

Science is a systematic process formulated to gather and analyze knowledge about nature and the universe in a methodical manner. The scientific method is logical; data it produces are based on hypotheses tested by unbiased experiment. Because science is based on rational thinking, its truths are easily verified through repeat experiments. Sanatana Dharma is another method of finding the truth. Its discourses on cosmology and theology can be closely intertwined with modern science. In addition, sanatana dharma speaks at length on human conduct and morality. While many of the postulates of sanatana dharma and Hindu cosmology have been established by science, others have been confirmed through the life experiences of the great Hindu societies. Thus, sanatana dharma can be considered as a verifiable truth as well.

Sanatana Dharma has many beliefs that are in agreement with the findings of modern science. For example, the ancient Hindus were the only civilization of that time period to realize that the universe was much older than a few thousand years old. They realized that living in step with nature was the best way to live. Eminent scientists like Albert Einstein, Carl Sagan, and Erwin Schrodinger have recognized the value of the moral strictures in Sanatana dharma; many of them became scholars of Hinduism as well. One notable example of Hinduism's truths verified by science is Bell's Theorem. First proposed by Joseph Bell, it states that everything in the universe is connected in some way. It has been touted as the most important theorem in modern science by Professor Henry Stapp of the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, and has been confirmed repeatedly by experiments. There are many quotes in the Upanishads and other scriptures that seem to reflect this theorem in a theological manner. One notable line is found in the Isha Upanishad: "All this- whatever exists in this changing universe, is pervaded by God". Everything in the universe is connected by God, so objects that are millions of light years away still affect each other simultaneously. While this result has been predicted by Bell's theorem and observed in experiments, science has not yet provided an answer as to why this occurs--but Hinduism has.

Many sects of Hinduism are also atheistic; while the existence of a material God may not be a verifiable truth, it is the Hindu lifestyle that can be verified truthfully. If one looks beyond the veneer of Hindu polytheism, one can see that the basic ideals of Hinduism: "Brahman (omnipresent force) is everything" is very reminiscent of quantum theory. Such physical forces like the weak force and strong force are present in every atom of matter; the ancient Hindus have named it Brahman. In addition, early Hindu scriptures reference what is now known as the multiverse theory in this quote from the Bhagavata Purana:

“Because You are unlimited, neither the lords of heaven nor even You Yourself can ever reach the end of Your glories. The countless universes, each enveloped in its shell, are compelled by the wheel of time to wander within You, like particles of dust blowing about in the sky.” (Bhagavata Purana 10.87.41). This purana has clearly referred to “countless universes”, all connected by an immaterial God. In addition, it implies the relationship between space (God) and time as not two discrete entities, but as one continuous, nonlinear being.

However, the philosophies of Sanatana Dharma are applicable to everyday life, not just particle and astrophysics. Ancient Hindu philosophers may have been right about the effect of electromagnetism on humans. The book *Body Electric* discusses various ways in which our bodies are affected by electromagnetic waves. One tradition of the Hindu lifestyle is to never sleep with the head in the north direction. Professor BM Hegde of Kasturba University and a Padma Bhushan recipient believes that the magnetic field of the earth negatively affects the brain.

Another branch of Sanatana Dharma is Ayurveda, Hindu traditional medicine. It is divided into eight components: internal medicine, pediatrics, surgery, ENT, psychiatry, toxicology, disease prevention, and improving the health of one’s offspring. Many of the remedies of Ayurveda are being scientifically verified today. Research done has noted that garlic and turmeric are beneficial for cardiovascular health, as is the practice of yoga (Mamtani 2006). Neem leaves have been shown to reduce the proliferation of prostate cancer cells (Kumar, et al 2006). It has been shown to have positive effects on treating malaria and HIV (Udeinya 2004). Bitter gourd has also shown promise in reducing hyperglycemia (Viridi, et al. 2003). Vegetarianism is shown to have many gastrointestinal health benefits (Key, et. al 1999). The *Bhagavad Gita* divides foods into sattvic, rajasic, and tamasic categories. Sattvic foods include fruits, vegetables, nuts, grains and milk. Sattvic foods promote a sense of peace and well-being. Rajasic foods are bitter, sour, pungent, and dry. They induce anger. Tamasic foods are the unhealthiest, as they include stale food, overly processed food, meat, eggs, and liquor. These foods promote indolence and pessimism. Sattvic foods are considered the healthiest foods even in Western society.

In addition, Hinduism prescribes ten ways of living: *Satya* (Truth), *Ahimsa* (Non-violence), *Brahmacharya* (Celibacy, non-adultery), *Asteya* (integrity), *Aparighara* (Non-corruption), *Shaucha* (Cleanliness), *Santosh* (Contentment), *Swadhyaya* (Reading of scriptures), *Tapas* (penance), and *Ishwarpranidhan* (Regular prayers). In this way, Sanatana Dharma becomes a “moral science”; the natural sciences dictate how the world works, but Hinduism

provides possible explanations of why the world works and how human beings should conduct themselves. Bramacharya, satya, and santosh preserve emotional health, asteya and aparighara preserve social structures, and shaucha prevents the spread of disease.

Sanatana Dharma encompasses all forms of truth: how the world works, why the world works, and humanity's place in it. It preaches a way of life where one can live in harmony and peace with oneself, society, and the universe. Science was developed to understand this harmony and peace, and has provided many explanations consistent with the teachings of Sanatana Dharma. Both science and Sanatana Dharma are verifiable truths, and as they evolve, they will merge as one.

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Dated 7/30/2011- 3:33 PM

I am a 4th year college student studying at Mary Baldwin College in Staunton, Virginia.

I have attached my essay for the scholarship essay topic: "Science is a Verifiable Truth and so is Sanatana Dharma"