

CHILD PREPARATION FOR A SUSTAINABLE SOCIETY ACCORDINGLY BUDDHISM

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ABSTRACT

Child is a fresher for the society in lack of experience and who is immature or irresponsible. Therefore, the child's education is an essential act for a sustainable society. In this sense, the modern world pays a major attention for the development of child education as well as his/her socialization progress. Buddhism as a religion that guides the society to a paradigm pays a specific attention towards children. In the concept of 'Children are future' the preparation of child is more important because they are the group who is supposed to assume the world. The child behavior and childhood experiences will influence the individual firmly. Therefore the individual's personality should be amended from his/her childhood for a proper and remunerative person. The developed society is a futile unless if it is free from humanities. Buddhism emphasis both mundane and supra-mundane character and here there are many teachings related to the preparation of a child as well as his/her ethical values. Accordingly, Buddhism the preparation of child begins when he/she is in mother's womb. After the birth until his/her youth the family, teachers, as well as the society, should look after them well and Buddhism denotes how it should be happened. The child as an immature and irresponsible one the teachings methods should be rather different from grown and Buddhism point outs how to educate the child. Firstly, the elders should denote the world and clarify what is good and what is bad. Secondly, teachers should render the education.

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Similarly, Buddhism pays a priory for the ethical values of the child and as a less experiencer, it is a great responsibility to socialize him/her in universal human ethics. Buddhism accepts the psychophysical development of child unless the human society will be ablaze in future. Therefore, the research paper is finding a prominent criterion for the preparation of child for a sustainable society accordingly Buddhism. The research is based on primary and secondary sources. Theravada Pāli canon and commentaries are referred under primary sources and books, academic journals and articles, reliable internet sources are referred under secondary sources.

1. INTRODUCTION

Children are the future and in modern the world pays a major attention on them. Simply child is identified as an irresponsible person who has a curiosity to seek his/her surroundings. Children generally have fewer rights than adults and are classed as unable to make serious decisions, and legally must always be under the care of a responsible adult or parents. Recognition of childhood as a state different from adulthood began to emerge in the 16th and 17th centuries. Society began to relate to the child not as a miniature adult but as a person of a lower level of maturity needing adult protection, love and nurturing. Therefore, civilized human society provide a proper education for child in the purpose of preparing him/her for a sustainable future. The current education system for child seems little bit problematic when considering the humanity of present child generation. As an example, few days ago in Sri Lanka, sixteen old child murdered one of his own class-mate due to a love affair. Last year in Kashmir nine-year girl was raped and tortured by her stepmother and stepbrother. In state of Florida Alex King who was twelve years old and Derek King who was thirteen years old killed their father Terry King. Therefore, the current child education system should be more developed than the present. This research paper is an investigation on whether we can introduce a successful education system accordingly Buddhism for a sustainable society with a bright future for children as well as full of humanity.

2. RESEARCH PROBLEM

The research problem of this paper is whether we can introduce

a new child education theory to modern child education system accordingly Buddhism and how far Buddhist education system could be applied to child education system positively.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This is a qualitative research based on Primary and secondary sources. The Theravāda Pāli canon, commentaries are referred under Primary sources. Reliable internet sources, Encyclopedias, Academic journals and publications which related to the research topic are referred as primary sources.

4. HYPOTHESIS

There are many educational theories and methodologies in Buddhism that could be applied to current child education system.

5. DISCUSSION

The role of child education is more complex than teaching an adult. Simply, child education is twofold as early childhood education and childhood education. In early childhood education period child gets the ability of language and he directly communicate with his family and other members of his/her surroundings. He/she even consider the poisonous animals as his/her friends until he/she experience they are enemies of them. A major role of childhood education will be played by schools or other educational institutions. Therefore, modern education system introduces many educational theories for the educational development for child in these periods. Some countries as well as Sri Lanka, Thailand, Brazil etc. provide free education for children which follow Europe education theories. Here, the problem is though they use Europe education theories out come of child is somewhat problematic because the pay a major attention for collecting data which brings the child to a hierarchy level in knowledge. In Buddhism as well as many education systems it is emphasis the both physical and mental development with humanity as the education. The knowledge without the heart and the heart without the knowledge will provide immeasurable disadvantage for a sustainable society.

Therefore, Buddhism emphasise the responsibility of early childhood education for the family that he/she belongs. Parents

have a giant retentiveness on the child when he/she is in mother's womb. According to Buddhism, the famous Angulimāla Paritta (Majjmimanikāya: PTS: 2.102) (chanting) is used for the pregnant mothers recited by Ven Angulimāla. The chanting is a declaration of oath reminding the righteous life that never harmed any leaving being after his ordination. Here, this is a pre-preparation for the child's ethical education when he/she is in mother's womb itself.

As the parents are more responsible for the child's early childhood education Buddhism point out the career of the parents as Brahma and Pubbācariya (the first teachers). (Aṅguttaranikāya: PTS: 1.131) The commentary describes parents as Brahma due the four Divine Abodes or Sublime such as Loving Kindness (Mettā), Compassion (Karuṇā), Sympathetic Joy (Muditā) and Equanimity (Upekkhā). (Aṅguttaranikāya Aṭṭhakathā: PTS: 2.203) Next, the parents should nurture their own baby and protect him/her until he/she reach a level of understanding. First of all, parents should have an above intention and an understanding on the child before beginning the educational career of the child. Secondly, the parents should begin to educate their own children in their behavior. Commentary denotes that, the parents should teach how to sit; stand; walk; sleep; eat; drink. (Aṅguttaranikāya Aṭṭhakathā: PTS: 2.203) While educating the child in this behavior they have to develop the language skills of the child. When the child pronounces some sound except the cry parents should begin to teach the king-ship words such as father, mother, sister etc. and even his/her name. (Aṅguttaranikāya Aṭṭhakathā: PTS: 2.203) When this process is continuing the child will develop his/her language skill and then he will start to talk proper words and sentence. As we had denoted above child is a person in a great curiosity on his/her surrounding world. When the child begins to talk, he/she will question his/her parents to solve his/her curiosity. Here, there is a great responsibility to parents to provide proper answers to them in the purpose of showing the world. Therefore, Buddhism point out three major duties for parents in child's early childhood career such as,

Raise them – *Apādakā*
Nurture them – *Posakā*
Show them the world – *Ime loke dassetāra*

(Aṅguttaranikāya: PTS: 1.131)

In *Singālovada Sutta*, Lord Buddha categories the whole society into six with related pairs such as parents and children, teachers and pupils, Husband and wife etc. Each category has specific duties to fulfill for the betterment of the society. According to sutta, there are five duties for parents to sever their children. The first duty is to provide the moral education for them. They have to protect their children from evil and arrange them to dwell in virtue. (*Dīghanikāya*: PTS: 3.188) In Buddhist philosophy Buddha denote some criteria to judge what is wholesome and unwholesome. Simple if one's action harmful to he himself/she herself and even to the others it is considered as unwholesome or evil. In other hand, if one's action is not harmful to, he himself/she herself and even to the others, it is considered as wholesome or righteous. Here the parents should have a capability to give proper judgments to their children in moral educational career. Similarly, while Buddhism also denotes the first task of the parents is to provide the moral education, they have to educate their children well. In Eastern education philosophy even, it is considered the mother and father as a revenger and enemy of children if they don't provide a proper education for their children. Here, providing the moral education is also a great responsibility of the parents.

As in modern, the major childhood education plays by schools or institutions Buddhism believes the teacher in educational institution plays a major role of childhood educational career. Therefore, parents even should forward their children to such educational institutions. The teacher has an innumerable to control student's life. When we considered the Ven. *Angulimāla's* biography, the pupil who didn't harm anyone was converted to murderer by a teacher and Such a murderer again was converted to an innocent, non-harmful one by a teacher. Therefore, in child educational career the teacher's role is denote under five duties such as, give thorough instruction, make sure they have grasped what they should have duly grasped, give them a thorough grounding in all skills, recommend them to their friend and colleagues, finally provide them with security in all directions. (*Dīghanikāya*: PTS: 3.188) In other hand, the child should guide by rising to greet them, by waiting on them, by been attentive, by serving them by mastering the skills they teach. (*Dīghanikāya*:

PTS: 3.188) Therefore, Buddhism denotes the primary structure of childhood education with the guidance of the teacher under a respectful context within the both teacher and the pupil.

When considering the child prepare for a sustainable society Buddhist dispensation provide more successful and practical methodologies. Once Ven. Ānanda who was the who was known as the treasure of the Dhamma ordained two children. At that time, they were lost and going on begging for foods without any love and affection from their guardians. The two children were helpless and they were crying on the road when Ven. Ānanda saw them. Just then due to sympathy arisen in Ven. Ānanda's heart got the permission from Buddha to ordinate them. Here if children are helpless and have a minor understanding on his actions and able to dispel a crow from his begging ball, he/she is qualified to enter the Buddhist dispensation. In my own opinion with reference to above incident Buddhist dispensation is the best place for the both spiritual and academic education for children who are helpless.

The love, affection protection is much needed in child education career and Buddhism also accept it. It is mention that, the teacher of a novice known as the spiritual father should look after the novice as a same as a father look after his own child. (Mahāvaggapāli: PTS: 1.45) As modern psychologist define child as irresponsible person Buddha advises the novice, without the permission of the spiritual father he should not pay any relations with outsiders. As the spiritual father consider his pupil as his own son, he should provide all the needs for his pupil as well as the guiding him to the Ultimate Bliss. Many misbehaviors of children are due to the lack of fulfillment of their needs. Even in children's educational career, if they haven't the minimum requirements it is difficult to continue the education process.

Buddhism believes the capacity of child's mind is more less than an adult. Therefore, the disciplinary codes for novice (normally considered as child monk) are less. Here, Buddhism accept the freedom without excessive rules and regulations for children. The most prominent method is to let the child study with a great freedom. If the child has to earn money, involve in jobs, be a servant or look after his/her relatives or parent it is great barrier for his/her

education. As an incident happen in Sri Lanka, Rizana Nafeek left the country in order to get a work in Saudi Arabia when she was reality under eighteen and her passport was altered. She had to be servant in house to look after a four months baby and died while in Nafeek's care. Nafeek claim that the baby had choked on a bottle by accident during feeding. (*Asian Human Rights Commission: 2007*) Even though she was beheaded in 2013 while despite an appeal of Sri Lankan government. This denotes mainly child is an irresponsible person and the child should grow up under a guardian. Excessive rules and regulations, tension and professions will mislead not only in his/her education career but also in throughout his/her life.

As in Kohlberg's education theory at the pre-Moral level, the punishment is used for the obedience of the child. Similarly, Buddhism also prescribes the essence of punishment for the child (knows as novice). Here, the specific characteristic of Buddhism is Buddhism never beat the children or avoid their essential needs. Mahāvaggapāli (PTS: 1.84) denotes that if the novice is not obedient or does not follow the precepts, he should be punish. Here we should not forget that these punishments are not inhuman. Simply, not allow to associate the teacher until he/she recover, or sweep the dwelling house etc. As soon as the child understand he himself/she herself the fault and re-correct it, he/she will be giving time to understand his offense and let him/her to continue his/her normal daily career. Buddhism thoroughly rejects beating or blaming or touching child's physical body in the intention of punishing. The punishment is not the first option when child had done any offense. Firstly, the teacher should advice the child and the last option is giving a punishment considering the capacity of the child and his/her offense. The whole progress should be happened with a great compassion on the child as in the purpose of educating him/her in moralities as well as in institutional education.

It is not a doubt; the child's education is more difficult than adult education. Therefore, we can find many Buddhist theories that could be applied for the enhancement of modern child education system. According to the identification of education, the nature of the mind is very important. The evil mentalities of a person bar the intelligent activities of the mind. The excessive desire (greed-lobha), the

strong anger (hatred-dosa) and the chaotic mind (dilution-moha) are the main evil mentalities according to Buddhism. Except above mentalities, there are additional various sub attitudes in Buddhism about evil mentality. Under these sub attitudes of mentality are the following of desires, wishes compacts hindrances. They are denoted as evil mentality or misdeeds. According to this condition, the mind of the student is a fountain of mentality. (Weerasinghe: 1980: 44) Such a nature of mentality disturbs pure and correct activities of the mind. It will be ineffective to oneself as well as to the society. The concentration of the mind will help to avoid such evil mentality that is harmful to oneself or even to the whole society. To control one's mind Buddhism prescribes meditation. There are two forms of methods of meditation known as "Samatha" meditation and "Vipassanā" meditation. The Samatha meditation is essential in child education career because it is very helpful to keep mind is calm. The Samatha meditation concentrates the mind to one particular Subject, paying total attention to it without allowing the mind to go here and there. The meditation also can be known as 'one-pointedness'.

The contemplation of mind objects (Dhammānupassanā) (Majjhimanikaya: PTS: 1.61) or review of mental condition is denoted as the meditation of intelligence and of subjective field by Ven. Walpola Rahula. Ven. Rahula, furthermore emphasizes learning, reading, discussion, criticizing is included in this meditation. (Rahula: 1978: 74-75) The meditation of Dhamānupassanā here is very useful in remembrance. The section, acquisition of seven factors of enlightenment (Bojjhaṅga pariggahaṇa) that can be finding in Dhammānupassanā, is more relevant in education process.

Here, the parts of intelligence of meditation are included in Seven sections. When we are realizing and understanding the seven-part of intelligence, it can be clearly understood how it will be helpful with the learning process.

The mindfulness. (Sati sambojjhaṅga)

That means all the activities which are attached with both physical and mentality, must be done with reminiscence.

The investigation of the law (dhamma vicaya sambojjhaṅga)

The discussion, reading and observing in each subject.

The energy (*virīya sambojjhaṅga*)

The reminiscence of courage, engaging the task what is doing with strong determination.

The rapture (pīti sambojjhaṅga)

As the proverb, “Live content and you will be a king” Engaging in the learning process without the anxiety and unhappiness.

The tranquility (passaddhi sambojjhaṅga)

The reminiscence of rest of mental and physical pastime.

The concentration (*samādhi sambojjhaṅga*)

The reminiscence of agreeing of concentration of the mind.

The equanimity (*upekkhā sambojjhaṅga*)

The reminiscence of indifference means, facing every good and bad or evil result of life without anxiety and unhappiness.

(*Majjhimanikāya: PTS: 1.61*)

Through above seven facts the education process among the students will be more succeeded and definitely, it will be able to create a perfect student personality. The other applicable meditation is the culture of boundless state (*appamañña*). That means expanding and stretching to all living beings, four stretching meditation of, Loving kindness (*mettā*), Compassion (*karuṇa*), Sympathetic joy (*muditā*) and Equanimity (*upekkhā*). These four will help to develop the field of expectation and the students can improve their learning process by giving up hatred, revenge, competition, and jealousy. So, they can be able to reach to aim of their further. By casting away those of bad effective evil and filthy characteristics, they can be understood their abilities skillful talents as well as their weaknesses and then they can practice to bear with happiness, victories as well as the defeat and failures. The specific result of this is the child education will be fulfilling not only in education but also in child’s moral career. The terrible misconducts within the children such as murder, rape etc. will totally eradicated and the future society will be more fruitful by following above Buddhist teachings.

By the external appearance of any student, their internal mentality never can be identified by a teacher but through the behavior. In addition, the teacher has a responsibility to make understand the socio-economic background of the student. Here, the family background of a student is very important. The parents' education, the family conflicts and the father who had addicted for intoxicants are some of them. The teacher actually at once can't think how far the student has faced mental emotions or family background of aggressiveness. Sometimes he is with non-lovely of his parents. So, the teacher has a very wide task with his teaching career and he is bound to a great responsibility. It is very tedious and complex. So, teacher has to dedicate in his teaching career because the teacher has to identify the student's family background. He should have a personal coordination and an interaction with student's living condition, their family status and especially about the student's parenting's. A quarrelsome family background is harmful for the student's learning process and also the father's intoxication and infidelity of parents is another mental agony for the students. The students of those families are with anxiety, suppression and sometimes with depression. So, their suppressive mind is out of learning background. In fact, this will be a severe factor for back warding in their learning process. It is specifically affected for their studies.

It is very important to reveal how our Lord Buddha assisted those who are caught by such mentalities. One such assistance is the incident of *Kisāgotamī*. She was severely and badly suppressive minded because of her died, son. As she loved her son than of her life, she was carrying her died son in search of a physician came near to Buddha. The Blessed One consoling her mind said to bring a handful of mustard from a house where no any family member was dead. *Kisāgotamī* started running in search of a handful of mustard with hopeful mind where no one had died. She ran from house to house but she was unable to find such a house that who was not died. The message what she got from every house was their father, mother, son or one of their kith and kings had died. At last *Kisāgotamī* realized what life is. The life is mortal and the impermanence. *Kisāgotamī* with a realized mind kept the dead body of her died son in a graveyard and visited Lord Buddha

and became a nun. (Dhammapadhṭṭhakāthā: PTS: 2.270) Here, Buddha enlightened Kisāgotamī through letting her to realize by her own experience and this is a prominent method to child education system as well as use in modern education system.

The method of business is an educational theory that Lord Buddha used. Once the Blessed One bargain with Ven. Nanda. When prince Nanda was a laity, he had fell in deep love with Janapada Kalyāṇi and because of that after his ordination also he was suppressed minded. So, one-day Novice Nanda was accompanied by Lord Buddha to heaven. On the way, they saw a burnt she-monkey. Novice Nanda was charmed in the heaven looking at goddesses. When Lord Buddha asked for Nanda 'What do you prefer among two females, either Janapada Kalyāṇi or goddess.' Just then Ven. Nanda replied 'Oh, Buddha what to think when we compare Janapada Kalyāṇi to goddess, she is as same as the half-burn she monkeys we saw.' There the Lord Buddha's business matter was an agreement with novice Nanda to give the most beautiful goddess for Ven. Nanda after completing the meditation and attain the ultimate goal. Finally, owing to obtain the most beautiful goddess novice Nanda meditated and attain the Nibbāna. (Dhammapadhṭṭhakāthā: PTS: 1.118).

In Buddhist tradition, it is famous that the son Anātapīṇḍika named Kāla was displeased to visit Lord Buddha. Anātapīṇḍika who was close devotee of Buddha was very distressed because his son did not have a sign of piety. Later, Anātapīṇḍika made a promise for his son as 'If you had gone near to Buddha, I will give you thousand' and the first-day Kāla won it. Next day Anātapīṇḍika advised his son, 'If you had learned a single verse of Buddha, I will give you another thousand and in the intention of winning the thousand Kāla went next day to temple to learn a single verse of Dhamma. Lord Buddha knew this and kept a will until the end of the preaching he may not learn a single verse of Dhamma. Finally, Kāla was unable to memorize even a single verse until the end of Dhamma and at the end, he became a stream enterer (Sotāpanna) and refused father's money. (Malalasekara: 1960: 571-572).

Hereby referencing to above, the method of business is used

in Buddhism in the purpose of educating children. But here the method is used for special students and the teacher should have a capability to recognize that sort of children.

The method of discussion is also a successful method in child's education. Sometimes it will be more perfect than lecturing. The Lord Buddha usually has friendly talks, discussions with whom who visited the blessed one. So, everyone who visited the blessed one built up an oral friendliness with the Lord Buddha. There should be a friendliness between the teacher and the students during the teaching and learning process. Because of the friendly discussions made, teachers can obtain and emerge the priceless and precious ideas and expressions from students. by this sort of friendly discussions with students reveal the reactions as well as abilities and the intelligence of students.

So, the friendly discussion is very effective method of exchanging the knowledge with each other. Many people who suffered with bad mentalities, suppression anxieties, and their family problems visited Lord Buddha and had discussions. And they left the Lord Buddha with pacifications and mitigations. So, the discussion is a very helpful method of learning.

Once king *Kosal* was very frustrated minded of getting birth of a daughter. With the frustrated mind king *Kosal* visited Lord Buddha reluctantly and said that he was very sorrowful of getting birth of a daughter. The Lord Buddha had a friendly discussion with king *Kosal* and made him understand that the woman is also very valuable for the existing of human generation of the world. The balancing of both men and women would fulfill the society. (Saṃyuktanikāya: PTS: 1.85) The friendly talks and discussions are very fruitful because they help to identify other qualities, wisdom and improve the mutual understanding and also the interactions of discusses. The discussions, exchange the people's knowledge and experiences with other people's unknown knowledge and this is a efficacious method in child education system.

In the field of education, there are many methodologies that can be used for succeeding the teaching career. The puzzling method is among them. It is a successive teaching method. This successful

method of puzzling had used in many occasions accordingly Buddhism and applicable to child education system.

Once Princes Baddhavagiya (Mahāvaggapāli: PTS: 1.22) spending a day jovially with whores. But the jubilant day was ended at losing their valuables. They had been robbed by harlots. They went in search of their valuables. On their way, they saw Lord Buddha sitting under a shady tree calmly on their way to the botanical garden who was in meditation with tranquility and calmness. The princes visited the Lord Buddha and inquired about the women who had stolen their belongings. Then the blessed one asked them to inquire about themselves that would be the betterment than that of searching women. This puzzling answer made princes to think in deep. Their mind became chaotic and they were anxious to find out the reality of the life. At last, in order to fulfill their aim, they became the disciples of the Lord Buddha.

Similarly, the method of obligation, insertion of modern attitudes into traditional concepts, method of group teaching or coalition teaching, the method of lecturing, the usage of audio-visual aids are used in Buddhist child education system.

CONCLUSION

In theme of children are the future it is more important to prepare a perfect child who is capable to face the future in the purpose of creating a sustainable society. Modern education system uses many scientific methods for fulfilling the above purpose. Even though intellectuality is not sufficient without spirituality. Therefore, Buddhism as a religion endeavor to upheld the spiritual development as well as intellectual development introduce successful education theories. Buddhism plays a major attention for a sustainable ideal society and the major role of it plays by the children. Therefore, we can find a systematic child education system which categorized as early childhood education and childhood education which is similar to modern education system. According to Buddhism, the early childhood education is a responsibility of family and parents. Here, it begins when the child in his/her mother's womb. Nurturing the child and the language education is a main role of the family. Similarly, showing them

the world and providing the moral education is a foremost duty of parents. The childhood education begins when the child had grown while having the early childhood education. The education institution and teachers play the main role in this age. However, the teacher has to serve his/her pupil in five ways while guiding him for both intellectuality and morality. As the child, an irresponsible person with a great curiosity of his/her surroundings family and teachers should care on him/her constantly. Excessive rules and regulations for children not permitted by Buddhism while accepting the punishment to guide their education. Nevertheless, the punishments are not inhuman and even do not touch the child's body and mind harmfully but let to realize his/her offense. The specific characteristic in child education system is mediation. The contemplation of mental objects which acquisition of seven factors of Enlightenment is positively affected for the well understanding of the child in his/her educational career. Similarly, the meditation of four Sublimes will upheld child's morality and prepare the child's mentality for any kind of challenge he/she face in future. Buddhism emphasis the teacher should have a proper understanding on the child before teaching the pupil. Subsequently, teacher will be able to identify the teaching method for the child. Buddhism denotes various teaching methods to panopies the child for the betterment of his/her future such as method of business, method of discussion, method of puzzling. These all methods should apply to the child after a better understanding on the student and with great love and compassion. Therefore, it is clear that there are many educational theories and methodologies in Buddhism which is applicable to current education system in the purpose of preparing the child for a sustainable society.

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