

Anumāna in Nyāya

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In Indian logic inference is known as “*Anumāna*.” It is knowledge (*mānā*) which arises after (*anu*) other knowledge. Thus the literal meaning of *anumāna* is knowledge which comes after some other knowledge. The presence of the middle term in the minor term is called *Paksadharmata* and the invariable association of the middle term with the major term is called *Vyāpti*. The knowledge of *Paksadharmata* as qualified by *Vyāpti* is called *Parāmarsa*. And *anumāna* is defined as knowledge arising through *Parāmarsa* i.e. the knowledge of the presence of the major in the minor through the middle which resides in the minor and is invariably associated with the major.

Structures of *Anumāna*:

In every *anumāna*, there are 03 terms viz. *Sadhya*, *Paksa* and *Hetu*. These 03 terms correspond to the major, minor and middle term respectively. *Hetu* is also called *linga*. *Vyāpti* is the ground of *Anumāna*.

Kinds of *Anumāna*:

There are 03 different classifications according to 03 different principles.

1) According to Purpose *anumāna* is of two kinds:

- (a) *Svarthānumāna* or *anumāna* for oneself and
- (b) *Parārthānumāna* or *anumāna* for other.

There are five members of *Parārthānumāna* viz.

- *Pratijñā*,
- *Hetu*,
- *Udāharana*,
- *Upanaya* and
- *Nigamana*.

In *Svarthānumāna* a man **seeks** only to reach the conclusion for himself. This is illustrated in the case of a man who infers the existence of fire in a hill because he first perceives

a mass of smoke in it and then remembers that there is a universal relation between smoke and fire.

In *Parārthānumāna* a man having inferred the existence of fire in a hill lays it down as a thesis and proves it as a conclusion following from the major and minor premises and the conclusion into a third premise.

(2) According to Causal relation *anumāna* is of three kinds:

(a) *Purvavat*: In *Purvavat anumāna*, we infer the unperceived effect from a perceived cause. For example, when from the presence of dark heavy clouds in the sky, we infer that there will be rainfall.

(b) *Sesavat*: Here, we infer the unperceived cause from a perceived effect. For example, when we see a river in flood and infer that there was heavy rain, we have a case of *Sesavat* inference.

(c) *Sāmānyatodṛṣṭa*: This inference is based on certain observed points of general similarity. For example, when we see a horned animal and infer that it has cloven hoofs, we have a case of this inference. There is uniformity of co-existence between horns and cloven hoofs, though they are not causally related.

(3) According to the Application, *anumāna* is of three kinds:

(i) *Kevalānvayi*: An inference is called *Kevalānvayi* when it is based on a middle term which is only positively related to the major term. For example,

All knowable objects are namable.

The Pot is a knowable object.

Therefore, The Pot is a namable object.

(ii) *Kevalavyatireki*: An inference is *kevalavyatireki* when it is based on a middle term which is only negatively related to the major term. It is based on the invariable concomitance between the middle term, which is established by the method of agreement in absence (*Vyatireka*)

since there can be no positive instances of agreement in presence between the terms. For example,

No non-soul substance has life.

All beings possessing animal functions have life,

Therefore, all beings possessing animal functions have soul.

(iii) *Anvaya-Vyatireki*: An inference is *anvaya-vyatireki* when it is based on a middle term which is both positively and negatively related to the major term. The universal relation (*vyāpti*) in this inference is established by the method of agreement in presence (*anvaya*) and agreement in absence (*vyātireka*).

(a) All Smokey objects are fiery

The hill is smoky

Therefore, the hill is Fiery.

(b) No non-fiery objects are Smokey.

The hill is Smoky.

Therefore, the hill is fiery.

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