlying natural order of the universe:

The [Way] that can be told of is not an unvarying way; The names that can be named are not unvarying names. It was from the Nameless that Heaven and Earth sprang; The named is but the mother that rears the ten thousand creatures, each after its kind (Ch. 1, trans. Waley).

Laozi in the Tao Te Ching emphasizes 'doing nothing' (Ch. 48) and 'returning primordial nature' (Ch. 40) based on the Way (*Tao*) and virtue (*Te*). That is, since a human being is the fundamental of cosmos, one should follow the principle or law of nature, and not be bound by 'human doing', but adapt to the nature in order to achieve the Way.

He who devotes himself to learning (seeks) from day to day to increase (this knowledge); he who devotes himself to the Tao (seeks) from day to day to diminish (this doing). He diminished it and again diminishes it, till he arrives at doing nothing (on purpose). Having arrived at this point of non-action, there is nothing which he does not do (Ch. 48, trans. James Legge).

The movement of Tao [by] contraries proceeds; And weakness makes the course of Tao's mighty deeds. All things under heaven sprang from it as existing (and named), that existence sprang from it as non-existent (and not named) (Ch. 40, trans. James Legge).

In the above viewpoint, the concepts and principles of happiness in the Tao Te Ching are mainly related to the Way and virtue which pursuit inner peace, harmony, and happiness (Johnston, 2013; Marinoff, 2014; Wilson, 2014). The Tao Te Ching presents hidden or metaphorical concepts and principles of happiness: knowing the *Tao* as the Mother of all things (Ch. 1), following the Way like water (Ch. 8), repletion of emptiness (Ch. 11), balancing *Yin and Yang* (the harmony of male and female the principles) (Ch. 28; Ch. 76), knowing oneself and others (Ch. 33), hiding the light (Ch. 36), returning primordial nature (Ch. 40), pursuing the *Tao* (Ch. 48), doing nothing (Ch. 48), taking pleasure in one's rustic tasks (Ch. 80), and knowing and doing the Tao (Ch. 81), etc. Several major chapters of the Tao Te Ching related to these topics are cited as the following:

In Chapter 8: *Following the Way like Water*

The highest excellence is like (that of) water. The excellence of water appears in its benefiting all things, and in its occupying, without striving (to the country), the low place which all men dislike, Hence (its way) is near to (that of) the Tao (trans. James Legge).

In Chapter 11: *Emptiness*

The thirty spokes unite in the one nave; but it is on the empty space (for the axle), that the use of the wheel depends. Clay is fashioned into vessels; but it is on their empty hollowness, that their use depends (trans. James Legge).

In Chapter 28: *Balance of Yin and Yang*

Who knows his manhood's strength, [yet] still his female feebleness maintains... Thus he the constant excellence retains; [the] simple child again, free from all stains (trans. James Legge).

In Chapter 33: *Knowing Others and the Self*

Knowing others is wisdom; knowing the self is enlightenment. Mastering others requires force; mastering the self requires strength (trans. James Legge).

In Chapter 80: *Rustic Life*

[The] people... should be contented with their food, pleased with their clothing, satisfied with their homes, should take pleasure in their rustic tasks (trans. James Legge).

In Chapter 81: *The Way of Heaven*

Sincere words are not fine; fine words are not sincere. Those who are skilled (in the Tao) do not dispute (about it)... The more that he gives to others, the more does he have himself. With all the sharpness of the Way of Heaven, it injures not; with all the doing in the way of the sage he does not strive (trans. James Legge).

In the Tao Te Ching, the concepts and principles are not presented definitely or concretely, but symbolically or metaphorically. Laozi views the concepts of

happiness as metaphysical and naturalistic perspectives. Thus, it is not easy to explicate the definite theory of Laozi's happiness. However, in consideration of examining results in this study, the ultimate goal or principle of happiness is to achieve the *Tao* (Way), and the following principle is to achieve virtue (*Te*) as the active living or cultivation of the *Tao*. The distinctions between concepts and principles are ambiguous, but generally major concepts and principles are: following the nature like water, doing nothing, returning to the primordial nature, filling with emptiness, harmonizing between *Yin* and *Yang* related to *Tai Chi* (supreme ultimate), living rustic life, knowing the self and others, hiding the light, and following the Way of Heaven.

IV. Significant Similarities and Differences: Ancient Indian v. Chinese Classics

The researcher maps out significant similarities and differences between ancient Indian and Chinese classics on the basis of the examination results in the previous sections. First of all, through two Hindu sutras and two Confucian classics, the similarities and differences of educational principles and aims are firstly discussed. Next, in the Bhagavad Gita and the Tao Te Ching, the similarities and differences of happiness concepts and principles are reviewed. There are several significant similarities and differences of educational principles and aims between the two Hindu sutras and the two Confucian classics.

First, the commonly important principle of ancient Indian and Chinese education is both individual and social development. However, the core principle of ancient Indian education in the two Hindu sutras, the Upanishads and the Brahma-Sutras, is intellectual and spiritual pursuits for achieving ultimate emancipation (absolute liberation) centered on the Supreme Being (Brahman), while the essential principle of ancient Chinese education in the two Confucian classics, the Analects and the Mencius, is teaching and upbringing of an ethically well-cultivated man (the morally superior man) centering around human beings. The two Indian sutras highlight the main principle religiously and spiritually in a viewpoint of socio-intellectual development, whereas the two Chinese classics accentuate morally and politically in a standpoint of socio-ethical development.

Therefore, the former focuses on the development of intellectually pious personality and character, while the latter stresses on the development of morally virtuous personality and character. Despite this common similarity shown between the ancient Indian and Chinese classics, there is a little difference of educational principle between two great Chinese thinkers, Confucius and Mencius. The primary principle of Confucius' education is based on the cultivation of a morally virtuous man for individual and socio-political perfection, but on the other hand the main principle of Mencius' education is grounded on virtually self-cultivation, the realization of a moral society, and a righteous state, with pursuing the primary concepts of benevolence, righteousness, propriety, and wisdom.

Second, the significantly similar aims of ancient Indian and Chinese education are plainly presented: individual and social development, inculcation of social values and duties, preservation and transmission of knowledge and culture, promotion of social harmony and efficiency, preparation the worldly life for their actual needs, and achievement of their ideal goals. In spite of these similarities, there are some differences in the important aims of ancient education.

The authors of the Upanishads and the Brahma Sutras argue both this worldly and the other worldly life. However, both sutras emphasize intellectual and spiritual pursuits for achieving ultimate emancipation (perfect freedom or liberty), with taking on religious and philosophical colorations, although the two Indian sutras highlight some teachings of this worldly and the other worldly life. On the contrary, the authors of the Analects and the Mencius claim this worldly life to their people, and emphasize the human and moral pursuit for upbringing a virtuously cultivated man (superior man) from socio-ethical and political standpoints. In particular, there is almost nothing, except ancestors worship, in the two Chinese classics that correspond to the two Indian sutras which provide some educational aims in terms of religious needs of this worldly and the other worldly life. Practically, to worship ancestors is related to the viewpoint of 'filial piety' on the basis of Confucianism. Simply put, the primary educational aim appeared in the two ancient Indian sutras is *theo* (God)-centered education, while that in the two ancient Chinese classics is *anthro* (human)-oriented education.

Third, the main similarity and difference of happiness principles are briefly reviewed in the Bhagavad Gita and the Tao Te Ching. The commonly significant principle of happiness of ancient India and China is that happiness is the right way

and the best state of an ultimate goal in life. The core principle of Bhagavad Gita is the way of reaching absolute freedom (ultimate liberation, supreme peace, supreme perfection) as the highest happiness, whereas that of the Tao Te Ching is the achievement state of the Way and virtue. The Gita's absolute freedom seemingly bears a greater resemblance to the Way (Tao, following the way of Heaven) of the Tao Te Ching. However, the former views 'ultimate liberation' (the highest happiness) as the state of salvation with absolute freedom in terms of religious and spiritual standpoint, while the latter regards *the Tao* (Way) as the happiness state in metaphysical and naturalistic perspectives.

Lastly, the similarities and differences of happiness concepts are discussed in the Bhagavad Gita and the Tao Te Ching. The similarly main concepts of happiness between the two classics are plainly presented: purification of the total self, release from material nature itself, returning the original oneness, and attaining the state of great wisdom. Despite the similarities between the two Books, the Gita bears these main concepts on the basis of Brahman as the supreme goal to attain ultimate salvation, while the Tao Te Ching contains them on the ground of the heavenly or natural Way (*Tao*) as the ultimate goal to achieve the highest happiness.

Furthermore, there are not a few different concepts and ways to attain the highest happiness between the two classics. The Gita provides several significant concepts and ways religiously and pragmatically: three quality spheres of happiness (*sukham*); the beatific state (*nirvana*) near to God Himself; never 'to be born again' (*samsara*); *moksha* (liberation from *samsara*); entering into Brahman as the supreme goal; practicing the great power and strength of *yoga* (paths or practice); using *jnana*, *karma*, and *bhakti*; knowing which the sages attain supreme salvation; practicing the art of meditation; attaining the state of great wisdom; and practicing the way to renunciation and relinquishment.

On the contrary, the Tao Te Ching differently suggests several symbolical and metaphorical concepts and ways for achieving the highest happiness (the heavenly *Tao*): pursuing the *Tao* (the Way) as the ultimate goal in life, *Te* (virtue) as the active living or cultivation of the *Tao*, knowing the *Tao* as the Mother of all things, following the Way like water, repletion of emptiness, balancing *Yin* and *Yang* related to *Tai Chi* (supreme ultimate), knowing oneself and others, returning primordial nature, taking pleasure in one's rustic tasks, doing nothing, and knowing and doing the *Tao*. In sum, the Gita provides happiness concepts spiritual, religious, and

pragmatic, whereas the Tao Te Ching offers happiness concepts naturalistic, ethical, and metaphysical.

V. Summary and Conclusion

The purpose of this study is to investigate not only the principles and aims of education, but also the concepts and principles of happiness in ancient Asian wisdom, particularly ancient Indian and Chinese classics as well as religious sutras. The writer addressed three research questions to examine this article systematically as the following: firstly, what are educational principles and aims of the Upanishads and the Brahma-Sutras vs. the Analects and the Mencius?; secondly, what are happiness concepts and principles of Bhagavad Gita vs. Tao Te Ching?; lastly, what are significant similarities and differences of education and happiness appeared in ancient Indian and Chinese classics?

The researcher used a descriptive content analysis method with a cross cultural approach to defend the above three research questions. The research results of this study are summarized as the following:

First, in the Upanishads and the Brahma-Sutras, the principle of ancient Indian education placed emphasis on both this worldly and the other worldly life to attain ultimate liberation from life bandages for achieving salvation. However, the latter was put an emphatic point of the intellectual and spiritual pursuits for achieving ultimate emancipation. Under this principle, the major aims of ancient Indian education are summarized: religiously and spiritually intellectual development, physical and social development, inculcation of civic and social values and duties, preservation and transmission of knowledge and culture, development of pious personality and character, promotion of social efficiency and happiness, and preparation the different castes of people for their practical and religious needs of life (Altekar, 2011).

In the ancient Chinese classics, the Analects presents that cultivating the man of virtue is the primary principle and aim of Confucian education in ancient China. Individual's moral cultivation is the foundation for achieving the morally superior man as well as the most important educational subject. The core factors of Confucian educational concepts are humanity (benevolence), righteousness (justice), propriety

(ritual), and wisdom. Confucius considered education as an ethical or moral quality necessary for individual and socio-political perfection (Lee, 2001, p. 169). In addition, the Mencius shows that the primary principle of Mencius' education is the realization of moral society on the basis of learning to essentially seek benevolence and righteousness. 'The Great Morale is the mate and assistant of righteousness and reason, and it fills up all between heaven and earth' (Gong Sun Chou I, Chapter 2, trans. James Legge). Mencius in his book asserts Confucius' significant moral concepts, such as humanity (benevolence), righteousness (justice), rituals (propriety), wisdom (knowledge), loyalty, and filial piety, in order to make a morally righteous state as well as to achieve morally individual self-actualization and a harmonious moral society. These individual and socio-ethical concepts are also regarded as Mencius' educational and political principles.

Second, in the Bhagavad Gita, the way of reaching absolute freedom (ultimate liberation, supreme peace) is the core principle as well as the essence of teaching. As the researcher hypothesized in this paper, the context of the Gita reveals: absolute freedom (supreme peace, ultimate liberation) as the highest happiness, nirvana as beatifically tranquil happiness in the process of ultimate liberation, pleasure as happiness toward the exercising state for nirvana. As Zaehner (1969) points out, the Gita suggests various concepts and aspects: release from the bondage of works, from old age and death, and from material Nature itself; as the way by which one approaches Brahman, and to become Brahman, itself the highest way and home; the beatific state near to God Himself; never to be born again; participating in His mode of being; and entering into Him.

In the Tao Te Ching, the concepts and principles of happiness are not presented definitely or concretely, but symbolically or metaphorically. Laozi views the concepts of happiness as metaphysical and naturalistic perspectives. In the Tao Te Ching, the ultimate goal or principle of happiness is to achieve the *Tao* (Way), and the following principle is to achieve virtue (*Te*) as the active living or cultivation of the *Tao*. Based on these principles, the Tao Te Ching presents major concepts: following the nature like water, doing nothing, returning to the primordial nature, filling with emptiness, harmonizing between Yin and Yang related to *Tai Chi*, living rustic life, knowing the self and others, hiding the light, and following the Way of Heaven.

Third, the commonly important principle of ancient Indian and Chinese education is individual and social development. However, there are a few differences: the Upanishads and the Brahma-Sutras offer the intellectual and spiritual pursuits for achieving ultimate emancipation (absolute liberation) centered on the Supreme Being (Brahman), while the essential principle of ancient Chinese education in the two Confucian classics, the Analects and the Mencius, is teaching and upbringing of an ethically well-cultivated man (a morally superior man) centering around human beings. In brief, the ancient Indian sutras emphasize the main principle religiously and spiritually in a viewpoint of socio-intellectual development, whereas the ancient Chinese classics accentuate the major principle morally and politically in a standpoint of socio-ethical development.

In the Bhagavad Gita and the Tao Te Ching, the commonly significant principle of happiness in ancient India and China is that happiness is the right way and the best state of an ultimate goal in life. The core principle of Bhagavad Gita is the way of reaching absolute freedom (ultimate liberation, supreme peace, supreme perfection) as the highest happiness, whereas that of the Tao Te Ching is the achievement state of the Way and virtue.

There are several different concepts and ways to attain the highest happiness between the two classics. The Gita provides not some significant concepts and ways religiously and pragmatically: three quality spheres of happiness; *nirvana*, *samsara* and *moksha*; entering into Brahman as the supreme goal; practicing the *yoga*; using *jnana*, *karma*, and *bhakti*; attaining the state of great wisdom; and practicing the way to renunciation and relinquishment. On the other side, the Tao Te Ching differently suggests a few symbolical and metaphorical concepts and ways: pursuing the *Tao* as the ultimate goal in life, *Te* (virtue) as the active living or cultivation of the *Tao*, following the Way like water, repletion of emptiness, balancing *Yin* and *Yang* related to *Tai Chi* (supreme ultimate), knowing oneself and others, returning primordial nature, taking pleasure in one's rustic tasks, doing nothing, and knowing and doing the *Tao*. In sum, the Gita provides happiness concepts spiritual, religious, and pragmatic, while the Tao Te Ching offers happiness ones naturalistic, ethical, and metaphysical.

In terms of world history, both ancient Indian and Chinese religions and thoughts have significantly contributed to the spiritual and practical worlds in the East and the West. In particular, the ancient Hindu classics, such as the Upanishads, the Brahma

Sutra, and the Baghavad Gita, are core sutras of Hindu religion and thought that have had great impact on Indian culture and other religions, especially Buddhism and Jainism. In particular, Yoga, as physical, mental, and spiritual exercise or alternative medicine, which originated in ancient Indian religion and culture has widely spread to the western people. With the ancient Indian religion, the ancient Chinese Confucianism and Taoism also have impacted on the East and the West spiritually and culturally. Especially, Confucianism and Taoism had greatly influenced on the Eastern Asian culture and thought. Furthermore, *Tai Chi* theory and practice which evolved in some part of principles of Taoist metaphysics and Confucian ethics have spread worldwide (Cheng 1993). The concept of *Tai Chi* (supreme ultimate) shows the origin or fusion of *Yin and Yang* (etymologically, cloudy and sunny, or dark and bright) into a single ultimate.

In conclusion, based on the research results of this paper reviewed, the researcher suggests that the principles and concepts of happiness as well as the principles and aims of education may seem to impart the useful resources and valuable theories of happiness or well-being education to contemporary educational practitioners and theorists in order to establish the sound morals of individuals, societies, and nations. For future research, it is recommended that the study be broadly undertaken to investigate the merits of educational, philosophical, and religious thought in the classics of both worlds. Finally, the author asserts that the current society centered on scientism, materialism, and mammonism may be thrown into confusion or chaos, unless we establish a morally righteous individual, society, and nation.

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