

An analytical study on how Buddhist social works support to the collaboration of society

Rev. Penalaboda Gnanaloka¹

Introduction

Society means collaboration of person to person. Not only be one of the crucial bases for accomplishing merit, but "social work" is one of the names for "happiness" -that is, the "meritorious deed" in the Buddha's discourses or suttas as well. With a long distance to its origin, social work, in its first reference as dāna (giving), was expressed in the Buddha's time as a spiritual force for the creation of social conditions favorable to tackle such critical social dukkha (problems) as poverty, hunger, wars and the suffering resulting from these problems. And after more than 2,600 years, these same old problems have continued, together with new social problems and risks. In the turn of the twentieth century tendency, however, are emerging such social-environmental-economic development crises along with those problems as ecological catastrophe, environmental degradation, climate change, human trafficking, drugs, and recently the paradox of happiness of people in the developed nations – for the current economic situation does not - really make their citizen happy, although the countries have succeeded much in industrialization and modernization guided by the "pursuit of happiness," an efficient economic ideology in search of an affluent and good 'welfare state' of Homo economics of the mainstream economic paradigm. This paper, in quest for solutions relevant to those contemporary problems, analyzes their causes and considers the 'Buddhist social work' as a vital path in pursuing genuine happiness via the Buddhist economics of happiness standpoints.

Research Objectives

To investigate keep the society in peaceful and harmony according to the Buddha's point of view.as well as buddha's teaching on politically, economically, religiously etc. To describe the theory of social contract in brief and illustrate how it can be worked out according to the Buddha's teaching.

¹. Royal pandit, Undergraduate, Department of Pāli and Buddhist philosophy, University of Sri Jayewardenepura, Sri Lanka. *Gnanaloka1990@gmail.com*

Research Mythology

The research involves historical, analytical and comparative study with the primary and secondary Sources of information about social works and social functions. The research investigates primary Sources as Tripitakaya, Vedic literature, Buddhist commentaries and Sanskrit literature. As well as investigated by the sociological books. All the investigated facts from the sources are analyzing distributed to analyze the concept in this research.

Research problem

Research on how Buddhist social works support to the collaboration of society and peaceful world.

Research Literature review

Here mainly research on Analyze and critically discuss the wealth of information in Buddhist texts, historical sources and eastern and western sources on philosophical thoughts. As well as sources related to modern experiments and observations in the field of Buddhist philosophy.

Research Framework

Sutta expressions. Social Evolution and revelation. A sociological comparative commentary. Social values of collaboration.

Research Discussion

With a long distance to its origin, social work was in its first reference as dāna (generosity, charity) and veyyāvacca (offering the service). Both meanings were expressed in the Buddha's time as spiritual force for the creation of social conditions favorable to tackle the critical social dukkha (problems) such as wars (among states), poverty, hunger, and the suffering resulting from these problems. According to the traditional story, such distinguished individuals as Sudatta-Anāthapindika and Visākhā (Migāra's Mother);? who situated at the upper class of society and very wealthy, as well as Suppiyā, and Ugga of Hatthī village, all choose to follow the spiritual path and became the noble ones through 'generosity' and 'rendering the service'. Hence, the history of philosophical idea of eastern social work must begin with the great contribution of the Buddha. The Blessed One understands the major cause of social problems within the individual. By focusing on the individual, even though he also knows how much culture and the structure of

society (class system) have influence upon individuals; his Dhamma can cure the social problems of his time. This is because to serve a society in a real and long term is difficult, if the person is devoid of 'individual development'. Therefore, the Buddha urged his sixty disciples who had attained the arahant ship to travel from village to village, city to city, to teach his Dhamma to people for their welfare and happiness:

Research Conclusion

The Buddhist social work is an action that is no longer developed in the context of homoiconic where his/her behavior is driven by self-interest or selfishness. The philosophy of Buddhist social work has to deal inter-dependently among individuals, the economy, ecology, environment, society, and morality that is for the individual and social transformation. It can be seen in some suttas as sigālovāda sutta, vasala sutta, māha mangala sutta etc. Its idea is based on awareness-understanding of interdependence among individuals and those surrounding systems which all are in unity. Besides, it needs to work together, care for each other, make sacrifices, let go of 'self' and give up self-interests for the sake of Dhamma, the welfare of others, the happiness of the greatest number of people, and finally, the good of society.

Keywords: Social work, Buddhist economics, Homo economics, Happiness paradox.

References

- Horner, B. (tr.). (1998). **Majjhima-nikāya:** The Middle Length Sayings. vol-1. pp. 363.
- Ñānamoli, Bhikkhu (1991). **Khuddaka-nikāya:** The Minor Anthologies: **Khuddakapaṭṭha:** The Minor Readings. Oxford: Pali Text Society. pp. 2-4.
- Woodward, F.L. (tr.). (1942). **Sanyutta-nikāya:** Book of Kindred Sayings. vol-4. (Salāyatana Vagga). p. 86.
- [Http://www.crosscurrents.org/buddhistethics.htm](http://www.crosscurrents.org/buddhistethics.htm).
- Soydan, H. (2009). **Theories and Methods of Social Work:** An Exploring Different Perspectives, Faculty of Social Work. University of Ljubljana. pp. 9-30.
- Rhys Davids, T.W. and Stede, William (eds.). (1918). **Civilization and society.** op.cit. p. 720.