

Buddhist Economic Philosophy as a guideline for country oriented Economic Growth

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Abstract

Buddhist Economics is a branch of Buddhist philosophy originated in India 2500 years ago. Initially Buddhism was known as a religious study based on spirituality and the middle path known as (medum piliwetha) is the prescribed way towards the ultimate intention of acquiring the redeem (mokshaya). Economics is the study of economic behaviour of man who is considered to be rational in making decisions. It deals with how to maximize the profit and utility when the given resources are limited and fixed. The presumption is that immaterial human needs exceed material resources. At this point, the dilemma arises whether Buddhism influences Economics which focuses on local wellbeing. Therefore, this study focuses on the potential factors accelerating and influencing modern Economic targets. Buddhist teachings are for both ordinary lay man's wellbeing and for the spiritual wellbeing seekers. Accordingly, Lord Buddha has admonished on consumption (C), savings (S) and investment (I) patterns which is discussed under modern economics using theories like simple production function ($Y=C +S$), Harrod Domar theory and Rostow's growth theory. Eventhough sustainable development concept, equal rights for women, green concept and happiness index are newly introduced concepts for Economics, the old Buddhist teachings have shed sufficient light on these vital factors. Despite the major belief that Buddhism makes the economic man a lethargic man, E.F. Shumarshar in his notorious book "Small is Beautiful" points out the depth of Buddhist influence on modern Economics. In furtherance of this study, secondary data resources such as relevant and approachable books, magazines and reliable websites will be referred and a comparative study will be done depending on the previous Buddhist Economic concepts and modern Economic theories.

Keywords - Buddhist Economics, middle path

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