

POSTGRADUATE INSTITUTE OF PALI AND BUDDHIST STUDIES

**CONTRIBUTIONS OF EARLY BUDDHIST TEACHINGS
TO THE FIELD OF MARKETING**

BY

LUMBINI PRIYANTHA DEVASIRIE

(2005/Ph.D./583)

THE DISSERTATION

SUBMITTED TO THE POSTGRADUATE INSTITUTE OF PALI AND

BUDDHIST STUDIES, UNIVERSITY OF KELANIYA

IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE

DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

2010

Abstract

This dissertation is an overview of the Early Buddhist perspective on the principles or the foundations of business activity and the role of businessmen as makers of economic gains or profits through effective utilization of resources that are held under their control. The aspects of business is discussed here under three broad headings: a) Profits Wealth and Growth, from the early Buddhist point of view b) Early Buddhist Theory of Justice, examining the Buddhist perspective of a just system of (economic) distribution of wealth and the responsibility of the members of a moral society emphasizing on the role of the businessmen c) The relevance of personal psychological experiences of the businessmen for the success of businesses underlining the methodology to follow derived from early Buddhist teachings.

The dissertation differs from the previous studies on the subject; because, instead of making attempts to find confirmations of known socioeconomic theories, this study concentrates and attempts to extract the principle of business activity according to the early Buddhist teachings. Understanding the principles within the Buddhist perspective provides a novel and pragmatic direction towards achieving the objective of a business; namely, profits and wealth. The function of Marketing, being the criteria that differentiate a business from any other organization and being the nerve center of all business activities, interacting with people in identifying their needs and finding means of satisfying them has a lot to gain from the direction of business activity that is discussed in this dissertation. Further, the wide area that is covered in the study in search of principles unearths an insight on the Buddhist thinking on the Distributive Justice and the role and the responsibility of Businessmen towards building a society of free and content people.

The study concentrates on a limited number of discourses from the early Buddhist teachings; keeping Papanika Sutta of the Anguttara Nikaya, as the core in elucidating the Buddhist business philosophy. The qualities of the teaching: 'svakhato', 'sanditthiko', 'akaliko', 'ehipassiko', 'opanayiko', 'paccattam veditabbo', 'vinnuhi' is used as parameters in analyzing the discourses in this study ensuring the internally consistency of the findings within the scope of Early Buddhist Teachings.