Hinduism’s Impact On The Society’s Developing Philosophy, Literature, Art And Politics

Introduction

Culture plays a crucial role in shaping the way individuals sees the world. It has a potential to bring changes to individual’s attitudes and belief (UNESCO, 2000). While these cultures maybe related to individual’s association with certain groups, this certain associations refers greatly to religious groups. Religion instruction and belief continues to remain as a core of society’s moral code. This is shown in numerous democratic countries. The primary evidence of such moral ethos is shown in America’s follow of the teachings of Christianity; respect the life and freedom of others the same as oneself, not to steal, not to harm. These teaching became the law of which people voluntarily obey with the belief that God will always there for judgement. Thus, individual’s voluntary to obey such law became a nature of democracy (Christensen, 2011). As of such influence of religion to one’s attitudes and behaviours, it cannot be said that religion does not coexist to the contribution in development of society.

In the sense of Hinduism, the practices and the teachings of this religion has great sense of contribution to the development of the society we perceive. Hinduism is known as the oldest religion (Lorenzen, 1999). Numerous people view Hinduism as a form of religion, yet, it’s more of a way of life in contrast to religion. The original name of Hinduism, ‘Sanatana Dharma’ refers to Eternal way of life/duty. Thus, to practice Hinduism is to simply fulfil their duties in life (Johnson, 2018).

With the philosophy of Hinduism in mind, different practices and teaching has great impact on the development of the modern society, seen through its impact on the political system and nation’s identity, which is present in numerous Asian countries, as well as its contribution in the individual’s daily lifestyle.

Discussion:

Politics and national identity

Religion is highly regarded as the basis of tradition; it co-exists in politics of the modern-day society. Therefore, it has an important influence on forming individual’s and nation’s political perception and identity (Mert Aslan, 2018). Without doubt, religious factors are greatly considered in political issues.

The application of religion in politics is not common in the modern society. Though the foundation of politics is bound to be inseparable with religion, it is difficult to point out explicit religious connections. Though, in countries of strong religion connection with politics, which evolved from distinctive past, creates different influence in the political system to those with minimum religious influence. The modern political system of India is greatly influence by Hinduism and it is a constant issue within whether the country is deemed as Hinduist country (Jaffrelot, 2019). This issue is risen due to the increase of Hindu nationalists in India which aims

to gain greater political advantage (Jaffrelot, 2019).

Hindu nationalism is one of the oldest ideological streams in India. Its establishment became in 1920s not so long after establishment of first Indian communist party and before Indian socialist party. The party ran parallel to the dominant Indian political tradition, the congress, which Gandhi, in 1920, transformed it into a mass organisation. The nationalism furthered its contribution in the politics by developing an alternative political culture to the dominant idiom in Indian politics. Such contribution came about due to the wake of Bal Gangadhar Tilak and his strong defence of the traditional Hinduism of violent action which the Hindu nationalist strongly showed obedience towards it, thus, rejecting Gandhian and Nehruvian conceptions of nonviolence and united Indian nation. With such rejection, Hindu nationalist movements evolved and cultivated an ethno-religious definition of Indian nation (Jaffrelot, 2017).

With such ethno-religious definition formed within the Hindu nationalist and the rising involvement of members of the nationalist parties, such as Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), in the Indian politics, the distinction of India as a strict Hinduist nation is in a distinctive incline (Rambachan, 2003). The incline of the support of Hindu nationalists' concept is shown by India's Gujarat state Chief Minister Narendra Modi's lack of intervention in containing violence and yet, showing an extent of support towards such violence towards Muslims (Goldferb, 2014). The influence of such religion concept is summarised by Jaffrelot, "within the Indian nation there is Hindu majority that epitomises the national culture. Muslims and Christians can remain…. in private sphere but the moment I comes to the public space Hinduism must prevail" (Goldferb, 2014). The summary can specifically evident the effect of which the strong Hinduist belief has caused on the politics of India and its national identity. Thus, without doubt, it can be confidently said the religion of Hinduism and its strong followers of the philosophy and its concept has significantly affected in the continuous development of nations' political and its identity, as evident by the act of which Hinduism has affected India's system and its identity.

Individual's daily life

Though Hinduism had significant impact on the political and economic development at an international level, its religion also had a major impact on the daily lifestyle of individuals of international society. The influence can be viewed explicitly as well as implicitly individual's lifestyle. In relation to Hindu's contribution to the development, the teachings and the practices of such religion can be identified within an individual's lifestyle.

Many people practice the teachings and concepts of Hinduism in their daily life without considering as Hindu. The examples of such are yoga and meditation. Many does not understand that such practices are originated within the Hindu faith, yet many considers themselves and yogis and meditators, they do not claim Hinduism as accepted faith, but incorporate it into their daily lifestyle. Many yoga practitioners are not regarded to be devout Hindus, but they would, in rare occasions, participate in the following of the teachings of Lord(s) Shiva, Ganesha and Gautama Buddha; three Gods often associated in the art of yoga (Bobby,2019). Furthermore, many would follow the philosophy of Sanatana Dharma, separating themselves from materialism (Frawley, 2007). Such yogis may not be devout followers of Hinduism, they do participate in such worship of religion in which they deem fit for their lifestyle. The yoga practitioners, let alone in America, has been recorded at almost 20 million people and more than 50% of Americans have put yoga as a daily routine for physical and spiritual fitness,

separating them from Hindu (YJ editors, 2017). The statistic shows as an evidence that Hindu's yoga has grown into the society as a form of mental and physical fitness.

Influence of Hinduism in the society can be stretched to the practice of Ahimsa, non-violence. The practice of Ahimsa is greatly performed by Hindu throughout the world. The concept of Ahimsa does not only apply towards humans but also animals. Thus, numerous Hindus choose to perform vegetarianism. Primary factor of increase in veganism is that one may feel as a contributor of systematic abuse and cruelty within the food industry and can no longer be part of such brutal construction. Many people do not realise that practice of vegetarianism is the following of the teaching of Ahimsa, the philosophy of equal living opportunities is to be provided to all living beings (Sivakumar, 2014).

This concept which Lord Gautama Budda preached over 2,000 years ago, is an example of the teachings and the practices followed by atheist and non-hindus of the international society (Howard, 2018). Similar to Ahimsa, the teachings of Gautama Budda have greatly influenced the world as the teachings continue to inspire and influence people, religious or not. As evident by these different practices and teachings associated with Hinduism and with such flexibility and acceptability of Hindu practices, it can be said that Hinduism have inherited into the modern society.

Conclusion

Hinduism's impact on the society's developing philosophy, literature, art and politics is one which will further play an important aspect, whether the people are religious or not. With the religion significantly effecting nations with strong religious connections such as India and Hinduism's flexible guidelines, such religion is highly adaptable in individual's daily life. The religion's great placement in numerous political systems around the world and its influence in people's life routine, it is undeniable that Hinduism has significant impact in the development of the modern international society.