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Buddhism and Human Development

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Abstract

This article aimed to convey the knowledge about human development from Pitaka, the Holy Pali Canon of Buddhism, particularly from *Suttantapitaka*, one of the *Tipitaka*, to find out what Dhamma topic, the Buddha's teachings, is the most appropriate for human development based on the research entitled: Buddha-dhamma for Administrators conducted by Sman Ngamsnit in 2020 by documentary research. Findings were that main Tipitaka Pali Canon, volume 20 to volume 25, there are 21 *Dhamma* topics that are most suitable for public and private organization administration. In *Tipitaka* volume 25 in which *Suttanta Pitaka* volume 17 is, there is Dhamma principle for human development, called *Mangalasutta*, blessings. This principle is considered by Buddhist academicians the human development strategies. In this *Mangalasutta*, Buddha had laid down the methods or strategies for human development from the very basic to the highest level, consisting of the thirty-eight strategies with blessings as the outcomes. When one practices along these strategies from very basic to the highest level, one will have a good life, eliminate sufferings, gain liberation, and become the full developed, the enlightened one.

Keywords: Human Development, Buddha-dhamma, Buddhist Strategies.

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Introduction

One of Buddha proverbs says “*Tantō Setthō Manussesu*: Among men, those who are fully trained are the most excellent”⁴

Human development, in general sense, is a process of enlarging people’s choices, the three essential choices for people to lead a healthy and long life, to acquire knowledge and to have access to the resources needed for a decent standard of living. Human development is about giving people more freedom to live lives they value. Three foundations for human development are to live a long, healthy, and creative life, to be knowledgeable, and to have access to resources needed for a decent standard of living¹. Development is not purely an economic phenomenon but rather a multi-dimensional process involving organization and reorientation of entire economic and social system. Development is process of improving the quality of all human lives with three equally important aspects: raising people’s living levels, i.e. incomes and consumption, levels of food, medical services, education through relevant growth progresses, Creating conditions conducive to the growth of peoples, self-esteem through the establishment of social, political and economic systems and institutions which promote human dignity and respect and increasing people’s freedom to choose by enlarging the range of their choice variables, varieties of goods and services Human resource concept was first introduced by **Leonard Nadler** in 1969 in a conference in US. “He defined HRD as those learning experience which are organized, for a specific time, and designed to bring about the possibility of behavioral change”⁵. Human resource development is a process of training and system developing and unleashing human expertise through organizational development and personnel training and development for the purpose of improving performance.⁶

In Buddhism, human development is a training process which can be called Strategy but in Buddhism, called *Sikkhā*, consisted of three main strategies: strategy for morality training, called *Sila Sikkha*, concentration training, called *Samādhi Sikkhā*, and wisdom training, called *Panyā Sikkhā*. These three trainings are very important in human life

⁴ Buddha’s Saying: Suttanta Pitiaka in Titaka,, volume 25, Thai (2539) Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University Press, p. 133

⁵ Nadler, Leonard (1989) Developing Human Resources: Concept and a Model, Michigan, Zeace Nadler, Jossey-Bass Publisher

⁶ Kemmis, S. McTaggard, R. Action Research Planner, 3rd Edition, Victoria: Deakin University, 1988



by the purpose of life is to learn to live a good to perfect life. From these three main strategies, the Buddha had laid down the ways, the methods, or tactics.

Buddhism in many perspectives.

Buddhism can be looked at from many perspectives. Buddhadasa Bhikkhu⁷ one of the famous Thai monks mentioned at least three perspectives as follows:

1) Buddhism as Religion: Buddhism as a system of practice based on *Tisikkhā*; *Sila*, morality, *Samadhi*, concentration and *Panyā*, insight, a system when practiced to the completion enables one to break free from suffering, entering *Nivāna*. This is Buddhism as a religion.

2) Buddhism as Philosophy: Some religious scholars, especially Westerners look at Buddhism from philosophical point of view. Philosophical knowledge can be clearly seen by means of reasoned logical proofs but cannot be demonstrated experimentally. It contrasts with science, which is knowledge resulting from seeing something clearly.

3) Buddhism as the art of living, as skill and competence in being a human being, living a good and righteous life, living to cultivate the moral purity, then training the mind to be tranquil and steady and fit to do the job, and finally developing wisdom and clear insight.

From study and scrutinizing Suttantapitaka, Tipitaka volume 20 to volume 25, the results revealed that there are 22 Dhamma topics that are appropriate for the public and private organization administrators and one topic for human development.

Dhamma, virtues that are appropriate for public and private organization administrators. These are:

Lokapaladhamma, virtues protecting the world, 2 topics: *Hiri*, moral shame, *Ottappa*, Moral dread.

Dhukkata Pukala, rare persons, 2 topics: one who is the first to do a favor, previous benefactor, and one who is grateful and repay the done favors.

Patisantara, hospitality, 2 topics: worldly hospitality, material or carnal greeting and doctrinal hospitality, spiritual greeting.

Dhamma, phenomena, 2 topics: mundane state and supermundane state.

⁷ Buddhadasa Bhikku, Handbook for Mankind, Bangkok, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya Press, 2548



Sobhanakara dhamma, gracing virtues, 2 topics: patience, tolerance and modesty, meekness.

Bahukaradhamma, virtues of great assistance, 2 topics: Sati, mindfulness, Sampajanna, clear comprehension.

Sujarita, good conduct, 3 topics: good conduct in act, good conduct in words and good conduct in thought.

Papanikadhamma, quality of a successful businessman that can also apply for administration, 3 topics: Chakkhuma, shrewd, vision, Vithuro, capable of administrating business and Nissayasampanno, having good credit rating.

Adhipateyya, dominant influence, supremacy, 3 topics: Attâtîpateyya, supremacy of self, self dependency, Lokâtîpateyya, supremacy of the world, public opinions and Dhammâdhipateyya, supremacy by Dhamma or righteousness.

Agati, prejudice, 4 topics: Chantâgati, prejudice caused by love, desire, partiality. Dosâgati, prejudice caused by hatred or enmity. Mohâgati, prejudice caused by delusion or stupidity. Bhayâgati, prejudice caused by fears.

Sangahavathu, bases of sympathy, virtues making for group integration and leadership, 4 topics: Dana, giving, Piyavâcâ, kindly speech, convincing speech, Attacariya, useful conduct, rendering services and Samânattatâ, even and equal treatment, behaving oneself properly in all circumstances.

Itthipâda, path to accomplishment; basis for success, 4 topics: Chanda, will, aspiration, Viriya, effort, exertion, Citta, active thought and Vimamsâ, investigation.

Ariyavathi, noble growth, development of a civilized man, 5 topics: Saddhâ, confidence; Sila, morality; Suta, learning; Câga, liberality and Pannâ, wisdom.

Brahmavihâra, holy abiding; sublime state of mind, 4 topics: Mettâ, loving-kindness, friendliness, Karunâ, compassion, Mutitâ, sympathetic joy and Upekkhâ, neutrality.

Vajji Aparihâniyadhamma, principles leading never to decline but only to prosperity with 7 topics: (1) to hold regular and frequent meetings; (2) to meet together in harmony and disperse in harmony, do business and duties in harmony; (3) to introduce no revolutionary ordinances, or break no established ordinance, but abide by the original norm and principles, (4) to honor and respect the elders among the Vajjians and deem them worthy of listening to, (5) the women and girls of the families are to dwell without being forced or abducted, (6) to honor and worship Vajjian shrine, monuments and objects of worship, both central and provincial and do not neglect those righteous ceremonies held before for them, (7) to provide the rightful protection, shelter and support for Arahants and



wish that the Arahants who have not come may enter the realm and those who have entered may dwell pleasantly therein.

Rājadharmā, virtues of the king, virtues of the ruler, 10 topics: Dāna, charity; Sila, morality; Pariccāga, self-sacrifice; Ajjava, honesty, integrity; Maddhava, kindness and gentleness; Tapa, austerity, self control, non-indulgence; Akkōdha, non-anger, non-fury; Avihimsō, non-violent, non-oppression; Khanti, patience, forbearance, tolerance; and Avirōdhana, non-opposition, non-deviation from righteousness, conformity to the law.

Dhamma, virtues for human development

In Pitaka, Thai version, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, volume 25, Suttanta Pitaka volume 17, in Mangalasutta, from page 561 to 563, Appeared Mangalasutta, blessings, the human development strategies the Buddha answered the Devas and men who argued about the blessings, the real essence of life. These Mangala or supreme blessings are considered the Human Development Strategies, consisting of 38 strategies, from very basic to the highest levels. When one practices to the fullest, one will attain the highest developed state of beings, the enlightened one.

The thirty-eight strategies of human development for supreme blessings are as follows:

1. The first strategy is *Asevanā ja Palanang*, to abstain from association with wicked persons. the fools. Characteristics of the wicked persons are to think wickedly, speak wickedly and act wickedly.
2. The second strategy is *Panditā Nanja Sevanā*, to associate with only the wise persons. The wise persons are the ones with knowledge, wisdom, good hearts, and live life righteously.
- 3 The third strategy is *Pujā ja*, to worship those who are worthy, suitable of honor and worship
- 4 The fourth strategy is *Patirupadesa*, to live in a suitable place and good environment
5. The fifth strategy is *Puppe ja Katapunyatā*, to have well accumulated virtues from the previous life
6. The sixth strategy is *Attasammāpaniti*, to Appropriately conduct self-development in beneficial courses; faith, precepts, learned, sacrifice and wisdom, the real essence of Dhamma



7. The seventh strategy is Pahusajja, to be the learned person. The qualifications of the learned person are: 1) all around knowledge to higher levels 2). Good memory of both characters and contents 3). Fluent presentation with good supportive examples 4). gained experiences from practice 5) know all true nature of things with wisdom.

8. The eighth strategy is Sipp Anja, to be skilful in arts and craft with esthetic, creative and value added.

9. The ninth strategy is Vinayō, to be well-trained, well-disciplined persons.

10. The tenth strategy is Supāsītā Ja Yāvācā, to be developed to be well spoken persons with good and sweet, pleasing to ears words

11. The eleventh strategy is Mātāpitu upattāna, to look after the parents. take good care of the parents. Make them happy and have peace of mind, making merits dedicating to them after they passed away.

12. and 13. Twelfth and thirteenth strategies are Putta tārassasangaha, to take care of children and spouses, looking after them with loving care.

14. The fourteenth strategy is Anākulā Ja Kammantā, to be developed to work earnestly with great effort to finish the work, not left work undone.

15. The fifteenth strategy is Dānan ja, to be developed to be a person who donates, sacrifices and shares with others, conducts charity, give helping hands.

16. The sixteenth strategy is Dhammajariyā, to develop a person to practice Dhamma, practice virtuous conduct and practice observance

17. The seventeenth strategy is Yātakānan ja Sangkahō, to develop a person to be a person who knows how to help his relatives and cousins.

18. The eighteenth strategy is Anavajjāni kammāni, to develop human to engage in only clean work, honest and harmless occupation

19. The nineteenth strategy is Arati virati pāpā, to develop human to refrain from doing all sins, all bad deeds.

20. The twentieth strategy is Maja Pānā ja Sanyamo, to develop human to abstain from drinking alcoholic beverage and addicted intoxicants

21. The twenty first strategy is Appamātō ja dhammesu, to develop human to be heedful at all times, in doing, speaking and thinking, is to develop mindfulness.

22. The twenty second strategy is Karavo, to develop human to be respectful in body, speech, and mind. Persons with respect never be disrespected.

23. The twenty third strategy is Nivato, to be humble, polite, not to be so proud, so haughty and arrogant



24. The twenty fourth strategy is Santutthi, to be self-content, satisfied, and grateful with what one has.

25. The twenty fifth strategy is Katanyuta, to be developed to be persons with gratitude, gracefulness, and moderation.

26. The twenty sixth strategy is Kâlena Dhammatsavanang, to develop persons to know how to listen to Dhamma in an appropriate time

27. The twenty seventh strategy is Kanti, to have tolerance, endurance, and patience,

28. The twenty eighth strategy is Sovajatsata, to be obedient, willing to obey and willing to learn

29. The twenty ninth strategy is Samanā nan ja Tassanung, to see, consult and associate with ordained monks. Brahma and ascetics

30. The thirtieth strategy is Kâlena Dhamma sâgajjâ, to listen to Dhamma discourse, religious sermons and to have doctrine dialogues at an appropriate time and appropriate place

31. The thirty first strategy is Tap \bar{O} ja, to practice exertion, mental devotion, and religious austerity.

32. The thirty second strategy is Bramajariyan ja, to practice Holy life, sublime life, or celibate life.

33. The thirty third strategy is Ariya Sajjâ na Tassanang, to be developed to see the four Noble Truths; Suffering, the causes of suffering, the cessation, the path to the cessation.

34. The thirty fourth strategy is Nibbâna Sajjigiriya ja, to be developed to the state of clearly comprehension of Bibbâna. To the state of extinction of all defilements and suffering

35. The thirty fifth strategy is Puttassa Lokidhammehi, to be free from worldly conditions: gain, loss, dignity, obscurity, blame, praise, happiness, and pains. These worldly conditions cannot shake the mind, stable mind of the developed persons.

36. The thirty sixth strategy is Asokang, to be developed to the state of not to be sad, not to be glad when touched by worldly conditions, mentally healthy, to be calm and tranquil at all circumstances.

37. The thirty seventh strategy is Virachang, to be developed to the state of being free from attachment, to have the pure mind with no defilement attached.



38. The thirty eighth strategy is Khemang, to be developed to the state of having the blissful, stable mind, Arahanta's minds with no defilements attached, the mind that is not wavered by the worldly conditions.

These thirty-eight strategies with blessing as outcomes, when one practices from very beginning at one's immediate environment to the highest level, Nibbhana, the ultimatum goal of Buddhism, one will be victorious, happy, and peaceful always. This is the supreme blessings and ultimatum goals of every human and Deva's lives.

Discussion

MANGALA SUTTA: The Discourse on Blessings

Mangala Sutta is generally considered a list of thirty-eight blessings. The present public administration academicians considered these blessings the strategies to reach those blessings. The Buddha wanted His devotees to be victorious and happy everywhere and every time. To achieve such a state of universal victory and happiness, development or action is needed to be taken in regard to every aspect of one's life. So, the Buddha begins with one's immediate environment, both human and material.

By not associating with the foolish, associating with the wise and honoring and worshipping those worthies of honor and worship constitute the main elements of the ideal human environment conducive to achieving the goal set before the devotee. To reside in an appropriate location is the fourth strategy emphasizing material environment. The next strategy for the blessing is inherited merits accumulated from the previous life. So, one is lucky and easy to be developed in this life. It is important asset for those lucky persons to maintain accumulating the merits in this life

The sixth strategy Attasammapaniti, is pre-requisite for all strategies. To perform any duties and responsibility, one must set oneself at the right direction.

To be developed, one must be eager to learn, Pahusajja, to be the learned person, seeking for new knowledge continuously. Otherwise, one will be stagnant.

By being the learned persons, one will be skilful in arts and craft with esthetic, creative and value-added mind

The important discipline of the developed man is Vinayō, being well trained, well-disciplined persons. With good discipline one will be successful in all endeavors.

Besides good discipline, the developed administrators must have Supāsītā Ja Yāvācā, to be well spoken persons with good and sweet, pleasing to ears words. The developed persons are till obligated in day-to-day life as supporting one's parents,



cherishing one's wife and children, engaging in uncomplicated or unconfused occupations, being generous and of righteous conduct, tending one's relatives and performing blameless deeds. Then, the developed persons participate in Dhamma discussion from time to time as to pave the way to the next stage of development, Brahmajariya, that signifies self-control, celibacy, to enter into religious life as a monk-an essential preparation for the accomplishment the perception of the noble truths of suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering and path leading to cessation of suffering, and the realization of Nibbana, The ultimatum goal of human development is to be developed into the person who has realized Nibbana, the ultimatum goal of Buddhism, the person whose mind is unruffled by the turbulence of life. Is free from sorrow, defilements, and sufferings.

These remarkably cogent lists of strategies that the Buddha laid down to bring mankind to the safe and secure sanctuary of the tranquil state of Nibbana, the highest state of development. There could be no other strategies by which the devotees, the followers should culminate.

Conclusion

Human development, in the worldly sense, is a process of enlarging people's choices, the three essential choices for people to lead a healthy and long life, to acquire knowledge and to have access to the resources needed for a decent standard of living. Buddhism, human development is a life-long learning process that never ends until one reach the highest state of beings, that is Nibbhāna. There are many Buddhist methods and strategies that fit human attributes. the Buddha has laid down from the very basic to the highest strategy to bring mankind to the safe and secure sanctuary of the tranquil state of Nibbana, there is no other strategies that can help devotees and followers to culminate in the point of highest development.

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