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An Analytical Exposition of the Contemplation of Faculties in Insight Meditation Praxis towards Mental Sustainability

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Original Research Articles

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Abstract

The prime concern of this article is to discuss on contemplating of Faculties (Indriya Bhāvanā) in the Indriya-bhāvanā Sutta of Majjhima Nikāya where offering insights into the development of mental faculties and the pursuit of lasting mental well-being in the Theravāda Buddhist meditation practice. Traditionally ascribed to the Buddha, the Indriya-bhāvanā Sutta in Majjhima Nikāya systematically guides individuals in nurturing faculties, or mental faculties, to achieve profound insights. Central to this approach is the cultivation of mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom, integral elements of Vipassanā meditation. Through dedicated refinement of these faculties, practitioners unlock a profound comprehension of existence and fortify their mental resilience. It accentuates how the systematic development of these mental faculties acts as foundational pillars for a harmonized and resilient mind. At its core, the sutta's abstract revolves around the methodical training of the mind through contemplation and introspection. Practitioners are instructed to refine their faculties by keenly observing the interplay of mind and matter, unraveling the transient, unsatisfactory, and non-self-nature of existence. Its core formula revolves around the systematic training of the mind through meditation and introspection. On the other hand, the article underscores the Sutta's contemporary relevance, positioning it as a valuable roadmap for navigating life's challenges and fostering mental sustainability. The central message of the study resonates with the notion that attaining mental sustainability is intricately tied to the disciplined cultivation of mental faculties. Through dedicated practice, individuals can attain a state of equilibrium, resilience, and mental clarity for sustainable life style. The transformative influence of insight meditation, as elucidated in this article, stands as an enduring guide for individuals seeking a robust state of mental well-being through the cultivation of insightful awareness.

Keywords: Vipassanā; Samatha; Indriya; Bhāvanā; Meditation; Faculties; Objectives

Introduction

Insight meditation, a practice rooted in ancient contemplative traditions, provides a profound understanding of the mind's workings. This exposition explores the contemplation of faculties within insight meditation, focusing on the interplay between cognitive processes and mental sustainability. Insight meditation, also known as Vipassana, is a methodical approach to cultivating self-awareness and understanding consciousness. By scrutinizing mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom, practitioners embark on a transformative journey towards mental sustainability. The cultivation of these faculties enhances cognitive capacities, fosters resilience, and balance, ultimately leading to a more enduring and harmonious mental landscape (Sutthisanmethi, et, al. 2022).

The study sets out to explore the intricate interplay among mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom, as expounded in the Indriya-bhāvanā Sutta. By scrutinizing the sutta's guidance on the systematic development of these faculties, the research seeks to unravel their collective impact on dismantling ignorance and fostering mental resilience. The aim is to draw valuable insights that bridge the wisdom of traditional Buddhist meditation practices with the pressing need for mental well-being in the modern world (Thepa, et, al. 2022).

Through a nuanced examination of the sutta, the research aspires to contribute to an enriched understanding of the underlying principles of Vipassanā meditation (Thepa, 2022). Moreover, it aims to shed light on the potential applications of these ancient teachings in addressing contemporary challenges related to stress, anxiety, and overall mental health. By bridging the gap between traditional wisdom and current concerns, this study seeks to offer a meaningful contribution to the discourse on mental well-being and provide practical insights for the integration of these teachings into modern contexts.

Objective

Therefore, the study is aim to answer the following research questions:

1. How does the Indriya-bhavana Sutta delineate the development of mental faculties through Vipassanā meditation, and what insights does it offer into the cultivation of mindfulness and awareness?
2. To what extent can the practice of Vipassanā meditation, as guided by the sutta, contribute to mental sustainability, resilience, and well-being in the contemporary context?
3. How do the principles outlined in the sutta align with or differ from current psychological and therapeutic approaches to mindfulness, and what implications does this have for integrating ancient wisdom into modern mental health practices?

Conceptual Framework

Theoretical significance contributes to the theoretical understanding of insight meditation and its connection to mental sustainability. Practical significance offers insights for individuals, practitioners, and scholars, emphasizing the transformative potential of contemplation on mindfulness, emotional resilience, and cognitive well-being.

Significance of the Study: examining the contemplation of faculties in insight meditation, this analysis explores its pivotal role in promoting physical and mental sustainability. By unraveling cognitive intricacies, it unveils a profound understanding. This exposition emphasizes the transformative impact on mindfulness, emotional resilience, and cognitive well-being, offering a roadmap for a sustainable and fulfilling mental life.

1. Central Concept of Contemplation of Faculties in Insight Meditation

Definition: The focal point of the conceptual framework is the practice of contemplation of faculties within the context of insight meditation. This involves the systematic examination and understanding of mental and sensory functions.

2. Theoretical Significance of Contributing to the Theoretical Understanding

Link to Insight Meditation: Establishing a connection between the contemplation of faculties and the broader theoretical framework of insight meditation. Investigating how this specific aspect enriches the overall understanding of the meditative process. **Cognitive Processes:** Exploring the theoretical foundations of cognitive processes involved in the contemplation of faculties, including attention, perception, and awareness. Investigating how these processes contribute to mental sustainability. **Integration with Meditation Models:** Integrating the contemplation of faculties into existing meditation models, emphasizing its unique role in enhancing mental sustainability. This involves connecting with established psychological and philosophical theories.

3. Practical Significance of Transformative Potential on Various Dimensions

Mindfulness Enhancement: Examining how the contemplation of faculties acts as a catalyst for heightened mindfulness. Illustrating practical strategies derived from the exposition that individuals can apply in daily life to enhance their present-moment awareness. **Emotional Resilience:** Investigating the practical implications of contemplation on emotional resilience. Exploring how this practice contributes to emotional regulation, self-awareness, and the ability to navigate challenging emotions. **Cognitive Well-being:** Highlighting the transformative potential of contemplation on cognitive well-being. This includes an exploration of its impact on concentration, clarity of thought, and overall cognitive functioning.

4. Interactive Components

Contemplative Practices, describing specific contemplative practices associated with the contemplation of faculties. Analyzing how these practices interact with the theoretical foundations to yield practical benefits. Individual Application, outlining how individuals, practitioners, and scholars can apply the insights gained from the exposition in their respective domains. Emphasizing the adaptability and inclusivity of these practices.

5. Outcome of Sustainable and Fulfilling Mental Life

Synthesis, bringing together the theoretical and practical components to synthesize a comprehensive understanding of the contemplation of faculties. Demonstrating how this synthesis contributes to the overarching goal of mental sustainability. Roadmap for Mental Sustainability: Providing a conceptual roadmap derived from the exposition. This includes practical steps and considerations for individuals aiming to cultivate a sustainable and fulfilling mental life through the contemplation of faculties in insight meditation.

6. Feedback Loop of Continuous Refinement and Application

Iterative Process, acknowledging that the conceptual framework is dynamic and subject to continuous refinement based on ongoing research, feedback from practitioners, and emerging insights in the field. Application and Validation, encouraging the application of the conceptual framework in real-world settings and subsequent validation through empirical studies, ensuring its relevance and efficacy in diverse contexts.

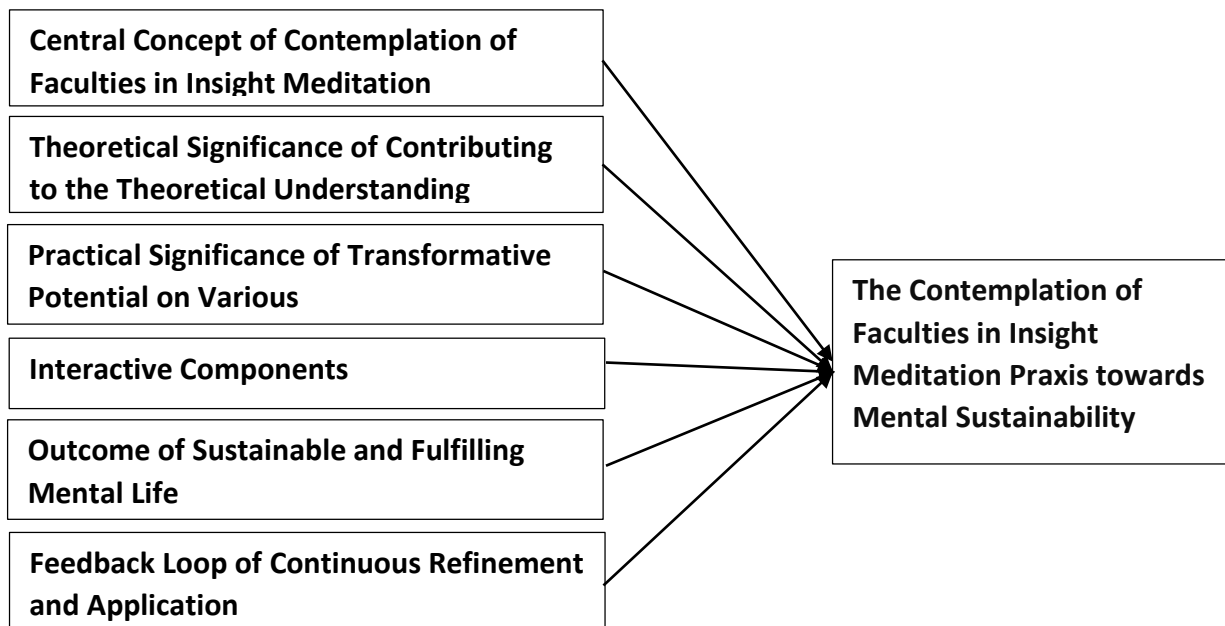


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of exposition of the Contemplation of Faculties in Insight Meditation Praxis towards Mental Sustainability

This conceptual framework integrates the theoretical and practical dimensions of the contemplation of faculties in insight meditation, emphasizing its contribution to both the theoretical understanding of meditation and its practical application for individuals seeking mental sustainability.

Materials and Methods

This research is intended to be a literature survey based on both primary and secondary sources. Its methods will be mainly dependent on exposition, analysis, and criticism.

1. Research Design

Type of research adopts a qualitative document analysis approach. Nature of study that a literature survey based on primary and secondary sources, focusing on the contemplation of faculties in insight meditation.

2. Selection of Documents

Primary Sources: Original Theravada Buddhist Tripitaka texts, ancient scriptures, and teachings related to the contemplation of faculties in insight meditation. Historical documents or manuscripts that discuss the evolution of insight meditation practices and its impact on mental sustainability.

Secondary Sources: Academic articles, research papers, and books exploring the theoretical and empirical aspects of insight meditation and its effects on mental well-being.

3. Inclusion Criteria

Relevance, documents selected will be directly related to the contemplation of faculties in insight meditation and its connection to mental sustainability. Quality, emphasis on scholarly and reputable sources to ensure the reliability of the information.

4. Data Collection

Systematic Review, conduct a thorough and systematic review of selected documents. Exposition, extract relevant information on the contemplation of faculties, focusing on key concepts, practices, and historical context. Critically examine the content, identifying themes, patterns, and variations in the understanding of contemplation and its impact on mental sustainability. Evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of different perspectives presented in the documents.

5. Coding and Categorization

Coding Scheme, do develop a coding scheme to categorize information based on themes and concepts related to the contemplation of faculties and mental sustainability.

6. Data Analysis and Interpretation

Exposition, present a detailed exposition of the contemplation of faculties in insight meditation as depicted in the selected documents. Analysis, delve into the cognitive intricacies, exploring how the documents contribute to a profound understanding of the subject. Criticism, provide a critical assessment of the literature, discussing conflicting viewpoints, gaps in knowledge, and areas requiring further exploration.

Results

1. Major Definition

The Pāli term 'Bhāvanā' is simply a combination of the noun 'Bhāvanā' with the verb 'bhāveti', means 'to begets' or 'to produce' again and again. Gunaratana explains 'Bhāvanā' comes from the root 'bhu', which means to grow or become. In English, it calls 'mental development' (lit. existence, producing) in general but rather vaguely called 'meditation'. Meantime, the reader should keep in mind that the term 'Bhāvanā' does not only inheritance to Buddhism but also the other religious traditions in India has been used. However, the term used in Buddhism broader sense than other religious and linguistic traditions. Therefore, when it comes to identifying what 'Bhāvanā' is, one should understand by interpreting its nature. Thereby, the 'Bhāvanā' in Buddhism has to understand it within the Buddhist context.

The Buddha advocated avoided two lesser ideologies of sensual lust (kāmasukhallikānuyoga) and self-torment (attakilamathānuyoga) which bring a state of craving alone with greed, hatred, delusion, conceit, agitation and other negative unwholesome states. The teaching of Buddhism presented the 'Middle-Way' doctrine (majjhimā-patipadā) towards the realization of Nibbāna and the abolition of dukkha or suffering. Therefore, we can understand that Buddhist meditation also presented in the context of middle-way doctrine.

In the post-canonical texts, meditation means mental development or cultivation (bhāveti bhāvanā). In the practical methods, it denotes cultivation and development (āsevati vaddheti etāyāti bhāvanā) of the wholesome mental qualities (kusala-dhamma) (cittam bhāveti bhāvanā, bhāveti kusalā dhamme āsevati vaddheti etāyāti bhāvanā.). According to Saṅgīti Sutta meditation should be as follow:

- Āsevitāya- To be practice
- Bhāvitā- To be develop

- Bahulīkata- To be practice seriously/frequently
- Yānikata- To be mastered
- Vatthukata- To be practice thoroughly
- Anutthita- To be the experience
- Paricitā- To be well-practice
- Susamāradaddha- To thoroughly undertake

The meditator has to meditate very seriously to accumulate results of meditation. Therefore, the threefold training (Morality (sīla), Concentration (samādhi), and Wisdom (paññā) (Sutthirat, et al. 2023) possible to identify as a meditation technique in Buddhism. On the other hand, it is very popular that meditation is one of the meritorious acts out of three meritorious actions. Here, we would like to discuss in deep about meditation not just like a meritorious action but meditation for accumulates the absorption (jhāna) and the results (phala) on the way to the final goal of Nibbāna.

2. The Diversity of Samatha and Vipassanā Meditation Technique

Samatha and Vipassanā are two prominent meditation techniques with distinct focuses. Samatha cultivates concentration and tranquility, promoting a calm mind. Vipassanā, on the other hand, emphasizes insight into the nature of reality, fostering mindfulness and awareness. Despite differences, both contribute to mental clarity and spiritual development.

The well-known meditation guidebook in Theravada Buddhist tradition is the Path of Purification (Visuddhi-Magga) written by the Venerable Buddhaghosa: a well-known commentator who lived in ancient Sri Lanka. The following verse of the Samyutta Nikāya underlying to compose the text:

“Sīle patiṭṭhāya naro sapañño,
Cittaṃ paññañca bhāvayaṃ;
Ātāpī nipako bhikkhu,
So imaṃ vijaṭṭhe jaṭṭhaṃ”

(Bhikkhu translated (2012: SN. 1. 23) as “When a wise man, established well in virtue, develops consciousness and understanding, Then as a bhikkhu ardent and sagacious^[13] He succeeds in disentangling this tangle.”)

Here, ‘Cittaṃ paññañca bhāvayaṃ’ denotes about the mind and the wisdom. It describes the threefold training of Morality (sīla), Concentration (samādhi), and Wisdom (paññā). The

concentration is acquiring from the tranquility meditation (samatha-bhāvanā) and the wisdom is acquiring from the wisdom meditation (paññā-bhāvanā). The Insight-meditation (Vipassanā-bhāvanā) is another synonym to the wisdom meditation. Therefore, there are mainly two types of meditation technique: tranquility meditation (Samatha-bhāvanā) and insight meditation (Vipassanā-bhāvanā) in Theravada meditation tradition. The tranquility meditation is a development of tranquility identical with concentration and insight meditation is a development of insight identical with wisdom.

In Anguttara Nikāya mentioned following short discourse to introduce briefly about these two meditation techniques as thus:

“Dve me, bhikkhave, dhammā vijjābhāgiyā. Katame dve? Samatho ca vipassanā ca. Samatho, bhikkhave, bhāvitō kamatthamanubhoti? Cittaṃ bhāvīyati. Cittaṃ bhāvitāṃ kamatthamanubhoti? Yo rāgo so pahīyati. Vipassanā, bhikkhave, bhāvitā kamatthamanubhoti? Paññā bhāvīyati. Paññā bhāvitā kamatthamanubhoti? Yā avijjā sā pahīyati. Rāgupakkiliṭṭhaṃ vā, bhikkhave, cittaṃ na vimuccati, avijjupakkiliṭṭhā vā paññā na bhāvīyati. Iti kho, bhikkhave, rāgavirāgā cetovimutti, avijjāvirāgā paññāvimutti”ti (R. Morris, 1961: AN. II.31.).

Oh monk! These two qualities have a share in clear knowing. Which two? Tranquility (samatha) and Insight (vipassanā). When tranquility (samatha) is developed (bhāvitā), what purpose does it serve? The mind is developed. And when the mind is developed, what purpose does it serve? Passion (rāgo) is abandoned. When insight (vipassanā) is developed, what purpose does it serve? Wisdom (paññā) is developed. And when wisdom is developed, what purpose does it serve? Ignorance (avijjā) is abandoned. Defiled by passion, the mind is not released. Defiled by ignorance, wisdom does not develop. Thus from the fading of passion is their awareness-release. From the fading of ignorance is their wisdom-release (paññāvimutti).

It should be noticed that in the following part of the discourse or the entire discourse does not mention the term meditation Bhāvanā. However, it can assume that the Bhāvanā refers to the term of development (bhāvitā): the development of the mind. The discourse is summaries the important of the two techniques of meditation: tranquility meditation (Samatha-bhāvanā) and insight meditation (Vipassanā-bhāvanā). On the other hand, it briefly covers the purpose of the two meditation techniques. Therefore, Therefore, how do Samatha and Vipassanā differ in their core principles? How can the diversity of these practices inform contemporary mindfulness applications?

3. The Samatha Meditation and Its Objects

The Samatha-bhāvanā technically defines as one-pointedness of mind (cittaekaggatā) and undistractedness (avikkhepa). It is one of the mental factors in wholesome consciousness. The tranquility meditation is a peaceful state of mind attained by strong mental concentration. The

aim of the tranquility is at the attainment of the meditation absorptions (jhāna): four fine material (rūpāvacara) and four immaterial (arūpāvacara) absorptions. Therefore, the tranquility mind purifies the mind and free from the five hindrances (nīvaraṇa) such as sensual pleasure, ill will, sloth and torpor, restlessness and remorse, and skeptical doubts and penetrate the mind pure and calm when the mind is deeply concentrating on the objects of meditation. According to Sāmaññaphala Sutta in Dīgha Nikāya mentioned that a person abandoned the five hindrances its looks upon a man freed from a loan, a patient recover from a disease, a prisoner free from jail, a slave emancipated from the slavery, a man crossing the desert and arrived on the border of the village. As soon as the mind is free from the hindrances, the meditator realizes the attainment of the absorptions and he able to feels initial application (vitakka), sustained application (vicāra), joy (pīti), happiness (sukha) and pointedness (ekaggatā). As a result of initial application, sustained application, joy, and happiness of the meditator mind; he feels purification of his body, purification of his body made his mind to be peace; when the mind is peace, he directs and bends down his mind to the concentration (samādhi). This account manifests the mutual relation between mind and body. Therefore, it is very clear that peacefulness and happiness of the mind cause the relaxation of the body and supports the concentration. When the mind bends down to the concentration, the meditator comes to experience the absorption. Having experienced the absorption, the meditator directs to the supernatural knowledge (jhāna).

The concentration (samādhi) takes central psychological action in meditation because it involves the ability to keep one's attention firmly fixed on a given subject for protracted periods, thus over-coming the mind's usual discursive habit of flitting from subject to subject. As we shall see, concentration is one of the earliest goals of Buddhist meditation.

The high degree of concentration is generally developed by the practice of one of the forty objects (kammattāna) of tranquility meditation and it called upon the Tranquility Objects (samatha- kammattāna). According to the Abhidhammatthasangha and Visuddhimagga the forty objects of tranquility meditation comprise the following sevenfold:

1) Ten Kasiṇa: kasiṇa means in the sense of 'whole', 'all', 'complete', 'entirety' (sakalatthāna). It is so-called because it should be observed wholly or completely in meditation. Here ten Kasiṇas are earth kasiṇa, water kasiṇa, fire kasiṇa, air kasiṇa, blue kasiṇa, yellow kasiṇa, red kasiṇa, white kasiṇa, light kasiṇa, and limited-space kasiṇa.

2) Asubha — the ten kinds of foulness objects are corpses in different stages of decay and also called 'cemetery meditations; they are a bloated corpse (uddhumātaka); a livid corpse (vinīlaka); a festering corpse (vipubbaka); a dismembered corpse (vicchiddaka); an eaten corpse (vikkhāyitaka); a scattered-in-pieces corpse (vikkhitta); a mutilated and scattered-in-pieces corpse (hatavikkhittaka); a bloody corpse (lohitaka); a worm-infested corpse (pulavaka); and a skeleton (atthika).

3) Anussati — the ten recollection objects are the recollection of the Buddha, Dhamma, Sangha, morality, generosity, celestial beings, peace, death, mindfulness occupied with the 32 impure parts of body and mindfulness of breathing.

4) Brahma-vihāra — four sublime abodes also called illimitably (appamaññā) are loving-kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy, and equanimity.

5) Āruppa — four immaterial spheres namely: Realm of infinite space, consciousness, nothingness, and neither perception nor non-perception.

6) Āhāre-patikūla-saññā — the one perception is the perception of food.

7) Catu-dhātu-vavatthāna — one analysis of four elements.

4. The Vipassanā Meditation and Its Objects

The Vipassanā meditation is an original meditation technique discovered in the experience of the Buddha. The term Vipassanā has been derived from two words: vi+passanā. 'Vi' means various ways and the 'Passanā' means seeing. So, Vipassanā means 'seeing in various ways' or 'seeing in diverse ways' (vividhākārato dassanā); 'examining' (vicayena passatīti vipassanā); 'investigation' (vicayena passatīti vipassanā); 'seeing by analysis' (vibhajjayena passatīti vipassanā), etc. In the path of liberation Vipassanā meditation called upon the wisdom (paññā) meditation. In its classical Buddhist usage insight (Vipassanā) means 'full awareness of the three characteristics of the existence of impermanence, suffering and non-self' which are the objectives for the Insight meditation. Full awareness of nature of the world is not a mere understanding of the world but it is understanding of one's cognitive process and matter (nāma-rūpa) or otherwise the five aggregates (pañakkhandha). The Buddha thought that once sees and understands the reality of the world in the eyes of three characteristics of impermanent, suffering and the non-self causes to the middle-path (majjhimā-patipadā) to realize the final liberation (Nibbāna). In the Western world, this meditation practice is known as Mindfulness Meditation.

In the exercise of insight meditation once existences of the defilement from the mind; one should know seven stages of purity (saptavisuddhi), ten insight-knowledge (vipassanā-ñāna), three characteristics marks (tilakkhana), three methods of contemplation (anupassanā), three doors of emancipation (tivida-vimokkamukha) and three ways of emancipation (tivida-vimokka). To practice Vipassanā meditation, the Satipatthana sutta is the foremost discourse undertakes four-foundation mindfulness practice in the framework of insight meditation. The contemplation of feelings is one of four-foundation mindfulness, which is one of the foundational meditation techniques to understand human psychology to achieve the insight understanding on the way to the final destination in Buddhism (nibbāna). Besides it, the Indriya-bhāvanā Sutta also founds a great valuable discourse showing the insight by explaining the contemplating of faculties connecting with feelings.

5. The Development of the Faculties in the Indriya-bhāvanā Sutta

The Buddhist teaching leads to understanding the truth and succeeding to the truth. Numbers of discourses available in the Pāli canon regarding the techniques and methods used for understanding the teaching. The Indriya-bhāvanā Sutta is the last discourse in the Majjhima Nikāya, is a foremost discourse for succeeding the truth (Nibbāna). The main component included in the Indriya-bhāvanā Sutta in its doctrinal analysis main keyword is the cultivation of faculties between the Brahmin and Buddhist meditation traditions that leads to a central discussion as a result of conversation done with the Brahmin student Uttara, a pupil of the Brahmin Pārāsariya at Muvelu (bamboo) Grove in Kajangalā. The Buddha explained the meditation of faculties in his teaching as a requesting from the Venerable Ananda, which can be considered the first discourse in the canon entitled: “Let the Buddha teach the supreme development of the faculties in the training of the Noble One. The mendicants will listen and remember it” (yaṃ bhagavā ariyassa vinaye anuttaraṃ indriyabhāvanāṃ deseyya. Bhagavato sutvā bhikkhū dhāressanti”ti) .

One of the chief difficulties of the discourse is the translation of the term use Indriya because the term Indriya is a name for twenty-two partly physical (rūpa) and mental phenomena (nāma-dhamma) often treated in the canon; namely the six faculties (āyatana), three sex (bhava), five feelings (pancha vedanā), five spiritual faculties (pancha bala), and three super-mundane faculties (lokottara- Indriya). According to the Pāli-English dictionary, Indriya means power, faculty, controlling principle. At the title, the 'Indriya-bhāvanā' suggests on how to restraint (samvara) and cultivates (bhāvanā) the sense faculties for the sake of spiritual liberation. Moreover, according to the content of the Indriya-bhāvanā means 'practice of the development or cultivation of the six faculties (āyatana) refers to higher training than the 'sense-restraint' (indriya-samvara). The differences between the cultivation of the faculties (Indriya-bhāvanā) and restrain of the faculties (indriya-samvara) is well explained in Majjhima Nikāya:

The expression “the development of the faculties” (indriya-bhāvanā) properly signifies the development of the mind in responding to the objects experienced through the sense faculties. The more rudimentary aspect of this practice, the restraint of the sense faculties (indriya-samvara), involves controlling the mind in such a way that one does not grasp at the “signs and features” of things, their distinctive attractive and repulsive attributes. The development of the faculties carries this process of control through to the point where, by an act of will, one can immediately set up insight even in the course of sense perception. At the highest level, one acquires the ability to radically transform the subjective significance of perceptual objects themselves, making them appear in a mode that is the very opposite of the way they are normally apprehended (V. Trenckner, 1993: 152).

At the beginning of the Sutta, the Buddha raised a question regarding the teaching of the 'development of faculties' thought by Brahmin Pārāsariya. The Brahmin Uttara responded, according to Brahmin Pārāsariya's 'development of faculties' means 'not seeing a form with eye and not hearing sounds with ear...'. Buddha was dissatisfied with Brahmin Pārāsariya's analysis of mental faculties, which he believed would lead to blind and deaf individuals such as the Buddha mentioned "if that so; a blind man or a deaf man would be of developed faculty". Uttara, who had heard Buddha's words, remained silent and confused, unable to respond. Buddha, seeing Uttara's silence, ashamed and speechless and understanding his mentality, called Ananda, and explained his own approach to mental faculties, resulting in the development of blind and deaf individuals. The Buddha teaches about the supreme development of the faculties in the disciples for Noble One as thus:

"And how, Ānanda, is there the supreme development of the faculties in the training of the Noble One? When a mendicant sees a sight with their eyes, liking, disliking, and both liking and disliking come up in them. They understand: Liking, disliking, and both liking and disliking have come up in me. That's conditioned, coarse, and dependently originated. But this is peaceful and sublime, namely equanimity.' Then the liking, disliking, and both liking and disliking that came up in them cease, and equanimity becomes stabilized. It's like how a person with clear eyes might open their eyes then shut them; or might shut their eyes then open them. Such is the speed, the swiftness, the ease with which any liking, disliking, and both liking and disliking at all that came up in them cease, and equanimity becomes stabilized. In the training of the Noble One this is called the supreme development of the faculties regarding sights known by the eye (V. Trenckner, 1993: 152).

This sutta contains the explanation of the changes that take place in the six organs of man, eye, ear, tongue, nose, body and mind, when the three actions of morality (Sīla), concentration (Samādhi) and wisdom (Paññā) develop. The Buddha divided the people who cultivate his faculties into three categories: an ordinary unawakened practitioner (sutavā ariya sāvakā), learner on the path (sekha puggalo) of three individual: stream-enterer (Sotāpanna,) once-returner (Sakadāgāmi), non-returner (Anāgāmi), and the noble one (asekha puggalo) of an Arhat.

According to the discourse, the functioning of the six senses of the three people of ordinary unawakened practitioner's, learner on the path and the noble one's is explained. The thing common to all these three people is when they experience a sense-object with the sense organ, there arises feeling (vedanā) about the agreeable, the disagreeable, the agreeable-and-disagreeable (the neutral) and giving rise to mental perception (saññā): the immediate knowledge (DN: II, 308; MN. 152). However, the experience of the cognition is different from one another. For instance, the noble one sees a sight with their eyes, and they understand (pajānāti) the feeling of agreeable, disagreeable, or agreeable-and-disagreeable; once he

understanding (pajānāti) the feeling: they cognize the feeling as conditioned (saṅkata), gross (olārika), and dependently arisen (paticca-samuppanna), which is peaceful and sublime: that is say namely equanimity (upekkhā).

Ānanda, is the incomparable development of the sense organs in the discipline for an Ariyan? As to this Ānanda, when a monk has seen a material shape with the eye...hears a sound with the ear...smell with the nose...tastes a flavor with the tongue...touches with the body...cognizes a mind-object with the mind, there arises what is liked, there arises what is disliked, there arises what is both liked and disliked. He comprehends thus: this that is liked, disliked, both liked and disliked (neutral feeling) is arising, and this that arises because it is constructed, is gross. (But) this is the real, excellent, that is to say equanimity (V. Trenckner, 1993: 152).

However, the learner on the path (sekha puggalo) observes the six senses experience, whether ensuing feeling agreeable, disagreeable, or both agreeable and disagreeable; and his experience with the feeling are horrified, repelled, and disgusted (aṭṭiyati, harāyati, jigucchati).

How are they a practicing trainee? When a mendicant sees a sight with their eyes, liking, disliking, and both liking and disliking come up in them. they are horrified, repelled, and disgusted by that. When they hear a sound with their ears ... When they smell an odor with their nose ... When they taste a flavor with their tongue ... When they feel a touch with their body ... When they know an idea with their mind, liking, disliking, and both liking and disliking come up in them. They are horrified, repelled, and disgusted by that. That's how they are a practicing trainee (V. Trenckner, 1993: 152).

In contrast, the ordinary unawakened practitioner observes experience a sense-object with the six sense organ, there arises feeling agreeable, disagreeable, or both agreeable and disagreeable; and his response on the feeling is trouble, ashamed, and loathes.

And what Ānanda, is a learner's course? As to this, Ānanda, when a monk has seen material shape with the eye...hears a sound with the ear...smell with the nose...tastes a flavor with the tongue...touches with the body...cognizes a mind-object with the mind, there arises what is liked, there arises what is disliked, there arises what is both liked and disliked: he is trouble about it, ashamed of it, loathes it. Just so, Ānanda, is a learner's course (V. Trenckner, 1993: 152).

The Noble person (asekha puggalo) of an Arahāt is ensuing feeling agreeable, or disagreeable, or both agreeable and disagreeable from the sense objects and he feels the objectives of sense organs and giving rise to mental perception (saññā). Then he cognizes those feelings as conditioned (saṅkata), gross (olārika), and dependently arisen (paticca-samuppanna),

therefore it is equanimity (upekkhā). He eradicates all the defilements. Therefore, when he experiences the feelings that come physically and mentally, his mind becomes equanimity which is peaceful (etaṃ santam) and sublime (etaṃ paṇītam). He knows as it is, and experiences let them come and go just like a mirror reflects an image. Later he abides equanimity, mindful, fully aware and developed the sense organs what so call the neuter feeling.

And what Ānanda, is one a noble one with developed faculties? Here Ānanda, when a monk has seen material shape with the eye...hears a sound with the ear...smell with the nose...tastes a flavor with the tongue...touches with the body...cognizes a mind-object with the mind, there arises what is liked, there arises what is disliked, there arises what is both liked and disliked. If he desired thus: May I abide not perceiving impurity in impurity, he abides there not perceiving impurity.

If he desired: may I abide perceiving impurity in purity, he abides there perceiving impurity.

If he desired: may I abide by not perceiving impurity in impurity and purity, he abides there not perceiving impurity.

If he abides May I perceiving impurity in purity and impurity, he abides there perceiving impurity.

If he desires: may I having avoided both purity and impurity abide in equanimity, mindful, and clearly conscious.

He abides in equanimity towards that, mindful and clearly conscious. Even so, Ānanda, is one a noble one with developed faculties (V. Trenckner, 1993: 152).

The discourse focuses on the cultivation of wisdom through the development of six sense experiences, or the cultivation of wisdom on visualizing pleasure in the mind. According to the Madhupindika Sutta of Majjhima Nikāya, every sense experience is conditioned (saṅkata), gross (olārika), and dependently arisen (paticca-samuppanna). Reflecting on these experiences leads to a peaceful and sublime state, bringing equanimity (upekkhā). The main theme is to refrain from all sense experiences and be mindful of when agreeable, disagreeable, and neutral experiences arise.

6. Sensations in Sensory Development

Sensation (vedanā) is the primary topic in the discourse. The Pāli term Vedanā, derived from the verb vedeti, which means 'to feel' or 'to know' and traditionally translated as 'feelings' or 'sensations'. Vedanā does not signify 'emotion' in its range of meaning. Sensation occurs when the internal sense organs come into contact with the external sense objects and associated with the six sense-base consciousness.

According to the Buddha, there are different types of classification of Vedanā depending on the context. Vedanā is identified as the second of the five aggregates (khandā). According to its nature, it comprises five classes: bodily agreeable feelings (kāyika sukha vedanā=sukha), bodily painful feelings (kāyika dukkha vedanā=dukkha), mentally agreeable feelings (cetasikā sukha vedanā=somanassa), mentally painful feelings (cetasikā dukkha vedanā=domanassa), and indifferent or neuter feelings (adukkhamā-asukhā vedanā=upekkhā). With regards to the six internal sense organs, contact with external sense objects, associated with consciousness, distinguishes six kinds of feelings: feelings associated with seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, bodily impression and mental impression (Bhikkhu Bodhi, 2012: DN. 22). According to our experiences sensation is classified into three: pleasant, unpleasant, or neuter. In the Rāhulovāda Sutta it is mentioned that pleasant feeling excites latent passion, Unpleasant feeling excites latent hatred. The neuter feeling excites latent delusion (V. Trenckner, 1993: MN. 62). In the teaching of four-foundation mindfulness (Satipatthāna Sutta), these three sensations are subdivided into worldly/material (Sāmisa), and unworldly/non-material (Nirāmisa).

While he is experiencing a pleasant feeling in regard to material things he comprehends, 'I am experiencing a pleasant feeling in regard to material things; While he is experiencing a painful feeling in regard to material things he comprehends, 'I am experiencing a painful feeling in regard to material things; while he is experiencing a feeling that is neither painful nor pleasant in regard to material things he comprehends: 'I am experiencing a feeling that is neither painful nor pleasant in regard to material things; While he is experiencing a pleasant feeling in regard to non-material things he comprehends, 'I am experiencing a pleasant feeling in regard to non-material things; While he is experiencing a painful feeling in regard to non-material things he comprehends, 'I am experiencing a painful feeling in regard to non-material things; while he is experiencing a feeling that is neither painful nor pleasant in regard to non-material things he comprehends: 'I am experiencing a feeling that is neither painful nor pleasant in regard to non-material things (Bhikkhu Bodhi, 2012: DN. 22).

However, there is no doubt, to recognize the sensation of agreeable and disagreeable but the neutral feeling has to understand very carefully because it has explained in different ways in the cannon. Moreover the, neutral feeling is unable to recognize from the ordinary psychological states because it is experiencing in advanced level (likes Jhānic level) of mind. In the Pāli tradition the, neutral feeling is known as equanimity feeling (upekkhā). According to the Pali-English Dictionary, upekkhā is defined as "hedonic neutrality or indifference," the "zero point between joy and sorrow," and "disinterestedness, neutral feeling, equanimity." (Davids. Rhys. & Stade Williams, 1979: 134). In Buddhist philosophy, equanimity (upekkhā) is generally recognized as one of the four brahma-vihāras (also mettā, karuṇā, and muditā). In meditation practice, equanimity is also commonly referred to as the faculty most prominent when experiencing the

fourth jhāna. In Visuddhimagga equanimity defines as “promoting the aspect of neutrality towards beings” (Nanamoli Bhikkhu, 2010: LX 96). In the commentaries of the Atthasālinī and the Visuddhimagga, Bhikkhu Buddhaghosa defines equanimity in ten different ways. These ten kinds of equanimity are: a) six-factored equanimity, b) equanimity as a brahma-vihāra, c) equanimity as an enlightenment factor, d) equanimity of energy, e) equanimity about formations, f) equanimity as a feeling, g) equanimity about insight, h) equanimity as specific neutrality, i) equanimity of jhāna, j) equanimity of purification. Therefore, we can assume that neutral feeling is a counterpart of the middle principle (majjhimā-patipadā). According to Abijāna Sutta without knowing, fully understanding and dispassionate towards feelings, abandon it; one is incapable to destroy the suffering. (vedanaṃ anabhijānaṃ aparijānaṃ avirājayaṃ appajahaṃ abhabbo dukkhakkhayāya) (C.A.F. Rhys Davids, 2016: SN. 22. 24). Understanding and full awareness of the sensation leads to achieving the final goal of Nibbāna.

7. Objectives of Cultivating of Faculty Meditation

Mindfulness occurs in the mind after meditating on the sensation of agreeable, disagreeable, or neutral thoughts of sense experiences. Development of the sensation of agreeable, disagreeable, and neutral feeling of six senses faculties means the cultivation of the Insight knowledge. Therefore, all the following objectives possible to achieved as a result of the development of faculties (Indriya-bhāvanā) in the path of insight liberation.

- 1) The fundamental mental factors are being analyzed from the insight mind as a result of access to the path of Insight meditation.
- 2) The insight mind will be entered into the path of effort-ness knowledge (patisotagāmi) from the effortless knowledge (anusotagāmi). In other words, the process of consciousness will be access to against the flow from along the flow.
- 3) Achieving the right understanding (sammāditthi).
- 4) Cultivates the Noble eight-fold path leading by the right understanding.
- 5) The noble truth of the path leading to the extinction of suffering (Dukkha nirodha gāmini patipadā ariyasacca) operates in the mind to suspension of all consciousness and mental activity.
- 6) The mind is entering into the way of liberation.
- 7) The mind becomes familiar to practice the full understanding of the known (ñāta-pariññā), the full understanding of an investigating (tīraṇa pariññā) and full understanding as overcoming (pahāna pariññā) by eradicating the craving (taṇhā), conceit (māna) and dogma (ditthi) in the ordinary mind.
- 8) The four-foundation of mindfulness of contemplation of body, feelings, mind and the mental objects develop against the perceptions arising in the mind.
- 9) Cultivates the seven-factors of Enlightenment (satta-bojjhanga).
- 10) The mind converts into the noble mind from the worldly mind.

- 11) Subdued the craving oneself.
- 12) Achieving the insight knowledge, arise the wisdom, and liberate.

8. Understanding of Praxis of the Cultivating of Faculties

The discourse does not mention any specific posture to practice of Indriya-bhāvanā. It is not essential to go for a specific place to practice it but in the discourse, the Buddha expected to understand the cognitive process in the mind. He wanted his noble disciples to show the path leading to the cessation of suffering. Therefore, he expected to notice once feeling as agreeable, disagreeable, or neutral (*adukkhamā-asukhā vedanā*) and understand the perception of feeling as conditioned, gross, dependently arisen and impermanent. Such as when a monk experiences a sense object with sense organ; once feels them as liked; disliked, and comprehends the perception of like; dislike; has arising on me; stopped it and dwells neutral feeling which responses the equanimity in the mind. This is the Buddhist psychological interpretation of the cognitive process, ultimately understanding for the liberation.

The process of an object arises through a sense organ in mind called *Ārammana* (object). At this moment (while practicing the *Indriya-bhāvanā*), the doctrine aspires to transfer the mind from wrong understanding (*micchā-ditthi*) to right understanding (*sammā-ditthi*). This is the first step in the *Indriya-bhāvanā*. More importantly, the mind is behaving in the noble eightfold path when the right understanding arises in mind.

It should be reminded that there is an opposite meditation technique for *Indriya-bhāvanā*. It calls as ordinary meditation (*uttara-bhāvana*). The characteristic of the *Uttara-bhāvanā* is maintaining consciousness. When consciousness is established and has come to growth, there is the production of future renewed existence. When there is the production of future renewed existence, future birth, again-death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, displeasure, and despair come to be. Such is the origin of this whole mass of suffering. Moreover, the *Uttara-bhāvanā* motivates the effortless knowledge (*anusotagāmi*) to dwell in the life journey. However, the objective of *Indriya-bhāvanā* is to choose the path of effort-ness knowledge (*patisotagāmi*) to entering to the supreme bliss of *Nibbāna*. Therefore, in the path of effort-ness knowledge gives the energy to abandon the consciousness process and preceding the noble path. As a result of that, it analyzes (insight acknowledgment) the passion in the mind, when there is an analytical exposition on passion, there is the full understanding of the known (*ñāta-pariññā*), the full understanding of an investigating (*tīraṇa pariññā*) and full understanding as overcoming (*pahāna pariññā*) supports to understand the craving (*tanhā*), conceit (*māna*) and dogmatic views (*ditthi*) in the mind. Meantime, the *Indriya-bhāvanā* developed and cultivated fulfills the four-foundation of mindfulness (*Satipatthāna*).

The *Satipatthāna Sutta* explains four-foundation of mindfulness of contemplation of body, feelings, mind and the mental objects. A detailed treatment of this subject is so important

for the practice of the Buddhist mental culture. At the beginning of the sutta explained the importance of the sutta as thus:

The one and only path, Bhikkhus leading to the purification of beings, to passing far beyond grief and lamentation. To the dying-out of ill and misery, to the attainment of right method, to the realization of Nirvāna, is the Fourfold Setting up of Mindfulness (Bhikkhu Bodhi, 2012: DN. 22).

The basis practice in the Indriya-bhāvanā sutta is the contemplation of feeling also mentioned in the four foundations meditation in the Satipatthāna Sutta. In the contemplation of the feeling: all the feelings arise in the meditator perceives, namely agreeable, disagreeable, both agreeable and disagreeable (neutral) feeling of body and mind, sensual and super sensual feelings, sensual indifferent feeling and super sensual indifferent feeling. According to Buddhism, all the formations are impermanent. Feeling also impermanent. Therefore, the Buddhist attitude shows that there is no such dogmatic view like feeling which is dangerous and gives bad results. In discussing the doctrine of four noble truths, the Buddha analyzed how does a person develop craving and eliminate the craving. Accordingly, the analysis of how and when a person develops craving and eliminates the craving is primarily based on the factor of feeling. Therefore, the Rahogata Sutta mentioned that the feeling is a basement on the suffering.

In the next level is the four-foundation of mindfulness cultivated and fulfill the seven-factors of Enlightenment (satta-bojjhanga). The meditator who develops mindfulness on the faculties able to achieve the seven-factors of Enlightenment (satta-bojjhanga) as result of developed the above objectives.

Bhikkhus, on whatever occasion a bhikkhu abides contemplating the body as body, ardent, fully aware, and mindful, having put away covetousness and grief for the world-on that occasion unremitting mindfulness is established in him. On whatever occasion, unremitting mindfulness is established in a bhikkhu-on that occasion the mindfulness enlightenment factors is aroused him, and develops it, and by development, it comes to fulfillment in him (Bhikkhu Bodhi, 2012: DN. 22).

Whenever, the meditator dwells contemplating the four foundation mindfulness, strenuous, clearly-conscious, mindful, after subduing worldly greed and grief, at such time his mindfulness present and undisturbed; at such time meditator gained and developing the factors of enlightenment mindfulness (sati-sambojjhanga) and reaches the fullest perfection. The factor of enlightenment investigation of the law (dhamma-vicaya) is developing after investigate, examine and thinks over the law (dhamma). The factor of enlightenment energy (viriya) also develops by investigating one's energy. When the energy is developed the supersensuous arise. On that occasion, the meditator is developing the factor of enlightenment rapture (pīti). In calmness state, the meditator feels consoles of his body and mind. At such time he gained and developing the factor of enlightenment tranquility (passaddhi). The console body and mind cause

to developing the factor of enlightenment concentration (samādhi). Whenever the meditator looks at his complete concentrated mind, the equanimity enlightenment factor is gained and developed (R. Morris, 1976, see. Satipatthāna Sutta].

It can assume that above mentioned all the objectives (dhamma) are cultivating and developing as a result of practicing the Indriya-bhāvanā sutta. The meditator is developing and gained the noble mind from the worldly mind and able to abandon the craving. Finally having cultivated all the dhammas, he attempts to achieve the final goal of liberation (Nibbāna).

9. An Approach to Development of Faculties for Mental Sustainability

The information mentioned above represents how the discourse of Indriya-bhāvanā influences to contemplating on sensation for the sake of final liberation in Buddhism. In addition to that, we have to have understood that Buddhist teaching is available not only for noble achievement but also for worldly sustainability because Buddhist teaching does not narrow for one particular objects but it focuses on the vast area of worldly problems. Among these areas, Buddhism works closely with human psychology. Therefore, the Buddha identified as the greatest psychologist in the world. He is the greatest doctor to diagnoses the disease and prescribes it to (soham brahman sambuddho, sallakatto anuttaro). Therefore, teaching is a possible prescription to apply for mental sustainability.

Nowadays, the psychological unstable is a major problem due to the number of mental disorders such as stress, tension, anxiety, somatic symptom, depression, etc. According to Buddhism, the Roga sutta mentioned two kinds of illnesses: Mental Disorders and Physical Disorders. These two factors are interrelated. Buddha emphasized that every being has some sort of disorder. Therefore, he states that 'all the common people are deranged' (sabbe puthujjanā ummattakā) until once eradicate all the defilements. According to Sabbāsava Sutta, the primary reason for the defilements (āsava) is the emotion (cittavega).

Emotion is the meaning we given to our felt states of arousal. It is fundamental thoughts arising in the mind as a result of our personal experiences obtaining from the five aggregates. Emotions of the mind are mainly two aspects: positive emotion and negative emotion. The negative emotion is an effect on aggressive behavior, suicide, and violent short-cut to remove painful stimuli and the positive emotional effect for love, joy, etc. However, we should not confuse regarding the altruistic feeling of loving-kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy and equanimity from quasi-sexual love, possessive love, attachment, expression worldly sorrow. According to psychology, for worldly life, we should need to increase the positive emotion and need to decrees negative emotion what psychologists called it Managing Emotion. Managing emotion is an important to sustainable life, otherwise it has enough power to harmful both mentally and physically.

In Buddhism, emotion is a stimulus in the sensory field or at an identical level. Such a stimulus excites a person's feelings. Pleasant feelings (sukhavedanā) and painful feelings (dukkhavedanā) are affective reactions to sensations (vedanā). According to Buddhism, we need to understand that emotion is a part of stimuli and it discusses under the subject of sensation. In the discourse of Indriya-bhāvanā, sensations classified into three: pleasant, unpleasant, or neuter. Pleasant feelings are a stimulus to pleasurable feeling and unpleasant feelings are a stimulus to pleasure less feelings. However, all sensations are bothering to mentally and physically when the consciousness reacts pleasant, unpleasant, or neutral feelings. All the sensational thoughts are reacting while senses are active when the sensation is active. In the discourse of Indriya-bhāvanā shows that contemplating on sensations and its nature can manage the mental cognize which can establish a positive cognitive system for mental sustainability.

Discussion

The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly impacted global society, resulting in thousands of deaths and economic, health, and social instability. Governments and responsible institutions have emphasized discipline as a solution to prevent unsustainability. Self-discipline codes have been implemented by agencies, and some countries have imposed strict laws to manage the situation. However, some countries have managed to control the situation through sympathy and peaceful behavior, leading to a well-disciplined society. This environment encourages individuals to understand themselves and harmony with oneself and nature. As a result, some countries have been able to control the situation.

The World Health Organization estimates that one million people die from suicide annually, with 16 deaths per 100,000 people or one death every 40 seconds (Li, 2020: 181-213). This situation has been noticed from the responsible agencies such as the University of Manchester Centre for Mental Health and Risk states that more than forty percent of the suicide cases available due to mental illness. Psychological factors such as hopelessness, loss of pleasure, depression, anxiety, agitation, rigid thinking, rumination, thought suppression, and poor coping skills increase the risk of suicide. Economic, health, and social instability contribute to these psychological factors (Ross, 2017; Silva, 2005). Western countries have been exploring ways to control this issue in Asian and Eastern countries. They came to know that meditation supports to answer to this problem. For example, in one decay, Japan was noticed to be the highest suicide country in the world what they called to it 'Karosi'. They founded Zen meditation in Japanese Buddhism is a suitable treatment to resolve emotional conflict and it has been developed and become popular among the world. In the same time, the Western world spot into the Mindfulness meditations (Pāli-'Bhāvanā) practicing in Asian Buddhist countries likes Sri Lanka, Myanmar, and Thailand. The Vimuttimaggā and Visuddhimaggā is the remarkable meditation guidebook written for meditation practice in Sri Lanka. As a result of that number of Western institutes have given more attention to following techniques: Mindfulness Base Cognitive

Therapy (MBCT), Mindfulness-based Stress Reduction (MBSR), Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT), Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) are perfect examples (Nyanaponika Mahatherea, 2000; Myneni. S. R., 2010).

The Indriya-bhāvanā Sutta in Majjhima Nikāya, a pivotal discourse attributed to the Buddha within the Pāli Canon, unfolds a holistic framework delineating the contemplation of faculties to cultivation of mental faculties through the practice of Vipassanā meditation. In the context of burgeoning contemporary apprehensions regarding mental sustainability, this research endeavors to delve into the profound teachings embedded in the sutta and discern their applicability to present-day concerns.

Conclusion

Meditation is the process of a console person's mind. Calm and peaceful mind affects the healthy body because scientists believe that the mind and body is a mutual entity. Therefore, Buddhism itself advised the use of meditation to establish the mental integrity of the man. On the other hand, the prime goal of Buddhist meditation is to achieve the final goal of liberation by eradicating all the defilements in the mind. To achieve that point, the Indriya Bhāvanā Sutta is an important discourse to make the mind to be calm and peaceful by concentration on the sensation that occurs as a result of a sense of the cognitive process. Here we have mainly focused on how important the Indriya Bhāvanā Sutta for man's worldly life and noble purpose. In the noble purpose, the Indriya Bhāvanā Sutta supports to achieve insight knowledge by mere mindful of the pleasurable, unpleasurable and neuter thoughts that occur in the mind when the six senses cognize its objects associated with the six consciousness. In addition to a noble purpose, the Sutta follows to achieve worldly benefits especially psychological calmness in day-to-day life because it supports to aware and understand every movement in our faculties does.

Declaration of Interests

I have a personal interest in mindfulness and meditation practices as part of my own well-being journey, which has motivated my exploration into the contemplation of faculties in insight meditation. I acknowledge that personal beliefs or experiences related to meditation practices may introduce a potential bias. However, every effort will be made to maintain objectivity and transparency in the research process and reporting. This declaration of interest aims to provide transparency and build trust in the research process by openly acknowledging any potential influences or affiliations that might impact the objectivity of the study.

Ethical Considerations

Citation and Attribution: Properly cite and attribute information to the original sources to uphold academic integrity. Avoiding bias be aware of potential biases in the selected documents and acknowledge them in the analysis.

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Definition of Conflicts of Interest

I have no conflicts of interest.

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