

THE ELUCIDATION OF ALBERT CAMUS' PHILOSOPHY OF ABSURDISM

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Abstract: The philosophical concept of absurdism has been one of the difficult notions to understand in a realm of philosophy. It deals mainly with the inherent contradiction between the human longing for meaning in life and the belief that there is no inherent purpose to the universe. According to this philosophy, human life is absurd because people are constantly seeking meaning and purpose in a universe that is irrational. However, one must embrace and experience life despite its inherent absurdity, finding joy and satisfaction in action amidst the futility of existence. This belief system advocates for individuals to identify their own purpose in life, acknowledge the absurdity of reality, and experience joy in living. Nevertheless, individuals use beliefs or ideologies to avoid or reject the harsh realities of life known as philosophical suicide. Philosophical suicide involves religious or spiritual beliefs that pledge eternal life or rebirth, or blind obedience to a specific political or philosophical principle that shields individuals from evil. Ultimately, philosophical suicide can lead to a superficial and thoughtless life without real meaning or purpose. Hence, there is an advocacy to rebel. The idea of rebellion is a way to challenge established beliefs and systems of thought. This requires questioning authority, norms and societal expectations in the quest for truth (and/or personal freedom). 'Rebels' in philosophy sought to expand human knowledge and understanding by questioning established doctrines and challenging accepted truths. It is an opportunity for innovation and transformation, as it challenges conventional thought while paving the way for human progress and advancement. Therefore, a rebel must be resilient in whatever decision he makes. Resilience is the ability of a person to recover from failure, overcome obstacles, and adapt to change. It is all about having the inner strength, the means and the attitude to rise above challenges. Hence, for one to build a life worth living, he or she must possess resilience, which is the belief of perseverance, courage, and self-awareness.

Keywords: Absurdism, Nihilism, Philosophical Suicide, Morality, Rebellion, Resilience.

1.0 Introduction

It is salient to propound the concept of absurdism in Albert Camus' understanding before discussing some contemporary issues related to the subject. In this article, we will expound an overview of Camus' philosophy, beginning with his birth, how he developed his philosophy of absurdism, and what triggered him to develop such a philosophy. We will go over his formative years in more detail, including his works and marital status. To this end, in referring to the *Myth of Sisyphus*, the resilient warrior, we will critique his philosophy and substantiate the search for meaning

1.1 Albert Camus' Life, Education, and Works

Albert Camus' own life experiences induced him to 'pause' and ponder the meaning and worth of life; they provided him with numerous encounters with the absurd, with the conflicts, contradictions, frustrations, and paradoxes of the existence of humans. On November 7, 1913, Camus was born in a working-class neighborhood in Mondovi, French Algeria. In *Le Premier Homme*, his last unfinished book, he attempted to capture the image of his father, who tragically died in the battle of Mame in 1914. His mother was a housemaid and remained a widow since 11th October, 1914. His childhood and early experiences exposed him not only to poverty but also the thirst for freedom.¹

¹ Francis J. Lescoe., *Existentialism with or without God*, (New York: Alba house, 1974), 343.

In the end, Camus never had the chance to meet his biological father, Lucien Camus, a struggling French farming laborer who was killed in 1914 during World War I in the famous Battle of the Marne. Furthermore, Camus lived with his mother and other family members without many basic material possessions since his father died when he was only a year old. His identity and poor background had a substantial effect on his later life.²

Camus, however, had greater rights under indigénat than Algerian Arab and Berber citizens despite being a French national. He became passionate about football and swimming during his early years. Camus received a scholarship in 1924 to pursue his studies at a renowned lyceum (secondary school) close to Algiers thanks to the influence of his teacher Louis Germain. He had tuberculosis in 1930 when he was seventeen years old, and his condition was life-threatening for several months. Due to his illness, he was unable to enroll in the military and take the final exam for his philosophy degree. The temptation to commit suicide during one of his travels shows the presence of existential anxiety in his way of living. He experienced death as the phenomenon of the absurd. He does not merely reflect on but rather endures the basic experiences of the human condition: poverty, suffering, evil, guilt, death, and frustration. It was at that time he turned to philosophy, with the mentoring of his philosophy teacher, Jean Grenier.³

Camus, nevertheless, is not overtaken by these encounters; he knows how to have fun and nurtures well-being. He adored the beaches of the Mediterranean (the sand, the rocks, the sunlight) and sports (football, swimming, dancing). His appreciation of the natural world is evident in both his philosophical and creative vocabularies. Happiness, then, is the opposite of the world's tragic experience.⁴

In 1934, aged 20, Camus was in a relationship with Simone Hié. Simone had an addiction to morphine (narcotic), a drug she used to ease her menstrual pains. His uncle Gustave did not approve the relationship, but Camus married Hié to help her fight her addiction. He subsequently discovered she was in a relationship with her doctor at the same time and the couple later divorced and later he married Francine Faure in 1940. This indicated his profound awareness of and deliberate response to the historical phenomenon of nihilism; they show his critical examination of the reasons for living, dying, and creating. In 1957 he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature; he is the ninth and the second youngest writer at 44 after Rudyard Kipling, who was 42 to receive this distinction.

As described in the studies dealing with his life and work, in 1942, apart from his other works, Camus published an essay entitled, "*The Myth of Sisyphus*." This is his most well-known essay and contains a greater part of his philosophy of absurdity. For many years he published a good number of works which included essays and novels. But on 4th January 1960 at the age of 46, he was killed in a car accident near Sens, in Le Grand Fossard in the small town of Villeblevin.⁵ A major concern of Camus's philosophy was suicide, and he sought to find a way to address this issue. Suicide is thus not something that a person should take or not take; rather, it is something that every man should not think of attempting. Hence, in this context, suicide is considered evil.

1.2 A Critique of Albert Camus' Philosophy of Absurdism

Camus is well known for his famous statement which states, "There is but one truly serious philosophical problem, and that is suicide. Judging whether life is or is not worth living amounts to answering the fundamental question of philosophy."⁶ According to Camus, part of what makes something "absurd" is the fact that we are unable to find meaning. Therefore, he primarily addresses affective states associated with meaninglessness under the category of the feeling of the absurd. This feeling is addressed in his earlier works most succinctly and thoroughly, especially in *The Myth of Sisyphus*.

Absurdity refers not only to particular circumstances in people's lives (like the aforementioned examples), but also to human existence in general. Humans are meaning-seekers by nature. They yearn for unity with the environment

² Francis J Lescoe., *Existentialism with or without God*, 343.

³ Francis J Lescoe., *Existentialism with or without God*, 343.

⁴ Jean Sarocchi., *Camus*, (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1968), 3.

⁵ Frederick Copleston, S.J., *A History of Philosophy, Volume IX*, (New York, Doubleday, 1994), 392.

⁶ Copleston., *A History of Philosophy, Volume IX*, 392.

around them, for understanding (intellectual clarity), and for carrying out deeds that are worthwhile in and of themselves (intrinsic value).⁷ However, this search for meaning is only met with indifference or hostility.

At this juncture in his endeavor, man confronts the irrational. He is aware of his inner yearning for both reason and happiness. This conflict between human needs and the world's irrational silence gives rise to the absurd. It is believed that Camus saw absurdity as existing both inside and outside of human awareness. It is internal because it involves a specific psychological truth (that people look for purpose in their lives). It is also external since it implies a specific truth about the unconscious world (that is, the absence of such meaning in the outside world). The absurd is best understood as a conflict between people's need for unity and their own rejection of it by clinging to their individuality and autonomy.⁸

1.3 The Strive for Meaning and the Emergence of the Absurdity

Camus's ideas about the meaning of life can be easily misinterpreted; one may be tempted to see them as a metaphysical doctrine that provides an instant solution to the existential meaningfulness crisis. Responding to the misinterpretations of this central idea that underlie his philosophical thought, Camus argues that the disproportionality between the human being and the world is the descriptive phenomenon of the absurd, rather than prescriptive one, considered as the starting point of his reflections rather than the ultimate conclusion. It is more appropriate to understand Camus's thoughts as a phenomenological symptomatology of fundamental human attitudes, both intellectual and psychological, against the modern world stripped of all illusory rather than as a metaphysical explanation of the world's problems.⁹

Human beings are constantly searching for purpose in the world they inhabit. Human life as a whole is what brings people into contact with history, which shapes and validates their beliefs and values. In light of the end and what lies ahead in relation to his or her day-to-day experiences, he or she yearns for assistance. Nevertheless, absurdity or the conclusion that life is meaningless emerges when human ideals and values are not upheld and fulfilled. A human being will occasionally doubt even his own existence, wondering how and why he entered the world in such a way and ending up in conditions he did not choose. Examples include one's birth family, the nation, the town, one's physical characteristics, and numerous others. The sensation of absurdity arises when these questions are not addressed with specificity

The absurdity arises from the conflict that exists between an individual and the world they live in as they try to find purpose in life. As previously mentioned in the examples, this feeling can originate from a variety of sources or circumstances, "The realization of death's finality, the sense of nature's disregard for human values and aspirations, or the shock of suddenly realizing how meaningless daily life is can all give rise to the absurd feeling."¹⁰ Without any clear goal or significance, the world opens up to the man with unobstructed vision. Man experiences a sense of absurdity because the world is irrational and cannot satisfy his needs in the way he desires.

To put it in another way, absurdity is the conflict that arises from people's innate desire to find purpose and meaning in life and their inability to do so. This indicates that something is humanly impossible rather than logically impossible. We are accustomed to a world that makes sense even when bad things happen. However, in a world abruptly stripped of illusions and lights, man experiences a sense of alienation and stranger Dom. Since he has no memory of a home that has been lost or hope of a promised land, his exile has no end. The sense of absurdity is actually the result of this separation between a man and his life, an actor and his environment.¹¹

The irrational, human homesickness, and the absurd are the three parties or personages in which the absurdity arises. Aside from the insane world in which he finds himself, man discovers other men or humans with whom, due to the social nature of man, he comes into contact and starts exchanging thoughts, grief, and absurdities because they have all encountered similar circumstances. Moreover, people are far from providing enough assistance or responses to one another's inquiries. The great religious leaders and other intellectuals are among these groups of

⁷ Albert Camus., *The Myth of Sisyphus*, (London: Penguin, 2005), 26.

⁸ Matthew Bowker., *Camus and The Political Philosophy of the Absurd*, (Lanham: Lexington, 2013), 1.

⁹ Albert Camus., *The Myth of Sisyphus and Other Essays*, (New York: Vintage Books, 1955), 2.

¹⁰ Copleston., *A History of Philosophy, Volume IX*, 392-393.

¹¹ Albert Camus., *The Myth of Sisyphus*, Translated by Justin O'Brien, (London: Penguin Modern Classic, 1955), 9.

men who make claims to offer solace and answers to the absurd man. However, in doing so, they reveal additional information regarding their own limitations, which contributes to the absurd man's perception of life as having no clear meaning or purpose.

1.3.1 The Significance of the Myth of Sisyphus

With *The Myth of Sisyphus*, Camus articulated the problem of absurdity using a very unique manner. He presents the central idea, saying, "it is legitimate and necessary to wonder whether life has a meaning; therefore, it is legitimate to meet the problem of suicide face to face."¹² Camus unlike other existentialists took absurdity as his starting point and not the end.

Tricking the gods was a source of great pleasure for the scoundrel hero Sisyphus. The gods had sentenced Sisyphus to roll a rock incessantly to the summit of a mountain, from which point its weight would cause it to fall back. For some reason, they had believed that work that is pointless and horrible is the worst kind of punishment. "One needs to picture Sisyphus content." Carroll suggests that even though Camus claims that Sisyphus achieves "nothing" from his ineffectual labor and disdain for the gods, the "nothing" he achieves each time he pushes his rock to the very top of the hill, is in fact, the "something" of art.¹³

In order to highlight the absurdity of all human existence, Camus uses this case. Even though Sisyphus knew what he was doing was ridiculous and had no purpose, he mustered the courage to carry on because he could not give up on anything else. Almost all of Camus's ideas are contained in this myth. It inspires people to live their lives to the fullest in spite of the various challenges they face. Resilience is therefore a necessary component of absurdism.

We can therefore legitimately question whether our meaning-based justifications for considering suicide are based on any absurdity akin to that of Camus. His views also have counterintuitive ramifications for how people evaluate life's significance and the factors that influence suicidal thoughts. The meaninglessness of life is a necessary truth, independent of the unique circumstances of each person's life. However, this seems implausible. Sisyphus's life may have been meaningless in Camus's sense, but it is hard to accept that the lives of many notable individuals, such as Nelson Mandela, were also meaningless, and that Mandela's suicide reasons were comparable to Sisyphus's.

Furthermore, the absurdism of Camus suggests that significance remains constant throughout our lives. Ultimately, it can be argued that youthful Sisyphus pushing his rock up a hill is just as pointless as elderly Sisyphus; rested Sisyphus pushing his rock up a hill is just as pointless as exhausted Sisyphus; and so on. Nonetheless, the meaningfulness of most real human lives appears to fluctuate, as do the opportunities for meaningfulness.

1.3.2 The Plague as an Allegory for Resilience

Apart from *The Myth of Sisyphus*, Camus's writings frequently express rebellion as a reaction to the absurdity of human existence. For example, in *The Plague*, Dr. Rieux, Tarrou, and Cottard are dedicated to the battle against the plague that has engulfed their community. In a nutshell, Dr. Rieux explains that he chose to document the devastating effects of *The Plague* on the people of Oran instead of deciding to be one of those who hold their peace but bear witness in favor of those plague-stricken people; to ensure that some monument of the injustice and outrage performed them might endure.¹⁴ After several months of exile, many Oran residents grow weary of their self-centred fixation with their own misery. They begin to understand that the plague is a global calamity that affects everybody. They acknowledge their societal obligation and participate in the efforts to combat the pandemic. Different strategies are employed by the Oran people in dealing with this pointless suffering. Initially, they make an effort to minimize or dismiss it, but eventually, they begin to perceive it as a personal enemy keeps them from the people they love. Others, finally lose hope and give in to what appears to be inevitable, while some regard it as divines' retribution or a way to make money. But it is precisely this that Camus uses to remind us of the terrifying potential of the human condition and the necessity of facing it head-on.

¹² Camus., *The Myth of Sisyphus*, 11.

¹³ John Foley., *Camus from the Absurd to Revolt*, (New York: Acumen, 2008), 11.

¹⁴ Albert Camus., *The Plague*, trans. Stuart Gilbert (New York: Vintage Books, 1975), 308.

Consequently, *The Plague* is about bravery, involvement, kindness and altruism, small-scale bravery and grand-scale cowardice, and a host of other deeply humanist issues like love and goodness, happiness, and interpersonal relationships. Accordingly, the term "Plague" can allegorically refer to anything from the Second World War to philosophical ideas of absurdity, in addition to denoting a (literal) physical manifestation of illness. Without giving a clear definition, the reader is free to interpret the plague in a variety of metaphorical ways that could be philosophical, historical, or even metaphysical. Thus, we contend, is the power of allegory.

1.3.3 The Stranger as an Exploration of Absurdity to the Meaning of Life

The story revolves around Meursault, an eccentric Algerian man who vacillates between different stages of his life without any real passion. Like Camus, Meursault believes that life is meaningless. This suggests that Meursault acts without considering the ramifications or how his actions will be perceived when faced with a choice. Camus is credited as the originator of absurdism, the belief that life has no purpose despite our wishes for a different outcome.

Camus asserts that people have different ways of dealing with meaninglessness. The first choice is to "exit existence" or commit suicide. Neither Camus nor Kierkegaard believed that this was the best option. Second, one can turn to spirituality or religion in an attempt to find a meaning that is nonexistent. A "jump" into the unverifiable is made in the present instance. Step three is acceptance. It's important to acknowledge the absurd while carrying on with life. Camus considered the third option to be the best. One may only embrace their freedom by accepting the absurd.¹⁵ Despite appearing as an afterthought, absurdism plays a crucial role in *The Stranger*. Meursault is viewed as a social outcast. He does not believe relationships are important and doesn't think there is a purpose to life.

The main character represents the sense of alienation that comes with being alone. He sticks out because he refuses to establish deep relationships with people. He is so stiff, so nonexistent, when it comes to expressing his feelings. He frequently acts in a way that deviates from what people around him would expect of him. There was no reason for Meursault or any of the other grieving people in the room to bid Meursault's mother a final farewell. At a certain point, he says, it was difficult for me to accept the mourning as real. With regard to his actions and his inability to explain them, he finds it difficult to fit in. Having his designation as an anti-Christ, he must cope with new, disagreeable forms of isolation in his detention cell.¹⁶

In contrast to transcendental powers, *The Stranger* approaches destiny from Camus's perspective, which reduced fate to the knowledge that everyone would eventually die. In the context of *The Stranger*, it is possible to apply the concept of destiny to everyday problems that deprive people of their freedom and represent a death. Theological predestination has no place here; Meursault's destiny is unique to him and his existence; like all men, he is doomed to die, the ultimate and inevitable outcome. He concludes that freedom is fundamentally cancelled by death and that an individual's life choices ultimately have no bearing on this one universal reality. Death is a fact of life for all people, and Meursault's impending death symbolizes his ultimate triumph over freedom.

1.3.4 The Rebel as a Phenomenon in Every Person

It's clear from the chapter "Beyond Nihilism" in *The Rebel* that Camus believes rebellion is the best way to deal with nihilism. He asserts, "The people who truly advance the interests of history are the ones who know when and when to rebel against it."¹⁷ Camus promoted rebellion as the most honourable reaction to nihilism, as evidenced by this and numerous other passages in the book. Nevertheless, his preferred form of rebellion could not be predicated on random violence; rather, it had to be committed to the accomplishment of some noble objective, such as freedom. Moreover, Camus maintains that every struggle must take place within certain legitimate bounds in *The Rebel*, where he defines rebellion as the fight against terror, deception, and servitude.

To put it in another way, The Rebel obviously wants some freedom for himself, but if he is sincere, he never demands to end the existence or freedom of others. For the rebel man, it is imperative that they embrace the

¹⁵ Albert Camus., *The Stranger*, trans. Stuart Gilbert (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1946), 154.

¹⁶ Kim H. Hannah., "Camus and Sartre on the Absurd", *Philosophers*, no. 21, vol. 32, (2021), 26.

¹⁷ Albert Camus., *The Rebel*, trans. Anthony Bower (New York: Alfred Knopf, 1954), 269.

absurdity of the universe. Eventually, the creation is no longer viewed tragically; rather, it is viewed seriously. He needs something to put his hope in and is drawn to the universe by an odd love. Then, man is concerned about hope. The beauty of solidarity, which has its roots in human dignity; the idea that human life has value, offers hope to rebellion confronting absurdity.

1.4 Absurdity as a Recipe for Suicide

Suicide is the inevitable consequence of not being able to cope with this absurdity; in Camus's view, suicide was the biggest issue in need of attention. Because life cannot be lived without meaning, suicidal thoughts or actions arise when a man loses all sense of purpose in life. If, under certain conditions, a man is unable to realize his dreams, he perceives himself as worthless and hopeless.

This developed into a problem for Camus because he witnessed a great deal of people perish as a result of their belief that life is not worth living, as well as a paradoxical number of people who were killed for reasons that, in their minds, provided them with reasons to live; that is, a compelling argument for both living and dying. With this, we might find multiple instances of people passing away for various reasons in this regard.

Although there are many factors that contribute to suicide, Camus contends that the most prevalent ones are not the most potent. Seldom is it committed through reflection, he said. The most common causes and reasons for suicide that come to mind are personal tragedies, terminal illnesses, and other similar circumstances. According to Camus, taking one's own life indicates that you either don't understand life or that it is too much for you. Stated differently, the inconvenience is not justified.¹⁸

In fact, there are plenty of reasons why people commit suicide in this world. We learn of suicides carried out to escape the shame resulting from scandals, as well as instances when people felt rejected and disappointed in themselves. Other instances include being rejected by one's parents, friends, family, and/or boyfriend/girlfriend, among many others. The most fascinating thing about a significant portion of suicide victims is that they almost always leave a note behind, particularly at the scene of the crime. In addition to helping in some ways with judgments regardless, this also provides space for introspection and provides a fair image of those who are left behind.

Still, Camus does not advocate suicide because it is an absurd action that implies giving in to the ridiculous, submitting to the absurd, or giving up the fight against the opponent. Since suicide is an act that is planned in the heart and is therefore only known by the perpetrator, the relationship between thought and suicide is another crucial factor that must be examined. It is never easy to live in the world we find ourselves in. Every man can experience the feeling of absurdity in daily life, and it can strike him in the face multiple times. This means that people around him may not always be aware of the difficulties he is facing.

From a practical standpoint, man is identified and known by his actions, by the sum of his deeds, and by the effects of his existence. Beyond his true impulses, man defines himself through the beliefs he has made up. "Why?" is another question that ignites the sense of absurdity. Camus was more concerned with the problem's consequences; suicide, in this case, than with the absurdity itself. In order to achieve this, the absurd man searches for meaning; when he is unable to find it, he commits suicide. Therefore, a man seeks meaning but frequently experiences disappointments, which breeds a sense of absurdity and ultimately may lead to suicide.

1.5 Conceptual Distinction Between Nihilism and Absurdism

Nihilism gives rise to absurdism. Absurdism is a philosophical viewpoint that maintains that human attempts to find rational explanations or meaning in the universe ultimately fail and are therefore irrational because, at least for humans, there is no such thing as meaning.¹⁹ This implies that certain aspects of life are purely absurd, making it impossible for humans to exist. Human beings have to accept the absurdity of their existence in spite of its impossibilities. As a result, when we accept the impossibilities in life, we rebel against them and discover purpose in

¹⁸ Camus., *The Myth of Sisyphus*, 11.

¹⁹ Patrick Hayden., *Albert Camus on Revolt and Revolution*, (Boston: Leiden), vol. 5, (2020), 380.

them. As such, when it comes to the claim of meaning, absurdism and nihilism are mutually exclusive. thus, the reason is that nihilism does not allow for hope, whereas absurdism does.

Most of the twentieth century has seen nihilism linked to the idea that life has no purpose, and it is frequently discussed in terms of extreme skepticism and relativism. In order to address this, absurdism is used to counter the misunderstanding of nihilism regarding the assertion that life has no purpose. Consequently, it makes sense in light of Camus' assertion that;

Absurdism has to make the assumption that nothing supernatural exists. Accordingly, when the center of man's being (God) is denied, then what is left is man's own self-imprisoned consciousness of himself in the world of immanence. These possibilities, which include transcendence, intellectual intuition, and wisdom, are negated in the existing man.²⁰

Based on this, the only course of action left for human beings is to rebel against all of the obstacles they face. In addition, Camus views the rebel as a person who rejects self-deception as a false sense of comfort regarding the absurdity of the human predicament while rising against the strange indifference of the outside world. This suggests that the rebel is a person who is committed to putting humans in situations where people have human solutions. He rebels against impossibilities like difficulties, suffering, and meaninglessness. Consequently, individuals learn that absurdities abound in life itself. Thus, there is hope for life even in the midst of its absurdities.

At this point, a person rebels against absurdity, becomes enraged by suffering, and turns to the myth of Sisyphus to help them survive. With reference to the Sisyphus myth, Camus contends that “The realization that life is absurd cannot be an end in itself but only a beginning.”²¹ Challenges and difficulties are part of life. Anybody who experiences hardships in their daily lives must never give up. Our will to rebel against our suffering stems from our hope for a better future. To move on and live happy lives, we need to accept the challenges we face. To avoid Camus' suicide philosophy, which is essentially giving up or being defeated, we must adopt Sisyphus' attitude of accepting absurdities and holding out hope for a meaningful life.

In the concept of nihilism religion serves no purpose for meaning. The nihilists claim that “there is neither objective value nor objective fact in religion.”²² Religious beliefs are what have caused nihilism. It is by pretending to follow the Christian beliefs that has led to nihilism. We must believe that we can only find happiness in our own makings using reason. This indicates that the concept of nihilism is based on the totality of meaningless life. In nihilism, there is no hope for a meaningful life. It encourages human beings to be masters of their own existence. Reason becomes dominant in nihilism, negativity about life is what is emphasized. Thus, existence of one's being is meaningless.

1.6 The Ultimate Moral Principle

Prior to taking any drastic measures to repair the ongoing destruction of morality in Europe during the time of Immanuel Kant, Kant first noted that it is an observable empirical fact that people have ethical as well as moral views. He vehemently opposed utilitarianism, which accepts any action as long as it results in some degree of enjoyment for the individual.

In contrast to Jeremy Bentham, Kant thought that some behaviours (such as murder, lying, cheating, and stealing) should never be tolerated. Consequently, the utilitarian principle is refuted. What then is the best way to interpret Kant's moral philosophy? In actuality, morality is something we practice and discuss on a daily basis rather than being an illusion. It solely concentrates on rational existences.

Consequently, this compels one to unveil the famous categorical imperatives championed by Kant in his ethics. “Presenting an action as objectively necessary in and of itself, without taking into account any other end, is known as the categorical imperative.”²³ It commands unconditionally. Such as: ‘don't lie, don't murder, don't steal to mention but a few.

²⁰ John Foley., *Albert Camus: From the Absurd to Revolt*, (New York: Acumen, 2008), 6.

²¹ Foley., *Albert Camus: From the Absurd to Revolt*, 6.

²² Peter Sjöstedt-Hughes., “Nietzsche and Nihilism”, *Lecture to the Ethical Society*, no.10, vol. 114, University Of Exeter, (2009), 6.

²³ Immanuel Kant., *Foundations of the Metaphysical of Morals*, (New York: The Library of liberal Arts, 1785), 31.

Kant understands that if a person commits suicide, he or she can no longer perform any moral acts. Eliminating morality from the world cannot be morally just. The suicide takes away his identity. As it nullifies the terms of all other duties, this goes against the highest duty we have to ourselves.

This law is something that does not come outside from us but something that comes from within germinating from pure reason. In short this simply implies that every action one ought to take must be such that everyone can freely and willingly act upon it in that similar situation without any contradiction. Hence, this is kind of moral universalism or moral absolutism is derived from man's faculty of rationality.

Probably the most nuanced of the three Kantian formulations, the second one makes it abundantly evident that treating others and oneself as ends in and of themselves is preferable to using other people as objects to achieve one's own goals. As Kant would state: "Never act in a way that merely serves as a means to an end; instead, act in a way that of promoting humanity, whether it be in the person of another or yourself."²⁴ According to Kant, man is God's property and cannot decide how to end his own life.

Suicide is also a dehumanizing act because it treats the suicide victim like a thing. In this sense, beasts are things, but humans are neither things nor beasts; therefore, by killing themselves, suicide victims dehumanize and debase themselves. When he gets rid of himself, he treats himself like a monstrous creature. Consequently, nobody in this universe is deserving of being treated like a mere mean.

Furthermore, this requirement applies to all people, regardless of race or religion. The main issue is whether a particular action is right or wrong. As a result, one acts out of duty as well as in accordance with it. "All rational beings must therefore adhere to duty, which is the practical, and unconditional necessity of action."²⁵ Henceforth, quoting from one of Kant's commentaries which states that; "Moral judgment is subjective in the absence of moral principles."²⁶ Stated differently, a categorical imperative's standards should serve as the foundation for determining whether an action is worthy of being considered.

Hence, In Kant's view, an individual who acts in such a way, shows no regard for human nature, and turns himself into an object, becomes an object of free will for all. Since he has made a thing out of himself and has given up on his humanity, he cannot expect others to respect the humanity in him. Therefore, we are free to treat him like a beast, a thing, and make use of him for our entertainment in the same way that we do with a horse or a dog.

1.7 The General Moralistic Perspective

In relation to this viewpoint, protecting life and preventing suicide are our primary moral obligations because suicide is unsuitable. Suicide is viewed as shameful and a transgression against society. It is wrong to commit suicide. Many religious moralists adopted a natural-law perspective on suicide, contending that it disobeys the order God created for the universe and hijacks God's right to decide when we should die. To exterminate the concept of morality compared to one's being is to eliminate morality as an entity from the universe. Therefore, it debases a person's humanity when they treat themselves as a mere means to an arbitrary end.²⁷

According to the social contention against the acceptance of suicide, committing suicide is wrong because it betrays our obligations to others and can therefore hurt the community as a whole or particular others (like friends or family) because it clearly inflicts emotional, financial, and material harm on the survivors who pay the cost for the person's suicide.²⁸ The above reasoning is consistent with what Cooper B. Holmes quoted Aristotle's claim that killing oneself is detrimental to the state's community.

²⁴ Kant., *Foundations of the Metaphysical of Morals*, 56-57.

²⁵ Kant., *Foundations of the Metaphysical of Morals*, 43.

²⁶ Philip Stratton-Lake., *Kant, Duty and Moral Worth*, (London: Routledge, 2000), 9.

²⁷ Immanuel Kant., *The moral law: Groundwork of the metaphysics of morals*, (London: Routledge), 1948, 213.

²⁸ Cooper B. Holmes., "Comment on Szasz's View of Suicide Prevention", *American Psychologist*, vol. 42, no. 9, (1987),

1.8 Philosophical Vs Physical Suicide

Most philosophers who opposed suicide held the following positions: it is the height of absurdity as well as wickedness, pure self-gratification, a dangerous precedent, madness, and pathology. That is the reason it has been a constant source of intense passion among people. From an existential, political, emotional, or religious standpoint, it is unquestionably dangerous. The idea that suicide is moral and ethically wrong was made explicit in the philosophical arguments against it. The aforementioned viewpoint is based on the notion that, despite what is commonly believed, the problems that ultimately result in suicide are transient.

Nonetheless, the act of suicide can be caused by a number of factors, including depressive disorders, terminal illnesses, emotional distress, and other issues. It is frequently asserted that therapy of some kind can help to mitigate these causes. The person's life may occasionally undergo a significant change as a result. While this perspective has been discussed in relation to examining the obstacles presented by certain common causes of suicide, some philosophers have criticized it.²⁹ Although some people may believe that emotional suffering is fleeting, they contended that it can occasionally be challenging to make changes in an individual's life. The reason for this is that, even in counselling therapy, the effectiveness of this strategy would largely depend on the severity of the ailment and the individual's ability to bear the discomfort or challenge.

One could contend that people who commit physical suicide for absurd reasons are victims of philosophical suicide. Emile Durkheim is credited with helping to explain some physical suicides, particularly in terms of his explanation of the factors that lead to physical suicide. Thus, we will only address two types of physical suicide in Durkheim's view: altruistic and egoistic.

1.8.1 The Supposition of Egoistic Suicide

Generally speaking, egoism is a condition in which a person has weak social bonds with others. Accordingly, the rest of society will not be greatly affected by the suicide of the individual because they are not firmly rooted in or integrated into it. There aren't many social ties to prevent someone like that from killing themselves. One could argue that people who are egoistic are severely lacking in social integration.³⁰ The inference is that these people have a tendency to contribute to steady suicide rates because they lack the integrating elements of social norms, values, and support systems. The main inference is the fact that egoistic self-harm results from a sense of individual failure or from not being able to live up to one's own or society's expectations.

1.8.2 The Possibility of Altruistic Suicide

Suicides of this kind occur when a person fully integrates into an organization or community. Due to their unwavering commitment to the cause, the individuals are prepared to end their own existence if their beliefs and ideals demand it. The person feels compelled to take their own life because they have been accepted by a society or group. To put it another way, these individuals commit suicide because they feel that their deeply held ideal demands it. Some people feel that taking their own life is their duty, a phenomenon known as obligatory altruistic suicide. Additionally, there is the optional suicide, which occurs when someone feels that suicide carries a certain social status. People who kill themselves out of self-loathing represent another type of suicide that is charitable in nature.³¹

They consider this to be admirable and think that there is a lovely life out there somewhere. The phenomenon of altruistic suicide occurs when societal forces enforce excessive regulation on individuals. A glaring example is someone who kills themselves in order to further their political or religious beliefs. Even in cases where death is the outcome, these individuals have surrendered to societal expectations. In the author's view, there is also ample evidence of selfless suicide among the suicide bombers.

²⁹ Georges Minois., *History of Suicide. Voluntary Death in Western Culture*, translated by Lydia G. Cochrane, (London: The Johns Hopkins University Press), 1999, 38.

³⁰ Steve Taylor., *Durkheim and the Study of Suicide*, (London: Macmillan), 1982, 19.

³¹ Daniel E. Hebding and Leonard Glick., *Introduction to Sociology: A Text with Readings*, (New York: McGraw-Hill), 1996,

Consequently, there will be a decrease in suicide when people have a set of meaningful goals and a set of regulated rules and norms. Suicide, however, will rise when objectives become meaningless and ineffective or become impossible to accomplish because of a shifting circumstance.

1.9 Conclusion

This article gives us a clear picture of what Camus intended to write in his philosophy. This is where his work has been exposed on why his philosophy is known as the philosophy of the absurd. Absurdism comes out with the mind of viewing life or reality as meaningless. This is where Suicide is emphasized, and on how man comes up with the mind of committing suicide which Camus was against. Conclusively, it is the existential act of suicide that led Camus to critically analyse the problem.

Therefore, a meaningless life may mean going through an existential crisis. A human being could be borderline depressed. Thus, the feeling of emptiness may occur in a life of person. However, one can be sure that, despite all of this, there is still meaning to one's existence. The point of this entire concept in philosophy is that, ultimately, the goal is to live life in a way that when the individual's growth comes to an end, something good is still left behind for the cycle to continue. No human's life is ever truly meaningless. Basically, our life can never lose its meaning and purpose. If you are living in this world, there is some reason deep down. We should embrace our absurdities if we want to live a happy life. Thus, life is full of challenges, but it is through those challenges that we are able to be strong.

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