

AN EVALUATION OF RELIGIOUS SKEPTICISM IN RELATION TO HUMAN SUFFERING AND PAIN: TOWARDS A THEODICAL SYNTHESIS

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ABSTRACT

The issue of human suffering and pain might be seen as a variant of the basic problem of evil. The evidential question of evil has been a heated topic in the philosophy of religion. In this sense, some skeptics question whether religion is a legitimate topic for criticism since faith is not based on evidence. This understanding of the problem of evil indicates that God is unlikely to exist, given the reality of senseless suffering and pain among humans. Hence, in some religions, suffering and pain are regarded as the only manifestations of evil in light of divine justice and compassion. Hence, it can be inferred that suffering and pain have both positive and negative functions in that they lead to the development of human noble character. The research is aimed at evaluating religious skepticism in relation to human suffering and pain, with the end-goal of arriving at a theodical synthesis. As a theoretical research that is literature-based, the historico-critical review method was adopted. The research argued from the theoretical viewpoints of fideism, naturalism, and evidentialism and discovered how religious skepticism, with its inherent distrust of the supernatural, prevents people from having a loving and personal relationship with any deity whose motives are unknown. It concluded that suffering and pain are possible catalysts for a search for meaning in life and God, as well as a test of faith, hence, religious traditions should not restrict medical interventions.

Keywords: *Religious Skepticism; Human Suffering; Pain; Theodical Synthesis;*

INTRODUCTION

There is little concern about whether a world without suffering is less spiritual or moral. God is said to be suffering in exile alongside the people. Human beings have the ability to recognize when they are in a state of discord. Humans will not be able to tell when their bodies are under attack if they do not have pains. Suffering, like pain, can indicate that something has gone wrong, and that awareness can be beneficial in a moral agent's life. However, relieving suffering can be difficult if the relief does not address the source of the discord. Human suffering, like so much else in the world, is a perversion and a disruption of what should be. Suffering is an anomaly; it has no intrinsic value and is not good in and of itself. But that is not to say that suffering is without value. In terms of suffering, most religious texts contain both a naturalistic account of human life in dangerous environments

and a philosophical account of the divine and human wills' interaction because some passages suggest that God is omniscient and has foreknowledge of suffering. Hence, they would say that suffering came into being as a result of a breakdown in the relationship between humans and their creator.

This research looked at how humans might become aware of God's reality, as well as religious skepticism in relation to human suffering and pain. It examined the contrasts between spectator and authoritative evidence when it comes to God's reality, using Kierkegaard's fideism, Dennett's naturalism, and Moser's evidentialism as theoretical frameworks. The paper also looked at whether people's moral views, as well as their likes and dislikes, are linked to human suffering and pain. As a result, the roles of reason, human choice, and love in the understanding of God's truth in relation to human suffering and pain were discussed.

1. RELIGIOUS SKEPTICISM

Skepticism is the concept in philosophy that rejects the possibility of knowing reality as it is, apart from human perspective. Skepticism has gradually evolved to represent uncertainty about what is usually regarded as true. All philosophical skepticism is epistemological in nature; that is, it is founded on beliefs about the extent and validity of human knowledge. The majority of the Greek Sophists in the 5th century BC were skeptics. The Pyrrhonists, a school of Greek philosophy named after its founder, Pyrrho of Elis, were the first to express the concepts of skepticism openly. Brains (2008) argue that skepticism may be taken to its logical conclusion by claiming that equally valid arguments may be made for and against every philosophical theory (Brains, 2008). The Greek philosopher Aenesidemus, who categorized 10 reasons in favour of the skeptical stance, and the Greek physician Sextus Empiricus, who stressed observation and common sense above theory, were the most influential skeptics of later antiquity (Popkin and Neto, 2004). Members of Carneades' middle academy, which grew from Plato's academy in the 3rd century BC and the new academy of the 2nd century BC, were more methodical but less extreme in their skepticism (Popkin and Neto, 2004).

Michel de Montaigne's essays throughout the Renaissance bore the strongest impact of ancient skepticism. Hume (1947), an 18th-century Scottish empiricist philosopher, was the foremost exponent of contemporary skepticism. Other contemporary schools of philosophy, such as pragmatism, analytic and linguistic philosophy, and existentialism, have elements of skepticism. Most people believe that the existence of anything is based on an illogical but natural inclination.

The term "skeptical" comes from the medieval French *sceptique* or the Latin *scepticus*, which means skeptic sect. It is from the Greek term *skeptikos*, which means inquiring, and was used to describe members of the Hellenistic Pyrrhonism School (Penner, 2014). Religious skepticism differs from atheism and agnosticism. Some deists are religious skeptics or theists who reject the prevailing organized religion they encounter, or even all organized religion (Coskun, 2006). Religious people are often distrustful of statements made by other faiths, at least when the two religious sects disagree on a specific tenet. Some thinkers argue that the sheer variety of religions justifies skepticism among believers and nonbelievers equally (Edgell, 2006). So, a religious skeptic could believe in Jesus even if they didn't believe he was the Messiah or did miracles.

Xenophanes is credited as being the father of religious skepticism (Wykstra, 2011). He was a critic of popular religion at the time, especially faulty notions of the divine that

resulted from humans' proclivity to anthropomorphize deities. As chronicled in *The Apology*, Xenophanes' criticism of orthodox religion led to his impiety and corruption trial. On the other hand, Democritus was the originator of Western materialism, and his works include no evidence of believing in an afterlife, and Epicurus and the philosophy he created were subsequently influenced by this (Zuckerman, 2009). Lucretius declared Epicurean philosophy in his poem *De rerum natura*, claiming that the cosmos runs according to physical principles and is led by chance rather than the Roman gods. Cicero, an academic skeptic philosopher, presented arguments against the Stoics in *De Natura Deorum*, casting doubt on the gods' character (Penner, 2014). In ancient India, for example, a materialist philosophical school known as the Crvka was recognized for being dubious of the Vedic religion's holy claims (Coskun, 2006). Philosopher and founder of the Charvaka School Ajita Kesakambali did not believe in reincarnation.

Hobbes (quoted in Dennett, 2006) said that there are no incorporeal entities and that everything, including God, heaven, and hell, is corporeal, moving matter. Though scripture acknowledges spirits, he reasoned that he never says that they are *incorpore*, which means without dimensions and amount. The word "deist" has come to mean someone who values scientific and historical facts. Some skeptics dispute whether religion is a valid target for critique since belief is not contingent on evidence. Others, on the other hand, believe it is as important as any other kind of knowledge, particularly when it makes claims that contradict scientific conclusions (Wykstra, 2011). Since the late twentieth century, philosophers such as Schellenburg (2018) and Moser (2018) have focused on what it means to be a religious skeptic. The way some contemporary philosophers challenge the conceptual validity of believing in the supernatural has echoes of early Greek skepticism. Religious skeptics, especially those who are also atheists, face a certain level of skepticism and lack of acceptance in current times.

2. SUFFERING AND PAIN IN CONTEXTS

Those who suffer for no apparent reason in the Christian context can find solace in the knowledge that Christ and his Church suffer in solidarity with them, and that, despite having to endure something they cannot fully comprehend; God will bring good out of all ills. This is the vocation of suffering: they will finish Christ's task by embracing pain. And to reject this, to completely deny the idea of one's own sorrow, is to lose something valuable. According to Ottuh and Jemegbe (2021), suffering has no intrinsic worth from the perspective of biblical religion. Human misery, like so much else in our society, is a perversion and a disturbance of what should be. It came into existence as a result of a breakdown in the connection between humans and their creator - the benevolent God who created everything for his own pleasure and that of his creatures (Fitzpatrick, Kerridge, Jordens, Zoloth, Tollefsen, Tsomo, Jensen, Sachedina and Sarma, 2016).

Suffering is an anomaly; it has no intrinsic worth and is not desirable in and of itself. Indeed, we read some passionate petitions to God about the absurdity of suffering in the *Psalms* of the Old Testament. But it is not to imply that pain is without worth (Ottuh and Jemegbe, 2021). As a result, human suffering is a symptom that something is wrong with things as they are. Suffering, whether physical or psychological, should inspire us to look for God. Without it, the human state would seem to be completely terrible.

Evangelical Christians are undoubtedly of the opinion that human suffering should be avoided and alleviated wherever feasible, provided that the measures are ethical (Fitzpatrick *et al.*, 2016; Ottuh and Jemegbe, 2021). It is no coincidence that evangelical

Christians, like Christians of other faiths, have long advocated for the advancement of medicine, palliative care, and hospice care for the ill and dying. Early Christians were known for what they did to help people who were sick.

The Qur'an is a key source for Muslims' religious system. In terms of pain, the *Qur* offers a naturalistic description of humans living in dangerous places, such as the desert, as well as a philosophical understanding of the complicated relationship between divine and human wills (Boston, Bruce and Schreiber, 2011). Suffering is seen as both an inherent part of human experience and an issue of faith or theodicy in the Islamic tradition, since it is ultimately the Almighty Creator who produces evil or suffering.

In various Quranic texts (including 4:63), people suffer an affliction for what their own hands have advanced. Other texts imply that God is omniscient and foreknows pain since no sorrow befalls the world or humans (*Quran* 57:22). While this seems to support a typical Muslim cultural attitude of passiveness in the face of adversity, it also fosters patience in the understanding that pain is predetermined and transient. Children are not considered to have any religious or moral duty (*mukallaf*) in Islam, and hence they cannot be 'punished' for failing to fulfill their responsibilities. Because all of God's actions are meaningful and nothing is in vain, some Muslim scholars claim that children's suffering is best viewed as a heavenly indication (Edwards, 2003). Different perspectives on how pain should be endured reflect the theological difficulties that the reality of suffering has caused for Islam. Suffering is seen as a tangible human experience in the Qur'an and Muslim traditions, and it should be the focus of care and medical treatment (Fitzpatrick *et al.*, 2016). A large variety of Muslim traditions serve as prophetic guidance regarding how to cope with sickness and how to visit the sick and bereaved. According to one narrative, when a person became sick, the Prophet would massage him with his right hand before praying to God.

The Buddhist idea of *dukkha* is more expansive than common suffering conceptions. It includes feelings of discontent, irritability, anxiety, frustration, and yearning, as well as all other types of stress. The Buddhist path is defined by recognizing that all sentient beings suffer, finding out how to avoid and alleviate misery, and then acting on that understanding. As a result, there is nothing to lose and everything to gain through avoiding and alleviating pain (Egnew, 2009). The Buddha taught that under the impact of mental defilements (*klesas*), humans eventually generate their own suffering. As a consequence of desire, aversion, and other afflictive emotions, they engage in unwholesome activities that result in future *dukkha*. If they fail to see this, they may get comfortable and, like a bird trapped in a gilded cage, never seek freedom. Humans are subject to the natural law of cause and effect, not to an external entity that rewards or punishes them. Pain is unavoidable; the tales people tell about it are entirely up to them.

Suffering may teach people a lot. Suffering as a result of disease, injury, old age, or bereavement might provide a chance to learn more about the fundamental nature of the human experience. If people could recognize the sources of their sorrow, they might eventually break free from the cycle of suffering. According to this causation mechanism, both human and nonhuman actors are personally accountable for their suffering, including physical, mental, spiritual, existential, and so on (Norris, 2009). In this sense, suffering may be seen as a test of faith or a method of obtaining knowledge in Hinduism. Some theistic models reward or penalize devotees who worship a deity or goddess who can relieve or punish someone who is suffering.

In some traditions, like the one derived from Patanjali's Yoga Stras, pain is an unwelcome byproduct of attachment to the body, and *moksha* is only realized when one is

divorced from one's body. Modern allopathic medicine is allowed to cure pain if it does so in a circumscribed, prosaic, and worldly context (Fitzpatrick *et al.*, 2016). Some Hindus recognize pain as a necessary part of *sasra* but are not opposed to striving to relieve it. A Hindu might also think that suffering makes it hard or impossible to do other things that help or speed up the search for *moksha*.

3. FIDEISM, NATURALISM AND EVIDENTIALISM

The word "fideism" refers to a school of thought that thinks religion is in some manner apart from; if not outright hostile to, reason (Carroll, 2008). Tertullian (quoted in Bishop, 2007) claimed that only revelation could disclose the truth of Christianity, elaborating on a theme raised by Paul in his First Letter to the Corinthians. Throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Kant's (1929) critical philosophy supplied an intellectual incentive for advances in religious thinking. In the case of God, Pascal (1992) believes that assessing the likelihood of a good conclusion is difficult. He suggests doing a cost-benefit analysis of the relative benefits of "wagering" for or against God's existence. These possibilities may be assessed using the "Expected Value Principle (EVP)". Critics have raised further objections to Pascal's premise.

According to Golding (2003), being a religious theist is acceptable if the value of a good relationship with God is valued more than any other value. Kierkegaard (1946) was a pseudonymous author who credited the majority of his writings to a number of other authors. He claims that speculative philosophy turns Christianity into a philosophical system or theory. He said that any religion that was based on historical or scientific approximations and could be broken by them was not real faith. For Clifford's (1999) "it is unethical always, everywhere, and for everyone, to embrace anything on insufficient evidence" Mackie's (2002) predicted that fideism is intellectually irresponsible. If the religious hypothesis is a living hypothesis, James (1996) argues that the choice it gives us must also be a real option. When the opportunity is one-of-a-kind, the stakes are great, or the decision is irreversible, the choice is critical (as opposed to insignificant).

Naturalism is a philosophical movement that asserts that nature encompasses all of existence and can only be comprehended via scientific inquiry. It rejects the supernatural and downplays metaphysics, or the study of the ultimate essence of things. As a result, values are relative, and ethics is dependent on habit, preference, or some type of utilitarianism. Naturalism holds that the material world is the only true world. It asserts that matter, not mind or soul, is the ultimate reality (Papineau, 2007). Naturalists are concerned with actual facts, events, and realities. Nature is everything to them; it is the whole of reality. Naturalism holds that instincts are to blame for all of our actions, whether biological, psychological, or social (Ecklund, 2010). Naturalists believe that there is no ultimate good or evil in the universe. Mind, according to naturalists, is an accident of evolution that may be described in terms of nature (Beilby, 2002). Naturalism is the philosophical belief that everything comes from matter and that there is no God or spirit. It is a philosophical theory that is opposed to supernaturalism basically.

There are no greater values; nor is there any transcendent objective or ideal of human existence. The introspective philosopher Hume (quoted in Audi, 1996) argues in his *Discourses* that there is no justification for assenting to what he has realized he cannot help believing regardless. Hume defines admitting and acquiescing to the forces of nature as living in full acknowledgment of these forces and limits.

Evidentialism is a theory that determines which beliefs are true and which are false. Evidentialism is the greatest argument for justification, according to Feldman and Conee (2004). They argue that a person's doxastic attitude toward a proposition is justified if their evidence supports it. Plantinga's (2000) reformed epistemology stands in opposition to evidentialist epistemology. According to him, reason's deliverances include both correct fundamental beliefs and beliefs founded on propositional proof. This isn't fideism, or taking a leap of faith. Evidentialists may answer the charge that evidentialism implies that all faith-based beliefs are illegitimate. Fideism, for example, holds that evidence has no bearing on religious views, and those efforts to defend religious ideas in this manner are futile. In Babe Ruth's case, believing *p* is pragmatically justified, but it is epistemically unjustified; while the belief may be justified in terms of achieving another goal, it is not justified in terms of achieving the purely epistemic goal of having beliefs that are likely to be true. According to evidentialism, the nature of the evidence is not important as long as it provides proper support for some statement. Some argue that, due to cognitive dissonance, the human mind is not naturally motivated to establish views based on facts. A just belief, according to this reasoning, requires an infinite supply of reasons.

Responses to this argument may generally be divided into the following categories: foundationalism, coherentism, skepticism, and infinitism. Some views are legitimate, but not because they are founded on other beliefs. These are known as appropriately fundamental beliefs, because they serve as the basis for all other justified views. Justified beliefs are all evidentially supported by other beliefs, yet an unlimited number of beliefs are not formed since the chains of evidential support among beliefs are permitted to circle. A person's belief is justified in the resultant image when it fits together with their other views in a cohesive fashion, with their varied beliefs mutually supporting one another. Because the negation/complement of some statements is another statement, a modest reasoner subset of coherentism would necessitate that all justified beliefs be statements about some objects. There are no beliefs that can be justified.

Because the negation/complement of one some statement is another some statement, a modest reasoner subset of scepticism, like the subset of coherentism, would demand and define all justified beliefs as assertions about some objects. In addition to these replies, some philosophers have claimed that evidentiary chains end in unjustified beliefs. Others have said that limitless lines of reasoning may occur. Of the main responses, coherentism and skepticism are clearly consistent with evidentialism. Coherentism allows for evidential support for all of our justified beliefs in the face of the regress argument by allowing for circular chains of evidence of support among beliefs. And the skeptic here is utilizing an evidentialist demand to arrive at her skeptical conclusion. Many philosophers accept foundationalism as a reaction to the regress argument, rejecting the validity of circular reasoning as advocated by the coherentists. The foundationalist's fundamental views seem to be counterexamples to the evidentialist's thesis at first appearance, in that they are justified beliefs that are not rational since they are not supported by deeper evidence. And evidentialism and foundationalism are not always mutually exclusive.

Many current epistemologists disagree that empirical support is the complete story when it comes to belief justification. Many people feel that a more comprehensive theory would include considerations of the mechanisms that lead to and maintain beliefs. Reliabilism, Causal Theory, and Truth Tracking Theory are examples of non-evidentialist theories. Because they are innocent-until-proven-guilty, some natural opinions may be accepted in the absence of proof. They are justified as long as there is no cause to believe

they are untrue. However, expanding one's understanding of what constitutes evidence might help to overcome many of the criticisms against evidentialist viewpoints. There is an evidential dilemma of evil. Although God and the presence of evil are not logically incompatible, the evidential problem addresses whether the quantity or types of evil, such as human suffering, in the world qualify as likely proof against God's existence. This viewpoint contends that the vast quantity of evil in the world, as well as the presence of unjustified evil, precludes a credible belief in God, since human beings suppose God would not allow the existence of evil that seems to serve no beneficial purpose.

From a purely theoretical standpoint, the problem of human suffering can be understood as one formulation of the classical problem of evil, which questions whether the existence of a perfectly good, all-knowing, and all-powerful God is compatible with the extent to which human beings encounter and undergo positive suffering. The fact of what appears to be significant and gratuitous human suffering has been presented in the context of analytic philosophy of religion either as logically inconsistent with the existence of the God of classical theism or as an evidential consideration weighing heavily against the probability of that Being's existence or perfection (Adams, 2014). There are different ways to look at both problems in terms of the role that suffering plays in these arguments. This ranges from asking why people suffer at all to asking why there isn't less suffering than there is to asking why some people have to go through horrible evils or destructive suffering that makes them question the value of their lives as a whole.

4. RELIGIOUS SKEPTICISM AND HUMAN SUFFERING

Within religious philosophy, the evidentiary issue of evil has been a hot subject. Given the reality of senseless suffering, this interpretation of the problem of evil implies that God is unlikely to exist. Many theists have responded by adopting a position known as skeptical, which claims that one cannot make any reasonable judgments about such cases of suffering because humans are not omniscient and thus cannot know whether there are any goods attached that could justify the suffering's inherent evil (Thousand, 2016). People have argued that skeptical theism, as an answer to the evidentiary issue of evil, undermines the rest of theism by requiring skepticism of all other religious beliefs. Furthermore, this study contends that skeptical theism renders any interaction with the divine, which is a central tenet of most theistic faiths, impossible. Given these considerations, skeptical theism is not a reasonable position for a theist to adopt since it cannot provide a persuasive answer to the problem of evil without soon moving to skepticism that undermines theism.

The occurrence of meaningless suffering is central to Rowe's (1996) thesis, where he states that suffering that an omniscient and omnipotent entity could avert without sacrificing a tremendous good that would make the world a worse place without it, or causing an equally horrible or worse evil to occur. Most people would agree that this assertion is correct and that God would go to considerable lengths to avoid suffering unless doing so would result in the loss of a greater benefit or the imposition of a worse evil (Thousand, 2016). Many philosophers turned to a viewpoint known as religious skepticism in reaction to Rowe's statement of the evidentiary issue of evil. Their argument was that people have no reason to assume that they would be able to perceive any of the benefits that may be associated with apparently senseless suffering. Bergmann (2001) was one of these philosophers that put forth three skeptical theses.

In essence, Bergmann argues that one cannot make any rational judgments regarding circumstances of apparently meaningless suffering since it is impossible to know

whether or not there are goods connected with such cases. Much of Bergmann's reasoning is based on the assumption that humans are not omniscient and hence cannot know whether there are any benefits that are directly linked to situations of apparently useless suffering. Bergmann may be entirely correct. Should an omniscient God exist, it is likely that he would be aware of good things that are beyond human comprehension. However, arguing for this viewpoint is very harmful to theistic as a whole. In response to Bergmann's argument and skeptical theism in general, one may embrace skeptical theism and accept the premise that humans are not omniscient and hence cannot make rational judgments about what God would do in any given scenario. Second, one cannot know whether any of the other elements of religious faith are genuine if one cannot make fair judgements about what God would do in any particular scenario—for instance, that God created humans in his image or the idea that there is an afterlife (Thousand, 2016). Also, if you believe in skeptical theism, you have to be suspicious of every other part of religion.

Religious skepticism plainly allows for a far broader interpretation of skepticism than it originally meant. If one believes that God is omniscient and so capable of bringing about certain desirable outcomes that are beyond human comprehension, one must also believe that humans are incapable of making rational judgements about what God would do in any particular scenario. Given this, there is no compelling reason to assume that any other religious beliefs are correct (Thousand, 2016). For example, since it is impossible to predict how God would respond in any particular scenario, it is impossible to know if God made humanity in his image. It is possible that God brought about commodities outside of human understanding by not making people in his image and instead creating humans in a completely different manner. The same may be said for all other characteristics of religious faith, which seem to seriously undercut theism. Because the intentions behind most of what God seems to allow in the universe are unknown, it appears that laying such a foundation is impossible, because the benefits he may or may not be bringing about are beyond human comprehension. This shows that religious skepticism, which is based on a natural lack of trust in the supernatural, makes it impossible for people to have a close, loving relationship with a god whose goals are unknown.

5. TOWARDS A THEODICAL SYNTHESIS

The issue of human suffering may be seen as a variant of the traditional problem of evil, which raises the question of whether the presence of a flawless God is compatible with the amount to which human beings suffer. Theodicies, or heavenly justifications, have typically been used as philosophical solutions to this difficulty (Farennikova, 2013). It might be claimed that the theodical method in analytic philosophy of religion has both moral and epistemically destructive tendencies, and that such philosophers would be better off shifting their focus from the hypothetical God's point of view to people who really suffer (Griffioen, 2018). One can recover, construct, reconstruct, and reappropriate more virtuous approaches to the individual and collective struggle with the life of faith in the face of pain and human suffering by focusing less on defending the epistemic rationality of religious belief and more on the therapeutic effectiveness of particular imaginings of God with respect to suffering. While the divine idea's transcendence and inexplicability may put God beyond human comprehension from a theological standpoint, the dynamic struggle of theodicy must grapple with how we imaginatively represent God in the life of faith on the ground and what these representations mean for how we react and respond to suffering in the world. Job was slain on the altar of classical theism by modern philosophical theodicy (Anderson, 2012).

On the battleground of anti-metaphysical transcendence and postmodern philosophical theology, traditional theism has been defeated. Perhaps, according to Griffioen (2018), one of the central tasks of a 21st-century analytic philosophy of religion is to return to the utter immanence of real human suffering, to reclaim Job's perspective and Jacob's tenacity, in order to locate theologically fruitful imaginings of a metaphysical God before whom we can sing and dance but with whom we can also wrestle face-to-face, a God with whom we can earnestly struggle and against whom we can, perhaps, even loudly propound.

Outside suffering, theists argue that pain is biologically beneficial. For example, if a person does not experience pain, he or she will be unaware that they are ill. Hence, it can be claimed that pain is caused by obnoxious stimulation, indicating the beginning of damage to the fiber ending (Scott, 2015). Pain, according to David Hume, is not required in the creation of an all-loving, good, powerful, and knowing God; instead, constant pleasure and happiness should be required (Isiramen and Akhilomen, 1998). As a result, most atheists argue that there are insufficient grounds to prove God's existence in the face of evil because they cannot see the utility of pain in a good and powerful God's world. Theists also argue that pain is meant to serve a good purpose in that it can result in the formation of noble character when it is bravely born.

However, according to John Hick, the existence of God and the existence of evil cannot be reconciled rationally, but must be understood through faith (Cheetham, 2013). So, most of the time, theists try to explain away evil and say that it cannot be explained. They say that evil is a mystery and that no solution has been found that isn't fatal.

Undeserved suffering can cause people to doubt God's goodness, even if the suffering is the result of a greater good. The concept of predestined suffering links God to an act that seems to bring both bodily and moral harm. Sunni theologians placed a greater emphasis on God's omnipotence than on human liberty, pushing the problem of evil deep into the realm of theology and thus ignoring ethics and psychology. The state policy of the Umayyad rulers (660–748) was to promote belief in God's absolute will, which predetermined all human action. People were led to believe that human suffering was a form of God's punishment due to the divine will based on a few Qur'anic verses. Based on the idea that sin is the cause of suffering, these passages made people feel like they couldn't do anything about their own or other people's pain.

Suffering, in whatever form, is seen as part of God's promise to those who reject his commands in traditional theodicy. Faith in a fair, rewarding God who will repay virtuous servants for all they have suffered in this world is sustained by faith in the life to come. It simply links the evil of suffering to the sin of ungrateful disobedience, which stems from human denial of God's existence. In whatever religious tradition, reconciling God's kindness and goodness with the suffering of the innocent has proven difficult. In the bulk of religious debates, pain was defined only in terms of human beings (Fitzpatrick, *et al.*, 2015). Other examples of existence were not mentioned since moral evil only refers to human behaviors done against or harming other beings.

The basic tendency in Muslim piety is to hold people responsible for their own suffering and to encourage them to do good deeds in order to free the world from pain. In the light of divine justice and love, pain is considered the sole form of evil in certain faiths. The ruin or destruction of the natural environment or the imposition of animal agony on forest animals is not the same degree of evil as when human life is involved. It is hard to imagine that a fair and kind God would let these kinds of pointless suffering be seen as less bad, unless they caused pain to higher beings, like people.

CONCLUSION

One of the findings of this research has revealed that vast majority of people believe that something exists as a result of an illogical but natural desire. Religious skepticism rejects the prevalent organized religion called deism. On the other hand, naturalism as a philosophical theory asserts that nature encompasses all of existence and can only be comprehended via scientific inquiry. Evidential chains, according to some philosophers, lead to illogical ideas. Others have claimed that endless thinking routes exist. Suffering, like pain, may indicate that something is wrong, and being aware of this can be beneficial in a moral actor's life. However, relieving pain might be difficult if the relief does not address the source of the conflict. Since faith is not founded on facts, some skeptics dispute whether religion is a suitable target for criticism. Others believe it is equally as important as any other kind of information. People see suffering as both an essential part of being human and a question of religion or theodicy.

Suffering is seen as a disturbance or disharmony in every spiritual tradition of the body, of the ego, and, in South Asian faiths, of cosmic order. Anguish and suffering are clearly defined in some viewpoints, while others take a wider approach that encompasses physical and mental pain, loss, desire, and spiritual or existential suffering. Suffering has no inherent worth, according to none of the viewpoints, and both Buddhist and evangelical perspectives contend that it does not. Suffering may lead to a quest for meaning and God, as well as a test of faith, the cultivation of virtue, and the enhancement of human dignity. Suffering allows people to reflect on their actions, their basic existence, and the prospect of freedom. The need to give meaning to pain becomes a method of reacting to the emptiness; of conquering the world's inequities and contingencies. While each of the viewpoints places distinct emphasis on enduring, witnessing, avoiding, and healing pain, they all agree that suffering should be reduced.

In general, religious traditions tend to have few limitations on medical treatments. The usefulness of religious explanations in medicine is that they may assist patients and doctors in regaining perspective on medical procedures. Physicians should encourage discussion about treatment goals, be aware of their patients' faith traditions, and understand how those faith traditions view suffering. As a solution to the problem of human suffering in relation to the evidentiary issue of evil, religious skepticism falls short. While it does raise some concerns about the problem of evil, it is evident that its fundamental skepticism may be used to criticize the rest of theism. Also, skepticism about religion makes it impossible to have a personal, loving relationship with God. Religious traditions should frequently have fewer constraints on medical treatments. On the other hand, suffering and pain, should be seen catalyst for a quest for the meaning of life and God, as well as a test of faith, hence religious rituals should be less restricted.

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