

An Exploratory Study on Whether Seela is an Effective Behavioral Treatment for the Prevention of Eating Disorders

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The mind, which is pure by birth, becomes defiled due to impure thoughts such as *klesha*, *upaklesha*, *angana*, *chetokhila asava*, *ogha*, *yoga*, and *nivarana*. Buddhist psychology teaches that due to these impurities, the mind becomes confused and mental disorders and abnormal behaviours occur. According to modern psychology, it is believed that the imbalance of neurotransmitter hormones in the brain and central nervous system causes mental disorders and abnormal behaviours. Mental disorders related to eating are identified in modern psychology as Anorexia Nervosa and Bulimia Nervosa. Anorexia Nervosa means avoiding food by assuming that one is too obese or skinny, whereas Bulimia Nervosa means eating vast amounts of food and following inappropriate methods to remove the excess from the body. These mental disorders are stressful for human beings. Buddhist psychology proposes a behavioural reform known as *Seela Shiksha* to correct these mental disorders. Seela means the discipline of words and body. The main purpose of Seela is to systematise the behavioural pattern. The eating disorders are fragmented through that therapy by gradually reducing food cravings. The study investigates whether Seela works as a behavioural treatment for eating disorders. This study is limited only to Anorexia Nervosa and Bulimia Nervosa. This study aims to create a physically and mentally healthy community through behavioural treatment by temporarily suppressing impurities. Data are collected through discussions with experts in the field. The importance of the research is to study the effect of Seela on physical and mental health. Irregular food consumption is the root cause of many non-communicable diseases that are on the rise today. It can be concluded that Seela can be utilised to get over these disorders and have a healthy physical and mental existence.

Keywords: Behavioural treatment, Eating disorders, Mental health, Physical health, Seela