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IT DEPENDS

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WRITE UP

A few years ago I asked some of my friends whether the thirst for knowledge increases with the increase in knowledge or it actually decreases and pat came the reply, “It depends”. This is a sentence that we encounter on a daily basis – many times. Normally, as soon as someone utters this sentence we immediately fall flat. Why shouldn’t we? We ourselves do that and make others collapse in seconds.

It is, however, worthwhile to stop at this repeatedly used sentence for a while and contrast the occasions when we say “It depends” with the occasions when we don’t. For instance, did we ever say “It depends” when someone asked us our name and the name of our father and mother? Will we ever say “It depends” if someone asks us what is the day today? Do we ever write “It depends” against Gender in our CVs?

After recalling the occasions, let us recall the kind of people from whom we have(n’t) heard this sentence the most. Let us start from the earlier luminaries to our teachers and peers. How (in)frequently have they uttered “It depends” and why or why not? We may try to find out more about the vagueness or clarity of their ideas. It might also help us in understanding whether they had stayed with the problems longer or they had arrived at conclusions in a speedy manner.

On being asked, “Is he your husband” or “Is she your wife” do we ever say, “Well, you know, it depends”? Do we every say, “It depends” when asked when we got married? When asked about the date and place of the birth of our sons and daughters do we ever say, “It depends”? But, then, why do we say “It depends” when asked about the thirst for knowledge? Because it is not that obvious? Why isn’t it that obvious? Why it depends? How much does the TRUTH depend on circumstances and on how we look at it?

“It depends” serves as a beautiful escape route many a times. But it does so in a very ‘scholarly’ manner. It gives an unmistakable impression that we have researched on this very subject for years together and have *finally* arrived at the conclusion that “It actually depends”. “It depends” sounds “I am afraid, I haven’t thought about it at all and I do not want to admit it, you know”. “It depends” means “You have caught me unawares and I need some more time”. Every time we hear “It depends” we should ask ourselves “Does it actually depend?”

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