

SUSTAINABLE SOCIETY AND BUDDHIST ETHICS: ADAPTATIONS OF GLOBAL EDUCATION IN DHAMMA SCHOOLS IN MYANMAR

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ABSTRACT

The future of Myanmar lies in the capability of youth today. In order for Myanmar to build an ethical and wholesome sustainable society, this study explores the Dhamma School Foundation (DSF) in Myanmar, which teaches youths Buddhist education, ethics, layman's code of conduct, as well as cultural and religious customs. The study looks into how DSF works, how its teaching pedagogy is in line with global education, its objectives, its curricula, its learning outcomes and exposure.

In spite of its noble aims for youth, the country is at the moment somewhat infamous for spreading hate words on social media, irresponsible and not following discipline in various areas. This study was conducted by doing an opinion survey among youth from DSF and some university students. Issues that were investigated included how the respondents engage in Buddhist education and ethics, their social and environmental awareness, their habits of using mobile phone games and facebook, their use of Dhamma in daily life, and their opinions on the prospect of learning Dhamma and ethics via mobile application.

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This research aims at finding an appropriate strategy for teaching Dhamma and ethics via mobile applications, online media, broadcast media, print media like journal, magazines, children cartoon, creative learning by means of fun games, songs, drama, and other edutainment, educating people in entertaining ways in collaboration with Buddhist education institutions, mobile games developers, phone service providers and TV stations to teach Dhamma. Such learning could include quote of the day, for example, a short phrase excerpt from the Dhamma to notify them as one minute daily lesson, using famous celebrities to reach out to the public every day as mobile Sarsana in digital form.

1. INTRODUCTION

This study looks into Dhamma School Foundation (DSF), established in 2012 in Myanmar as a case study in terms of organization which educates youth about Buddhist teachings and ethics. The study explores how Buddhist education for daily life, which is partly based on the Mingala Sutta (KN.V.P 1979, P. 318-9) and the layman's duties as given in the SingalovadaSutta (DN. III 1979, P 153-5), is taught at DSF, how DSF is organized, and if and how DSF's teaching pedagogy is in line with global education. In addition, the study explores possible ways to create ethical, disciplined, and wholesome learning environments in Myanmar through mobile applications, which could be a modern way of teaching Buddhist education and ethics in daily life. In order to find out how best to create such learning environment through mobile applications, the researcher shall do a survey on the habit of using mobile games, Facebook, and other social media among youth in Myanmar, and youths' perceptions of hate words on social media in Myanmar. Survey questionnaires were sent to 50 Dhamma School students, 20 Pyinnyar Dhanna students, 50 Myanmar International School students and 30 university students from the government National Management Degree College in Yangon. Dhamma School Foundation Chairman Sayardaw and the Secretary No. 2 Sayardaw were interviewed. Twenty-four survey questions were constructed in a survey and data was analyzed via Microsoft excel, statistical formulae and simple percentage to support qualitative research data.

2. BACKGROUND

The meaning of the word “Sustainable Society” is very broad. It can be from various perspectives such as business, environment, conservation, energy, green house effect, information technology and many other numerous sectors. According to the UN Human Development Report 1990, a “sustainable society” is commonly used as economically viable, environmentally sound and socially responsible. Sustainable Society has been an international agenda since then (UN Human Development Report 1990). In practice, it may be very difficult to measure sustainable society of Myanmar.

However, Sustainable Society Index (SSI) was firstly introduced by Netherlands, the Sustainable Society Foundation in 2006. SSI Index from 154 countries represents 90 percent of the world population. According to Netherlands Sustainable Society Foundation, “SSI ranking” measures (1) Human Well-being, (2) Environmental Well-being, and (3) Economic Well-being. (1) Human Well-being is basic needs such as nutrition, shelter, safe water, clean water, personal and social development of gender equality, education, health, sanitation etc. (2) Environmental Well-being is nature and environment such as quality of air, water, green house effect, haze, natural resources, eliminate waste, biodiversity etc. (3) Economic Well-being is employment, efficient farming techniques like organic farming, transparent economic system, ethical and fair production and distribution etcetera.

According to Sustainable Society Index (SSI) of the country ranking among 154 countries, in the year 2014 and 2016, Myanmar’s ranking is (1) Human Wellbeing stood 112 both in 2014 and also 112 in 2016, (2) Environmental ranking was 42 in 2014 and 84 in 2016, (3) Economic Well-being stood 68 in 2014 and 61 in 2016. (Sustainable Society Foundation, Netherlands, 2017).

For Myanmar to increase its SSI numerical ranking depends on how policy makers lay down good policies and how they implement them, as well as their awareness of the fundamental three categories of SSI human well-being, environmental well-being, economic well-beings. To achieve this, the country definitely requires morally strong, well-disciplined citizens who follow

the rules of law strictly. It is important to create environmentally sound and socially responsible Myanmar by laying down solid ethical foundation through Buddhist Education to be in line with the modern age of information technology. The Mingala Sutta and what Myanmar traditional reciprocal duties taught by the Buddha could be the best to apply in daily life to sustain Myanmar to increase SSI ranking in terms of economic well-being, human well-being and environmental well being. In the Singalovada Sutta, Buddha has clearly laid five ways of growth between husband and wife, parents and children, employers and employees, clergy and laity, right relations among friends, relatives and neighbors, and most importantly 10 kingship to govern righteously as reciprocal duties. (DN.III 1979, P 153-5). Buddha approved the duties of children to parents as “Meritorious is obedience to parents, right conduct to parents is obedience. Anguttara Nikaya records that great approval is accorded to families where parents are held in high respect. (Saddhatisa. H 1987, P. 117). Anguttara Nikaya recognizes 5 ways of growth in pupils and teachers as “confidence based on knowledge and personal experiences (*Saddha*), in morality (*Sila*), in learning (*Suta*), in the practice of giving up things or generosity (*Caga*) and in wisdom (*Panna*)” (Saddhatisa. H 1987, P. 127).

Dhammasami elaborates MingalaSutta as self reliance, self-dependence and self-blessing from educational, social, economic, psychological and spiritual dimensions (Dhammasami. K 2012, P. 9). By adopting the teachings in the MingalaSutta in daily life, Myanmar’s economic well-being, human well-being and environmental well-being could be enhanced, and thus her SSI index could be increased. Dhammasami quoted Soni’s interpretation by saying that the “MingalaSutta is a charter in outline of family responsibility, social obligations, moral purification and spiritual cultivation to reach the perfect harmony, love, peace and security” and the discourse teaches appropriate personal discipline, righteous conduct, higher virtues of humility, gratitude and patience. (Dhammasami. K 2012, P. 9-10). Dhammasami summarized 38 blessing of the Mingala Sutta briefly as (1) not to associate with the fool (2) but to associate with the wise, and (3) to honor those who are worthy of honor in Stanza no.1 as the greatest blessing. In Stanza no. 2, (4) to recite in a suitable locality (5) to have done

preparation (meritorious actions) in the past, and (6) to set oneself in the right course as the greatest blessing. In Stanza no. 3. (7) to have general knowledge (8) knowledge of arts, science and vocations (9) discipline and manner and (10) the art of truthful and pleasant speech as the greatest blessing. In Stanza no. 4. (11) to support mother and father (12) to cherish wife and children (13) to be engaged in un-conflicting (peaceful occupation) as the greatest blessing. In Stanza no.5 (14) to be righteous in conduct (15) to help one's relatives (17) to be blameless in action as the greatest blessing. In Stanza no. 6. (18) to loathe evil (19) abstain from it (20) to refrain from intoxicants and (21) to be mindful in the Dhamma as the greatest blessing. In Stanza no.7. (22) respect (23) humility (24) contentment (25) gratitude and (26) to listen to the Dhamma on due occasions as the greatest greeting. In Stanza no.8. (27) to be patient (28) receptive to advice (29) to associate with monks and (30) to have Dhamma discussions on due occasions as the greatest blessing. In Stanza no.9 (31) self-restraint (32) holy practice (33) the seeing of the Noble Truths and (34) the realization of Nibbana as the greatest blessing. In Stanza no.10. (35) the mind undertaken by the whims of fortune (36) carefree (37) stainless and (38) fearless (secure) as the greatest blessing. Stanza no.11 is that of having achieved these 38 blessings as undefeated everywhere in established happiness as the greatest blessings. As Dhammasami put it "Stanza no. 3 deals with education", this study looks into Dhamma School Foundation (DSF) in Myanmar how its curricula reflects the discourse in terms of global education perspective. (Dhammasami 2012, P. 14) He explained stanza no.4 and 5 as teaching social obligations and social ethics that the researcher is convinced that sustainable Myanmar society definitely requires solid foundation of this teaching. Dhammasami emphasized stanza no. 6 that "deals with moral ethics and self-control", stanza no.7 and 8 as "psychological development, bearing on one's success or failure in both social and religious life". Since this study looks at ordinary lay people only in Myanmar, stanza 9, 10, 11 may not be relevant at this stage in this research. (Dhammasami, 2012, P. 14). Myanmar society needs social commitment that Dhammasami briefly mentioned as blessing no.11, 12, and 13. (Dhammasami, 2012, P.28). These blessings are looking after parents, caring spouse

and children and having peace without conflict. Dhammasami quoted 20th century Myanmar scholar U Ba Than's interpretation of 38 blessings by saying "blessing no.1-21 belong to moral ethics, nos.22-30 belong to meditation and the last 31-38 to wisdom." (Dhammasami. K 2012, P. 11). The Mingala Suta is being taught in DSF curricula in all grades. From the grade 1 to 8, the Mingala Sutta's numbers 1, 2, 3 are taught as fundamental blessing, and then number 4 to 30 are added in each level. (DEF Central 2018, P, 21-27).

In the history of Myanmar since pre-colonial period, education, particularly religious education plays an important role in shaping moral values (Schober 2011, P60). In Myanmar, monasteries aim to deliver basic education in rural areas. (Schober 2011, P. 12) However, rejection of colonial education such as Science, Math in monastic education led laymen teachers to replace monks as teachers in schools. Then Monastic Education gradually set back, but still monasteries as education centers played influential roles in rural areas.

Young Men's Buddhist Association (YMBA) was developed in Myanmar in the 1910s and was among the unique groups which undertook many initiatives on education to promote modern education system that incorporated in Burmese the fundamentals of Buddhism (Schober 2011, P. 47). Likewise, Dhamma School Foundation also teaches modern way of educating the youth in the Buddhist ethics, and Buddhist education. However, unlike YMBA which also focused on nationalist movements together with modern education, DSF is training the youth to be good citizens through Buddhist education in a modern way of teaching. On the other hand, YMBA leaders are outward looking by sharing educational and cultural experience of studying abroad, the west cultivated modern cultural values, whereas DSF is inward-looking, with all students and teachers required to wear traditional meditation uniform, white top and brown Myanmar longyi, which is called Yawgi dress in Myanmar, and strictly follow the Buddhist text only. (Schober, 2011, p. 42).

3. BUDDHIST EDUCATION AND DHAMMA SCHOOL FOUNDATION IN MYANMAR

Formal educational institutions in Myanmar do not include

religious study in school curricula. However, Dhamma School Foundation in Myanmar teaches as a Sunday School to those students from formal institutions, the Buddhist Education, Buddhist Ethics, how to live in the right way, especially the Mingala Sutta to be applied in daily life in its curricula at every level from Grade 1-8. In the government's grade 1 students are eligible to attend to DSF grade 1 level, likewise, grade 8 to DSF 8 accordingly. School curricula have been developed and incorporated with scholarly high intellects among Sangha and Child-Centered Approach practitioners by using songs, poems, story-telling, case studies from Buddha time to apply critical thinking, analyzing and discussing the contemporary Myanmar life style. Traditionally, Buddhist educators discouraged such practices but instead, they encourage memorizing only, not allowing teachers to be questioned.

Dhamma School Foundation (DSF) was initiated in 2012 and effective in 2013. It started giving training courses to potential teachers who volunteered to teach in Dhamma Schools. The Original idea of the DSF comes from Srilanka Dhamma School, as Sunday School for the children and the youth. Dhamma School Foundation in Myanmar aims at producing good citizens and creating a wholesome Myanmar new generation through Buddhist education including maintenance of peace in the country. The principles of Dhamma School Foundation emphasize (a) Teaching in accordance with Buddha's Dhamma, (b) Conserving Myanmar traditional heritage, (c) Not attacking, not insulting other religious beliefs or people, and (d) Not getting involved in political parties and politics. (DSF Central, 2018, p. 1).

The main objectives of Dhamma School Foundation include (a) New generations of Myanmar to learn Buddhist education from the foundation level to advanced level through modern teaching pedagogy and, more Dhamma Schools to open throughout Myanmar, (b) From traditional Buddhist to become advanced Buddhist to apply Buddhist education to practice in daily life, (c) Teachers and pupils to collaborate harmoniously together in working for Buddha Sarsana. (DSF Central, 2018, p. 1).

The main tasks of the Dhamma School Foundation are (a) Using Child-Centered Approach CCA in developing Buddhist Education

Curricula, (b) Opening Teachers' Training Courses for effective implementing and teaching, (c) Supporting in establishing new Dhamma School throughout the country, (d) Surveying trips and observing and supporting for effectiveness and sustainability of Quality Dhamma School, (e) Collaborating with other institutions to exchange modern teaching technology in accordance with the principles of Dhamma School Foundation. (DSF Central, p. 1-2).

Dhamma School Curricula has been already developed up to grades 1 – 8, and it has yet to upgrade to grade 12 in ongoing process in collaboration with Pariyatti Scholarly experts of high intellect include Sangha and experts from education sector, modern technocrats who specialized in modern education, especially Child-Centered Learning Approach. All grades 1-8 students have to study every Sunday, 2 hours per week, 9 months a year from June to February, with 40 topics at each level, covering the history of Buddha, his teaching of Dhamma, Buddhist Education, Buddhist Ethics, LawkaNiti, environmental awareness, social responsibility, cultural festivals, Buddhist custom events and individual hygiene. Even Abhidhamma level 1, Phatthana, Dhamma Sakkyakya were included in Grades 7, 8 curricula in the textbooks. Students can practice through exercises focused on learning by doing, celebrating culturally significant days purposefully, musical, drawing, puzzles, quiz, discussion, debates, critical thinking, problem solving in line with modern education, especially CCA. The MingalaSutta has been taught in each grade according to their age. (DSF Cenral 2018, p. 21-29).

The researcher went to observe two schools and it was found out that the reciprocal duties, taught by Buddha in the Singalovada Sutta between parents and children, pupils and teachers, clergy and laity, right relations among friends, relatives and neighbors are being taught. They even need to recite these codes of disciplines in rhymes upon arrival at Sunday School or before class endings.

Dhamma School Teachers' Training Courses started in 2013, and in order to run the Dhamma School Foundation smoothly in the long term, Management Training Courses for staff who run the foundation were opened in 2018. Records, as of 2018 December show that there have been 18,000 Dhamma Schools, 75, 180 teachers, 2 million students in Yangon Division, Mandalay, Sagaing,

Irrawaddy, Magwe, Tennesarim, Pegu, Naypyidaw, Kachin, Kayar, Karen, Chin, Mon, Rakhine, Northern Shan Divisions, but data has yet to be updated regarding the numbers throughout the whole of Myanmar. (DSF Central 2018, p. 50-64).

The number of Dhamma School students stand at 4 % of the population in Myanmar. Aside from Dhamma schools, there are Yin-Kyay-Lain Mar weekend schools, PyinNyarDhanna for children and youth, private and volunteer training courses for youth in teaching Buddhist Ethics. DSF seems to be promising a bright future for new generations, with the new blood of Myanmar building a sustainable Myanmar if Dhamma education organizations can move on continuously. DSF Chairman Sayardaw mentioned in our verbal interview, the DSF (Central) is preparing a blueprint for management training to staff who run the DSF on a long term day to day basis.

Although DSF is an independent self-funded institution, school curricula and contents, DSF activities are advised, and given guidelines by the DSF Central which is monitored by supreme council executives, including the Chairman and members of the highest Theravada Supreme Sangha Council, Tipi Sayardaws, Rector Sayardaw of International Theravada Buddhist Missionary University. Operation management is monitored by DSF Central and executive committee members Sayardaws. (DSF Central 2018, p. 9-15).

4. HABITS OF USING MOBILE GAMES, SOCIAL MEDIA IN MYANMAR

In his farewell speech, the former U.S. Ambassador to Myanmar gave his remark that Myanmar is the country of facebook land. (VOA Radio Burmese news, unknown date.) 2017 Statistical data shows that facebook users in Myanmar is 18 million, ranking it six among 10 ASEAN countries, where Indonesia is the largest with 130 million, Philippines 67 millions, Vietnam 55 million, Thailand 51 millions, Malaysia 24 million, Cambodia 7 million, Singapore 4.8 million, Laos 2.4 million, Timor-Leste 0.48 million, Brunei 0.41 million respectively. (Kyaw Phone Kyaw/ Frontier, 2018). While Myanmar has drawn international attention especially in the issue of spreading hate speech on Facebook and social media, Artificial Intelligence (AI) software is being developed by two Myanmar tech

whizzes to monitor and counter the hate speech with a powerful research tool. (Kyaw Phone Kyaw/ Frontier, 2018).

KoYewint Ko, the co-founder and chief technology officer at software company Bindez, and KoThuya Myo Nyunt, its director of engineering, are developing a system that monitors hate speech through Artificial Intelligence (AI). The inspiration for developing the AI system came when the two met members of civil society groups at a Peace-Tech Exchange workshop hosted by the United States Institute of Peace in Yangon in 2014. The two have also been working with the Yangon School of Political Science to help with digital technology for anti-hate-speech project to analyze hate speech that Thuya Myo Nyunt told Frontier (Kyaw Phone Kyaw/ Frontier, 2018). The AI system would enable to counter hate speech to respond much faster to fake news and rumors and it is based on Unicode, one of the Myanmar fonts but if people write hate words in other fonts like Zawgyi font, it will be automatically converted to Unicode before the analyzing process is running. The AI system would recognize individual words for analysis. The system would achieve a key word detection accuracy rate of between 80 percent and 90 percent and sentiment research accuracy of between 70 percent and 80 percent. AI developer ThuyaMyoNyunt said private Facebook accounts would not be monitored to respect users' privacy, but it would only be possible to monitor private accounts if the government made an official request to Facebook. (Kyaw Phone Kyaw, Frontier, 2018).

The development of the system comes as the Ministry of Religious Affairs and Culture, in cooperation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, is drafting a law on countering hate speech that is expected to be enacted later in early 2019. According to amendments to the Evidence Act made in 2016, digital records can be used as evidence in courts. AI system co-developer YewintKo said that the AI platform could be used to provide evidence for lawsuits. (Kyaw Phone Kyaw/ Frontier, 2018).

5. DISCUSSIONS ON OPINION SURVEY

Opinion survey questionnaires were sent out to 150 youths, each questionnaire consisting of 24 questions dealing with habits

in using mobile games, using social media, perceptions on hate-words, application of the Mingala Sutta and Buddhist education in daily life, environmental and social awareness, opinion on the possibility of learning Buddhist thought and ethics via mobile phone application. Among 150 youths, due to time constraints, only 102 responses were collected for data analysis. There were male 28.4 % respondents and 28.5%, female, missing gender without mentioning male or female stands 43.1%. Among respondents, those aged under 16 years was 48.4%, those aged between 16-35 years was 50.5%, and those aged above 35 years was 1.1% Among them, 85% of respondents used mobile phones, and 71% always played mobile games. The number of hours spent in playing mobile games varied, with the maximum number of game players spending 35 hours per week, and the minimum time spent was one hour per week. Among facebook users, 61% used facebook, spending a maximum of 84 hours and a minimum of 45 minutes, whereas other social media users amounted to 40% of respondents, using a maximum of 48 hours per week and a minimum of 30 minutes per week. Regarding hate words on FB, 24% of respondents could bear hate words and they could neglect them, whereas 76% could not stand hate words at all. 5% of respondents participated in responding to hate words via comments, whereas 95% did not get involved in hate words. 45% wanted to block hate words, whereas 55% just ignored hate words without blocking them.

Regarding study of Buddhist thinking and ethics in Dhamma schools via the Yin Kyay Lainmar in Myanmar, which means polite and good behavior training, 91% of respondents had a chance to study in DSF and other Buddhist schools, but 9% had no access to study under Buddhist education and ethics. 93% of respondents were fond of learning about Buddhist thought and ethics. Among them 88% replied that they were aware of Buddhist education and applied their learning to their daily life. 62% of respondents said they knew very well about Mingala Sutta, 38 blessings and 21% recited it every day. 42% of respondents said they understood the meaning of the discourse. 51% of respondents applied the essence of the Mingala Sutta almost everyday.

When asking DSF students if they were happy, or whether

they wanted to share their knowledge of Buddhist education and ethics to other friends who could not study in Dhamma schools, 98% stated they were very happy to undertake Buddhist education and all of them wanted to share their knowledge with friends who didn't have any chance to study Buddhist education. Even though Dhamma Schools are free of charge and open to everyone, some parents might not encourage their children to attend Dhamma Schools on Sundays. One parent said he did not want his child to be manipulated by religious extremists elsewhere and he was not confident about sending his son as he had difficulty in selecting a suitable school or teacher although he himself was a devout Buddhist.

When asked if they wanted to see Myanmar with a healthy social environment, 97% of respondents said that they were willing to see a well disciplined and ethical Myanmar society. 90 % of respondents wanted to see the country morally clean with socially responsible citizens. Social awareness and environmental awareness questions were added to objective questions requiring "yes" or "no" answers, in addition to open ended "wh" questions of "why" to seek respondents' opinions. In responding to open ended questions, National Management Degree College students answered as follows. One student said that Myanmar people have a lot of knowledge on Buddhism and ethics, but never applied this in daily life and thus he saw his surrounding as a bad society. Many students said society in general was wretched. One student said Myanmar people could be proud in the future by changing themselves into well-disciplined citizens. Another student said that building Myanmar society through a healthy social environment was essential. One student saw the country as wretched, and he suggested teachers in formal classes should add moral teaching to their lessons "just like You teach us in our class". He meant "You" as this researcher, and jokingly suggested teaching a case study of moral collapse in university class discussions. Another respondent saw that a healthy social environment should be a requirement to maintain peace in Myanmar. Likewise 2 other students also said the same, stating that peace in Myanmar needed a healthy social environment to be built. Other students wanted to see the country's image improved through a better environment. Many students shared the same vision that peace in Myanmar needed a

healthy social environment. One Christian student from Sunday school said that not only bible study, but also Buddhist study and other religious studies were good for the country.

DSF students' responses from Insein, YwamaSayardaw's "Light of Dhamma" Dhamma school, are summarized as follows. Responses include that they are willing to see clean, garbage free environment that can make every one happy, healthy, where learning ethics and disciplines at Dhamma school makes them happy. Some respondents don't like undisciplined, unethical surrounding. One DSF student says she wants image of Myanmar in the world to be a pride for all Myanmar citizens or its good disciplines, good moral virtues and she wants to upgrade all Myanmar to be standardized world-class citizens. Another DSF student thinks clean environment, well-discipline, good ethics are the standard of world class human beings. One student shares his personal thoughts that if every Myanmar follows good disciplines and manage its rich natural resources, Myanmar can develop to keep abreast with those developed countries without having rich natural resources such as Singapore and USA. One student says if every one follows disciplines and ethics, it could be developed country without prison.

When asking opinion about the possibility of implementing Buddhist education and teaching Buddhist ethics through mobile application, 69% responded that it would be worthwhile teaching Buddhist education and ethics through mobile application. 66% were hopeful that the majority of Myanmar people would accept mobile teaching. When sharing thoughts in open ended questions, a student expressed his view that Myanmar society is busy with attending classes at schools, working in offices and had less time for Sarsana, so it would be great to learn Buddhist education on the mobile phone. Among those who agreed that mobile applications be used to learn ethics, many respondents said the method was very important and easy, effective way to teach Buddha Sarsana in a fun way. But two students stated that mobile phone use would not be effective as people are negligent. One student said that people used mobile games, and social media to relax and they wanted to see fun things only, so that Buddhist education online via mobile phone would not work.

Insein, Ywama Sayardaw's "Light of Dhamma" Dhamma school gave varied feedback. Among them was the head teacher of Insein Ywama Dhamma school who pointed out the pros and cons of teaching via mobile phones. Teaching Buddhist education and ethics through mobile phones and social media allow quick access to Dhamma and a rapid way of spreading the teaching. Even though it is very convenient and user friendly, there are pros and cons. In using internet, user costs are pricy, activities online are time consuming due to slow connections in Myanmar, and health-related problems such as eye strain and physical damage from insufficient activity can result. On the other hand, bookstores should be crowded buying ethical, moral teaching books to nourish food for thought. At the same time, survey respondents suggested that National TV and all media should produce ethical teaching programs. They were not against teaching via mobile phones, but they suggested additional alternative methods to be developed as well. One student thought using phones was wasting time and instead, suggested that reading books was more effective.

An appropriate set of policies is likely to halt the spread of hate words through social media. Public education could be one of the best policies. Thus encouraging people to take the vows of Ajivatthamaka Sila could be effective way to halt verbal sins. Ajivatthakamaka Sila is that one is taking vows not to do the following conducts.

i. Pānatipātā veramani sikkhāpadam samādhīyāmi (killing of any living creatures)

ii. Adinnādānā veramani sikkhāpadam samādhīyāmi (stealing, trickery, robbing)

iii. Kāmesumicchācārā veramani sikkhāpadam samādhīyāmi (wrong ways of sexual conducts)

iv. Musāvādā veramani sikkhāpadam samādhīyāmi (utterance of false words as well as hiding truth)

v. Pisunavācā veramani sikkhāpadam samādhīyāmi (act of backbiting, slander, calumny, malicious gossip)

vi. Pharusavācā veramani sikkhāpadam samādhīyāmi (use of language that is rough, abusive, violent, unpleasant)

vii. *Samphappalāpavācā veramani sikkhāpadam samādhīyāmi* (non sensual talks, gossips)

viii. *Micchājīvā veramani sikkhāpadam samādhīyāmi* (making a fraud livelihood through wrong act) “(MN.A. 2, P.280-2) .

6. SUGGESTIONS

The researcher is convinced that the following suggestions should be considered by the policy makers as an appropriate set of policies.

i. Government should support in implementing public education for the people of all age groups through various kinds of media, social media, print media, broadcast media, to be aware of ethics, disciplines, code of conducts for laymen. It should be in creative fun ways via mobile application, games, TV game show, quiz show, contests, movies, drama, songs, social media in edutainment programs. Edutainment is educating people in various entertaining forms. It could motivate people to possess self awareness, self disciplines, and to become responsible citizens.

ii. All stakeholders need to collaborate in implementing Buddhist education for daily life to notify soft reminder to people to follow ethical disciplines, layman's code of conduct especially to take *Ajivatthakama Sila* in avoiding physical and verbal misconducts like using hate words, abusive, untrue false and deceptive language use. Stakeholders mean the government, policy makers, Buddhist educators, institutional networks, mobile games developers, all kinds of media such as print media, broadcast media, TV program producers, movie directors, sponsors, advertising agencies, song writers, artists, FM radio stations etc.

iii. By means of downloading mobile applications, the mobile phones users can begin the day with “Quote of the day” a short phrase excerpt from the Dhamma to notify them as one minute daily lesson, using famous celebrities to reach out to the public every day as mobile Sarsana in digital form. In broadcast form, Taxi drivers can switch on the FM radios in their cars for passengers to notice such one minute Dhamma lesson.

iv. Many youth, even adults are hooked to games and phones.

Buddhist educators should collaborate with Game developers to create Buddhist education, Buddha's history and ethical knowledge as mobile games to enhance the awareness of ethical values in Myanmar.

v. The International Buddhist scholars network needs to build a sustainable society and work together in their capacity to create " Mobile Sarsana Project" in spreading Buddhist ethics worldwide to build sustainable global society at large.

7. CONCLUSION

In order to develop Myanmar as a sustainable society, I would suggest that Myanmar is urgently in need of a morally strong and socially responsible environment with well-disciplined citizens who follow rules of law strictly. This can only be achieved by laying down a solid ethical foundation through Buddhist Education. The results from the survey suggest that teaching Dhamma via mobile phone application could be beneficial, but one constraint is that internet fares and phone use bills are expensive in Myanmar and not affordable to everyone. Consequently, public education via mobile phone alone might not be sufficient enough to reach about fifty millions populations throughout Myanmar. While DSF students with access to Buddhist education represent just 4% of Myanmar population, it is hoped that such access will become available to everyone in the nation by means of strategic implementation as suggested above, via not only via mobile application, but also via FM radio, TV and social media, broadcast media, print media in edutainment forms, that is public education in various entertaining ways. Mobile Sarsana should be developed in this digital age to create a wholesome, sustainable Myanmar society at large.

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