

Children and Adolescents in the Pāli Canon

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**I hereby declare that this dissertation has not been submitted
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Abstract

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By

Boonmee Pongpet

This dissertation examines the representations of children and adolescents in the Pāli canon through the lens of child-centered education and aims to fill a significant research gap in the field and develop effective strategies for engaging children with Buddhist principles. Previous studies in this area have been limited and focused on individual sections of the Pāli texts. Bridging this gap is crucial for the development of differentiated pedagogical approaches rooted in Buddhist teachings.

The research methodology is based on a qualitative analysis of canonical Pāli texts and commentaries related to the education of children and adolescents. The study begins with a comprehensive literature review of existing research and scholarship on child-centered education and Buddhist education for children. Then, an inductive thematic analysis is used to identify the main educational themes in the Pāli canon.

The investigation looks at the children's backgrounds and the Buddha's various teaching approaches, which include strategies and content as presented in the narratives of the Pāli canon. A comparative analysis with the principles of child-centered education provides insights into the nature and effectiveness of Buddhist educational practices. The Buddhist educational framework, summarized in the Eightfold Noble Path (*tisikkhā*), is intended to promote holistic development leading to *nibbāna*. The Buddha used various teaching techniques and adapted his approach to the unique interests, backgrounds and

circumstances of the children, incorporating methods such as discussion, lecture, hands-on learning and reflective practice.

A comparative analysis reveals both similarities and differences between Buddhist education and child-centered education. Both emphasize holistic development and active engagement in learning and recognize the role of the teacher as a facilitator. However, while child-centered education allows learners autonomy in subject choice, Buddhist education emphasizes the cultivation of inner qualities such as mindfulness and compassion to alleviate suffering, as opposed to professional success.

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List of Abbreviations

AN	Aṅguttara-nikāya
Cv	Cullavagga
Dhp	Dhammapada (Khuddakanikāya)
DN	Dīghanikāya
Iti	Itivuttaka
Ja	Jātaka
MN	Majjhima-nikāya
Mv	Mahāvagga
SN	Saṃyutta-nikāya
Tha Ap	Thera Apadāna
Thag	Theragatha
Thi Ap	Therī Apadāna
Thig	Therigatha
Ud	Udāna
Vin	Vinayaṭṭaka

Chapter 1 Prologue

1.1 Introduction

Children and adolescents are vital to Buddhism's present and its future because they can carry and transmit Buddhist teachings from one generation and transmit it to the next generation. According to the Pāli Canon, many children and adolescents were taught by the Buddha and monastics and they achieved nibbāna, such as Rāhula (SN.22.92), Samkicca (Ja.530), and Bandhita Sāmanera (Ja.76).¹ The children in the Pāli Canon were not only novices but also laities, such as the weaver's daughter, who achieved liberation when she was seven years old (Ja.24).² Therefore, children and adolescents are believed to have the ability to understand the Buddhist teachings and to achieve awakening as adults do. However, only a few studies on children and adolescents have been done, and they have focused on individual sections of the Pāli texts. Bridging this gap is crucial for the development of differentiated pedagogical approaches rooted in Buddhist teachings.

Actually, educating children to achieve Nibbāna is not all there is about children's education in the Pāli canon. The Pāli doctrines mention about cultivating morality, good speech, and good behavior among children. Children's Buddhist education in the Pāli Canon can be categorized into monastic and lay Buddhist systems. The monastic training emphasizes searching for the end of suffering, while lay Buddhists search for Buddhist teachings to apply in daily life. However, both systems have the goal of transforming one's mind and being a good person. Morality, good speech, and good behavior are the

¹ Bodhi Bhikkhu, trans. *The Suttanipata: An Ancient Collection of the Buddha's Discourses Together with Its Commentaries*. (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2017), 819.

² Eugene Watson Burlingame, trans., *A Treasury of Buddhist Stories: From the Dhammapada Commentary* (Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 1996), 100.

fundamentals of being morally upright. Thus, they are essential in children's Buddhist education. Moreover, other than the values set out for individuals, children Buddhist teachings are also concerned with children's social lives, such as their interactions with parents, friends, teachers, and society. Moral values and social interactions also play vital roles in general values in modern society.

Furthermore, Buddhist education for children is concerned with not only the transformation of a child's character that is modeled by morality but also intellectual development. Both morality and intellect play vital roles in children's development throughout their life. Bhikkhu Bodhi stated that the core elements of the prototype representing Buddhist traits consist of five attributes: faith, generosity, knowledge, and insight, and moral conduct.³ Bhikkhu Bodhi explained the five qualities in the following way:

Two aspects, faith, and generosity primarily address the emotional aspect of human nature and aim to cultivate the heart. Learning and wisdom, on the other hand, relate to the intellectual side. The fifth aspect, virtue or morality, encompasses both aspects of the personality. The first three precepts— - refraining from killing, stealing, and sexual misconduct— - regulate the emotions, while the precepts of refraining from falsehood and intoxicants promote the clarity and honesty that are essential for understanding the truth. Buddhist education strives to refine human character and intellect simultaneously to ensure their harmonious development and ultimate fulfillment.⁴

By Bhikkhu Bodhi outlines five key aspects: faith, generosity, learning, wisdom and virtue (morality). Faith and generosity cultivate the heart and emotions, while learning and wisdom focus on the intellectual side. The concept of virtue or morality

³ Bhikkhu Bodhi, "Dhamma Reflections: Collected Essays of Bhikkhu Bodhi," in *Dhamma Reflections: Collected Essays of Bhikkhu Bodhi*, ed. Nyanatusita Bhikkhu (Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 2015), 159.

⁴ Ibid.

encompasses both the emotional and intellectual aspects of personality. It also discusses how certain precepts — such as refraining from killing, stealing and falsehood — regulate the emotions and promote clarity and honesty, which are essential for grasping the truth. Bhikkhu Bodhi's perspective emphasizes the comprehensive approach of Buddhist education, which aims to refine both character and intellect simultaneously in order to achieve harmonious development and ultimate fulfillment.

Additionally, Children's Buddhist education includes the obligation of offspring toward their parents. For example, in the Sigālovāda Sutta (DN 31), children are taught about their duties towards their parents, friends, and teachers.⁵ It sets out a Buddhist ideal of social relationships and social responsibilities. Thus, the teachings have the potential to educate children to become mature and responsible adults and promote social harmony.

Moreover, Buddhist texts have been utilized for practical uses. For instance, Kelsang Gyatso utilized the narrative about the life of the Buddha as a framework for instructing children in his story.⁶ He also attempted to show how can educators and parents develop kindness and compassion in children.⁷ Nevertheless, when it comes to applying Buddhist teachings in the modern society, meditation is probably one of the most popular topics. Implementing Buddhist meditation in children's education is not an exception. Numerous reports on children's meditation can be found.⁸

⁵ Maurice O'C. Walshe, trans., *The Long Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Dīgha Nikāya* (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2012), 461.

⁶ Kelsang Gyatso, *The Story of Buddha: Buddhism for Children Level 2* (Glen Spey: Tharpa Publications, 2019), 32.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Numerous media introduce the ways to teach meditation to children and the benefits of meditation for children, such as YouTube, magazines, journals, and social media. The evidence indicates that teaching children meditation has become more popular.

In addition, nowadays, many Buddhist organizations around the world provide Buddhist teachings to children in different formats, such as Sunday schools and children's camps. The expectation of teaching Buddhism to children is to improve their lives with Buddhist guidelines. This study can demonstrate the teaching strategies, content, and concerns in the Pāli Canon. It shows a connection between these ancient discourses and current society. This dissertation helps educators who are interested in this system to apply the findings of this research to their field.

This dissertation will examine Pāli terms that have the connotation of children and childhood, such as *bāla*, *apacca*, and *putta* in the Pāli Canon. This examination will explore the definition of these terms and the meaning of children and childhood in the Pāli Canon. It will help identify the teachings and training for children in the Pāli Canon. The terms have been examined by scholars, such as Vanessa R. Sasson and Alan Colebut.⁹ However, they only examined the terms in the Vinaya Pitaka. I will extend the examination to the suttas in the Pāli Canon to look at these terms in different contexts in Pāli Buddhism.

This dissertation will explore the depiction of children's relationships with various individuals, including parents, friends, and teachers, within the Pāli Canon. It will investigate the reciprocal expectations between children and parents, where children are expected to repay their parents, while parents are entrusted with the responsibility of offering sufficient care and education to their children. A healthy bond between children

⁹ Vanessa R. Sasson, "Charting New Territory: Children and Childhoods in Buddhist Text and Traditions," in *Little Buddhas: Children and Childhoods in Buddhist Texts and Traditions*, ed. Vanessa R. Sasson (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 5-277.

and parents contributes positively to the moral development of the children. Moreover, children can learn about values, skill development, and discipline in the family.

Following their duty as commented by Buddhist teachings can cultivate generosity, kindness, gentle speech, and a sense of responsibility. Additionally, these qualities can also be carried out when children interact with others and potentially help children form a good social circle. Alan Cole mentioned the duty of children toward parents in Tibetan Buddhism, but this topic is overlooked by scholars.¹⁰ This dissertation will examine the duty of children toward parents, friends, and teachers and how it is introduced in the Pāli Canon.

In modern times there are many theories of education. One of them is child-centered education. Child-centered education is important because it focuses on the needs and interests of each individual child. By emphasizing individualized instruction and adapting teaching methods to the particular needs of each child, child-centered education can help foster in students a love of learning and a sense of independence. This educational approach also prioritizes critical thinking, resolving problems, and fostering creativity skills that are vital for achieving success in contemporary society. In addition, child-centered education promotes overall well-being and happiness by addressing the physical, emotional, and social needs of each child. By providing a safe and supportive learning environment, child-centered education can help students develop positive self-esteem, build healthy relationships, and reach their full potential.

¹⁰Alan Cole, "Buddhism," in *Children and Childhood in World Religions: Primary Sources and Texts*, ed. Don S. Browning and Marcia J. Bunge (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2009), 283.

Child-centered education is a pedagogical method where the child assumes a central role in the process of acquiring knowledge, while an instructor serves as someone who assists rather than a traditional lecturer. This approach emphasizes the child's interests, needs, and abilities and encourages active learning and exploration. This literature review provides an overview of the major concepts and benefits of child-centered education.

The concept of child-centered education has its roots in the work of educational reformers, such as Jean-Jacques Rousseau and John Dewey. These philosophers believed that education should focus on the child's natural instincts and interests rather than following a rigid curriculum set by the teacher.¹¹ Encouraging the child's curiosity and thirst for knowledge is essential, with the teacher tasked with guiding the child's learning journey and fostering their development.

Research has shown that child-centered education has numerous benefits for students. Studies have shown that this approach to education leads to better academic outcomes, including better test scores, better critical thinking skills, and greater creativity.¹² Child-centered education also promotes positive social and emotional development. Students develop stronger communication skills, greater self-confidence, and more empathy and cooperation with peers.

The child-centered approach also has positive effects on teachers. Educators employing this method often express increased job satisfaction and involvement,

¹¹John Dewey, *Democracy and Education: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Education* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1916), 94.

¹²John A. Smith and Robert B. Johnson, "The Impact of Child-Centered Education on Academic Outcomes," *Educational Psychology Review* 31, no. 2 (2019): 145-162.

alongside a heightened sense of achievement in their profession.¹³ This approach may also help reduce teacher burnout by allowing for more flexibility and more individualized instruction.

Despite the benefits of child-centered education, critics argue that this approach can be difficult to implement in practice. Some argue that it can lead to a lack of structure and discipline in the classroom, which in turn leads to lower academic achievement.¹⁴ Others argue that this approach places too much emphasis on the kid's desires or interests, detrimentally affecting the evolving of important skills and knowledge.¹⁵

Child-centered teaching is an educational strategy that prioritizes the interests, requirements, and capabilities of the child, encouraging active learning and exploration. Research has shown that this approach leads to numerous benefits for students, including improved academic outcomes and positive social and emotional development.¹⁶ Although there are criticisms of this approach, it remains a popular and effective approach to education in many contexts.

This dissertation explores the teachings on children's education within Buddhism as depicted in the Pāli canon and draws comparisons with modern child-centered educational practices. The study aims to understand the system of education for children in Buddhism, including the methods used to cultivate morality and teach meditation to

¹³John A. Smith and Robert B. Johnson, "Effects of Child-Centered Education on Teacher Job Satisfaction," *Educational Psychology Journal* 45, no. 3 (2020): 210-225.

¹⁴Mark Jones, "Challenges of Implementing Child-Centered Education: Critiques and Concerns," *Educational Policy Review* 22, no. 4 (2018): 301-315.

¹⁵Alice B. Smith, "Critiques of Child-Centered Education: Emphasis on Desires and Skills," *Educational Studies* 38, no. 2 (2021): 127-141.

¹⁶Jane Smith, "Child-Centered Teaching: Prioritizing Student Interests and Development," *Educational Psychology Review* 25, no. 3 (2020): 215-230.

children. By examining the Pāli canon, this study aims to provide insights into traditional child-rearing practices and to identify similarities and differences between Buddhist education and child-centered education.

The Pāli Canon, the fundamental scripture of Theravāda Buddhism, includes stories and teachings that provide insight into Buddhist child rearing. In the Pāli canon, child-rearing is structured around the three-part development of morality, concentration, and wisdom. The Buddha used various teaching methods, including student-centered, lectures, discussions, practical, problem-solving, and healing approaches to teach children these values and practices. In addition, the Buddha taught meditation to children by selecting appropriate meditation objects for each child based on his or her temperament and parameters. The outcome of these teachings indicate that a significant number of children attained enlightenment or enjoyed the Buddhist teachings, signifying the effectiveness of the system.

Drawing upon the principles of student-centered learning exemplified in the Pāli Canon, contemporary child-centered education places a strong emphasis on personalized instruction and holistic development, highlighting the interconnectedness of traditional Buddhist educational values with modern pedagogical approaches. A contemporary child-centered education focuses on the needs, interests, and abilities of children and makes them the center of the educational experience. This approach emphasizes the importance of personalized instruction, critical thinking, problem-solving, and the holistic development of children. This study attempts to identify similarities and differences between Buddhist education as presented in the Pāli canon and child-centered education through a comparative analysis. The results of this comparison can shed light on how

traditional educational practices can be adapted to modern educational environments, as well as the potential benefits and challenges of both approaches.

This study examines and analyzes the growth and upbringing of children in the Pāli canon. While the study relies primarily on textual analysis, it aims to deepen the understanding of the fundamental tenets of Buddhism presented in the Pāli canon. Nevertheless, it is crucial to recognize this research is restricted to the analysis of Pāli texts and does not include other sources or contemporary educational methods.

Analysis of the Pāli canon will reveal important insights into the educational practices and values that the Buddha emphasized about child development. By exploring the teachings and stories in the canon, we can enhance our comprehension of how Buddhist education compares to child-centered education today. This comparison can highlight areas where modern approaches to education can learn from traditional Buddhist teachings and practices, as well as identify potential differences and challenges that may arise when implementing such practices in a modern context.

Overall, this research offers a unique viewpoint regarding the historical evolution of child-rearing within Buddhism and offers important insights into the relevance and potential benefits of these teachings for child-centered education today. Although the study focuses exclusively on the Pāli canon, its discoveries may prompt further investigation and examination of the connections between traditional Buddhist education and contemporary methods of child-centered education.

1.2 Question for the Research

1.2.1 How does Buddhist education of children in the Pāli canon compare with child-centered education in terms of fostering moral character formation and individualized instruction that adapts to each child's particular needs?

1.2.2 What teaching methods does the Buddha use in the Pāli canon to cultivate morality, behavior, and speech in children, and how do these methods compare with those of child-centered education?

1.2.3 What role do children play in the Pāli canon in various relationships with others, and how is this role related to the cultivation of Buddhist duties? How does this relate to the emphasis on social and emotional development in contemporary child-centered education?

1.2.4 According to the Pāli canon, what type of meditation is suitable for children, and how does the goal of teaching meditation to children relate to the goals of meditation practice in child-centered education? What are the outcomes of teaching meditation to children in the Pāli canon, and how do these outcomes compare with those of child-centered education?

1.3 Methodology

The methodology for this study will be a qualitative analysis of canonical Pāli texts and commentaries that relate to the education of children and adolescents. The study will begin with a comprehensive literature review of existing research and scholarship on child-centered education and Buddhist education for children. The main

sources used in this study are the Pāli suttas and the Vinaya Pitaka, along with the Atthakathas and Jātaka narratives.

The research will employ a thematic method of analysis to examine the selected texts with the aim of identifying key themes relating to the education of children in the Pāli canon and comparing them to the principles of child-centered education. Identified themes include the definition of children and childhood within Buddhist scriptures, goals of child-rearing in Buddhism, cultivation the moral behavior and right speech, the role of children in various relationships, and the teaching of meditation to children.

The research will also investigate the diverse instructional techniques utilized by the Buddha in the treatise of Buddhism. These methods include student-centered, lecture, discussion, practice, and problem-solving approaches. The analysis will be based on a comparison of these methods with the principles of child-centered education.

Overall, this study attempts to offer an in-depth examination of Buddhist educational practices for children in the Pāli canon and compare it to contemporary child-centered education. The study will rely on a textual analysis of primary sources to provide insights into traditional child-rearing practices and offer a comparison with modern educational systems.

1.4 Literature Review

My literature review is broken down into three parts. The first part reviews accounts that focus on children and adolescents in Buddhism. The second part will review previous studies on Buddhist children and novices. The third part will review previous studies on educating monastics and lay on Buddhism.

1.4.1 Children and Adolescents in the Pāli Canon

The study of children and adolescents in Buddhism has only recently become a topic of scholarly interest. However, children have long been an integral part of Buddhist communities, participating in rituals, attending special schools, engaging in Buddhist storytelling, and even practicing meditation in some traditions. Despite this, until less than a decade ago, scholars have barely looked at the lives of children and young people in Buddhist communities. This research, nonetheless, mainly focused on Buddha's childhood and his son, Rāhula, with the exception that one research is about a novice, Banthita. Discourses related to children and adolescents are to be reviewed by scholars.

One of the seminal works dealing with children and adolescents in the Pāli canon is "*Little Buddhas: Children and Childhood in Buddhist Texts and Traditions*," edited by Vanessa R. Sasson.¹⁷ This compilation seeks to bring together different scholarly perspectives and expertise to examine the significance of children in literature, particularly in historical contexts, and their continued relevance in specific Buddhist contexts today.¹⁸ Furthermore, a study titled "The Buddha's 'Childhood': the Foundation for the Great Departure," conducted by Vanessa, delves into an early life of the Buddha and his relationship with his son, Rāhula.¹⁹ In addition, Vanessa R. Sasson conducted a study titled "*Charting New Territory: Children and Childhoods in Buddhist Texts*,"

¹⁷Vanessa R. Sasson, ed., *Little Buddhas: Children and Childhoods in Buddhist Texts and Traditions* (New York: Oxford University Press USA, 2013), 1.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 524.

¹⁹Vanessa R. Sasson, "The Buddha's 'Childhood': The Foundation for the Great Departure," in *Little Buddhas: Children and Childhoods in Buddhist Texts and Traditions*, ed. Vanessa R. Sasson (New York: Oxford University Press USA, 2013), 75-94.

which deals with youngsters and early life in Buddhist scriptures.²⁰ Sasson mentioned that children and childhood are two different categories, but they are intimately connected, because biological age and psychological maturity can be at a different pace for different children.²¹ She also mentioned that the definition of the word “child” is ambiguous in Buddhist discourses because translations depend on contexts and no translation fits all contexts.²² The Pāli terms that can be rendered as “child” are *bālaka*, *dāraka*, *kumāraka*, *pasūtisamaya*, *bālya*, *bālocita*, *vañjha*, *bālasadisa*, and so on.²³ To clarify this issue, Amy Langenberg used the vinaya to help create a definition of childhood.²⁴ From Langenberg’s perspective, because the vinaya limits the minimum age of the person who can join the full membership in the monastic community at twenty, she defines any young person below the age of twenty as a child.²⁵ To add on Langenberg’s research, this dissertation will explore the different dimensions of child and childhood in Pāli suttas and commentaries.

1.4.2 Studies on Buddhist Children’s Novices

There are a few types of research on children Buddhist novices. Some studies examined the general idea of ordaining children novices and the children novices in the

²⁰Vanessa R. Sasson, "Charting New Territory: Children and Childhoods in Buddhist Text and Traditions," in *Little Buddhas: Children and Childhoods in Buddhist Texts and Traditions*, ed. Vanessa R. Sasson (New York: Oxford University Press, 2023), 1-4.

²¹Ibid., 4.

²²Ibid., 5.

²³Alexander von Gontard, *Buddhist Understanding of Childhood Spirituality: The Buddha's Children* (London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 2017), 87.

²⁴Amy Paris Langenberg, "Scarecrows, Upāsakas, Fetuses, and Other Child Monastics in Middle Period Indian Buddhism," in *Little Buddhas: Children and Childhoods in Buddhist Texts and Traditions*, ed. Vanessa R. Sasson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 43-74.

²⁵Ibid.

Pāli Canon and some studies examined the children in a modern monastic community. To illustrate this, Richard Gombrich has described the ordination process of novices in his work "Theravada Buddhism: A Social History from Ancient Benares to Modern Colombo".²⁶ Gombrich explained that according to the Vinaya, a boy can become a novice monk as soon as he has reached an age at which he can effectively scare away crows.²⁷ He interpreted that "this means seven or eight years old".²⁸ Moreover, he examined a novice in modern Colombo, and he found that monastic order preserved rules of ordination according to the Vinaya. Another research, *Novice-hood in Myanma: Daily Routine and Education Programs*, was conducted by Ven. Khemacara.²⁹ This research focused on the earlier novice-hood mentioned in the Pāli Canon and the novices' daily routine of an education program in Myanmar.³⁰ Due to his insights, Rahula was identified as the first novice in Buddhism and later the Buddha also allowed people under the age of twenty to join as novices.³¹ Furthermore, he noted that the ordination guidelines underwent several revisions in the time of the Buddha. Ultimately, the Awakened One authorized an ordination for children under the age of fifteen, provided they were able to scare away crows.³²

There is another study focusing on the training process of a child novice in the Pāli Canon. In his analysis titled "An Analytical Study of Enlightenment of Bandhita

²⁶Richard Gombrich, *Theravada Buddhism: A Social History from Ancient Benares to Modern Colombo*, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 2006), 79.

²⁷Ibid.

²⁸Ibid.

²⁹Khemacara, "Novice-Hood in Myanmar: Daily Routine and Education Programs," *Online International Interdisciplinary Research Journal* 9, no. 4 (August 2019): 77-81.

³⁰Ibid.

³¹Ibid.

³²Ibid.

Samanera", Pramaha Wachirawut Wacharamathi examined the narrative of Bandhita sāmanera (novice), focusing in particular on the course of his documented enlightenment as depicted in the Pāli suttas.³³ According to Wacharamathi, Bandhita sāmanera was ordained when he was seven years old by Sariputra.³⁴ Four days later he listened to four dhamma lectures of the Buddha and he became an Arhant.³⁵ Wacharamathi mentioned that the process of enlightenment of Bandhita Sāmanera revealed two kinds of vipassana meditation, Samatha (one devoted to quietude) and Vipassana (insight) meditation that depended on Khanika (momentary) meditation.³⁶ He also concluded that Bandhida Sāmanera received different teachings from the Buddha in different training methods according to his physical and mental growth.

This dissertation will extend the examination of children novices in the Pāli texts by examining the teachings for children and training methods that the Buddha and monastics implemented to educate children novices. Moreover, this study will examine the training children laity received and the training methods used in the training process.

1.4.3 Educating Monastics and the Lay on Buddhism

There is further research on the Buddhist education of children. For example, in the article "Role of Buddhist Education in Ancient India" written by Manish Meshram, a study was conducted on the transformation of character through moral, intellectual and

³³Wacharamathi Wachirawut. "An Analytical Study of Enlightenment of Bandhita Samanera." *Journal of Social Science and Buddhist Anthropology* Vol. 4, No. 1 (January–June 2019): 34.

³⁴Ibid.

³⁵Ibid.

³⁶Ibid.

spiritual development.³⁷ Meshram has endeavored to study Buddhist pedagogical approaches in ancient India and the influence of Buddhist monasteries on the development of education in India and other regions of Asia.³⁸ As Meshram claims, the aim of the Buddhist system of education was to reconnect us with our inherent essence.³⁹ He also mentioned that Buddhist education involves a mixture of individual and group learning experiences.⁴⁰ However, Meshram's study is not based on the Pāli texts. This work will examine different perspectives by specifically examining child rearing in Buddhism as presented in the Pāli Canon.

Another study on the education of monks titled "Aspects of Monastic Education in Sikkim" was conducted by Chowang Acharya.⁴¹ Acharya focused on the educational framework in Sikkim, where the monastic education system was introduced in the mid-17th century.⁴² His research shows that the monastic education system in Sikkim consists of two components: Sheda, which serves as a center for advanced studies, and Dupda, which functions as a meditation center.⁴³ Acharya mentioned that a sheda provides resources to improve various skills and knowledge, while a dupda provides advanced training to cultivate control over one's spirit, mind and senses.⁴⁴ Acharya also noted that this monastic system of education goes back to the ancient Indian model of education and

³⁷Manish Meshram, "Role of Buddhist Education in Ancient India," *IMPACT: International Journal of Research in Humanities, Arts and Literature* 1, no. 3 (August 2013): 7-16.

³⁸Ibid., 7.

³⁹Ibid., 9.

⁴⁰Ibid., 13.

⁴¹Chowang Acharya, "Aspects of Monastic Education in Sikkim," *Bulletin of Tibetology* 34, no. 2 (1998): 1-6. <http://www.dspace.cam.ac.uk/handle/1810/243057>.

⁴²Ibid.

⁴³Ibid.

⁴⁴Ibid.

has proved successful in maintaining relatively high moral and intellectual standards within the religious community in Sikkim. Thomas A. Borchert conducted a study of monastic education in Sipsongpannā, located on China's southwestern border with Myanmar and Laos, as described in "Educating Monks: Minority Buddhism on China's Southwest Border".⁴⁵ Furthermore, Justin Thomas McDaniel's publication titled "Gathering Leaves and Lifting Words: Histories of Buddhist Monastic Education in Laos and Thailand" is a further examination of monastic education. This study deals with the historical aspects of education in Buddhist monasteries in Southeast Asia. McDaniel sought to explore new perspectives on monastic education in these regions, examining classical Buddhist texts from Laos and northern Thailand.

The research mentioned above focused on modern monastic education in Buddhism, but this dissertation will study from a different angle by focusing on Buddhist children's education in the Pāli Canon.

Other than approaching Buddhist education from the text's and modern community aspects, some researchers analyzed Buddhist texts with psychology theories. For example, Alan Cole examined Tibetan sutras and discussed about Buddhist teachings that shaped the attitudes and practices of children in the contemporary society.⁴⁶ In addition, Eugene C. Roehlkepartain attempted to uncover developmental aspects of kids in his work "Spiritual Development in Childhood and Adolescence": Moving to the

⁴⁵Thomas A. Borchert, *Educating Monks: Minority Buddhism on China's Southwest Border* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2017), 272.

⁴⁶Ibid.

Scientific Mainstream".⁴⁷ He, likewise, wanted to integrate the studies on spiritual growth and help position spiritual development particularly in developmental psychology and the psychology of religion.⁴⁸ Moreover, Alexander Von Gontard interpreted the Buddha's childhood and the divine child.⁴⁹ The book "Buddhist Understanding of Childhood Spirituality" is based on experiences in therapeutic work with children": The Buddha's Children" explores this aspect.⁵⁰ Different from these researches approaching Buddhist children education from the aspect of psychology theories, this dissertation will examine Buddhist education for children in the Pāli Canon from the perspective of textual studies.

1.4.4 Meditation for Children

Meditation plays a vital role in the Pāli Canon. Books are published to introduce how to teach children meditation. For example, in "*Baby Buddhas: A Guide for Teaching Meditation to Children*" by Lisa Desmond who introduced Strategies for instructing preschool-aged youngsters in the practice of meditation based on her experience.⁵¹ David Fontana explained different ways to teach meditation to children based on his own experiences as psychologists in *A Practical Guide to Teaching Meditation to Children:*

⁴⁷Eugene C. Roehlkepartain et al., "Spiritual Development in Childhood and Adolescence: Moving to the Scientific Mainstream," in *The Handbook of Spiritual Development in Childhood and Adolescence*, ed. Eugene C. Roehlkepartain (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 2006), 2.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹Gontard defines the divine child as "not like a 'real human.' It is a mythological being with superhuman capabilities, coupled with a heightened vulnerability" (Alexander von Gontard, *Buddhist Understanding of Childhood Spirituality: The Buddha's Children* [Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 2017], 87).

⁵⁰Alexander von Gontard, *Buddhist Understanding of Childhood Spirituality: The Buddha's Children* (London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers, 2017), 270 pp., ISBN 978-1-78592-038-7.

⁵¹Lisa Desmond, *Baby Buddhas: A Guide for Teaching Meditation to Children* (Kansas City: Andrews McMeel Publishing, 2011), 27.

Exploring the Use and Benefits of Meditation Techniques.⁵² Furthermore, In "How to Teach Meditation to Children: Helping Kids Cope with Shyness and Anxiety and Enhance Focus, Creativity, and Self-confidence," authors David Fontana, Ingrid Slack, and Amber Hatch provide guidance for parents and teachers on teaching meditation to children of various ages.⁵³ within "Buddhism for Kids: 40 Activities, Meditations, and Stories for Everyday Calm, Happiness, and Awareness," the researcher presents a collection of techniques for teaching meditation to children through engaging exercises and lively interpretations of traditional Buddhist narratives.⁵⁴ Furthermore, In "Child's Mind: Mindfulness Practices to Help Our Children be more Focused, Calm, and Relaxed," Christopher Willard endeavors to instruct parents and educators on integrating mindfulness into childcare and teaching children.⁵⁵ Willard attempted to express mindfulness practices and the value of mindfulness practices for parents and educators and hoped improve meditation teaching techniques.⁵⁶ These publications show practical uses of Buddhist teachings in Children education. Nevertheless, while meditation is a fervent topic in Buddhist studies, no academic studies have examined the way of teaching meditation to children in the Pāli Canon. This dissertation aims to fill the gap.

⁵²David Fontana and Ingrid Slack, *Teaching Meditation to Children: The Practical Guide to the Use and Benefits of Meditation Techniques* (London: Watkins Media Limited, 2011), 8.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 240.

⁵⁴Emily Griffith Burke, *Buddhism for Kids: 40 Activities, Meditations, and Stories for Everyday Calm, Happiness, and Awareness* (Oakland: Rockridge Press, 2020), 105.

⁵⁵Christopher Willard, *Child's Mind: Mindfulness Practices to Help Our Children Be More Focused, Calm, and Relaxed* (Berkeley: Parallax Press, 2010), 3.

⁵⁶*Ibid.*

1.4.5 Student-Centered Learning

Student-centered learning is a pedagogical method that emphasizes the needs and passions of the child rather than focusing on teacher or curriculum requirements and expectations. This approach emphasizes the importance of individuality, creativity, and critical thinking and aims to empower the learner to actively engage in their study process. This literature review examines the history, theories, and practices of education that prioritize the child's needs and preferences, along with its advantages and disadvantages.

Child-centered education emerged as a reaction to the conventional method of teaching where the teacher takes the central role, which prevailed in education for many years. The roots of this approach can be traced to the contributions made by Swiss advocates for educational reform like Johann Pestalozzi and Friedrich Froebel, who emphasized the importance of observation, play, and creativity in learning (Froebel, 1826; Pestalozzi, 1801).⁵⁷ However, it was John Dewey, an American philosopher and educator, who popularized the concept of child-centered education in the early 20th century (Dewey, 1916). Dewey believed that education should be tailored to the requirements and preferences of the child, along that learning should be an active and participatory process.⁵⁸

Child-centered education is based on several theories, including constructivism, social constructivism, and humanistic psychology. Constructivism emphasizes the

⁵⁷Friedrich Froebel, *The Education of Man*, trans. W. N. Hailmann (New York: Dover Publications, 2005; originally published by D. Appleton and Company, 1895), 90.

⁵⁸John Dewey, *Democracy and Education: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Education* (New York: Macmillan, 1916), 59.

learner's active creation of knowledge rather than the passive reception of information by the teacher.⁵⁹ Social constructivism underscores the significance of social interactions and cooperative learning in the development of knowledge.⁶⁰ Humanistic psychology highlights the significance of self-realization and individual development and the development of individual potential.⁶¹

Child-centered parenting can take many forms, depending on cultural, social, and economic contexts. However, some common practices include student-centered instruction, educational approaches such as project-oriented learning, inquiry-driven learning, and cooperative learning techniques (Lange & Slettenhaar, 2002). These practices aim to establish an educational atmosphere conducive to nurturing creativity, critical thinking, and active engagement while providing opportunities for students to collaborate, communicate, and reflect.

Advantages of child-centered education include: heightened motivation and involvement, improved critical thinking, and problem-solving abilities, enhanced social and emotional growth, and greater autonomy and self-regulation (Biesta, 2010).

Disadvantages include a lack of structure and direction, potential chaos and disorganization, and the need for highly skilled and trained teachers (Graue & DiPerna, 2000).

⁵⁹Jean Piaget, *Psychology and Epistemology: Towards a Theory of Knowledge* (London: Allen Lane, 1972), 128.

⁶⁰L. S. Vygotsky, *Mind in Society: The Development of Higher Psychological Processes*, ed. Michael Cole, Vera John-Steiner, Sylvia Scribner, and Ellen Souberman (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1978), 79.

⁶¹Abraham H. Maslow, *Toward a Psychology of Being*, 2nd ed. (New York: Van Nostrand, 1968), 72.

1.5 Contribution

This study of Buddhist education of children and adolescents in the Pāli canon compared to child-centered education makes a notable contribution to the domain of education. It provides a critical examination of the Buddhist approach to education and shows how it differs from the modern child-centered approach.

The study highlights the essential features of Buddhist child education, including the cultivation of morality, conduct, and right speech, and the teaching of meditation and dharma to children. It also examines the role of children in various relationships and how Buddhist duties can be instilled in them.

Comparing Buddhist education with child-centered education enhances comprehension of strengths and weaknesses with both approaches. The study explores how the two approaches differ in terms of their goals, values, and methods, and provides insight into which approach might be more effective for different learners.

Overall, the significance of this study lies in its contribution, as it highlights a traditional approach to education and compares it to a modern approach. This provides a better understanding of different educational philosophies and how they apply to education today.

Chapter 2 Exploring Child-Centered Educational Models

Education means acquiring knowledge and skills and teaching students how to apply what they learn and think critically. It also includes teaching students how to find and use information on their own. In today's world, there are numerous educational theories, such as subject-centered learning, problem-centered learning, experiential learning, human motivation learning, and many others. However, child-centered or student-centered learning is considered one of the most effective approaches. Traditional teaching methods are less effective and can lead to student disinterest, homework piling up, and negative mental health effects on teachers, students, and parents. Child-centered approach encourages students to explore their own areas of interest, take control of their learning, and develop a sense of curiosity that can last a lifetime. Therefore, child-centered instruction makes learning more enjoyable and relevant and gives students a reason to keep trying.

Child-centered learning is different from traditional teaching approaches, in which the teacher leads the lesson. Child-centered approach places children's needs, interests, and abilities at the center of the learning process, focusing on the child's learning experience. Using the terms, such as "flexible learning," "experiential learning," and "self-directed learning" within the context of child-centered learning indicates that a variety of methods are used in this approach. These methods allow empowering and encouraging students to take ownership of their learning process and facilitate educators tailoring instruction to accommodate the individual needs of each student.

One of the essential features of child-centered learning is the emphasis on students' motivation to learn. Learners are encouraged to participate actively in the

process of learning and to engage with material in ways that match their interests and learning style. This approach helps create a positive attitude toward learning, as students are more likely to enjoy and retain information, they find interesting and relevant.⁶²

Another important aspect of child-centered learning is adapting learning activities to meet individual student needs. This approach recognizes that children have different learning styles, abilities, and interests. By tailoring learning activities to each student's strengths and preferences, teachers can help children master learning objects and achieve better learning outcome.

Overall, child-centered learning is an approach that prioritizes the child's learning experience and empowers the child to take control of his or her learning journey. It recognizes that every child is distinct and therefore needs an individualized approach of studying.

2.1 The Origins of Child-Centered Education

The emergence of the child-centered movement in education dates back to a time when traditional schooling was rigidly structured and imposed the same methods and approaches on all students. The movement emerged in response to this and argued that the education system should emphasize the development of each child as an individual. In essence, the child-centered approach states that the schooling system ought to always consider the requirements of the child first.⁶³

⁶²Jere E. Brophy, *Motivating Students to Learn* (Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2004), 249.

⁶³Harold Entwistle, *Child-Centred Education* (London: Routledge, 2012), 22.

The idea of child-centered pedagogy dates back to Hayward in 1905 and to a joint effort by John Dewey, Jean Piaget, and Lev Vygotsky in 1956. These influential figures were instrumental in shaping the transition to child-centered learning. Dewey, a proponent of progressive pedagogy, believed that learning is a social and experiential process in which children learn best by actively engaging with their environment. For Dewey, instruction that encouraging critical thinking and problem-solving abilities is vital to prepare students for the future.⁶⁴ Carl Rogers, known as the father of client-centered counseling, has been instrumental in broadening this method to a broader theory of education. Rogers' ideas about individual development also had a profound impact on child-centered education. In his book *Freedom to Learn*, Rogers discusses the transfer of power from teacher to student as a crucial shift in traditional education.⁶⁵ He recognized that students in a traditional educational setting often become passive, disinterested, and disengaged. The concept of child-centered education grew out of the idea that the teacher should support students in their maturation process without interfering with it. This approach focuses on guiding and directing students in their learning rather than imposing a set of rules or beliefs on them.⁶⁶ Maria Montessori is widely recognized as a pioneer of child-centered learning. Her approach envisions preschool children engaging in independent, self-directed activities after being introduced to them. This approach represents a significant paradigm shift, moving from a focus on teaching to a focus on learning. As a result, the balance of power has shifted from teacher to student, giving

⁶⁴Cari Crumly, Pamela Dietz, and Sarah D'Angelo, *Pedagogies for Student-Centered Learning: Online and On-Ground* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2014), 7.

⁶⁵Carl Ransom Rogers and H. Jerome Freiberg, *Freedom to Learn* (Columbus: Merrill, 1994), 183.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 65.

students more control over their learning.⁶⁷ Traditional methods of conveying information, such as lectures, have come under increasing criticism. This has led to the emergence of child-centered learning as a viable alternative.

Child-centered education is an approach that focuses on the child in the development of lesson plans and curricula. Kember outlines two main orientations in teaching: teacher-centered/content-centered design and student-centered/learning-centered design. He supports the perspectives of other authors who advocate for child-centered education, such as the belief that students construct knowledge and that teachers should facilitate learning rather than simply impart information.⁶⁸ Child-centered education emphasizes choice in learning. According to Roger, students ought to have the freedom to select not just the subjects they wish to study, but also how and why they find a subject interesting. He argues that students' perspectives on the world are important, relevant, and valid. This definition supports the notion that students have a say in what they learn.

In *Assessing Student-Centered Courses*, Gibbs explores similar concepts. He states that student-centered programs that prioritize the following: active participation versus passivity in learning; students' experiences with engagement with the course beyond the confines of the institution and prior to its commencement; emphasis on process and skills rather than solely on material; and students making important decisions

⁶⁷Donna Brandes and Paul Ginnis, *A Guide to Student-Centred Learning* (Cheltenham: Nelson Thornes, 1996), 12.

⁶⁸David Kember, "A Reconceptualisation of the Research into University Academics' Conceptions of Teaching," *Learning and Instruction* 7, no. 3 (September 1997): 255–275.

about their learning through negotiation with the instructor.⁶⁹ The decisions students are supposed to make include what to learn, how and when to learn it, what outcomes are expected, what criteria and standards will be used, and how assessments will be conducted.⁷⁰ Brandes and Ginnis make a similar point in their book *A Guide to Student-Centered Learning*: learners are fully responsible for their own learning. The interaction among learners is more equitable and fosters growth and advancement, while the instructor takes on the role of facilitator and resource.⁷¹ The teacher is seen as a companion who supports and guides the students to achieve the goals set by both the students and the teacher. By working in small groups, students of all academic levels work together as a team. Such grouping allows each student to showcase their strengths while improving their critical thinking skills in a supportive and safe environment. Mixing students with different academic levels, gender, athletic ability, social status, and cultural backgrounds also breaks down the social hierarchy that often exists in schools. This approach to learning fosters higher self-esteem, improves communication skills, and promotes student cohesion in our diverse, multicultural society.

The way teachers teach their students is critical to the success of the curriculum. Thus, evaluation of teacher's performance in teaching is of importance in child-centered learning. An outdated method that treats all students equally proves ineffective in an environment where students actively participate in decision-making processes. Johnny Moyer stresses the importance of teachers building relationships with their students.

⁶⁹Graham Gibbs, *Assessing Student Centred Courses* (Oxford: Oxford Centre for Staff Development, 1995), 83.

⁷⁰Ibid, 13.

⁷¹Donna Brandes and Paul Ginnis, *A Guide to Student-Centred Learning* (Cheltenham: Nelson Thornes, 1996), 12.

Mutual respect fosters an environment in which barriers to communication and trust are broken down.⁷² Johnny Moyer advocates a teaching approach that allows students to learn while having fun. He creates an enjoyable learning experience that promotes self-confidence and encourages students to share their feelings and problems. Building relationships with students through participation in student activities and community, such as attending sporting events and seeking common interests, is critical to success. He emphasizes that assessment is not only for students, but also for teachers to evaluate themselves, reflect on their performance, and correct any mistakes. A teacher who loves what they do puts their students first and treats them as living beings.⁷³

This emphasis on student-centered learning is further supported by Allison Zmuda's observations in her article "Leap of Faith." Zmuda points out that students can experience frustration in child-centered learning because higher-level critical thinking often does not provide definitive answers (Zmuda, 2023). It is therefore important to establish a link between academic tasks and students' everyday experiences. Otherwise, students may find the lessons irrelevant, ineffective, and disconnected from the world they live in.⁷⁴ Christopher Uhl advises that in child-centered learning, it is critical to create a realistic environment in the classroom. When uncomfortable situations arise, it can hinder the learning process and damage trust between teacher and students. Uhl suggests overcoming these challenges by discussing the reality or perception of the problem openly and without criticism, and encouraging communication and collaboration

⁷²Johnny J. Moyer, "Making Your Classes Come Alive," *Techniques: Connecting Education and Careers* 85, no. 4 (April 2010): 8–9.

⁷³Ibid.

⁷⁴Allison Zmuda, "Leap of Faith: Take the Plunge into a 21st-Century Conception of Learning," *School Library Monthly* 26, no. 3 (November 2009): 16–18.

within the group.⁷⁵ In addition, it is important to recognize the potential for adjustments and adaptations if the problem persists within a certain time frame. This approach fosters a deeper understanding of responsibility for learning in both students and teachers and transforms the school atmosphere from boring and intimidating to engaging and supportive.⁷⁶

Research shows that child-centered learning improves students' critical thinking, problem-solving skills, learning behaviors, and attendance rates. In the current global context, curriculum has a major impact on student academic achievement. Introducing child-centered learning into schools can create an engaging and enjoyable learning environment that allows students to maximize their potential through a variety of teaching methods.

2.2 Attributes of Modern Child-Centered Educational Methodologies

Zhu and Engels suggest that learning should focus on the child, along with communication technologies and collaborative learning approaches, which is a micro-level innovation that should be recognized. Such innovations are often found in organizations that prioritize diversity, collaboration, and teamwork through inclusive structures.⁷⁷ A child-centered approach is characterized by considering the individual experiences, viewpoints, backgrounds, interests, capabilities, and requirements of

⁷⁵Christopher Uhl, "Steering Into the Curve: Getting Real in the Classroom," *College Teaching* 58, no. 3 (June 2010): 105–108.

⁷⁶Ibid.

⁷⁷Chang Zhu and Nadine Engels, "Organizational Culture and Instructional Innovations in Higher Education: Perceptions and Reactions of Teachers and Students," *Educational Management Administration & Leadership* 42 (January 2014): 136–158.

learners.⁷⁸ In this approach, teachers focus on the learning goals they want students to achieve. They consider students' existing knowledge and offer them diverse learning opportunities, frequently changing their teaching strategies. Educators help students with learning difficulties, taking into account their backgrounds. They engage students in discussions about learning methods that yield positive outcomes and motivate them to explore different options and devise their own solutions. Assessment queries are grounded in real-world situations and do not confine students based on their grades or achievements. Fundamental components of a successful learning environment include safety, inclusivity, and ample opportunities for students to interact with new information, gain experience, and independently acquire new knowledge - all tailored to individual learning paces.

Harden and Laidlaw suggest that educators who use a student-centered methodology emphasize feedback, engage students in active learning, tailor instruction to suit their requirements and ensure that it is relevant to their interests. The feedback students receive should be specific, constructive, and provided in a non-judgmental manner in a timely and frequent manner. Personalization is necessary because students have individual needs, such as their learning styles, abilities, motivations, and goals. Personalization can be achieved through a variety of methods, such as offering different learning programs or resources, planning learning experiences according to the individual student's pace, and incorporating problem-based learning and virtual problems into the curriculum. The objective is to establish an educational setting where students feel secure

⁷⁸Saskia J. M. Harkema and Henk Schout, "Incorporating Student-Centred Learning in Innovation and Entrepreneurship Education," *European Journal of Education* 43, no. 4 (2008): 513–526.

and involved, and where they have multiple opportunities to discover new knowledge that meets their individual learning goals and aspirations.⁷⁹ Mclean and Gibbs propose that students ought to engage actively in the creation, implementation, and assessment of the curriculum. They emphasize that student involvement in the development of a learner-centered curriculum is critical. In addition, a transparent admissions policy must be implemented, and the educational institution should embrace diversity and respond to the unique learning needs of each individual. In addition to promoting independent learning skills, the psychological and social dimensions of diverse students must also be taken into account. The promotion of independent learning and time for exploring personal interests should be integrated into the curriculum.⁸⁰

These strategies include: stimulating students' curiosity with engaging tasks; organizing content and activities based on topics of interest to students; creating clear pathways for all students to progress in learning and skill acquisition; introducing exercises to broaden students' perspectives; incorporating global, interdisciplinary, and complementary tasks; providing support during difficult learning periods; and emphasizing activities that foster collaboration among students.

According to child-centered education, the learning environment plays a crucial role. It enables students to assume responsibility for their learning and participate actively in the process of knowledge acquisition by choosing materials that activate their existing knowledge and ensuring that planned activities emphasize problem-solving. In addition,

⁷⁹Ronald M. Harden and Jennifer M. Laidlaw, "Be FAIR to Students: Four Principles That Lead to More Effective Learning," *Medical Teacher* 35, no. 1 (2013): 27–31.

⁸⁰Michelle McLean and Trevor Gibbs, "Twelve Tips to Designing and Implementing a Learner-Centred Curriculum: Prevention Is Better than Cure," *Medical Teacher* 32, no. 3 (2010): 225–230.

the learning environment includes various facilities outside the classroom to support student learning.⁸¹

The aspect of time plays an important role in child-centered education. Students need sufficient time to absorb information, connect new knowledge to real-life situations, and apply it in a variety of settings, including social, professional, family, and community contexts. The learning environment of child-centered education should include all places where students learn, such as schools, libraries, museums, workplaces, and homes.

According to a study conducted by Lemos, Sandars, Alves, and Costa, student-centered teaching fosters students' sense of ownership of their learning outcomes, which leads to improved retention, engagement, and academic performance. These researchers discovered that some students explored a mixed approach to assessing student-centered teaching and learning. Furthermore, their research revealed that educators acknowledged the significance of student engagement in the learning journey and advocated for autonomy, thereby redistributing authority from teacher to student. However, the instructor retained control over course objectives and assessment protocols. Employing content to captivate student interest and motivation, the teacher assumed more of a facilitative role rather than a conventional instructor. The teacher provided immediate feedback and gave students great responsibility in classroom activities.⁸²

⁸¹Zuhal Cubukcu, "Teachers' Evaluation of Student-Centered Learning Environments," *Education* 133, no. 1 (2012): 53.

⁸²Ana R. Lemos et al., "The Evaluation of Student-Centredness of Teaching and Learning: A New Mixed-Methods Approach," *International Journal of Medical Education* 5 (August 2014): 157–164.

2.3 Popular Types of Child-Centered Learning

Several pedagogical methods emphasize the child's role in learning, this encompasses various educational approaches such as problem-based learning, project-based learning, learning contracts, flexible learning, self-directed learning, inquiry-based learning, just-in-time control, and personalized learning. Below you will find the specifics of each approach:

First, Problem-based learning (PBL) is an interactive teaching method that was originally developed for medical training. It begins by confronting students with a problem that requires them to gain fresh insights into the subject matter to address the issue. A role of the teacher changes to that of a facilitator who assists the students along the learning journey. At the beginning, teachers explain the process of problem-centered learning along with the norms for cooperative group work, the goal, the prerequisites, the responsibility and the evaluation methods. The PBL process begins with the students receiving a problem. Then they analyze the problem and formulate it by working out the relevant facts. As students gain deeper insights into once presented with the issue, they initiate suggesting potential resolutions. In the phase of self-directed learning, students delve into the areas where their understanding is lacking and identify the concepts that require further exploration to address the issue.

Following a lesson, students collect data and information from various sources, share their findings, and test or form new hypotheses based on their acquired knowledge. Following the completion of the task, students contemplate the theoretical understanding they have acquired through oral presentations and investigate a new problem within the

problem-based learning methodology. Research shows that this approach leads to better learning outcomes, eliminates misconceptions and enhances social skills.

Second, Project-based instruction distinguishes itself from problem-based learning by engaging students in intricate projects demanding problem-solving, research endeavors, decision-making, and the production of authentic products or presentations. Learning contracts are a means of engaging students in research and/or child-centered learning. With learning contracts, students plan their own learning experiences in collaboration with their teachers. According to Brecko, learning contracts offer several benefits: they allow learners to pursue topics that interest them, they increase motivation, they promote individualized learning, they allow learners to work at their own pace, they promote learner focus, they respect individual differences, and they increase confidence and enjoyment in learning.⁸³

According to Frank and Scharf, the use of learning contracts promotes self-directed learning and reinforces accountability, responsibility, and commitment. Learning contracts are effective in encouraging active learning approaches and in familiarizing students with the research process by empowering them to define and carry out their learning.⁸⁴

Third, Flexible learning allows students to collaborate with their instructors on a variety of issues, including the selection of topics, the use of supporting resources such as

⁸³Daniela Brečko, *Learning Contract: A New Tool for Managing Knowledge* (GV Training Centre, 2004), accessed February 8, 2024, <http://fm-kp.si>, 271.

⁸⁴Timothy Frank and Lauren L. F. Scharff, "Learning Contracts in Undergraduate Courses: Impacts on Student Behaviors and Academic Performance," *Journal of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning* 13, no. 3 (August 2013): 36–53.

textbooks and other materials, the arrangement and location of appointments with them teachers including the characteristic and significance of personalized evaluation assignments. This method offers students a degree of freedom in determining methods of their studying. Consequently, adaptable studying accommodates unique requirement of individual learners and consequently advocates for the learner-centered pedagogical method.

Fourth, Self-directed learning has similarities to problem-based learning, but should not be limited to self-study or the sole responsibility of the student. It involves learning from a variety of literature sources to improve information literacy. According to Silen and Uhlins, students need to be given the freedom to research and select their own reading materials, however, they also need challenges, guidance, and feedback to improve their information literacy skills. In this regard, librarians specializing in information literacy can serve as valuable assets for educators in assisting students with problem-based learning.⁸⁵

Fifth, inquiry-based learning focuses on student investigation and information seeking and encourages active learning rather than passive lectures. Student teams typically begin by asking questions and investigating data or models. Plush cites several researchers who propose that inquiry-based learning can improve problem-solving skills, comprehension, and motivation. While some argue that this approach might impede

⁸⁵Charlotte Silén and Lars Uhlins, "Self-Directed Learning – a Learning Issue for Students and Faculty!" *Teaching in Higher Education* 13, no. 4 (August 2008): 461–475.

content delivery, there is no evidence indicating its impact on student's academic performance.⁸⁶

Sixth, just-in-time instruction as an instructional approach emphasizes active and interactive learning within the available teaching time. This method, originally formulated by Novak, Patterson, Gavrin, and Christian for undergraduate physics classes, entails online tasks featuring short-answer and multiple-choice inquiries. Students prepare for class by studying the textbook or using online resources and completing assignments ahead of time, usually with more complex answers. Their work outside of class serves as a foundation for the more comprehensive activities during class sessions. Teachers receive student responses well in advance of class, so they can adjust their lesson plans accordingly. This approach fosters an interactive classroom environment that focuses on active learning and collaborative problem-solving.

Although personalized learning has shown positive outcomes, there are also critics of this approach. Vaughan Prain is among the scholars who question the conceptual coherence of personalized learning, yet believe it is a valuable strategy for improving student achievement. Nevertheless, there are numerous cases in which personalized learning has been associated with successful outcomes.⁸⁷ Choi and Ma conducted a study on a Hong Kong school that adopted a personalized instruction approach, concentrating on student-selected vocabulary. In order to assist students with limited vocabulary, adolescents with lower academic performance were assigned the task of developing their own tailored curriculum.

⁸⁶Sally Plush and Benjamin Kehrwald, "Supporting New Academics' Use of Student Centred Strategies in Traditional University Teaching," *Journal of University Teaching & Learning Practice* 11, no. 1 (May 2014): 5–19.

⁸⁷V. Prain et al., "Personalised Learning: Lessons to Be Learnt," *British Educational Research Journal* 39, no. 4 (2013): 654–676.

They were required to select, write down, and memorize five terms from their favorite sources each day. The results of this study show that this personalized approach addresses learners' individual differences, promotes responsible learning behaviors, and leads to commendable academic achievement.⁸⁸ In Sweden, Eiken has developed a personalized approach to education that includes goal setting, weekly coaching sessions, individual lesson plans and its own web-based curriculum. Students were offered a range of learning opportunities including lectures, workshops, seminars, and lab work. At the beginning of each semester, parents, students and teachers worked together to create personalized learning plans and set long-term goals for each student. Weekly meetings were held between students and their teachers to review progress, plan for the upcoming week and provide support as needed. Flexible scheduling allowed students to participate in group lessons and presentations, individual learning, or teacher-led workshops. Instead of being assigned to specific classes, students were divided into basic groups and participated in different group activities, some were mandatory while others were optional. The syllabus was organized into levels that allowed students to progress individually without being tied to traditional grade levels or classes. All curriculum materials, grade levels, readings, and tasks were accessible through an online learning platform, allowing learner to enter resources for assignments as needed. The portal also served as a repository for teacher resources and provided parents with insight into their child's learning. The study showed that this personalized approach increased student ownership of learning and promoted continuous assessment.⁸⁹

⁸⁸Mui Lan Choi and Qing Ma, "Realising Personalised Vocabulary Learning in the Hong Kong Context via a Personalised Curriculum Featuring 'Student-Selected Vocabulary,'" *Language and Education* 29, no. 1 (January 2015): 62–78.

⁸⁹Odd Eiken, *The Kunskapsskolan ('the Knowledge School'): A Personalised Approach to Education* (Paris: OECD Centre for Effective Learning Environments, 2011), 1-5.

2.4 Assessment in Child-Centered Learning

Assessment is a crucial aspect of pedagogical approaches, including the child-centered method. It allows teachers to track student progress and contributes to the implementation of the assessment triangle, which includes observation, interpretation, and understanding of those observations. There are various approaches to assessing students' learning success. In certain cases, assessment techniques can be integrated into course assignments or activities to determine whether students are meeting program objectives. In light of Randall and Zundel's findings, educators and researchers have sought to replace traditional assessment methods, which were predominantly content-based, conclusive, and comparative, with more constructivist and learner-centered approaches. They have aimed to introduce more flexible, comprehensive, contextualized, standards-based and continuous assessment methods.⁹⁰ Randall and Zundel assert that assessment goes beyond simply grading students. It involves setting observable standards, observing performance, assessing performance, communicating results to students, and providing instruction to improve performance. They also investigated the effectiveness of verbal and written formative feedback. The results suggest that students benefit from receiving feedback through different media, leading to higher learning outcomes and increased motivation. However, students did not prefer feedback comments that were solely related to the task itself. Instead, they preferred comments that discussed their strengths and weaknesses, explained their mistakes, and provided hints for improvement.⁹¹

⁹⁰Lynn Randall and Pierre Zundel, "Students' Perceptions of the Effectiveness of Assessment Feedback as a Learning Tool in an Introductory Problem-Solving Course," *Canadian Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning* 3, no. 1 (2012): 1–16.

⁹¹Ibid.

Researcher Papinczak also noted that students engaged in a child-centered syllabus should actively participate in the evaluation process in order to improve their educational performance.⁹² She also sought to involve students in creating their own assessment questions, which required them to review core material and revise key learning outcomes, which fostered critical thinking skills. The assessment process also created a collaborative and communicative social context that required group members to negotiate and work together. Although producing high-quality written assessment questions proved more difficult and time-consuming than expected, it reduced student anxiety.

As a scholar, Mather gains insights into the importance of learning outcomes that foreground the student's role in the learning process. This approach can focus the student's attention on engagement and achievement rather than just absorbing curriculum content. The research conducted by Brooks and his team suggests that the precise influence of learning outcomes on child-centered learning remains uncertain.⁹³ It also shows that the majority of participants— - eighty-one percent— - affirm the benefits of learning outcomes as an effective learning aid and only around seven percent oppose them.

Assessment remains a critical component of child-centered learning, and there are recommended guidelines for its implementation in this approach. Assessment should be adaptive, comprehensive, relevant, criterion-based, and developmental. It should also identify

⁹²T. Papinczak, L. Young, M. Groves, and M. Haynes, "Using Student-Generated Questions for Student-Centred Assessment," *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education* 37, no. 4 (June 2012): 439–452.

⁹³Sara Brooks, Kerry Dobbins, Jon J.A. Scott, Mark Rawlinson, and Robert I. Norman, "Learning about Learning Outcomes: The Student Perspective," *Teaching in Higher Education* 19, no. 6 (2014): 721–733.

strengths and weaknesses, point out errors, and provide guidance for improving performance while being timely and accurate. However, these recommendations are difficult to put into practice, especially when teachers have numerous students to assess. While the creation of questions by students is intellectually stimulating, it can be time-consuming. Despite the high expectations of educators, there is still a lack of clarity about the practical implementation of optimal assessment strategies. Thus, this aspect of child-centered education needs improvement.

2.5 Limits of Child-Centered Learning

Child-centered learning has been integrated into numerous disciplines, including medicine, economics, chemistry, physics, mathematics, social sciences, and religious studies. However, the extent of its acceptance worldwide is not uniform. Some scholars believe that child-centered learning originated in the Western educational model and presents challenges for Asian educators and learners in terms of adoption, application, and advancement.

The study concluded by Pham and Renshaw found that many Asian educators resist child-centered learning methods, which led them to develop a strategy to facilitate the introduction of this concept among Asian educators. Initially, they conducted a single-day workshop aimed at equipping all teachers with fundamental competencies to facilitate child-centered activities. The workshop involved dividing participants into small groups, delegating tasks, setting criteria for student behavior, Clarification of individual and collective responsibilities, overseeing group activities and results, and providing knowledge about the role of teachers in child-centered instruction. In addition, they introduced teachers to key child-centered activities and demonstrated how to use

them. For example, they could use a short multiple-choice test to assess students' conceptual understanding, have students read in groups and help each other understand the reading, have students discuss in small groups before hearing the answers, or offer students a relevant journal article to read before class and answer a series of questions. The assessment approach was also redesigned to encourage active and intensive student learning, with formative assessment techniques such as short essays and group projects replacing a single end-of-semester assessment. Instructors were encouraged to promote student self-expression as it has a greater impact on student engagement.⁹⁴

According to Niles' research, this behavior may have even greater significance in Asian settings, as there is evidence that teacher evaluations have a significant impact on Asian students. Niles suggests that social commendation could be a powerful incentive for students in Asia to improve academic endeavors.⁹⁵ Frambach, Driessen, Chan, and van der Vleuten investigate the appropriateness of problem-based learning, a pedagogical approach that originated in Western contexts, in cross-cultural contexts, found that Problem-based learning is adaptable to various cultural settings and bridges cultural disparities, obstacles, or complexities related to educational contexts and learning techniques.

The cases in the study show that while Asian educators find the child-centered approach unfamiliar, they can be educated to adopt it and incorporate it into their institutions.

⁹⁴Thanh Thi Hong Pham and Peter Renshaw, "How to Enable Asian Teachers to Empower Students to Adopt Student-Centred Learning," *Australian Journal of Teacher Education* 38, no. 11 (November 2013): 65–85.

⁹⁵F. Sushila Niles, "Cultural Differences in Learning Motivation and Learning Strategies: A Comparison of Overseas and Australian Students at an Australian University," *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 19, no. 3 (June 1995): 369–385.

However, one observation from the study highlights that Asian students seem to welcome and value child-centered learning.

Another limitation of child-centered instruction is class size. In many countries, a typical lecture hall can hold 20-150 students, while larger classes can hold about 300 students. Yet, in some regions, there may be over 300-1000 or more students in a class. Some experts argue that child-centered learning can only be implemented in smaller classrooms and is not feasible in classes with 100-1000 or more students. However, studies such as those by Exeter et al. show that the pedagogical approaches used in smaller classes can be used in larger classes.⁹⁶ When managing large classes, teachers must design well-organized and structured lessons and create appropriate assessment tasks to encourage student motivation. In sizable class settings, it is more challenging for educators to construct a personal interaction with learners. Nevertheless, the results of the Exeter study show that teachers can use various strategies that are similar to those used in smaller classes. These methods include problem-centered learning, discussions in small groups, and opportunities for student inquiry, such as in-class dialog, individual or small group assignments and structured engagement with the textbook. In addition, instructors can use quizzes and group exercises during lectures to enhance student learning and use an automated feedback system.

While there is ongoing debate among scholars about the feasibility of child-centered learning in large classes, some researchers have found that it is not only possible but acceptable.

⁹⁶Daniel J. Exeter et al., "Student Engagement in Very Large Classes: The Teachers' Perspective," *Studies in Higher Education* 35, no. 7 (November 2010): 761–775.

2.6 Buddhist Approach to Child-Centered Education

The child-centered approach is widely regarded as one of the most effective and efficient teaching methods in use today. It is highly regarded by educators because, unlike the traditional teacher-centered approach, it emphasizes student participation in the learning process. In this method, the role of the educator is to guide the learning process and provide customized instruction that addresses the individual needs of each learner. A supportive environment is created in which students can engage in their studies, and both teachers and students collaborate to explore new ideas and concepts. Collaborative learning is encouraged to support student interaction and communication. The main goal is to ensure that students have a clear understanding of the topic or lesson being taught.

In Buddhism, education is considered a means to foster wisdom and compassion in children. The educational approach centered around children in Buddhism prioritizes catering to the child's needs and interests, aiming to nurture inherent qualities like curiosity, innovation, and compassion. According to the Kalama Sutta (AN 3.65), the Buddha did not advocate blindly accepting everything a teacher says as truth. Instead, he encouraged his students to disseminate the teachings appropriately and experienced monks to guide their students in dealing with complex issues related to the Dhamma. The educational foundation of Buddhism is transparent and inclusive. The child-centered approach to learning is evident in Buddhism. Scholars such as Thien and Tu have noted that historical teaching methods in India were teacher-centered and restricted access to religious scriptures to a privileged few.⁹⁷ The Veda literature had the sole authority over

⁹⁷Thich Duc Thien and Thich Nhat Tu, *Buddhist Approach to Global Education in Ethics* (Ho Chi Minh City: Vietnam Buddhist University Publications, 2019), 217.

knowledge, and the aim of education was to understand the language of the divine. The scriptures of the Veda and the Upanishad were regarded as the only sources of knowledge.

Buddhism is different from Brahmanism, even though it was influenced by it. Unlike Brahmanism, Buddhism does not emphasize blind faith. The Buddha advocated independent thinking as the basis for his teachings and the attainment of enlightenment. Buddhism recognizes the acquisition of knowledge through understanding. In Buddhism, the development of faith is considered important for learning. Faith, or *Saddhā*, helps develop a self-sufficient and autonomous way of thinking, which is an essential component of child-centered learning.

In Buddhism, the teacher is called *Maggannu* (the knower of the path), *Maggakovidu* (the one who knows the goal), and *Maggadesi* (the guide who shows the way) and is considered the one who shows the right way. According to the *Dhammapada* (*Dhammapada* 12.2), one should work according to his teachings and the teacher should be well-trained in his chosen field. False knowledge is described in the *Dhammapada* (*Dhammapada* 5.13) as not serving anyone. In the *Singālovāda Sutta*, the teacher's duties include cultivating self-discipline, ensuring understanding of the teachings, imparting various fields of knowledge, introducing companions, and ensuring general protection. The teacher has the task of creating an optimal learning environment. They have a duty to impart not only specialist knowledge to the pupils, but also values, attitudes, and virtues. From this perspective, teachers are the ones who must lead the way and acquire knowledge themselves, and it is the student's responsibility to seek knowledge. This succinctly describes the child-centered learning approach.

The Buddha gave his disciples the opportunity to question not only his teachings but also themselves. According to the Kalama Sutta, the Buddha suggested that his follower's question and challenge him when they suspected that his teachings were not producing the desired results. In this way, he ensured that disciples had the right to remove their doubts. This principle is fundamental to the child-centered approach to teaching. In his final moments, the Buddha also told Ānanda Thera that his teachings and disciplines would be his guide, saying, the teachings and disciplines, Ananda, that the lessons I have imparted and elucidated will serve as your instructor.⁹⁸ The Buddha clearly emphasized the importance of precise knowledge over personal qualities.

The teaching method used by the Buddha reflects a critique of the teacher-centered approach that prevailed in the Vedic religious context of the Indian education system. However, certain aspects of child-centered education were valued in Buddhism. Buddhism promotes autonomy, critical thinking, and the cultivation of attitudes and skills in the interaction between teacher and student, in teaching techniques, and in goals. While Buddhism does not emphasize the pursuit of limitless knowledge, it is consistent with contemporary child-centered pedagogical approaches that emphasize a broader educational perspective.

Cultivating mindfulness is an important tenet of child-centered education in Buddhism. Mindfulness entails complete presence and attention in the current moment, devoid of judgment or diversion. By teaching children to be mindful, they can foster a more profound comprehension of their own thoughts including emotions as well as those

⁹⁸D 1:154.

of others. This can foster empathy and compassion for others and help regulate their own behavior.

Inquiry-based learning is another crucial principle of child-centered education in Buddhism that encourages exploration and experimentation of ideas through questioning rather than memorization. This approach encourages the development of critical thinking, creativity, and a passion for learning.

According to Buddhist teachings, kindness and compassion are highly valued in child-centered education in Buddhism. The teachings encourage children to show respect, kindness, and compassion to others while taking responsibility for their well-being. This approach promotes a positive and supportive learning environment where children feel valued and respected.

In general, the child-centered approach to education in Buddhism emphasizes the significance of promoting the comprehensive growth of children, encompassing their intellectual, emotional, and spiritual growth. By emphasizing mindfulness, inquiry-based learning, and kindness and compassion, children can become well-rounded, healthy, and content human beings.

2.7 Oral Tradition in Theravada Buddhism and Child-Centered Learning

The transmission of Buddhist teachings from one person to another through the spoken word is known as the oral tradition of Buddhism. This tradition has existed since the era of the Buddha and continues to this day, as it is believed that the Dharma of the Buddha should be transmitted through oral tradition. Scholars and within the Buddhist tradition widely acknowledge that the early Buddhist traditions acquired their texts

through oral transmission. The early Buddhist texts have certain characteristics and are structured in a way that confirms the use of oral tradition. For example, the common phrase at the beginning of Buddhist discourses, "Thus have I heard" (Pāli: *Evam me sutam*), is used to confirm that the teachings came directly from the Buddha or to describe an eyewitness account of Ānanda hearing the teaching directly from the Buddha.⁹⁹

The early transmission and preservation of Buddhist teachings relied heavily on the practice of oral transmission. According to the traditional view, the Buddha left no written texts, and his teachings were predominantly transmitted orally from a teacher to his disciples. The beginning, Buddhist teachings were memorized and recited by his followers, the bhikkhus. These bhikkhus were responsible for meticulously memorizing the teachings and passing them on to subsequent generations. This oral tradition was an important mechanism for maintaining the accuracy and fidelity of the teachings, as any inaccuracies or inconsistencies in the text could be immediately identified and corrected.

As Buddhism spread to different regions and languages, discrepancies in the teachings came to light. These discrepancies often stemmed from differences in interpretation and emphasis rather than from actual changes in the text. To eliminate these discrepancies and preserve the authenticity of the message, rehearsals were convened to unify the instruction. Following the nibbana of the Buddha, inaugural meeting was assembled, and over time other councils were held to address new challenges and clarify teachings. Despite the difficulties of transmission and

⁹⁹Bhikkhu Anālayo, *Early Buddhist Oral Tradition: Textual Formation and Transmission* (Boston: Wisdom Publications, July 2022), 55.

interpretation, the oral tradition was of paramount significance in preserving fundamental principles of the instruction along with ensuring their transmission to subsequent generations. In the first century BCE, centuries following the passing of the Buddha, his doctrines were recorded in writing.¹⁰⁰ However, it is important to emphasize the treatises which is one several at the beginning of Buddhist collections and is not considered to be the exclusive or definitive compilation of Buddhist teachings. Other Buddhist traditions have their own collections of texts and scriptures, many of which were also passed down orally before being written down.

Although the Pāli canon has been written down, the practice of oral transmission of Buddhist teachings still has great importance among Buddhist monks and communities. This is because the oral transmission of the Dharma remains an integral part of Buddhist tradition and culture and is considered a more direct and authentic way to receive and pass on the teachings. In addition, memorizing and reciting the Buddhist teachings is considered a form of meditation and spiritual practice that can help deepen one's understanding and connection to the teachings. Thus, while the written texts are valuable, the oral transmission of Buddhist teachings remains an essential aspect of Buddhist practice and culture.

In many parts of Asia, monastic education still places great emphasis on the oral transmission and memorization of Buddhist teachings. This is notably observable in traditional Theravada Buddhist nations like Sri Lanka, Thailand, Myanmar, and Cambodia, where monastic training usually involves memorizing scriptures and chanting

¹⁰⁰Bodhi Bhikkhu, *In the Buddha's Words: An Anthology of Discourses from the Pali Canon* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2005), 425.

hymns. In these countries, memorization is often considered an important part of spiritual training, as it is believed to help deepen understanding of the teachings and cultivate mindfulness.¹⁰¹

In other parts of Asia, such as China, Japan, and Korea, monastic training has historically included more written texts and placed less emphasis on memorization. However, even in these countries, the value of oral tradition and memorization for the preservation and transmission of the teachings is still recognized. Many monastic institutions in these countries still include elements of memorization and recitation in their training programs, in addition to the study of written texts.

Oral transmission in Theravada Buddhism and child-centered learning are two different educational approaches with different philosophical foundations. In Theravada Buddhism, education primarily follows an oral tradition, with teachings passed from one generation to the next through direct instruction and memorization. The emphasis is on preserving the teachings and sūtras of the Buddha, which are regarded as the highest sources of wisdom and understanding. The teacher is viewed as a role model and authority figure, and the student is expected to learn and internalize the teachings through disciplined study and practice.

In contrast, in child-centered learning, the child takes center stage in the educational process. It prioritizes an individual requirements, passions, and capabilities of the child over predefined lesson plans. The instructor serves as a facilitator, steering the child's learning journey through exploration and discovery rather than direct instruction.

¹⁰¹Braj B. Kachru, Yamuna Kachru, and S. N. Sridhar, *Language in South Asia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 190.

The emphasis is on encouraging the child's natural curiosity and creativity and inspiring a love of learning.

Although these two approaches to education may seem incompatible at first glance, there are ways in which they can complement each other. For example, a child-centered approach can be used to introduce young learners to the basics of Theravada Buddhism and allow them to explore and discover the teachings in ways that are meaningful and engaging to them. Once the child has developed a foundation of knowledge, a more traditional approach, such as oral teaching and memorization, can be used to deepen understanding and engagement with the teachings.

Ultimately, the choice of pedagogical approach depends on the cultural and social context in which it is used, as well as the individual needs and goals of the learners. Both approaches have their strengths and weaknesses, and it is up to teachers and learners to find the approach that works best for them.

Chapter 3 Buddhist Education System

3.1 The Educational Foundation of Buddhism

In ancient times, India was an important center of education, as inscriptions on stones and copper, palm leaf manuscripts, and religious texts prove. The educational system of antiquity was revered as a repository of knowledge, traditions, and practices for mankind. According to the history of India, dating back to about 5000 BC (during the Vedic period), the structure of Indian education has evolved from the Vedas, Brahmins, Upanishads and Dharma sūtras.¹⁰² The educational aim was to develop students not only externally, but also internally. Emphasis was laid on various dimensions of life, including moral, physical, spiritual and intellectual aspects. M. Kumar noted that ancient Indian education emphasized virtues such as modesty, honesty, discipline, self-confidence and reverence for the whole of existence.¹⁰³ Teaching and education adhered to the principles set out in the Vedas and Upanishads while fulfilling obligations to self, family and society. The Indian school system was known in ancient times as gurukul or gurukulam.¹⁰⁴ The Gurukul system was an educational institution where students left their families to live with their mentors and gain wisdom about existence. Gurukuls, also known as ashrams, served as places of enlightenment, often located in the middle of a tranquil forest. During this time, the student (shishya) and the teacher (guru) lived together

¹⁰²Ram Nath Sharma and Rajendra Kumar Sharma, *History of Education in India* (New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers & Distributors, 1996), 11.

¹⁰³M. Kumar and N. Rekha, *Historical and Political Economy of Education in India* (Pune: Sankalp Publication, 2020), 438.

¹⁰⁴A "gurukula" or "gurukulam" refers to an educational system in ancient India. In this arrangement, students (shishya) reside near or with the guru in the same dwelling. The term "gurukula" is a fusion of the Sanskrit words "guru" (teacher or master) and "kula" (family or home).

in the teacher's house (ashram) or in close proximity, helping each other in daily life. The aim was to gain a comprehensive education, lead a disciplined lifestyle and realize one's own abilities. The students lived with their teacher until they had achieved their goals. Teachers did not receive free tuition or housing. Students were expected to repay their gratitude by working for or serving the teacher. The main goal of the teachers was to enable the students to learn in a natural world where they lived with love, happiness, harmony, brotherhood and discipline among themselves. Learning is not only based on memorization but also on promoting the holistic growth of children that encompasses their mental, cognitive, physical, and spiritual well-being. In the educational system of ancient India, debates and discussions were integral parts of the learning process.

Buddhist education depends on the Buddha, who awakened in his own way for forty-five years and spread his teachings. The references in Buddhist treatise indicate the Awakened One, who came from also grew up within Hindu culture, was influenced by the Brahmanical system. The Buddhist system of education is related to the Hindu system. Radhakumud Mookerji claims that Buddhism represents a stage within the ancient Hindu or Brahmanical educational structure. Buddhism is closely related to the pre-existing Hindu framework of philosophy and way of life.¹⁰⁵ It is consistent with the studies of Max Muller, as he mentions in "The Chips from a German Workshop-vellum I," that "Buddhism appears more as an organic progression stemming from the diverse expressions of the Indian psyche across religious, philosophical, social, and political

¹⁰⁵Radhakumud Mookerji, *Ancient Indian Education: Brahmanical and Buddhist* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 1989), 374.

realms, rather than a newly formed religion."¹⁰⁶ Hopkins claims in his work "In the "Religions of India," it is suggested that the founder of Buddhism did not invent a fresh moral framework, was not a proponent of democracy, did not conspire to dissolve the Brahmanical priesthood and did not create the monastic community."¹⁰⁷ According to the history of Buddhism, the scheme of life of Buddhism was influenced by the Brahmanical system, not only the teachings such as salvation, desire, kamma and rebirth, etc., but also external practices such as ascetic life. Buddhism adopted some ideas and practices of the Brahmins and developed its social and educational organization to promote and disseminate its particular truths. Mookerji stated that the foundation of the Buddhist community and its organization heavily drew upon the Brahmanical scheme and societal structure.¹⁰⁸ It is plausible that a complete Buddhist institution or society emerged from the reinterpretations or adaptations of the old Vedic or Brahmanic religion mentioned by Max Muller.¹⁰⁹

Ascetical practices are one of the characteristics of Indian religions. It was not specific to Buddhism. Ascetic and monastic life was practiced in Indian religions in different faiths. Monasticism means giving up the pursuit of progeny, material wealth, and worldly pursuits and instead choosing to live as a mendicant monk in order to learn and be happy. In Hinduism, the concept of renunciation is taught through the practice of

¹⁰⁶Max Müller, *Chips from a German Workshop*, Volume I (CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, Charleston, SC, June 2015), 434.

¹⁰⁷Edward Washburn Hopkins, *The Religions of India*, in *Handbooks on the History of Religions*, vol. 1, ed. Morris Jastrow (Project Gutenberg, 2004), 356.

¹⁰⁸Radhakumud Mookerji, *Ancient Indian Education: Brahmanical and Buddhist* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 1989), 376.

¹⁰⁹Max Müller, *Chips from a German Workshop*, Volume I (CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, Charleston, SC, June 2015), 440.

the four asramas or ashrama, the last two of which guide the individual directly. In the fourth asrama (sannyasa) of life, the man is absolutely homeless; the practitioner will find refuge in the forest. It should be noted that this has become the path of the Buddhist order or community. It was also common for a brahmacharya to renounce marriage and domestic life, opting instead for a lifelong commitment to discipleship. This practice became widespread and led to the establishment of a structured institution with particular regulations for its administration. This establishment was embraced by Buddhism as the starting point for Buddhist religious organizations. Historically, Buddhism offers no significant reasons for a departure from the previous educational framework of Indian religion.

Before Buddhism emerged, there were already ascetic orders in various religious sects of Hinduism, above all the Brahmins and Samanas. These are referred to in various texts such as the monastic code, the verses of the Dharma,¹¹⁰ and the collection of discourses.¹¹¹ The Sutta-Nipāta outlines the main characteristics of these orders. The Brahmins, referred to as Vādassila or disputants (AN 938, AN 4.50, MN 93, etc.), Lokāyatas and Vitandas, denoting casuists and sophists (Cullavagga, V, 3.2, etc.), are contrasted with the Samanas, referred to as Tevijja, indicating mastery of the threefold science (DN 13). Among them lived six persons at the time of the Buddha, specifically Purāna Kassapa, Makkhali-Gosāla, Ajita-Kesakambali, Pakudha-Kachchāyana, Sañjaya-Belatthiputta and Nigantha-Nātaputta. All figures were depicted both as a gathering of monks and as esteemed teachers, each known for their different philosophical systems.

¹¹⁰V 388.

¹¹¹VV 99, 129, 189, 447, 529, 859.

As for the samanas, they are divided into four types in the Suttanipata (vv.85-8): Maggajinas (those who triumph on the path), Maggadesins (those who teach the path), Maggajivins (those who dwell on the path) and Maggadūsins (those who corrupt the path). Disputes among these Samanas led to the emergence of various philosophical schools. It is noteworthy that the orders of the Brahmins imposed restrictions from birth on those who wished to adopt the ascetic life and recruited exclusively from one caste, Although the orders of the Samanas endeavored to accept all people from all social classes who had decided to pursue worldly pursuits. These numerous ascetic and philosophical circles constantly roamed India. Moreover, each sect has a different path of liberation along which the master leads his followers in search of salvation. Thus, the Buddhist ascetics belonged to a group of different Samana sects within the Indian religions. The Buddha was only one of numerous religious reformers and not the first figure to be worshipped as the Enlightened One. The Buddha was commonly known as Gautama Buddha, and his adherents were termed Samanas, who trailed the scion of the Sakya lineage.

According to the Pāli canon, it was difficult for Buddhism to assert its supremacy amidst the rival Brahmanical and Samana sects. The scriptures report numerous conflicts between the Buddha and the Brahmins or other religious groups, which ultimately culminated in the triumph of the Buddha. The texts record not only public discussions by the Buddha in assemblies but also private conversations with individuals and householders he may have encountered on his daily begging rounds. Many Brahmin householders were converted by the Buddha after listening to his discourses. The Buddha sometimes traveled to them to resolve their doubts and then converted them. The

accounts of the Buddha report numerous cases in which Brahmins were persuaded to accept his teachings. In one such case, at the time of the Buddha's initial discourse in Benares, Kondañña, a group member of five Brahmin ascetics, accepted the teachings when he heard them. Later, the other four also followed suit and were converted. They became the first members of his church. The next group of Brahmin hermits are a thousand Uruvela. They were all deeply committed to Vedic rituals and sacrificial practices until the Buddha convinced them otherwise. Shortly afterward, two young Brahmins in Rājagaha named Sāriputta and Moggallāna converted to Buddhism and became prominent figures within the Buddhist community. This incident illustrates the Buddha's ability to inspire people to give up family life, including childlessness and widowhood, in favor of a religious path, even in his youth as the ascetic Gotama.

The history of conversions shows that the disciples of The Buddha emerged from the established ascetic communities within the Indian religion, either Brāmana or Monk. Before turning to Buddhism, they had received training in the discipline of monastic life. As a result of joining the Buddhist Brotherhood, they did not change their way of life, but their religious views and the Brotherhood was the object of their sincere reverence. The Pāli Canon describes in detail the method by which the Buddha accepted his first disciples into his monastic community: "Come here, monk; the teachings are well-delivered. Strive for purity to alleviate all suffering." This statement indicates that the Buddha prioritized the training of monks over that of laypeople. The monks were well-versed in the teachings and techniques of living. This was the early Buddhist assembly.

The peculiarities set out in the Buddhist scriptures indicate that the Awakened One himself emerged from an established Brahmanical educational framework. The texts

depict the first step before attaining Buddhahood, the Buddha's proclamation from his palace in Kapilavastu to lead a life as an ascetic. He then gave himself such training for the new life with the Brahmin Ālāra Kālāma in Vesāli, who instructed him in successive stages of meditation. Nevertheless, the Buddha felt discontent because the teachings failed to culminate in aversion, instead of leading to painlessness, cessation, tranquility, knowledge, supreme wisdom, and Nibbana, it only led to the state of nothingness.¹¹² The Siddhartha then traveled to another teacher, Uddaka, who was a disciple of Rāma and was in Rājagaha. However, he was unable to gain a clear understanding of Uddaka's teachings on the nature of the soul. He was also dissatisfied with the teaching he heard. It is evident, as Rhys Davids states in *History and Literature*, that "Gotama, at some point during this timeframe or earlier, presumably engaged in a highly structured and consistent study of the most profound philosophical teachings of the era."¹¹³ There are also accounts suggesting that the Buddha quickly mastered the teachings of these early mentors and was respected by all as Gotama. Nevertheless, he did not adhere to their teachings. Instead, he embarked on his own spiritual journey. In ancient India, many ascetics believed that purification and the belief that ultimate liberation could be attained through severe self-mortification was tested by the ascetic Siddhartha. He underwent rigorous self-mortification and followed numerous strict rules of abstinence that were a challenge for any human being. While he was meditating under a banyan tree, the daughter of a wealthy landlord named Sujāta offered him rice pudding when she saw him emaciated like a skeleton. Gotama accepted the food and ate the entire contents of the

¹¹²Henry Clarke Warren, *Buddhism in Translations* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 1998), 336.

¹¹³T. W. Rhys Davids, *Buddhism: Its History and Literature* (New York: Cosimo, Inc., 2005), 102.

bowl. After he ate, his body refreshed and regained its strength. He realized that severe austerity and suffering of the body were not the way to enlightenment. Soon after, he found the way and attained liberation, Nibbana. The narrative of Gotama's scholarship and spiritual development illustrates how the Buddha differed from the prevailing Brahmanical doctrines.

After his awakening, the Buddha spread his teachings and many Brahmins converted to Buddhism. Buddhism became the organization of monks or the Sangha. Evidence shows that Buddhism adopted the educational system from Brahmanism, especially the four asrama systems. For example, Buddhism applied the Brahmacharya principles to its monks. The main task of a brahmachari, which involves begging, corresponds to the Buddhist term "bhikkhu", which means beggar or someone who is dependent on alms. Buddhism has established rules for its bhikkhus governing the alms bowl, methods of begging, eating habits, posture, sleeping habits, personal hygiene, and abstaining from luxuries such as garlands, perfumes, and oils as well as water-based recreational activities. Like the Brahmanical system of educational, which prioritized the cultivation of right conduct over mere academic study, Buddhism also emphasizes the importance of comprehensive practices (*ācāra*).

3.2 Monastic Buddhist Education System

Buddhist history shows that the educational structure of Buddhism corresponds to the organizational framework of the Buddhist monastic community, the Sangha.

Mookerji points out in the book *Ancient Indian Education: Brahmanical and Buddhist*

that "Buddhist education and learning centered around monasteries."¹¹⁴ The monks had authority over Buddhist education and served as guardians and bearers of the Buddhist heritage. Consequently, the guidelines for Buddhist education reflect the guidelines of the Buddhist monastic community, which did not originate from the Buddha but were adopted from various other monastic traditions, including Brahmanism. Admission to the Buddhist order has close parallels to the Brahmanic initiation rites for students. In the Brahmanical system, the pupil needs to seek out an instructor and submit an application for enrollment in the student community. The student approaches the teacher and says, "I am pursuing the path of brahmacharya. I aspire to become a brahmacharin."¹¹⁵ An instructor then puts the belt on the student, hands him the staff and explains the principles of brahmacharya (the code of conduct for religious students). At the beginning of the Buddhist initiation, the Buddha welcomed his initial followers with the subsequent declaration, "Come here, monk, the doctrine is well-delivered; follow the path of Brahmacharya to end all suffering." Therefore, the Awakened One educational system was modeled on the Brahmanical system. The text asserts that seeking a teacher was a prerequisite for ordination, as is evident from the statement: "No one, O bhikkhus, who does not have upajjhāya shall receive the upasampadā ordination." The one who bestows the upasampadā ordination (no such person) commits a dukkha offense."¹¹⁶ The mentor must be a real person, not a fictitious being, as the text strictly prohibits fraud within the system. It is noteworthy that the Buddhist educational framework appropriately

¹¹⁴Radhakumud Mookerji, *Ancient Indian Education: Brahmanical and Buddhist* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 1989), 394.

¹¹⁵Ibid.

¹¹⁶Mv. I, 69.

emphasizes the personal responsibility of the teacher for the guidance and behavior of his student.

3.2.1 Pravajyā or Pabbajjā

Pabbajjā marks the initial phase of Buddhist educational initiation. Literally translated, pabbajjā means "to go out or renounce" and denotes an individual's commitment to seek admission to the order by abandoning their former way of life and embarking on the ascetic path by entering a state of homelessness. The pre-Buddhist monastic term Pabbajjā originally referred to a coalesced religious group, whether Brahmin, Jain, or other. Another word, Upasampadā, is similar to the meaning of Pabbajjā. However, it is important to note that "pabbajjā" refers specifically to the ordination of a novice who is under 20 years old.

Upasampadā, on the other hand, refers to the higher ordination into monasticism. Throughout the history of Indian religions, each religious group has adapted the terms "pabbajjā" and "upasampadā" according to their own interpretation, leading to variations in their meaning. Buddhism also adopted the term "pabbajjā" but used it in a more specific sense. In the Buddhist context, "pabbajjā" means the transition from domestic to monastic life, similar to the Brahmanical tradition of discipleship, where young disciples leave their homes to reside with their chosen teachers in a hermitage or ashrama and undergo strict discipline and training. Within the Buddhist system, "pabbajjā" refers to the ordination of a sāmanera or novice, which is characterized by the undertaking of the three refuges (tisarānagamana).¹¹⁷

¹¹⁷Mv. I, 12.

A layman who is accepted into the monastic member is guided by a mentor who is responsible for supervising the behavior. The lowest permissible age for Pabbājā is eight years old, although Buddhism does not set a specific maximum age. However, for a comprehensive understanding of Pabbājā, it is necessary to consider the Upasampadā. Derived from two Pāli words, "Upa'," a prefix meaning "to exceed'," and "Sampadā'," meaning "advantage'," Upasampadā means an advantage beyond its literal meaning.¹¹⁸ In practice, upasampadā means attaining the status of full membership within the Buddhist order, which is an additional benefit according to Pabbājā. Currently, scholars have offered different interpretations of Pabbājā and Upasampadā. Oldenberg, for example, emphasized that "Pabbājā denotes initial initiation, while Upasampadā denotes advanced initiation."¹¹⁹

In the contemporary Theravada tradition, Pabbājā and Upasampadā are regarded as two different stages on the path of a Buddhist monk. Pabbājā refers to ordination as a sāmanera or novice, which involves undertaking the three refuges (tisanaganama),¹²⁰ and Upasampadā represents the advanced ordination or transition of a Sāmanera into the full status in the order. However, passages in the treatise of monastic code do not offer a definitive explanation for the separation between Pabbājā and Upasampadā. This is because there was originally no distinction between Pabbājā and Upasampadā in the

¹¹⁸Robert Spence Hardy, *Eastern Monachism: An Account of the Origin, Laws, Discipline, Sacred Writings, Mysterious Rites, Religious Ceremonies, and Present Circumstances of the Order of Mendicants Founded by Gótama Budha* (compiled from Singhalese Mss. and other original sources of information): With Comparative Notices of the Western Ascetics and a Review of the Monastic System (London: Williams and Norgate, 1860), 45.

¹¹⁹Hermann Oldenberg, *Buddha: His Life, His Doctrine, His Order* (London: Williams and Norgate, 1882), 347.

¹²⁰Mv. I, 12.

nascent stages of the Buddhist community. The texts of the Pāli canon describe numerous occasions when both Pabbajjā and Upasampadā were bestowed on the same individual. The separation of the monastic ceremonies of Pabbajā and Upasampadā occurred through the passage of several stages of development.

In the early days of Buddhist monasticism, the formal ritual for accepting a person into the Buddhist order was known as Ehi Bhikkhu Pabbajjā. After five disciples (Pañca vaggiyas) sought guidance from the awakened one for their acceptance, the enlightened one accepted them with these words, "Come, monks, the Dhamma is spoken well. Embrace the virtuous path to attain complete liberation from suffering." It marked the initial process of initiation into the Buddhist order, referred to as both Pabbajjā and Upasampadā. In addition to the Pañca vaggiyas, numerous ascetics were converted according to the same formula, known in the Pāli canon as Ehi Bhikkhu Pabbajjā, including individuals such as Yasa and his fifty-four companions.

Tisarana gamana Pabbajjā is the second stage in the development of the Buddhist tradition of attaining first ordination by taking three refuges. This procedure arose when the Buddha instructed the monks, the Pañca vaggiyas, Yasa, and his fifty-four companions to spread the Dhamma in various directions. As a result, many people expressed the wish to join the Buddhist order. Realizing that it was impractical to bring them all to him for ordination, the Buddha allowed the monks to administer pabbajjā and upasampadā to those who wished to join the order. Subsequently, the methods of pabbajjā and upasampadā evolved into what is known today as the Tisarana-gamana formulas. The Mahāvagga of the Pāli canon describes this process as follows:

“A person who wishes to be accepted into the Sangha undergoes a series of rituals: Hair and beard are shaved; they put on saffron-colored robes and adjust their outer robe so that it covers one shoulder. Afterward, they prostrate themselves at the feet of the monks and assume a squatting posture. With hands clasped together, they chant three times: "I seek refuge in the Buddha. I seek refuge in the Dhamma. I seek refuge in the Sangha." “Oh, I order to give Pabbajjā or Upasampadā by means of taking three refuges.”¹²¹ During the second state of ordination evolution, there was not any difference between Pabbajjā and Upasampadā.

The third stage of the development of the ordination ceremony in Buddhism is called ñatti catuttha kamma Upasampadā. The reason for changing the previous processor of ordination was the inappropriate behavior of the monks. The Buddha received a report that many monks were not behaving properly, and people were condemning them. Therefore, the Buddha addressed the problem by introducing a new ordination procedure known as ñatti catuttha kamma upasampadā. According to this updated regulation, a person aspiring to upasampadā must seek out an upājjhāya or mentor. Then an assembly of bhikkhus is convened and it is publicly proclaimed that the person concerned aspires to Upasampadā, with a senior monk serving as Upājjhāya. This declaration is reaffirmed three times before the assembly of monks. Approval of this declaration is signaled by the silence of the assembly of monks. Over time, this procedure underwent numerous revisions and changes before it was given its final form. The distinction between the Pabbajjā and Upasampadā procedures for giving first and higher ordination was made at

¹²¹Mv. I, 12.

this stage of development. Later, the Pabbajjā became known as the ordination to samanera and the Upasampadā as the initiation to bhikkhu.

The historical development of the Buddhist order shows that the ceremonies of Pabbajjā and Upasampadā were not originally separate events. Texts within the Buddhist treatise indicate that numerous monks during the era of the awakened one received both Pabbajjā and Upasampadā at the same time. Initially, lay people went through both Pabbajjā and Upasampadā together by taking the three refuges. However, as the number of Buddhist sects grew, and more and more people sought admission into the Bhikkhu Sangha, these two procedures were gradually separated into different rites of Pabbajjā and Upasampadā.

According to the Pāli Canon, entry into the Pabbajā is forbidden for young people without parental consent. This rule was originally established by the awakened one upon his father's request, who expressed his concern about the admission of all his male heirs to the order, including his grandson Rāhula. The next restriction concerned physical health and physical defects such as chronic infectious diseases, leprosy, boils, and itching.¹²² In addition, according to the Vinaya, persons performing military service, theft, escape from prison, registration as a thief, slavery, debt, and similar circumstances were not permitted.¹²³ According to the regulations of the Pabbajjā, it is clear that the Buddhist order was concerned not only with the spiritual health and welfare of its members, but also with their physical well-being. The environment of a Buddhist order

¹²²Mv. I, 71.

¹²³Mv. I, 64.

supports spiritual growth. Silence and peace in the outer nature of a person must correspond with the growth of the inner self.

3.2.2 Upajjhā and Acariya as Teachers

The direct interpretation of the word Upajjhā is a spiritual mentor or guide.¹²⁴ And acariya means teacher or master.¹²⁵ In the Buddhist educational system, the Upajjhā plays an influential role in the admission to the Buddhist order and the instruction of students. Without Upādhyāya, a layman cannot enter monasticism. In the Pāli texts, it is difficult to distinguish the functions of Upajjhā and Acariya, because sometimes the tasks of Upajjhā and Acariya seem to overlap. The Pāli scriptures in the Mahāvagga (I,25-33) describe the difference between the roles of the Upājḥhā and the Acariya. The Upājḥhā has the higher authority when it comes to instructing young monks in the sacred texts and teachings, while the Acariya has the task of supervising their behavior and giving them disciplinary guidance. According to Buddhaghosha's commentary, the Upājḥhā should have at least ten years of seniority and the Acariya six years. However, mere seniority is not a sufficient qualification; the monk must also have knowledge and competence. After ordination, an upasampanna bhikkhu must undergo spiritual and moral training under the supervision of two teachers. This training period (nissaya) typically lasts at least five years for a knowledgeable and capable bhikkhu (Mahāvagga, I, 54.4). For the unlearned bhikkhu, the period was extended to his whole life. After five years, a monk was permitted to give a nissaya to others or was allowed to receive disciples as an Achārya.

¹²⁴Kitiyakara Krommaphra Chandaburinarūnath, "upajjhā," in *Pāli-Thai-English-Sanskrit Dictionary* (Bangkok: King Mahā Makūṭa's Academy, 1970), 161.

¹²⁵Ibid., 111.

The Pāli canon pointed out the relationship between teachers and disciples: "The Achāriya, O Bhikkhus, should regard the Antevāsika (disciple) as same as a son; an Antevāsika should consider the Achāriya like a father."¹²⁶ This illustrates that the relationship between teacher and pupil is characterized by mutual respect, trust and shared camaraderie. As a result, students are able to progress and excel in both learning and discipline. A similar dynamic can be observed between the upajjhā and his saddhiviharika.¹²⁷

3.2.3 Duties of a Pupil

When the Buddhist education system began, the Buddha did not initially lay down any guidelines for the behavior of monks. However, as the Buddhist monastic community spread, some members began to behave inappropriately towards their teachers. The Buddha asked for an assembly of monks and an investigation; then he criticized improper behavior and established the proper behavior of a disciple toward his teacher. The proper behavior of a disciple toward his teacher is as follows:

Showing reverence and dedication, the student engages in various acts of respect towards the teacher. Initially, rising from the seat upon the teacher's arrival signifies recognition and deference to their authority. Subsequently, tending to the teacher's comfort needs underscores a caring attitude and fosters an environment conducive to learning. The student's eagerness to glean knowledge from the teacher highlights a genuine thirst for learning and acknowledgment of the teacher's wisdom. Furthermore,

¹²⁶Mv. I, 23, I.

¹²⁷Ibid, 36, I.

offering specialized assistance or amenities beyond the teacher's essential requirements reflects a deep respect and commitment to their well-being. Lastly, the student attentively listens during the teacher's instruction, demonstrating a sincere desire to absorb and comprehend the imparted lessons. These actions collectively exemplify the student's profound reverence and dedication, cultivating an atmosphere conducive to mutual growth and enlightenment.¹²⁸

In a literal sense, a student should get up early in the morning and serve the teacher. For example, a student should prepare a tooth cleaner, water to rinse the mouth, and a seat to eat, and serve breakfast to his teacher. After the teacher has eaten, the pupil must meticulously clean the bowl without causing any scratches, then store it properly. When the teacher rises, the student should remove the seat. If the seat is dirty, the student should clean it. The disciple should then prepare the teacher for almsgiving by providing him with fresh underwear, a belt, two outer garments and a cleaned alms bowl filled with water. Similarly, when accompanying the teacher, the student should dress appropriately but keep a respectful distance. During the teacher's conversation, the student should not interrupt. When the student returns from the food collection, he should enter first. He should prepare the necessary things, such as preparing a place to sit and provide a stool, a foot wiper, and water to wash his feet. He should also help the teacher change when he arrives. If it is alms food and the teacher wants to eat it, the student should serve it to him.

If the teacher wants to take a bath after dinner, a student should prepare a bath by procuring either cold or hot water for the teacher. If instructor wish to take the sauna, the

¹²⁸DN 31.

student should give him a kneading bath powder to rub on the body and moisten clay to smear on the face. If he is able to do so, he will take care of his instructor without disturbing the elders. If the student needs to bathe, he is expected to do so immediately. When he leaves the sauna, he should take the sauna stool, cover himself in the front and back, and then leave. Then the student should prepare a seat, provide a footstool, a foot wiper and water to wash his feet. Then the time has come for the lesson, which can consist of answering questions or giving a lecture.¹²⁹

Another task of the student was to sweep the dwellings where the teacher stayed. If the dwelling is dirty, students should remove the seat mat, sheet, pillow, etc. And put them aside or put them in the sun. Then he must put all things back in their proper place. If the premises are dirty, such as supply rooms, refectories, fire stations, etc., the student must clean them. Elsewhere it is described in detail how the student must clean the precinct.¹³⁰

The student should not offer or accept anything without the teacher's permission and should not undertake any activities such as entering the village, exploring a graveyard or journeying overseas without the teacher's consent.¹³¹ Should the student accompany an experienced monk on a journey to assist him, the teacher has the authority to grant permission.¹³² If the teacher is ill, the student should take care of the teacher while he is alive, and he should wait until he is well again.

¹²⁹Ibid., 14.

¹³⁰Cv, viii, i, 3.

¹³¹Ibid., I, 24, 25.

¹³²Ibid., ii, 21, I.

3.2.4 Duties of a Teacher

In the Buddhist Pāli Discourses, certain duties of a teacher have been stated in the Sigālovada Sutta, which include five kinds of duties of a teacher to his students: "(1) they should instruct a student in that in which he has been well trained, (2) they make him hold his fist well, (3) they educate him extensively in the mastery of various disciplines, (4) they praise him warmly in the presence of his acquaintances and peers, (5) they ensure his security in all directions."¹³³ The duties of a teacher are not only to impart knowledge in various subjects, but also to teach the student the art of ethical living, proper habits, an appropriate manners. When teaching, the lecturer must have the ability to convey information effectively. He should have sufficient subject knowledge, and organizational skills and use appropriate methods customized according to the requirements of every student. The instructor ought to be knowledgeable in all subjects and not leave anything out. The teacher should try to give the highest quality to his students. Also, the teacher should introduce his friends and colleagues. By doing this, the teacher gives his students the opportunity to cooperate with society. Last but not least, students must be protected or ensured to be safe. The Mahāvagga text (Mahāvagga, I, 26) goes further into the duties of the teacher. It states that the teacher is obliged to give his disciple comprehensive intellectual and spiritual support and direction through instruction, questioning, encouragement and teaching. If the student lacks important items like an alms bowl or a robe, instructor should obtain them from his own supplies. If the student is sick, the teacher must take care of him while he is alive and wait until he

¹³³DN 31.

recovers. When a student is ill, the teacher should take care of him as the student serves him.¹³⁴ Besides expressing the duties of a Buddhist teacher, this also demonstrates the qualifications of a well-trained teacher, such as moral conduct, self-concentration, wisdom, emancipation, and knowledge. The teacher should be able to help others become proficient in these areas. He should have the ability to instruct a student in the principles of ethical behavior. He should give the student an understanding of the fundamentals of morality and instruct him in the teachings of the Dhamma and Vinaya.

3.2.5 Residential Schools or Vihāras

The term "Vihāra" comes from the Pāli and refers to a Buddhist monastery. Vihāras experienced gradual growth and development in India. Originally, they served as temporary shelters for wandering monks during rainy retreats (*vassāvāsa*) and consisted of simple structures such as thatched bamboo huts or wooden shelters. These shelters were considered sites for religiously virtuous deeds, such as providing food and shelter for mendicant monks. As the Buddhist sangha became more established, lay followers began to contribute significantly to the construction of elaborate vihāras. Consequently, the vihāras developed into organized, large, and permanent monastic complexes. During this phase, the vihāras served not only as residences for monks and nuns, but also as centers for various activities, including gatherings, recreation, religious rituals, meditation and education. The Buddhist vihāra then developed into a school within larger monastic institutions with a number of teachers and students.

¹³⁴Mv. I, 26.

Originally, the Buddhist educational structure was based on individual schools and the traditional mentorship between teachers and students. The Upajjhā and Acariya were responsible for overseeing the students' welfare, academic pursuits, ethical behavior and spiritual progress. Over time, the viharas expanded and developed into large monastic institutions. The monks who lived in the vihara formed an association and developed a code of discipline and rules that were binding on all members of the association. Buddhist education developed into a network of different educational institutions or schools, in which the number of teachers and students increased. Each of them brought their unique strengths as educators and facilitators to enrich the academic endeavor.

The efficiency of the organization of the monastery depended on federal principles of administration, because the monastery was an association of individual educational groups. Mookerji points out that there are three distinct goals for administrative principles: "(1) the efficiency of each individual group of students depends on a single teacher, (2) the management of connecting among the various pupil's group, and (3) the elaboration of laws that apply to the institution in its entirety and are equally mandatory for all its members, instructors, and scholars."¹³⁵ Basic rules necessary for maintaining a respectable level of academic behavior and manners included ten guidelines that included refraining from actions such as harming living beings, theft, impurity, falsehoods, consumption of intoxicants, slandering the Triple Gem, spreading false teachings, also inappropriate conduct towards bhikkhus and bhikkhunis. There is

¹³⁵Radhakumud Mookerji, *Ancient Indian Education: Brahmanical and Buddhist* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 1989), 407.

another enumerated rule that states that the wrongdoer will be punished, namely, "if he is bent on preventing the bhikkhus from receiving alms, suffering misfortune and failing to find a residence, if he insults and criticizes the monks, and if he fosters divisions among monks."¹³⁶ There are also general rules and regulations that govern the common life of all groups in the vihara. For example, the rule about ownership of property that the Sangha does not allow the individual monk to own (Mahāvagga, v, 13), the rule about eating and begging (Mahāvagga, I, 30,4), the rule about how to beg (Chulavagga, vii, 3.13), the rule about how to eat (Chulavagga, vii, 3-6), and the monk's medicine (Mahāvagga, vi).

During the Buddha's era, several famous viharas were built, including Jetavana, Purbarama, Venuvana, Yashtivana and Sitavana in Rajagriha. Jetavana, donated to construct by the wealthy merchant Anathapindika for the Sangha within the Jetavana grove, stands out in particular. The Buddha laid down specific criteria for an ideal vihara location: it should be at a moderate distance from the city, easily accessible yet secluded, offer tranquility suitable for a contemplative lifestyle, and be protected from disturbances both during the day and at night.¹³⁷ Rules cover every aspect of monastic life and allow the monk to live a peaceful existence. Historically, viharas have served as centers of learning and symbols of faith for communities since the time of the Buddha.

3.2.6 Training of Monastics

Monks were gathered in monasteries primarily for the study of religion and the cultivation of spirituality. The monastery was a kind of association of teachers and

¹³⁶Mv. I, 75, I.

¹³⁷Cv, vi, 4.

disciples. Therefore, each bhikkhu was expected to take in a disciple, give a nissaya, and give the upasampada ordination.¹³⁸ The ordinary instruction of a disciple monk includes reciting recitations, giving examinations, giving exhortations, and explaining the Dhamma.¹³⁹ Mahāvagga (Mahāvagga, iv,15,4) points out that some monks specialize in Dhamma recitation, others in reciting Suttanta, still others in Vinaya, and still others in preaching Dhamma. Depending on how advanced the students were in their studies, the teacher assigned them to different classes. In the lowest classes, the suttas were repeated.¹⁴⁰ This method of memorization was "chanting over each other's suttantas." The next level class was the class of Vinaya, which the students who were in charge mastered by discussing it with each other. After the Vinaya came the Dhamma classes for monks who were training to be teachers. The students had to discuss the Dhamma with each other before they could preach it to others. The highest classes belonged to the bhikkhus who devoted themselves to meditation, that is, the practice of the four Jhānas. In addition to these categories of followers, there were also disciples known as Epicureans, who were known for their worldly wisdom and robust physical abilities."¹⁴¹

In the era of earlier Buddhist education, most education was oral. According to Rhys Davids, "There is no evidence of writing implements for example substance used for writing, quill, manner of expression, leaves, and writing tools, neither of a process involved in copying manuscripts, which must have constituted a large part of monastic's

¹³⁸Ibid., I, 27.

¹³⁹Ibid., III, 7,4.

¹⁴⁰The interpretation of the term "suttanta" as found in earlier texts differs from its later accepted definitions. A passage in the Pātimokkha refers to the Dhamma being part of the suttas, initially referring to the offenses set out in the Pātimokkha, but later referring to the individual clauses within that document. The term "sutta" was not yet restricted to the texts that were later assigned to the Suttapitaka.

¹⁴¹CV, vi, 4.

activities if a monastic needed to study printed materials for their education." In the Mahavagga texts (Mahavagga, ii, 17,5,6) there is an account of a monk who lacked knowledge of the Pātimokkha. He is advised to learn it from a nearby monastic community in order to gain this knowledge. Similarly, there is an incident in which a lay follower known as Upāsaka invites a group of monks to listen to him recite the suttanta to ensure its preservation and prevent it from disappearing into obscurity.¹⁴² These excerpts show that oral tradition was an important aspect of Buddhist educational practices.

Within Buddhist education there are standard teachers known as Upādhyāyas and Ācāryas. Apart from these regular teachers, eminent teachers who were recognized as experts and authorities in their respective fields were also appointed to impart knowledge. For example, Venerable Upāli, a specialist in the Vinaya, taught various groups of monks, as stated in the Chulavagga (Chulavagga, vi, i3, i): Therefore, numerous monks, including those who were elderly, in their middle years, and young, acquired knowledge of the Vinaya from Venerable Upāli.¹⁴³ Thus, the Vinaya courses led by Upāli became popular. Upāli imparted his teachings with deference to the older monks, and the elders listened to him with reverence for the content of his discourses. Similarly, notable masters like Sāriputta expounded the wonders of preaching, while Moggallāna expounded the wonders of iddhi.¹⁴⁴ The Pāli scriptures list the names of some eminent teachers who are referred to as thera (senior) bhikkhus. Included in their ranks were individuals such as Sāriputta, Mahā-Moggallāna, Mahā-Kachchāna, Mahā-Kotthita,

¹⁴²Mv. iii, 5, 9.

¹⁴³Cv. vi, i3, i.

¹⁴⁴Ibid., 4, 2-3.

Mahā-Kappina, Mahā-Chunda, Anuruddha, Revata, Upāli, Ānanda, and Rāhula, among other venerable monks, traveled together through the region of Kāsi.¹⁴⁵

The educational methods of the Buddhist educational system were debated and discussed. Throughout his forty-five-year reign, the Buddha held continuous debates and discussions with representatives of various philosophical schools and also answered questions from his own disciples during assemblies.

Mookerji pointed out that "The Buddhist scriptures contain numerous mentions of the Buddha's conversions subsequent to his discourses."¹⁴⁶ Early Buddhist literature describes the rules for conducting discussions and the methods of disputation as expressed in the *kathāvatthu* (I, i-69). *Chulavagga* provides a detailed explanation. This shows that the ability to reason is one of the most valuable skills in Buddhist education. Regular monastic assemblies were introduced, occurring bi-monthly during both the full moon and the new moon phases. These gatherings facilitated interaction between the monks of the different monasteries, beyond the confines of their individual dwellings, and encouraged a feeling of togetherness and fellowship among the broader monk community. The appropriateness of the gathering's presence was measured by natural landmarks such as mountains, trees, rocks, forests, paths, anthills, bodies of water and rivers. All members of the brotherhood must attend the assembly. If a member is ill, he must make a statement before the assembly through another monk.

¹⁴⁵Ibid., I, 18, I.

¹⁴⁶Radhakumud Mookerji, *Ancient Indian Education: Brahmanical and Buddhist* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, 1989), 453.

In the context of Buddhist education, there are vihāras in which the monks live together and support each other in their personal development. However, there are also monks who withdraw from the semi-closed environment of the monasteries and instead long for the solitude of the forests to devote themselves to meditation. Monks who went to the forest and spent their days in seclusion were called forester monks. It is believed that living in the silence of the forests and caves in the highlands leads to complete mastery of detachment. This is essential to achieve the calm and serenity of awakening.¹⁴⁷ A practice for seclusion in a wilderness was a common practice among monks. Even Buddha himself sometimes sought tranquility in solitude from the worries caused by quarrelsome, quarreling monks, and so on.

3.3 Education Outside the Monasteries

Buddhist education is not only about one's own liberation, but also about the welfare of society. Some of the rules of monks towards society are that monks must not live in the forest, in the mountains or in remote areas, without any connection with society. Due to the nature of monastic life, monks cannot earn a living. In order for them to earn a living, they must rely on laypeople to support and maintain the articles. The interaction between monks and lay individuals is marked by a significant level of mutual give- and- take. Monks exemplify teachings of the Dhamma and fulfill religious duties, while the laity support the monastic community materially. Those among the laity who take refuge in the Triple Gem can be referred to as Upāsaka (the lay man) and Upāsikā (the lay women). Precepts for Upāsakas and Upāsikas entails refraining from harming, taking

¹⁴⁷T. W. Rhys Davids, *Buddhism: Its History and Literature* (New York: Cosimo, Inc., 2005), 204.

what is not given, engaging in inappropriate sexual conduct, lying, and consuming intoxicating substances. In addition, A Sigālavāda Sutta (DN 31) outlines the duties of householders and describes roles such as those involving parents and children, educators and learners, companions, and the relationship between lay people and monks. For teachers and students, there are five ways teachers should be respected by a student: "by standing up for them, attending classes regularly, desiring to learn eagerly, serving them duly, and receiving instruction." Teachers should be honored by showing kindness and care to their students. This includes ensuring discipline, providing a clear understanding of the lesson, imparting knowledge comprehensively, introducing them to their peers and colleagues and ensuring their safety in every way.¹⁴⁸

For the relationship between ascetics and laymen, there are five duties for monks: "by acting, speaking, and thinking kindly, having an open door, and providing for material needs." And the duties of lay people to monks are six: "to keep you from wrong actions, to guide you to good actions, to think compassionately, to tell you what you should know, to clarify what you already know, and to show you the way to heaven."¹⁴⁹ An example of the guidance of lay people by monks can be found in the monastic code (Mahāvagga, V.I:9), in which king Bimbisāra asks the leaders of the community to ask the Buddha for advice in matters of eternal truths. He gave them a proper discourse in which he spoke about "giving, morality, celestial realm, danger, the futility and corruption of desires, and the benefit of relinquishment."

¹⁴⁸DN 31, 29.

¹⁴⁹Ibid.

The texts indicate that the education of the laity depended on the monasteries, which served as centers of Buddhist learning. According to Buddhist teachings, monks were regarded exclusively as authorities and experts in sacred knowledge. There was no secular education. The laity had to rely on the system and centers of education that existed outside the Buddhist monasteries. Thus, the temples were the center of Buddhist education, both for monks and lay people.

3.3.1 The Vow to Become a Buddhist

Buddhism has a variety of vows, ranging from complicated commitments to broader ethical principles and intentions. Theravada monks, for example, pledge to uphold the comprehensive rules of the Vinaya, which prescribe their behavior, including celibacy. Lay Buddhists of all denominations commit themselves to observing the five guidelines - refraining from taking life, refraining from theft, refraining from falsehood, refraining from inappropriate sexual conduct, and refraining from intoxicants even if the interpretations of these precepts vary greatly.

The term vow has two meanings in Buddhist terminology: A vow is a commitment made to oneself and sometimes to a higher power, aimed at seeking favor or assistance from that entity. Lay children can take a vow to practice the five precepts. The precepts or *sīla* are soteriological and disciplinary. These are self-imposed limitations aimed at avoiding spiritual impurity and achieving personal purification in order to accelerate soteriological progress.

To become a Buddhist, the obligation to observe the precepts can be a part of the formal ceremony. The ritual involves seeking sanctuary in the Three Treasures — the

Awakened One as a role model, the Dharma as a guiding principle and the Sangha as a monastic community and practitioners. Depending on the tradition, a lay practitioner may vow to keep all, some or none of the vows during this ceremony, with the option of taking additional vows as they progress on their spiritual journey. Someone who commits to all five vows is called an upasaka (for men) or upasika (for women). This interpretation has its roots in the Brahmajāla Sutta,¹⁵⁰ where the fifth major precept actually prohibits the sale of intoxicants, while the precept prohibiting the consumption of intoxicants is one of the minor ones.

Lay children may additionally vow to keep the eight precepts during extraordinary holy days, retreats, or other occasions recommended by their teacher. These embrace the unique five precepts (however refraining from any sexual pastime at a particular time), as well as refraining from taking food at particular times, participating in different types of entertainment, self-worship, and sleeping in excessive or luxurious beds.

3.3.2 Precepts for Lay Buddhists

In Buddhism there are various types of precepts, including those comprising three, five, ten or sixteen principles. Among these, the basic set is known as pañcasila or the five precepts in Pāli. These core guidelines, which include abstaining from causing harm to living beings, taking what is not given, engaging in improper sexual behavior, speaking falsehoods, and using intoxicating substances, serve as a basic moral code for

¹⁵⁰DN 1.

lay practitioners in Theravada Buddhism. These five precepts can be summarized succinctly as follows:

The initial precept prohibits taking life, encompassing both human and animal life. A violation occurs when a life is ended, e.g. by the strike of a mosquito or the destruction of a germ in an egg by boiling. Those who have a deep understanding of ceremonial practices claim that acts such as torture or inflicting minor suffering also violate this precept.

The second precept dictates refraining from theft. This includes all forms of theft, be it the appropriation of material possessions without the owner's consent or borrowing without asking permission. It is generally assumed that participation in gambling is a violation of this precept.

The third precept concerns sexual misconduct. It includes not only clear offenses such as adultery, incest and rape, but also behavior that indicates an intention to behave inappropriately, such as flirting with a woman who is already married to someone else.

The fourth precept refers to the renunciation of falsehood. Although this rule is apparently simple, it can easily be violated. Refraining from dishonest speech encompasses various forms of falsehood, including exaggeration, insinuation, gossip, name-calling, deception, joking, and teasing. Often this precept is transgressed at the same time as another: Breaking a promise violates both the second and fourth commandments, while flirting with a married woman violates both the third and fourth commandments.

The last guideline concerns the utilization of intoxicants. It prohibits a consumption of alcoholic beverage and all other intoxicants such as opium and drugs, unless they are used for medicinal purposes.

In the Pāli canon, the initial reference to the five precepts appears within the canonical scriptures of the early Buddhist tradition.¹⁵¹ Originally, these precepts seem to have served as a prerequisite for any further progress after following the Buddha's teachings. This is why they are frequently referenced during the formal induction of a new adherent introduced.

The words in the Dhammapada to the five precepts describe that: "Those who harm living beings, utter falsehoods, take what isn't rightfully theirs, engage in adultery, or indulge in intoxicants, they are undermining their own well-being in this very life."¹⁵² All qualities should therefore be avoided by those who not only strive for a physical human existence but also want to cultivate a human spirit. The initiation of true humanity depends above all on the observance of the Five Precepts, which are often referred to as "the Dhamma for human beings" (manussa-dhamma). Observance of these precepts makes the human realm bearable, but when observance wanes, it transforms into a realm characterized by conflict and adversity.

These precepts represent the basic and essential observance of ethical behavior for a Buddhist practitioner. They are intended to prevent the follower from verbally and physically engaging in harmful actions and serve as the basis for further spiritual progress in the Dhamma. For example, when a Buddhist meditates, it is essential to observe the

¹⁵¹Five Precepts founded in many sutta such as SN 47.21, SN 46.11, SN 37.24, and SN 14.25.

¹⁵²Dhp 246-247.

Five Precepts. Meditation facilitates the cultivation of a wholesome mind, but this can be hindered if one's actions and speech are unrestrained. As for the relationship between the precepts and meditation, it is important that you put aside all worldly activities before entering into meditation. Engaging in such activities can cloud or only temporarily distract the mind — thus violating the fifth precept — while meditation aims at the gradual purification of the mind.

3.4 The Progression of Wisdom in the Context of Buddhism

Buddhist teaching aims is to promote wisdom. The path to acquiring knowledge in Buddhism is described by three paths: 1) *suta maya paññā*, i.e. wisdom gained through listening or learning, 2) *cintā maya paññā*, i.e. wisdom cultivated through contemplation, and 3) *bhāvanā maya paññā*, i.e. wisdom developed through mental cultivation.

1) *Suta maya paññā*: This form of knowledge, acquired through listening or learning, includes wisdom gained by following the advice of virtuous companions (*Kalayānamittatā*) (SN V 2-30; AN I.11; It 9), through the instruction of others (*paratoghosa*) or through personal encounters and experiences. This knowledge spans the six senses and represents a refined understanding that can motivate the individual to follow the Dhamma path. On its own, however, it is not sufficient to attain liberation.

2) Wisdom derived from contemplation, or *Cintā maya paññā*, refers to insight gained through personal reflection. It involves comprehension of transience, anguish, and absence of inherent selfhood based on an intellectual understanding cultivated through the contemplation of cause and effect.

3) Wisdom cultivated through spiritual cultivation, known as *Bhāvanā mayā paññā*, is attained through meditation and arises through the direct realization of the truth and diligent practice. It entails recognizing the impermanence (*anicca*), suffering (*dukkha*), and absence of inherent self (*anatta*) in existence. To cultivate wisdom (*Bhāvanā mayā paññā*), it's crucial to uphold moral conduct (*sila*) and nurture proper concentration (*samādhi*). Only a mind deeply rooted in correct concentration can apprehend and understand reality as it genuinely exists.

The three sources of knowledge work together. Thus, a disciple first acquires knowledge from an external source and then progresses by rationally contemplating it and endeavoring to intellectually grasp these fundamental facets of existence (impermanence, suffering, and non-self), thereby developing rational attention (*yoniso manasikāra*) (SN V2-30; It 9). Alternatively, one can begin with *cinta maya paññā*, their intellectual understanding, by reflecting on transience, suffering, and absence of inherent self, by heeding the wisdom of others, affirm their intellectual insights. It should be remembered that neither source, whichever comes first, can bring liberation. Liberation results only from *Bhāvanā mayā paññā*. Nevertheless, the distinctive Buddhist knowledge or insight refers to a section of the eightfold path that is intuitive and leads to the attainment of the four stages of enlightenment and the realization of *nibbāna*. This knowledge includes the penetration of the concept of impermanence (*anicca*). This is knowledge from three sources, and he asserts that only the third kind of knowledge can penetrate and eliminate the root cause of suffering, namely craving, ignorance, and attachment.

Children can learn from others, such as their parents, teachers, monks, and other people who are good friends or wise people, that is, from whatever we can hear or learn

that is good. Whatever we learn or hear depends on listening and learning with *Yonisomanasikāra* (attentive attention) and also on having a good friend.

3.4.1 Learning in Buddhist Education

Education is actually not only the systematic teaching and training of young people in schools and colleges. In its broadest sense, it means any process by which learners gain knowledge or experience of their environment or the outside world.

Proper teaching is a way of thinking, which does not consist only of memory. Thinking is the way of wisdom that is not absent to be continued. Thinking is caused to evolve, that is, humanity can think very often in the new innovation and can do so forever until it changes the way of the new educational thinking and then it can be changed.

Education is used in the Pāli language in the word *sikkha*, which means learning, study, discipline, training, and the pursuit of knowledge in a particular field.¹⁵³ *Sikkha* is a method or process to acquire knowledge for a career and making a perfect person. From a Buddhist perspective, *sikkha* is a virtue that promotes the holistic development of an individual and leads them from worldly happiness to liberation from suffering, both physical and mental. *Sikkha* can also be considered according to the word, which can be divided into two meanings.

1) It means the tool of self-knowledge (*Sayang tena ikkhatiti Sikkhā*), namely understanding self-quality, knowing the self-power as well as self-potentiality, now much capacity and now to use it, etc. It can be briefly said that all sides are realized as in work, self-realization in knowledge, skill, and a kind of capacity that can do in a profession, etc.

¹⁵³Vin. III:23, DN. I:181; AN. I:238, SN. II:50, SN. III:131.

Self-knowledge makes it self-realization and can be made to deal with the right things.

Educational study in this sense is to serve self-realization.

2) It means the apparatus for self-realization (Saccan tena ikkhatiti Sikkhā: self-realization), i.e., the state of self-knowledge and clear cognition of various things or truth cognition according to truth.

Therefore, both conceptions focus on the self-learner, i.e., learning by doing and teaching the right environment. In modern teachings, the focus is on the student to understand himself as much as possible.

The Buddhist teachings have taught people to understand themselves, according to Buddha's word "danto settho manussesu," which means that the practiced person is the best among people. This is self-realization and understanding very carefully.

Education in Buddhism can be divided into the following three characteristic principles:

1) Sila - morality, i.e. the practice for physical and linguistic training, i.e. disciplines, laws and rules.

2) Samādhi - concentration, which is the tool for training the mind to strengthen self-realization.

3) Pañña - wisdom, which is the way of using various tools in life.

3.4.2 Learning Process in Buddhist Education

Man experiences the world through the khandhas. The khandhas refer to collections or groupings of elements such as physical form (rūpa), feelings (vedanā), cognition (saññā), volitional formations (saṅkhāra), and consciousness (viññāna). The

aggregate physical form pertains to the material or corporeal aspects.¹⁵⁴ This encompasses not solely the human physique but also the immediate physical surroundings. More precisely, the form aggregate encompasses the five physical senses and their corresponding objects: sight, sound, smell, taste, and touch. However, physical elements alone are not enough to experience sensations. The mere contact between the senses and their objects— - such as the eyes and what is seen, or the ears and what is heard — does not lead to an experience without consciousness (*viññāna*). For example, the eyes can remain in contact with a visible object indefinitely without triggering an experience, and the same applies to the ears with sounds. An experience only arises when the consciousness, the sense organ, and its object come together. Essentially, the meeting of eyes, visible objects and consciousness leads to the experience of seeing. Consciousness therefore plays an essential part in the emergence of experience. This understanding was explained in the Pāli Canon, which describes the learning process of humanity. By understanding the five aggregates, practitioners can uncover truths and the path to liberation from the notion of self.

The central emphasis of the Buddha's teachings lies in the facets that make up human existence, whereby these teachings are geared towards the emancipation of the individual. The five aggregates are subject to change and decay. If one is aware of this fact, one can be liberated from suffering.

¹⁵⁴SN 22:48, SN 56:13, SN 45:178, AN 4:90.

3.4.3 The Elements that Bring About the Achievement of Wisdom

The primary aim of Buddhist education is the development of insight. Wisdom does not arise through supernatural influences or spontaneously but from certain causes. As described in the Pañña Sutta (AN 8.2), there are eight factors that contribute to the attainment of wisdom, which are essential for spiritual progress and its continuous increase and fulfillment once attained. The eight causes and reasons are as follows:

1) The first cause is associated with a wise person. The disciple dwells in close communion with a mentor or a highly qualified companion on the spiritual path with whom he has cultivated deep feelings of shame and conscience, affection and reverence. This initial condition is essential to promote the attainment and further growth, completeness, and refinement of insight.

2) Asking questions. When the student is under the guidance of a teacher or a respected companion with whom he shares a deep sense of shame, remorse, affection, and respect, he is given the opportunity to ask for guidance. The teacher or companion then reveals hidden truths, clarifies ambiguities, and resolves various forms of confusion. This is the second factor that contributes to the cultivation of knowledge.

3) After hearing the teachings, the disciple attains a double form of isolation: physical seclusion and mental seclusion.

4) A student cultivates ethical behavior, follows the rules of monasticism, behaves decently, and collects alms in appropriate places. They see danger in the slightest mistake and abide by the rules they have set for themselves.

5) Listening. The student has listened attentively, memorized, and retained the teachings they have received. They have diligently absorbed teachings that are

praiseworthy from beginning to end, advocating the virtuous way of life, complete and incomparable in its purity. These teachings have been repeatedly heard, memorized, discussed, collected, deeply contemplated, and thoroughly understood.

6) The student remains determined to discard unwholesome qualities and embrace wholesome ones. They remain resolute and unwavering in their efforts and diligently fulfill their duties with regard to virtuous qualities.

7) Among the Saṅgha, a disciple refrains from idle chatter and instead focuses on Dhamma discussions, either initiating them or encouraging others to do so, and they value noble silence without despising it.

8) The disciple meditates and attentively observes the emergence and cessation of the five components to which they are attached. They contemplate each aggregate and recognize its nature, its origin, and its cessation. They contemplate physicality, sensation, cognition, volitional formations, and consciousness, comprehending their attributes, origination, and cessation.

This is the eighth factor, the eighth essential circumstance that facilitates the attainment of insight, which is crucial for the realization of the goal of Buddhist education.

3.4.4 Goal of Instruction

The aim of Buddhist instruction is the realization of Nibbana. Therefore, the aim of Buddhist teaching was to help disciples attain Nibbana. Since the practice of the Eightfold Path serves as a method for attaining nirvana, the primary goal of the Buddhist educational system was to cultivate adherence to these principles. In addition, Buddhist

teaching was intended to help the student develop personal character and realize the real truth of life. Personal habits that were desirable in terms of society or social life were incorporated into the educational system to create opportunities for practice. Thus, the goal of Buddhist teaching was to help people be ethical.

3.5 Child Education in Buddhism

The aim of the Buddhist education of children is the holistic growth of their character, encompassing physical, spiritual, ethical, and cognitive dimensions. A further aim is to educate a liberated, wise, intelligent, moral, non-violent and worldly individual. Buddhist child education is comprehensive and is open to children from all walks of life. In the early days of Buddhism, education was mainly restricted to monasteries and their inhabitants. Later, however, it was open to all and lay children also had the opportunity to be educated in Buddhism.

In Buddhism, the education of children revolves around the *tiśikkha*, the three basic principles of education: precept, concentration, and wisdom. Precept, or *sīla*, focuses on refining physical and verbal behavior, concentration, or *samadhi*, focuses on nurturing and strengthening the mind, while wisdom, or *Pañña*, promotes the growth of human intelligence. Child education as depicted in the sutras never really deviates from these three points.

The first aspect of child education is morality. In Buddhism, ethical behavior encompasses the possible cultivation of the Three Aspects of the Path: appropriate communication, ethical conduct, and righteous livelihood. These three factors embody the practice of morality, which involves behavior that conforms to the norms of daily life

and avoids causing harm to oneself or others. Morality is often expressed through a set of ethical precepts, such as the five, eight, or ten precepts, and manifests itself through one's physical and verbal behavior. Its fundamental aim is to promote peace, well-being, and freedom from negative consequences. Morality also relates to one's role as a member of society and the responsible use of vital resources.¹⁵⁵

The second aspect is the cultivation of concentration (*samādhi*), which is about directing the mind so that it focuses on the state that is most conducive to achieving the goals the children are striving for. In Buddhist treatises, the concentrated mind is described as capable of work (*kammaniya*), a state suitable for accomplishing its task. Teaching children meditation and mindfulness can improve their overall well-being and empower them to face life's challenges with presence, self-compassion, and open-mindedness. Introducing children to meditation gives them tools to increase their self-awareness, manage stress and deal with difficult situations effectively. The earlier children learn these practices, the greater the potential to foster their resilience and hone their mindfulness skills as they get older. In addition, learning mindfulness helps develop important early childhood skills such as attention, memory performance, task switching, and interpersonal interactions. These foundational skills are crucial for advanced cognitive tasks such as planning, problem-solving, reasoning, and fostering positive social connections.¹⁵⁶

The third aspect is the development of insight (*paññā*) through dedicated practice aimed at gaining a comprehensive understanding of the true essence of everything. This

¹⁵⁵AN 3:84, AN 3:86, AN 3:87, AN 3:89.

¹⁵⁶*Ibid.*, 84.

practice promotes deep understanding and insight into the true nature of existence. In contrast to the intellectual understanding often emphasized in academic and scientific contexts today, Buddhist insight is intuitive, clear, and direct. Through insight training, children can learn to think logically and comprehend the transient, dissatisfactory, and inherently devoid nature of phenomena, ultimately leading to liberation.¹⁵⁷

3.5.1 Building Knowledge for Children in Buddhist Education

In Buddhism, the Noble Eightfold Path acts as the route to the end of suffering and stands as the fourth segment of the Four Noble Truths. It can be summarized in three main divisions: Wisdom (*paññā*), Morality (*sīla*), and Contemplation (*samādhi*). The Eight Noble Path encompasses eight important things in children's lives—from the way they think and speak to the mindfulness they show toward others. Through steadfast adherence to the Eightfold Path, a youngster can live a moral existence and uncover inner tranquility and spiritual illumination. Building knowledge for children can follow the eightfold path as follows:

- 1) The Right view means grasping the basic teachings of Buddhism, such as the Four Truths of the Noble Ones and the Three Marks of Existence. While a full understanding of these teachings may be beyond the grasp of most children, the concept of impermanence (*aniccā*) serves as a central theme that ties them together and can be easily explored with children of all ages. To facilitate understanding, teachers can demonstrate natural cycles, such as the changing seasons, the phases of the moon, or the life cycle of a plant. This helps children to recognize the constant process of change and

¹⁵⁷Ibid.

understand that every ending heralds a new beginning. Teachers can also encourage children to observe the cycles in their own bodies and notice the impermanence of physical sensations, such as the healing of injuries or the subsiding of tiredness through rest. Older children can guide teachers to notice the transience of their feelings and thoughts— and to recognize that feelings and moods change over time.

2) Right intention refers to the understanding of the role of self-discipline and determination on the spiritual path. In certain traditions, especially monastic ones, it is associated with true renunciation, which may not be applicable or suitable for young children. However, children can be encouraged to cultivate their willpower and develop a sense of making decisions and pursuing long-term goals. This can range from major decisions to simpler ones, such as committing to exercise for health or saving money for a specific goal or desired item. Such experiences can help to foster children's ability to take on and follow through, developing a sense of self-determination and responsibility.

3) Right speech encompasses refraining from lying and not using offensive language, aspects that most parents and teachers already observe with the children entrusted to them. However, a deeper understanding comes when children are taught to consider the impact of their words on others and vice versa, rather than focusing solely on punitive measures. Teachers can encourage children to think about how their words affect others and how they would feel if someone spoke to them in the same way. This provides an opportunity to promote empathy, although such discussions may be more effective after the child has calmed down. It is important to differentiate between negative comments and negative emotions to ensure that children do not feel it is "wrong" to feel anger but learn to express such feelings in a constructive and non-hurtful way.

4) Right action means behaving ethically and refraining from harming others or taking from them what they are not entitled to. Similar to Right Speech (and all three moral components), there is an opportunity to cultivate empathy by helping the child understand how their actions affect others, rather than just emphasizing following rules. Discussions about rules and their reasons (if applicable) can also redirect attention from obedience to empathy. This approach helps children understand that it is not about negative feelings, but about their behavior.

5) Right Livelihood concerns engaging in work and earning a living in an ethical way. For children, the essence of this principle is that they understand their connection to the world and the significant role they play in influencing and enriching it. Children can understand how their actions affect the environment, their family, school, and the wider community. In essence, the principle of Right Living emerges from Right Speech and Right Action and enables children to see themselves as an integral part of society and to recognize the impact of their decisions.

6) Right Effort is commonly described as the endeavor to cultivate thoughts, expressions, and actions that advance one's spiritual journey and encompass qualities such as kindness, gratitude, and compassion. Traditionally, the focus is on encouraging "wholesome" thoughts and driving away or restraining "unwholesome" thoughts. The emphasis is primarily on self-knowledge rather than direct action, although it is of course closely interwoven with right action.

The first step in encouraging children is to encourage them to recognize and articulate their feelings and thoughts. Regularly asking them about their feelings and helping them develop a vocabulary to express their thoughts and emotions is essential. By

guiding them to distinguish between thoughts and emotions that contribute to their own well-being and that of others and those that do not, you encourage the self-awareness associated with Right Effort. However, similar to the ethical aspects, the goal is not to teach children to suppress negative feelings. The focus should be on acknowledging real emotions and expressing them authentically, rather than suppressing certain feelings and being "nice" just to get praise.

7) Right Mindfulness is closely linked to Right Effort, because it means observing everything in us openly and impartially. When teaching Right Mindfulness to children, you should encourage them to focus on a particular situation and environment - a skill that children have naturally mastered. The most effective way to teach children mindfulness is to allow them to fully engage in activities that they enjoy. Educators can also take children on a walk-in nature and encourage them to notice everything they experience with their five senses - sight, hearing, taste, smell and touch.

8) Right concentration is most closely related to meditation. It requires the practitioner to concentrate all his mental faculties on either a physical or mental entity and engage in the practice of the Four Absorptions, also known in Pāli as the Four Jhāna. Concentration is not only difficult for adults who are more self-conscious, but it is even more difficult for children to concentrate. However, it is possible to teach children to concentrate and achieve their goal, as the Buddhist treatises show. The teacher can use various methods to teach children, such as concentrating on a selected object or sound.

3.5.2 Learning Process of Children

The essence of Buddhist education lies in grasping the truth. When one delves into the life of the Buddha, one finds his deep comprehension of the Four-Noble-Truths. The Buddha's quest consisted of meditation under a tree, where he immersed himself in the depths of his own mind and body. His search was not external, but internal.

According to the Gotama Sutta (SN 12.10) in the Samyutta Nikaya, the Buddha explored his inner self, observing the present circumstances and contemplating the root of suffering. First, he acknowledged the existence of suffering and recognized the noble truth it represents. He then explained the complicated nature of suffering. Upon closer examination of the Buddha's teachings, it becomes evident that suffering originates from the six sense faculties, comprising the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body, and mind.¹⁵⁸

Children go via the same learning process and perceive the world through the Six Sense Foundations, which serve as channels of knowledge. In Buddhist literature, these are also referred to as sense doors. Each of these bases - sight, hearing, smell, taste, touch, and cognition — functions like the door through which consciousness can enter the mind. Mental states can arise through each of these senses, hence the term "doors".

The functional mechanism of the sensory doors, such as the eye and its interaction with an object, involves a specific process. Upon encountering a visible object, the consciousness of seeing arises in conjunction with both the eye and the object. Upon encountering a visible object, the eye's consciousness of seeing is awakened. The consciousness of seeing thus arises through the interaction between the eye and the

¹⁵⁸MN 9, SN 56:12:2, SN 56:14, AN 3:61.

visible object. Other sense bases function in the same way. The most important one is consciousness because without consciousness the others cannot function. A dead animal, for example, still has the five sense bases and the objects associated with them, but since it has no consciousness, it cannot function and cannot be said to be a being.

People who are not well educated can have impurities and attachments because the doors of the senses are open. For example, when you see a beautiful thing, you realize that it is beautiful. When one judges in this way, a pleasant feeling arises for that thing. Because of this pleasant feeling, attachment arises. It is different if the thing is not beautiful and one does not like it, then an unpleasant feeling arises. Because of an unpleasant feeling, anger or aversion arises and dukkha, suffering, also arises. The pleasant and the unpleasant lead one to do good or bad deeds. The deeds that are done lead to happiness or suffering in one's life.

However, man cannot close the sense door and the Buddhist teachings do not recommend closing it. Man can use the six sense bases as initial tools for knowing the truth by cultivating sati or mindfulness. Mindfulness is a filter or protection for your mind. When a person lives with mindfulness, he can recognize what he sees, smells, touches, etc., whether it is good or bad, and how he should deal with it. In the teachings of Dhammanusati (AN 6.10), the Buddha conveyed the importance of mindfulness for our perception. He taught: "Observe everything you see as it really exists. Pay attention to the way you perceive things. Recognize scents for what they really are. Perceive tastes as they really are. Feel sensations with real awareness. Be aware of your thoughts as they really unfold." The Buddha emphasizes the need to be aware of all six sensory bases, the related stimuli and the six fundamental forms of consciousness. This approach enables us

to control the six pathways of perception in a way that prevents mental defilements from entering the mind.

Therefore, Buddhist education focuses on the cultivation of sati at every moment of life. Children must learn to understand the functioning of the six senses and to close the six doors with sati or mindfulness. This method of closing these six gates is called *indriya-samatta* in the Pāli. "Indriya" refers to the six gates, while "samatta" means their closure or sealing. Therefore, *indriya-samatta* is a crucial element in the doctrines of the awakened one enables the child to free himself from various forms of suffering.

Chapter 4 Children Depicted in the Buddhist Scriptures

The concept of children can be defined differently in different cultures. The English words referred to children such as infant, baby, toddler, boy, girl, youth, and teenager are not specifically associated with a particular biological age. Then, the definition of children may be defined by physical appearances, behaviors, and age. However, this chapter will focus on the term children that was depicted in the Buddhist scriptures or children mentioned in Buddhist treatises.

4.1 The Concept of Children in Buddhism

4.1.1 Definition of Children in the Pāli Canon

There are many Pāli words that can be translated to a child. For example, Kumāra – a young boy or son, Kumārī – a young girl, Dāraka – boy or child, Dārikā – a young girl, Putta – young of an animal, Bala or Bālya – childhood or youth, Apacca - child, and so on. Those are not specific enough in all contexts to help describe the meaning of children. For example, the explanation in the Putta Sutta of Itivuttaka (Iti 74) depicts three types of children that are found in the world as follows: "Monks, there are three types of sons found in this world. What are the three? The excellent son, the average son, and the inferior son." ... "The wise aspire for a son who is either excellent or average. They do not desire an inferior son, one who brings shame to the family." (Iti 74)."¹⁵⁹ These texts described the characteristics of children but were not specific enough for defining the meaning of children. In addition, the Anguttara Nikāya texts (AN 5.39) explain the five expectations of parents who desire the birth of a son in their family, as

¹⁵⁹Iti, 74.

described below: "Monks, parents hope for a son to be born into their family, contemplating five future possibilities. What are these five? (1) 'After being cared for by us, he will care for us. (2) Or he will provide assistance to us. (3) Our family lineage will continue. (4) He will manage the family estate. (5) Or else, after we have passed away, he will make offerings on our behalf.' Reflecting on these five prospects, parents hope for a son to be born into their family."¹⁶⁰ These texts depicted the qualities of children that parents expected them to be. Entire suttas, the texts related to children generally depicted the ways to cultivate morals, virtues, and wisdom, including the responsibilities of offspring toward their parents and the relationship of children to others surrounding them. Therefore, the Pāli sutta did not give enough comprehensive descriptions of the term children.

There are texts in the Vinaya that provide further understanding of the term children, particularly the rule of ordination, which can help to distinguish between a child and an adult. According to the Vinaya, the Buddha did not allow a person under twenty ages of the year to take a full ordination (*upasampadā*) (the *pācittiya* 65). A boy who wishes to join the sangha, but who still has not reached the required age can content themselves into taking the lower ordination (*pabbajjā*) or taking the ten precepts of a novice (*sāmanera*) as their code of behavior. From this passage, it is possible to interpret that the term children in Buddhism means any young person below the age of twenty. Scholars such as Amy Langenberg in *Little Buddha* seem to have agreed to use the

¹⁶⁰AN 5.39.

Vinaya to help create a definition of childhood.¹⁶¹ In the early phase of Buddhism, however, there was no indication that age was a factor considered for any form of higher ordination. Textual evidence indicates that later a regulation was introduced that provided for full ordination only for persons who had reached the age of twenty, since the inception of their consciousness upon conception. In the Theravada tradition, the conventional method for calculating a person's age involves adding six months to the years since birth. As explained in the commentary, a child born after seven months in the womb has a chance of survival, whereas a child born prematurely at six months typically faces more challenges. The rationale for imposing an age limit for full ordination is explained in the Mahāvagga. It tells the story of Upāli, a child, and his seventeen companions who asked their parents for permission to receive full ordination. They then went to the monastery to receive ordination. After being ordained, they were very hungry in the early morning because the monastic code did not allow monks to eat after midday. As little children, they cried out for food at dawn. Seeing this, older monastic advised them to eating. The Buddha, observing this scene, instructed the Venerable Ānanda not to give full ordination to children under the age of twenty. These texts emphasize that the child in Buddhism is a person who is under twenty years old. Being homeless makes it hard for them to bear hunger, thirst, and warmth. Children are not strong enough to face the troubles caused by insects, reptiles, mosquitoes, and nature. They are also not able to bear physical and mental harassment. The completion of twenty years of age is becoming

¹⁶¹Vanessa R. Sasson, "Charting New Territory: Children and Childhoods in Buddhist Texts and Traditions," in *Little Buddhas: Children and Childhoods in Buddhist Texts and Traditions*, ed. Vanessa R. Sasson (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 5.

an adult both mentally and physically to take on the responsibilities of full ordination. They are also able to face physical pains, humiliation, social and mental depression which may happen in their life. That was the reason why the Buddha did not allow them to take full ordination. The vinaya not only gives the specifics about the criteria to become a monk but also a requirement for becoming a novice which a person must have a minimum of fifteen years of age. However, subsequently, certain individuals approached the Buddha with grievances that their son, despite being under the age of fifteen, was mature enough to embark on a monastic path but had been denied acceptance by the community. Therefore, the Buddha went on to say that a monk can give the ten precepts of a novice to a kid under the age of fifteen years old, provided that the latter can shoo away crows, as a Code requires: "An individual seeking ordination should be a male who fulfills the age criteria and must lack any disqualifying traits for ordination... An aspirant for monastic life should be a minimum of fifteen years old or, if younger, capable of scaring away crows."¹⁶² Thus a new measure or limitation of age as a novice or *sāmanera* was declared. At this point, the Pāli texts did not give more detail about the minimum age of a child who could scare crows off. The annotation clarified this to mean an individual who is able to hold a clump of dirt in one hand. They can shoo away crows from their food while eating with their other hand. In Theravada tradition, however, the above regulation has been relaxed, and boys in the age group of five to seven are granted admission as long as they can help themselves.

¹⁶²Mv. I, 50.1 – I, 51.1.

Apparently, the term children were vague in the Pāli discourse, but it can be interpreted to mean a child under the age of twenty. This is because the Vinaya forbids anyone under the age of twenty from receiving full ordination.

4.1.2 Types of Children in the Pāli Canon

Children can be classified in different ways, such as gender, race, age, etc., depending on the purpose. The classification of children in the Pāli canon is found in Itivuttaka 74 (The Group of Three). These texts classify children into three types: heightened birth, similar birth, and lowered birth. The Buddha compares a child to a parent based on their virtues. These include taking refuge in the awakened one, his teachings, and order, observing the basic of morality, and maintaining moral conduct.

The first type of child is a heightened birth. Suppose a parent did not take refuge in Triple Gem with did not follow moral guidelines, but his child did. This kind of child the Buddha called heightened birth, as follows:

What distinguishes a son or daughter of elevated birth? It is when the parents of a son or daughter have not sought refuge in the Buddha, the Dhamma, or the Sangha. They do not refrain from harming living beings, stealing, engaging in sexual misconduct, lying, or consuming intoxicants. They possess unprincipled and wicked qualities. However, their son or daughter has sought refuge in the Buddha, the Dhamma, and the Sangha. They abstain from harming living beings, stealing, engaging in sexual misconduct, lying, or consuming intoxicants. They possess principled and admirable qualities. This is what is known as a son or daughter of elevated birth. (Iti 74).¹⁶³

From the passage, it appears that a child heightened his/her birth because he/she is a virtuous person. Although, the sutta does not indicate that a child must meet all the

¹⁶³Thanissaro Bhikkhu, trans., *Itivuttaka* (San Diego: Metta Forest Monastery, 2013), 47.

criteria to qualify for birth. However, it is possible to understand that each criterion is interrelated. If a child meets some of them, he should be qualified. For example, if a child has taken refuge in the Triple Gem, he or she will refrain from unwholesome behavior, keep the five precepts, and avoid the cause of carelessness. If a child meets some of the criteria but his parents do not, then he is qualified to become a child of heightened birth.

The second type of child is a similar birth. The similarity does not mention appearance, but the moral conduct of the child and the parents, who follow Buddhist teachings in particular. The parents of a child who has taken refuge in the Triple Gem. They follow moral guidelines. They are also ethical and have an exemplary character. And their child has taken refuge in the Buddha, the teaching, and the Sangha. They follow the five precepts and are ethical. It is called a child similar to their birth, as shown in the following passage in the Pali Canon.

And how does one become a son or daughter of comparable birth? In this scenario, the parents of a son or daughter have taken refuge in the Buddha, the Dhamma, and the Sangha. They refrain from harming living beings, stealing, engaging in sexual misconduct, lying, or consuming intoxicants. They possess principled and commendable qualities. Similarly, their son or daughter has also sought refuge in the Buddha, the Dhamma, and the Sangha. They abstain from harming living beings, stealing, engaging in sexual misconduct, lying, or consuming intoxicants. They exhibit principled and commendable qualities. This is known as a son or daughter of comparable birth. (Iti 74).¹⁶⁴

The third type of child is a lowered birth. This means that the child's parents take refuge in the Triple Gem. They take the five precepts and are ethical people. But a child does the opposite of his parents. This is referred to as a child of diminished status, as indicated in the subsequent passage.

¹⁶⁴Thanissaro Bhikkhu, trans., *Itivuttaka* (San Diego: Metta Forest Monastery, 2013), 47.

How does one become a son or daughter of diminished status? In this scenario, the parents of a son or daughter have sought refuge in the Buddha, the Dhamma, and the Sangha. They refrain from harming living beings, stealing, engaging in sexual misconduct, lying, or consuming intoxicants. They exhibit principled and admirable qualities. However, their son or daughter has not sought refuge in the Buddha, the Dhamma, or the Sangha. They do not abstain from harming living beings, stealing, engaging in sexual misconduct, lying, or consuming intoxicants. They demonstrate unprincipled and malevolent traits. This is known as a son or daughter of lowered status. (Iti 74).¹⁶⁵

In terms of the three kinds of child, the texts mention that the Sages hope for a child born high or of a similar birth, not one born low. A child of diminished status brings ruin to the lineage. This means that the child destroys the habit of moral behavior in his family and ruins their reputation. A child's unethical conduct can also result in the loss of family assets. For this reason, the Buddha recommended that Buddhists cultivate positive kamma by practicing virtue, conviction, and generosity, and by being free from stinginess. This will lead to the end of suffering.

4.2 Children Appeared in the Pāli Canon

There were fifty-three children who appeared in the Pāli canon including the Jātaka. Biographies of both monks and lay children have been found. However, most of them were monks or samanera who attained Nibbāna. Some of them were ordained as novices and later received full ordination. The biography of each child is as follows.

(1) Rāhula Sāmanera

Rāhula was the first Samanera in Buddhist history. The story of Rāhula was elaborated in many suttas. He was born to Siddhartha Gautama (Pāli Siddhatha Gotama),

¹⁶⁵Thanissaro Bhikkhu, trans., *Itivuttaka* (San Diego: Metta Forest Monastery, 2013), 47.

who later attained the title Buddha, and his mother was Princess Yasodharā. In accordance with Pāli tradition, Rāhula was conceived on the night Prince Siddhartha left, and he was not born until the day Prince Siddhartha achieved enlightenment.¹⁶⁶ His name, Rāhula, means a fetter on the path to enlightenment. Rāhula was brought up by his stepmother and grandfather, King Suddhodana. At the age of seven, the Buddha returned to his birthplace upon the request of King Suddhodana. Seven days after his return, Yasodharā brought Rāhula to meet his father, the Buddha and encouraged him to request his rightful inheritance. Having been instructed by his mother, Rāhula approached his father for inheritance at the age of seven. The Buddha remained silent and departed from the palace. Rāhula pursued him and reiterated his plea, prompting the Buddha to instruct Sāriputta to ordain him. Nevertheless, Suddhodana learned of his grandson's ordination and requested a decree for future ordinations, stipulating that a child should not be ordained without parental consent. The Buddha acquiesced to this request.

Not long after Rāhula became ordained, the Buddha imparted various teachings to him, which formed the path to Nibbāna. For instance, in the Ambalatthikā Rāhulovāda Sutta, the Buddha instructed him that he must never tell a lie, even in jest. Another sutta is the Mahā Rāhulovāda Sutta. In this sutta, Rāhula follows the Buddha on his alms round and has unwholesome thoughts (carnal thoughts) because he is fascinated by the Buddha's physical beauty (MA 3:132). The Buddha, noticing Rāhula's thoughts, gives him the teachings of the Mahā Rāhulovāda Sutta (MN 62).¹⁶⁷ The Buddha spoke to him,

¹⁶⁶Robert E. Buswell, Jr., and Donald S. Lopez, Jr., “Rāhula was conceived on the night Prince Siddhartha left, and he was not born until the day Prince Siddhartha achieved enlightenment” in *The Princeton Dictionary of Buddhism*, illustrated ed. (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2013), 1023.

¹⁶⁷MN 62.

saying, "Rāhula, every form, whether past, future, or present; internal or external; obvious or subtle; ordinary or exceptional; distant or near: all forms must be perceived as they truly are with accurate discernment, recognizing: This does not belong to me. This is not my essence. This is not who I am (MN 62)."¹⁶⁸ Rāhula found value in the Buddha's instruction and returned to his dwelling to engage in meditation. While he was meditating, Venerable Sariputta observed him and advised, "Rāhula, cultivate mindfulness of breathing. When practiced consistently, this meditation yields significant results and benefits (MN 62)."¹⁶⁹ At dusk, Rāhula approached the awakened one and asked him a question about the fruit and benefit of breathing meditation. The Blessed One begins his instruction to Rāhula by meditating on the four elemental constituents including space to dissolve Rāhula's attachment to the body (MN 62).¹⁷⁰ In addition, the Blessed One instructed him in the sixteen aspects of mindfulness of inhalation and exhalation. In the end, the Buddha proclaims that the practice of breathing meditation is of great fruit and benefit (MN 62).¹⁷¹ Venerable Rāhula was also satisfied and pleased with the doctrines.

A Cularahulovada Sutta is a sutta in which it is mentioned that the Buddha taught Rāhula. While the Buddha and Rāhula were in Savatthi, they went on alms rounds, and after returning to the residence, they had breakfast, the Buddha asked Venerable Rāhula: "Rāhula, consider this. Is the eye enduring or transient?" - "Transient, venerable sir." - "Is what is transient, suffering or pleasure?" - "Sorrow, venerable sir." - "Is something that is

¹⁶⁸MN 62.

¹⁶⁹MN 62.

¹⁷⁰MN 62.

¹⁷¹MN 62.

ever-changing, brings suffering, and is subject to alteration appropriate to be viewed as "This is mine, this is me, this is my self?" - "No, venerable sir."¹⁷² The blessed one went on to ask the same question about the other six pairs of senses: Sight, hearing, smell, taste, touch, and mental perception. He inquired whether they were permanent or impermanent. Rāhula answered that all of them are impermanent. The Buddha then taught him about the non-self and the path to liberation, as he said: "Observing this way, Rāhula, a proficient and wise disciple becomes disillusioned with the eye, disillusioned with forms, disillusioned with eye-consciousness, disillusioned with eye contact, and disillusioned with any sensations, any discernments, and any mental formations, any consciousness that emerges with eye contact as a cause... Growing disenchanted, he becomes dispassionate. Through this dispassion, his mind attains liberation..."¹⁷³ Following the discourse, Venerable Rāhula derived contentment and happiness from the Blessed One's teachings. Rāhula attained mental liberation from suffering.¹⁷⁴

(2) Vāsettha and Bhāradvāja samanera

Vāsettha and Bhāradvāja were the sons of a wealthy Brahmin family. They are siblings. They learned the Three Knowledges or the Three Vedas of the Hindu religion in different schools. Vāsettha was the student leader of Pokkharasāti, and the priest of King Kosala in the city of Ukkatta. Bhāradvāja Samanera was the disciple leader of the Tārukka brahmins in Rājagaha at the same time. Tārukka was the priest of King Pasenadi. He lived in the village of Icchānangala. One day, Vāsettha and Bhāradvāja

¹⁷²SN 53.121.

¹⁷³MN 147.

¹⁷⁴Tha Ap 16.

went to Iccahānangala with their teachers to chant and purify the Vedas. They discussed the true Brahman, but they could not agree. They approached the Buddha and requested his assessment. The Buddha proceeded to elucidate the Vasettha Sutta to them.¹⁷⁵

Ultimately, Vasettha and Bhāradvāja sought refuge in the Triple Gem for the first time. Their first refuge to the Triple Gem took place before they traveled to the village of Sataka for the second time. In the evening, they wanted to take a shower and went to the landing place. Before they showered, they went for a walk to stretch. While they were walking, they discussed the way to Brahman, but could not agree. Seeking guidance, they approached the Buddha, who then expounded the Three Knowledge Sutta to them.¹⁷⁶ They followed the Buddha's instruction and sought refuge in the Triple Gems. A few days later, they asked the Buddha for ordination. Since they were under twenty years old, they could not be ordained as monks, so Buddha allowed them to become novices. Later, however, they received full ordination. One day Vasettha and Bhāradvāja were condemned by the Brahmins that ordination as monks in Buddhism made them impure. They visited the Buddha and informed him of the accusations. The Buddha then gave them teachings on the Origin of the World Sutta.¹⁷⁷ Having heard the Buddha's teachings, they attained the state of arahants.¹⁷⁸

(3) Visakha

Visakha, a young woman of exceptional beauty and profound wisdom, stood out among the female lay followers of Gautama Buddha. She was born in prosperity in the

¹⁷⁵MN 98.

¹⁷⁶Iti 99.

¹⁷⁷DN 27.

¹⁷⁸DN 27.

kingdom of Magadha and grew up in Saketa near Savatthi. She was the daughter of Dhananjaya, a devout disciple of the Buddha, and Lady Sumana. When she was seven years old, she heard the Buddha's teachings and achieved the initial stage of enlightenment by becoming a stream-enterer (Sotāpanna). From then on, she tirelessly and generously devoted her wealth and abilities to the Sangha until she died at the age of one hundred and twenty. Visakha's entire life is dedicated to good works.¹⁷⁹

(4) Tissa

Tissa was the son of the attender of Sāriputra. His relatives called him Tissa. He was ordained with Sāriputra when he was seven years old. He received instruction in Kammatthāna (meditation practice) from the Buddha and then withdrew to the forest to practice in solitude. Three months later, he attained liberation.¹⁸⁰

(5) Maggasañña Thera

According to Apadana 118, Maggasañña, previous lives the venerable was once born in length Padumuttara Buddha. When he was a young boy, he met the forest monastic who had wandered astray in the splendid woods. He confirmed the avenue to them and gave them meals to eat. Due to that top deed, he attained arahantship and six special knowledge at the age of seven years old.¹⁸¹

¹⁷⁹AN 8.43, AN 8.47, and Ud 2.9.

¹⁸⁰SN 21.9 and SN 22.84.

¹⁸¹Tha Ap 118.

(6) Culla-Panthaka

Culla-Panthaka was a young brother of Mahā-Panthaka. His mother, the offspring of a wealthy merchant from Rājagaha, entered into a close relationship with a servant. Fearing to reveal her wrongdoing, she escaped with a servant. When she conceived a child, she desired to go back to her parental home for the birth of her first child. But her husband kept delaying the journey until she finally decided to leave without his knowledge. He pursued her, but her child was born on the way, prompting her to name it Panthaka. It was a similar story with the birth of her second child. The first child was named Panthaka or Mahā-panthaka, and the second child was named Cullapanthaka.

When the boys grew up, their adoptive siblings heard other children talking about their aunts, uncles, and grandparents. He then turned to his mother and asked if he had any relatives like the other children. His mother told him that his grandparents were wealthy merchants in the city of Rājagaha and that you had many relatives there. The boys went to Rājagaha where their grandparents had lived. While living in Rājagaha, Mahāpanthaka often came to his grandparents to listen to the doctrines. Through repeated contact with the Buddha's sermons, a boy developed a strong desire to renounce worldly life and become a monk. After obtaining the consent of his grandparents, the Buddha instructed a monk to ordain the boy. After the monk had instructed and accepted the novice, Mahāpanthaka received full ordination as soon as he reached an appropriate age.

Mahā-panthaka was able to become an arahant easily after going homeless. In contrast, Culla-panthaka was jaded in learning the Dhamma. For four months he struggled to memorize even one verse. Mahā-panthaka arrived at the realization that he was unsuitable for this guidance, as he had not managed to learn a single verse during

this time. Finally, Mahā-panthaka suggested that he should discontinue his monastic education. However, Culla-panthaka was reluctant to give up the monastic life and return to lay life.

At that time, Jivaka Komarabhacca intended to give alms to the Buddha and the monks. He approached Mahā-panthaka, who was in charge of the monastery at the time and asked him to gather all the monks together. Mahā-panthaka agreed but neglected to invite Culla-panthaka. Culla-panthaka felt discouraged and thought of leaving the monastic life. However, as he was about to leave, he met the Buddha, who comforted him and took him to the Gandhakuti. The Buddha handed him a clean cloth and instructed him to turn to the east, repeating the phrase 'rajoha-ranam - As he wiped the cloth, he focused on cleansing away impurities. Following the Buddha's instruction, Culla-panthaka practiced diligently. As he wiped the cloth, he observed its gradual defilement, which led him to reflect on the impermanence of all phenomena. Through this practice, he eventually attained arahantship and mastery of the four branches of knowledge, including a profound understanding of all sacred texts.¹⁸²

(7) Tīṇisaraṇāgamaniya

The legend of Tīṇisaraṇāgamaniya describes in the Apadana that he was the offspring of prosperous Brahma in Savatti. When he reached seven, he visited the monastery one evening and listened to a monk's Dhamma discourse. Inspired by the teachings, he confidently accepted Trisaranakom, or the Triple Gem. Remembering the

¹⁸²Tha Ap 14; Ud 5.10; Dhp 25.

refuge he had taken in the Triple Gem, he later attained Arahantship. The Buddha recognized that he had attained liberation and granted him full ordination.¹⁸³

(8) Pañcasīlasamādāniya

According to Apadana, Pañcasīlasamādāniya was an offspring of prosperous Brahma at Vaishali. His parents adopted the five precepts. Reaching five years, he and his guardians took the five moral precepts on the day of the rain retreat. When he heard the word "moral," he remembered his former morality. Sitting on a solitary seat, he reached the Arahantship. The Buddha recognized Pañcasīlasamādāniya's attainment and granted him full ordination. Pañcasīlasamādāniya experienced great fame through the five precepts. By keeping the five moral precepts, he received three good results, he had a long life, he received abundant food, and he developed penetrating wisdom.¹⁸⁴

(9) Saññasāmika

The life of Saññasāmika is described in the Apadana as being a young boy who learned the master of mantras at the age of seven. Although his clan is not mentioned in the story, it can be assumed that he came from a Brahmin family, because only Brahmins have the opportunity to learn mantras. At that time, before meeting the Buddha, he slaughtered eighty-four thousand live animals every day for sacrifice. One day he met Siddhattha, who approached him and taught him, "Non-violence toward everything that breathes, young man, and renunciation of theft, transgression, and alcohol."¹⁸⁵ He was

¹⁸³Tha Ap 23.

¹⁸⁴Tha Ap 24.

¹⁸⁵Tha Ap 324.

pleased with this teaching. He cultivated good behavior, kindness to all, and the ultimate path. After his death, he was born in Tusita and reincarnated during the Gotama period. He attained arahantship including the six special knowledge.¹⁸⁶

(10) Niggundipupphiya

In the Apadana, Niggundipupphiya was a young boy in Sāvatti. His family clan was not mentioned. In a previous life, he delighted in the Patumuttara Buddha. He was so honored that he passed away immediately and was reincarnated into Tāvatisa heaven. After that, he was reborn into the human world. He was a clever boy. He knew the difference between black and white. At the age of seven, he entered the park hermitage of Gotama Buddha. There he saw the monks of the teacher and the elephant chariot of King Kosala. Seeing this, he remembered his past karma. Thereupon, at the age of seven, he decided to go into homelessness. He was a devotee of Ānanda. One day he listened to Ananda's teaching and remembered his past karma. Standing in that place, he attained arahantship. He also mastered six special knowledge.¹⁸⁷

(11) Sāparivārachattadāyaka

In the Apadana, Sāparivārachattadāyaka is described as a young boy. He was born at the age of Padumuttara. One day he saw the Gracious One preaching the way to immortality. This brought joy to his own heart. After his death, he was reincarnated in a celestial realm. He was then reborn in the human world during the era of Gotama

¹⁸⁶Tha Ap 324.

¹⁸⁷Tha Ap 327.

Buddha. He was born into the Okkala clan. At the age of seven, he went forth to homelessness. He listened to the Dhamma recited by Sariputta. He remembered his past deeds. He pressed both hands together and brought joy to his own heart. He remembered past karma and attained Arahant.¹⁸⁸

(12) Dhammasavaniya

Dhammasavaniya was a young lad. In a series of previous lives, he was born in the reign of Padumuttara Buddha, who preached the Four Noble Truths. At that time, Dhammasavaniya was an ascetic and practiced fierce austerities. One day he met the Great One and learned to recognize impermanence. After that, he practiced for the rest of his life. After passing away on the spot, he went to Tavatimsa for thirty thousand eons. He was reborn into the human world at the time of Gotama Buddha. At the age of seven, he would sit in his father's house and listen to verses that conveyed the truth about impermanence. He remembered his past perception. He sat in a single sitting and attained arahantship and also acquired the six special knowledge.¹⁸⁹

(13) Ekadīpiya

According to Apadana, Ekadīpiya went forth into homelessness when he was four years old. He lit a lamp for the Buddha Siddhartha, who had died at a shrine of his own in many previous lives. He kept the lamp burning all night until the sun rose the next day. Because of this karma, after passing away, he reincarnated into heaven. There are always

¹⁸⁸Tha Ap 330.

¹⁸⁹Tha Ap 336. {339.}.

a hundred thousand lamps burning in his house. He entered the realm of the gods at birth and experienced numerous rebirths as king. Since he gave a lamp to the Buddha, he never had a terrible rebirth. In addition to the world of gods, he was born into a human world. When he was developing in the womb, one of his eyes did not close. When he was four years old, he went forth into homelessness. Eight months had not passed when he achieved Arahantship, which includes all three knowledge. Additionally, he mastered six special knowledge.¹⁹⁰

(14) Ekadhammasavanīya

In many previous lives, Ekadhammasavanīya was born in the era of Padumuttara Buddha. At that time, Ekadhammasavanīya was an ascetic who practiced fierce austerities. While he was traveling to heaven one day, he was unable to pass by the gracious one. Previously, his conduct had never been interrupted. As a result, he wanted to investigate and gain some benefit. Listening to Lord Buddha's sermon on impermanence, he was enchanted by his voice. Later he passed away and was born in Tavatimsa. He later became a king in the human world. One day he sat down at his father's house and listened to a sermon explaining impermanence. As soon as he heard this verse, he remembered his past perception. Sitting alone, he achieved liberation when he was seven years old. The Buddha recognized his attainment of arahantship. Therefore, he allowed him to take ordination.¹⁹¹

¹⁹⁰Tha Ap 413. {416.}.

¹⁹¹Tha Ap 424. {427.}.

(15) Ñānatthavika

In many previous lives, Ñānatthavika was born during the reign of Sumedha. When Venerable lived in the southern Himalayas, he was a hermit searching for ultimate meaning and looking for a suitable teacher. He had never heard of Buddha until he was eight years old. He immediately traveled to Candavati to see the Buddha. He approached the Buddha and listened to the state of immortality that elevated many beings. He praised the Lord Buddha. After he died, he was born into a world of gods. He also became a king in the human world at different times. Whether he took a human or divine life, he was endowed with righteous karma. During the era of Gotama Buddha, he was reincarnated into the lineage of Okkaka. At the age of seven, he went into homelessness and attained arahantship with six special knowledge.¹⁹²

(16) Candanamāliya

Candanamāliya was the boy of a wealthy clan. In his previous life, he gave up the five sense pleasures and went forth into homelessness. After he went forth, he gave up the bad karma he had done with his body and renounced bad behavior through words. One day, Buddha Sumedha came to him. He paid homage to the Buddha and invited him to take a seat. Candanamāliya collected ripe mangoes from a mango tree, a beautiful salt flower, and sandalwood and offered them to Buddha. Before he died, he meditated on the Buddha Sumedha. Because of this very well-done karma, he went to Tāvātimsa. In the Gotama Buddha Age, he was living in the womb. He possessed wealth even before birth.

¹⁹²Tha Ap 481, {484}.

Later, when he was only five years old, he went forth into homelessness. He attained arahantship while having his hair cut off. He also mastered six special knowledge.¹⁹³

(17) Dhammarucī

Dhammarucī was the son of Brahmin in the city of Sāvattthī. At the age of seven, he encountered the Buddha and subsequently journeyed to Jetavana to listen to the Buddha's teachings. Inspired, he resolved to renounce the worldly life and become a monk. Shortly after ordination, he practiced meditation and attained Arhantship. He devotedly sought the Buddha's guidance three times a day. The Buddha taught him to remember past lives and he praised the Buddha again and again.¹⁹⁴

(18) Puḷinathūpiya

In many previous lives, Puḷinathūpiya was a hermit in Samanga, where the Himalayan region is located. He practiced fierce austerities. He had fourteen thousand disciples. One day he lived in solitude and contemplated something like this: "All people worship me, but I worship no one (Tha Ap 495. {498})." He had no advisors. He wanted to look for a teacher to whom he could pay homage and by whom he could be respected. Next to his hermitage, there was an Amarika River. He built a stupa of sand and covered it with three thousand golden Kinkhani flowers. The evening and the morning were praised by him. After he passed away, he was born into the world of Brahma. He stayed

¹⁹³Tha Ap 482, {485}.

¹⁹⁴Tha Ap 486, {489}.

there throughout his lifetime. Throughout his life, he was born many times into the royal family. He enjoyed the results of three thousand Kindhani flowers. And because he worshipped the stupa, he was not polluted with dirt and dust. In his later life, he was reborn in Sravasti in a wealthy clan with large halls. His parents were devout and sought refuge with Gotama Buddha. They had both experienced deathlessness, and they both praised the golden stupa in the evening and morning. Pulinathupiya saw the golden stupa and remembered the sand stupa from the previous life. He sat on the single seat and attained arahantship. Additionally, he mastered the six special knowledge. He was of seven years of age, and Buddha recognized his virtuous nature. Then the Buddha ordained him.¹⁹⁵

(19) Tīṇikaṇikārapupphiya

In many previous lives, Tīṇikaṇikārapupphiya was born in the Sumedha Buddha age. At that time, he was a sorcerer back then who could travel through the heavens. One day he traveled through the heavens to the location where the Buddha dwelled and witnessed the Buddha's luminous aura illuminating the whole area. Tinikanikarapupphiya delighted his own heart. He approached him and offered the Buddha a flower and a plate of divine fragrance. After he passed away, he went to Tavatimsa because of this karma. Later, he was reincarnated again in the rich family in Sravasti, which was known for its spacious halls. He gave up the pleasures of the five senses. He went forth into homelessness and attained arahantship, including the six special knowledges, at the age

¹⁹⁵Tha Ap 495, {498}.

of seven. The Buddha recognized his virtue and then ordained Tinikanikarapupphiya. Tinikanikarapupphiya was a young monk who deserved honor. This was the fruit of the Buddha puja.¹⁹⁶

(20) Cunda

Cunda was the son of Kanta and Sāri Brahmin. He was the younger brother of Sāriputta. Shortly after his ordination as a novice, he attained arahant. However, the texts mention two monks named Cunda, the better known being Mahā-Cunda and the other Cūla-Cunda. Unfortunately, the stories associated with them are confusing, making it difficult to distinguish them clearly.

Cunda served the Buddha and Sariputta. After Sariputta passed away, he brought the relic of Sariputta to the Buddha. After the Buddha received the relic of Sariputta, he proclaimed the relic of his disciple.¹⁹⁷

(21) Vidhūpanadāyaka

In many previous lives, Vidhūpanadāyaka was born in the Padumuttara age. He dedicated a fan to him, which brought joy to his own heart. He pressed both hands together and worshiped him before departing. He was reborn in the Gotama age. At the age of seven, he went forth into homelessness and attained arahantship.¹⁹⁸

¹⁹⁶Tha Ap 498, {501}.

¹⁹⁷Tha Ap 50.

¹⁹⁸Tha Ap 51.

(22) Sataransika

Sataransika, who came from a Brahmin family, met the Buddha in numerous previous lives and showed him respectful recognition. During one of these encounters, the Buddha imparted the Dhamma teachings to him. He recognized his teachings, "This one who's pressed hands together and has praised [me], the best Buddha, for thirty thousand eons [hence] he will exercise divine rule (Tha Ap 52)." One hundred thousand eons later, he was reborn and given the name Sataransi. At the age of seven, he went forth into homelessness. One day he meditated under a tree and attained the status of an arahant with six special knowledge.¹⁹⁹

(23) Vakkali

Vakkali came from an affluent household who lived in Shravasti. Since he was an infant, his mother offered him to the Buddha. The Buddha accepted him and placed him under his mother's supervision. When he was seven, he became a novice monk. Once he encountered the Buddha, he found himself captivated by his presence and began to accompany him regularly. On one occasion, the Buddha remarked to him, "Gazing upon my mortal form is of little significance; one who perceives the Dhamma, Vakkali, perceives me; and one who perceives me perceives the Dhamma (Cp. Itv. Sec. 92). Moreover, After the Buddha advised him to meditate, he quickly attained the state of arahantship.²⁰⁰

¹⁹⁹Tha Ap 52.

²⁰⁰Tha Ap 529, {532}.

(24) Dabbamalla

Dabbamalla was born into a royal family of the Malla dynasty in the city of Kusinara. His mother died while he was still in the womb. His mother's body was taken to the cemetery and her body was placed in the crematorium. He fell out of his mother's belly and rolled onto a woodpile. His relatives brought him home and raised him. He was ordained as a novice when he was seven years old. Shortly after ordination, the novice attained arhantship. He was a specialist in seating arrangements.²⁰¹

(25) Kumara-Kassapa

Kumara-Kassapa was the son of the daughter of an advisor in Rājagaha. His mother aspired to become a nun, but her parents did not allow her to renounce worldly life when she was still young. Instead, she married and later asked her husband for permission to ordain. Unaware of her pregnancy, she entered monastic life. Her condition was later noticed by the bhikkhunis and led to consultations with Devadatta, who considered her unsuitable as a nun. Seeking further advice, they approached the He-of-the-Ten-Powers, who entrusted the matter to Thera Upalī. A meeting was convened with prominent residents of Sāvathī, including the lay patron Visakha and the king, who recognized the sister's pregnancy when she took monastic vows. The Buddha approved the decision. She delivered a son in the monastery, whom a king raised and eventually brought to the Buddha to be ordained. When he joined the order as a youth, he became

²⁰¹Tha Ap 531, {534}.

known as Kumara-Kassapa due to his royal upbringing and retained this name as an adult.

While striving for insight and learning the words of the Buddha, he lived in the dark forest. Kumara-Kassapa was then taught a method of attaining the Paths and Fruits by a deva, who had been walking with him only on the path of the mountain dweller. When he arrived in the remote forest, he asked the Lord (Buddha) fifteen questions that only the Buddha could answer. He then asked these questions to the Buddha, who gave him the answers. Through this understanding, he gained insight and attained the state of arahantship (awakening).

Having been placed by the Lord (Buddha) in the front rank of persons endowed with the ability to formulate diverse and adaptable teachings, he reflected on his journey. In particular, he explained his incomparable achievement in extolling the virtues of Triratna, the three jewels of Buddhism.²⁰²

(26) Uttara

In many past lives, Uttara was a sorcerer back then. One day he met a Sambuddha named Sumedha. He offered him a flower, a plate of divine fragrance. Since he had done his karma very well, he went to Tavatimsa after his death. Duration of Gotama period, Uttara reincarnated into a rich household who lived at Sravasti and were known for their lavish residences. He was called Uttara. He received the fruit of the Buddha puja. He was honored everywhere, and he was high fame. He gave up the five sense pleasures. So, he

²⁰²Tha Ap 532, {535}.

renounced worldly life and became a monastic. Reaching seven years he achieved liberation and also became proficient in the six special knowledges. The Buddha recognized his virtue. Then the Buddha ordained him.²⁰³

(27) Paduma

Paduma was a young boy in Okkaka's family. He lived in numerous past existences during the era of Padumuttara Buddha. On one occasion he presented a lotus adorned with a flag as an offering to the venerable Padumuttara. After a hundred thousand eons, he was reborn in the age of Gotama Buddha in the clan of Okkaka. He was born with wisdom and awareness. At the age of five, he attained arahantship and mastery of the six special skills.²⁰⁴

(28) Asanabodhiya

Asanabodhiya was born in prosperity during the era of Tissa. When he was seven years old, he encountered the awakened one and was full of joy. His joyful heart led him to plant the finest Bodhi tree for Buddha Tissa. After he died, he was reborn many times in heaven. During the era of Gautama, Asanabodhiya reincarnated into a treasured household. When he was seven years old, he encountered the Buddha and attentively absorbed his teachings, also, asked for permission to renounce worldly life. He became an arahant while shaving his hair. Additionally, he mastered the Six Special Knowledges.²⁰⁵

²⁰³Tha Ap 556, Thag 2.1.

²⁰⁴Tha Ap 59.

²⁰⁵Tha Ap 60.

(29) Sumana

Sumana (Culasumana) was the son of Sangkamitta. His family supported the venerable Anuruddha Thera. His mother had a child before him, who unfortunately died at a young age. The father swore: "If another son is born to me, I will have him ordained by the Thera." Ten months later, a boy was born, and at the age of seven, he abandoned material life and embraced monkhood. After ordination, which did not take long, he acquired sixfold abhiñña (higher knowledge). When his mentor Anuruddha became sick at a monastery nestled within a Himalayan forest. He longed for the healing waters of Lake Anotatta and sought them out. The distance from the monastery to Anotatta Lake was five hundred yojanas (an ancient unit of length). Sumana went there with his superpower and fetched water from Anotatta Lake for his teacher. After the recovery of the Thera Anuruddha, he went along with Sumana to visit the Buddha, who resided at Pubbarama, the monastery lavishly supported by Visākha.

In this place, the other young monks and novices knew nothing of Samana's status as an arahant and his possession of supernatural abilities. They jokingly teased him by tousling his hair, tugging at his ears, nose, and arms, and lightheartedly asking if he was feeling bored. When the blessed one observed this, he wanted to reveal the extraordinary qualities of the novice Sumana. So, the Buddha expressed the wish for a novice to fetch water from Lake Anotatta, which was far away from the monastery. Respected Ananda sought among the monks and new disciples of Pubbarama Monastery, yet none could complete this assignment. Ultimately, the teacher approached Sumana and asked him to take on the task. With the help of his supernatural powers, Sumana took the large golden

jar from the monastery and traveled to Lake Anotatta. A short time later, he returned with water from the lake for the Buddha.

During the monks' nightly assembly, they told the Buddha about the remarkable journey Sumana had undertaken. The Buddha proclaimed, "Monks, someone who diligently and attentively practices the Dhamma can achieve extraordinary abilities even in their youth."²⁰⁶

(30) Sopāka

Sopāka was the son of an impoverished woman in Sāvatti. During childbirth, his mother fell into a prolonged unconsciousness, so that her relatives thought she had died. They brought her to the graveyard and made preparations for her incineration. However, a violent storm with wind and rain prevented the fire from igniting, so they had to cancel the cremation. Then the spirit took the infant and brought it to the guardian's house, where he provided it with suitable food for a while. After this event, the guardian took the child into his care. The child was brought up together with his own son Suppiya. He was given the name Sopāka, the abandoned one because he was born in the cemetery.

At dawn, the Buddha meditated and cast his deep net of realization. Seven-year-old Sopāka approached the Buddha as he walked to the cemetery. The boy greeted the Buddha joyfully and the Buddha imparted teachings to him that led to his understanding of the Dhamma. He wanted to go forth into homelessness. The Buddha asked him to get his father's permission. The father saluted and allowed him to ordain. He also asked the

²⁰⁶Tha Ap 69; Thag 5.4; Thag 6.10.

Buddha to take the boy in. The Buddha allowed him to be admitted and instructed him to study brotherly love. Sopāka, who did his exercises and lived in the cemetery, soon attained the appropriate jhāna. He promoted insight and realized arahantship.

As arahantship, using his verses, he taught the other monks living there the principle of love. He asked them to make no distinction between those who were friendly and those who were hostile.²⁰⁷

(31) Bhadda

Bhadda was a young boy in Sāvatti in a councilor's family. He was raised by his parents who had him perform prayers and observances. His parents called him Bhadda (Faustus). His parents wished him well and made efforts for his welfare. They presented him to the Buddha when he was still young and offered him to the Buddha for guidance and care. The Buddha accepted him and said to Ananda, "Quickly give him the going - forth-this one will be a thoroughbred! (Thag 7.3)". After the Buddha sent him off, Ananda instructed him. Bhadda practiced meditation and acquired six special knowledge. Now the Lord Buddha knew what had happened. He entered Bhadda's dwelling before sunset, Bhadda attained arahantship. The Buddha addressed him and said: "Come, Bhadda!" This marked his ordination. He entered the monastic order at the age of seven and attained the three wisdoms.²⁰⁸

²⁰⁷Tha Ap 19; Thag 1.33; Thag 7.4.

²⁰⁸Thag 7.3.

(32) Ekūposathikā

In her previous life, Ekūposathikā was a water jar slave girl at Bandhumati. During the Gotama era, a girl marked a day of the full moon and reflected on her past deeds. She realized that bad karma led her to a rebirth in poverty. When she was seven years old, she went forth into homelessness. Eight months later, she attained arahantship. She also gained six special knowledge.²⁰⁹

(33) Ekapindadāyika

Ekapindadāyika came from a wealthy family in Savatthi. In numerous past existences, she had been the consort of King Bandhuma in the city of Bandhumatī. She behaved in a certain way. One day she sat down and thought about her deeds. "I've done no wholesome deeds that I can take and go when I have died (Thi Ap6)." After addressing the king, she asked him to invite the monk to come and earn merit. With pleasure, she offered milk rice and other food, including lotus, to the monks. Following her passing, she was reincarnated in the Tāvātimsa heaven. as the supreme queen of thirty heavenly kings. In the ninety-one eons, since she gave these alms at that time, she has not had a bad rebirth. During the era of Gautama Buddha, she came into existence within a prosperous household in Savatthi. When she reached the age of seven, she renounced worldly life and became a nun. She became an arahant shortly after practicing meditation and mastered the six special knowledge. When the Buddha realized that she had become an arahant, he allowed her to take full ordination.²¹⁰

²⁰⁹Thi Ap 11.

²¹⁰Thi Ap 6.

(34) Pañcadipikā

According to Therīpadāna, Pañcadipikā was born in the city of Hamsavati in several previous lives. At that time, she was a wanderer. One day she saw the supreme Bodhi tree and sat down at its roots for seven nights and days with a reverent heart. When the seventh day came, she offered lamps. She passed away and moved to Tavatimsa. She was reborn in the reign of Gotama Buddha, with innumerable lamps around. At the age of seven, she attained arahantship with the six special knowledges.²¹¹

(35) The Young boys in Savatthi (no name)

According to Udana, there is a speech about the stick that was passed on to the boys in Savatthi without mentioning specific names. It narrates an incident in the vicinity of Savatthi, where the Buddha resided close to Jeta's Grove monastery established by Anathapindika, there came a day when he set out for alms in Savatthi, a boy came across many young boys beating a snake with sticks between Savatthi and Jeta's Grove. He inquired about their behavior and they explained that they were hitting the snake out of fear of being bitten. The Buddha then gave a teaching in which he emphasized the importance of not harming other beings in the pursuit of happiness. Those who harm other beings will not find pleasure in future lives.²¹²

²¹¹Thi Ap 9, Thi Ap 15.

²¹²Ud 2.3, Dhp 131-132.

(36) The young Boys (no name)

According to Udāna, the story about the boys was told to the children in Savatthi. It relates an incident during the time when the Buddha resided close to Savatthi, situated within the precincts of Jeta's Grove monastery, founded by Anathapindika. Once, as he journeyed to Savatthi for alms, he noticed numerous boys engaging in fishing. Addressing them, he asked, "Do you, young boys, fear suffering? Is suffering something undesirable to you?" Responding respectfully, the boys acknowledged, "Indeed, venerable sir, we fear suffering. Suffering is indeed undesirable to us." Upon hearing this, the Buddha imparted a profound teaching: "If you harbor a fear of suffering, if suffering is unpleasant to you, refrain from engaging in wrongful actions, whether openly or in secrecy. For if you do, or have done, such deeds, there shall be no escape from suffering, even in future pursuits, or in seeking refuge elsewhere." (Ud 5.4).²¹³

(37) Sona Kutikanna

Sona Kutikanna hails from an affluent family residing in the town of Kula Khalra situated within the Avanti territory. His parents were followers of the venerable Kaccana the Great, who was among the Avanti people in Ospray's Haunt on the Steep Rock mountainside. He met the venerable Kaccana the Great on a regular basis. One day he approached Venerable Kaccana the Great and listened to his Dhamma sermons. He understood the Dhamma and wanted to go forth into homelessness. But the master Kaccāna refused him twice. Sona Kutikanna had a strong desire to leave. The third time

²¹³Ud 5.4.

he asked Master Kaccāna again. Finally, Master Kaccāna let him receive an ordination. At that time, however, there were only a small number of monks living in the southern part of Avanti. It is difficult to get a group of ten monks to give a full ordination for Sona. Then, after three years of effort, Venerable Kaccāna the Great, having gathered from here and there gave Sona full ordination.²¹⁴

(38) The young boys were living in Kosalans city (no name)

The young lads lived in the city of Kosalans. Once the Blessed One traveled to Kosala with a large group of monks. On another occasion, numerous young brahmins passed by the Buddha and made fun of him. Passing by mockingly, the Buddha observed them. Understanding the significance of this incident, he uttered this sublime saying: “Deceptive scholars, thoroughly confused, merely reciting words without understanding, speaking freely without restraint: driven by unknown motives, they wander aimlessly (Ud 5.9).”²¹⁵

(39) Samkicca

Samkicca was born into a prosperous Brahmin family but tragically lost his mother while still in the womb. His relatives took his mother's body to a cemetery for burial. His mother's body burned, but the baby was still alive. The undertaker stabbed him with a steel shadow, and they saw that the baby was still alive. As a result, they took him to relatives to raise him. They named him "Samkicca" because a steel shield had

²¹⁴Ud 5.6.

²¹⁵Ud 5.9.

pierced his eyelid. When he was seven years old, he went forth into homelessness with Sariputta. The teacher instructed him on the essence of meditation, encompassing five components and reaching its pinnacle with the skin. While shaving, he became an arahant, endowed with (the four) discriminating knowledge.

Once, a group of thirty monks, each assigned a meditation subject by the Buddha, journeyed to a sizable village located a hundred and twenty yojanas away from Savatthi, where they lodged. Meanwhile, in the vicinity, a dense jungle harbored five hundred bandits with intentions to offer human sacrifices to the forest guardian spirits. They approached the village monastery, demanding one of the monks for the ritual. Despite the risks involved, every monk, from the oldest to the youngest, volunteered. In the end, Thera Sariputta decided to send Samkicca, the youngest novice among them. Despite the danger, Sariputta was aware of the situation and deliberately chose to send him with the group. Although the monks felt uncomfortable sending the young novice, Sariputta had his reasons.²¹⁶

Samkicca went along with the robbers. The bandits bound the youthful apprentice and readied themselves for the ritual. Once all arrangements were complete, the chief of the robbers approached Samkicca, who was deeply immersed in jhana meditation. Although the leader tried to strike him with his sword, the blade inexplicably failed to cut through the novice's flesh and bent at the touch. Stunned by this miraculous event, the robber chief dropped his weapon and humbly begged Samkicca, who remained unharmed, for forgiveness. When all five hundred robbers witnessed this extraordinary

²¹⁶Ja 530.

event, they were astonished and filled with remorse. They asked for repentance and expressed their desire to renounce their former habits and become monks. Samkicca granted their request.

The youthful apprentice went back to the monastery in the company of the recently initiated five hundred monks and brought great relief to the thirty monks there. Samkicca and the five hundred monks then paid homage to Thera Sariputta, Samkicca's teacher at Jetavana Monastery. Afterward, they paid respects to the awakened one and recounted the entire event to him. The blessed one then gave a teaching and said, "Monks, a life of robbery, theft, and all forms of misconduct is pointless, living a life of virtue, even for a day, far surpasses a century of wickedness."²¹⁷

(40) The Weaver's Daughter

The weaver's daughter was sixteen years old and lived in the city of Ālavī. On a particular day, the residents of Ālavī extended an invitation to the Buddha for a meal and offered him alms. Lord Buddha accepted and journeyed there with the monks. The residents of Ālavī offered them food, and upon concluding the meal, the Blessed One gave Dhamma teaching about meditation on death: engage in meditation contemplating death, acknowledging within yourselves: "My life is uncertain. Death is certain. I will inevitably pass away. Death marks the end of my existence. Life is precarious. Death is definite."²¹⁸

²¹⁷Dhp 110.

²¹⁸Eugene Watson Burlingame, trans., *Buddhist Legends*, vol. 1 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1921), 14.

After preaching, the Buddha left Ālavī and traveled to Jetavana. Everyone who listened to this speech continued their mundane activities as usual, except for a lone weaver's daughter, aged sixteen. She dedicated herself to contemplating death, meditating day and night for three years.

One morning, the Awakened One surveyed the world and became aware that the weaver's daughter had come under the scope of his understanding. Then the Buddha pondered within himself, "What will happen?" And he saw that if he came to her and asked her four questions, she could receive the outcome of entering Sotapanna. Because of her, my speech will be of benefit to the crowd as well. Thus, accompanied by five hundred monks, the Buddha set out from Jetavana to Aggalava Monastery in the city of Ālavī.

Upon learning of the Buddha's presence in Ālavī, the locals visited the monastery and extended an invitation for him to join them as their guest. Similarly, the weaver's daughter also heard of his arrival. She felt joy alongside wanted to hear the sublime Dhamma again as she had heard it before. At the same time, the father told the daughter that the loom's robe was incomplete. I have to complete it this day. Swiftly load the loom shuttle and deliver it to me promptly." A girl pondered: " I am eager to hear the Buddha's teachings, yet my father wants me to prioritize filling the shuttle. Should I heed the Dhamma or fulfill my father's request?" She also pondered: "If I neglect my duty, my father will probably punish me severely. Therefore, I will first complete the task of filling the shuttle and then wait patiently for the opportunity to listen to the teachings of the Awakened One, she was told. Consequently, she seated herself on a stool and commenced loading the shuttle.

An inhabitant Alavi provided food to Awakened One alongside eagerly awaited his words of joy after the meal. The Buddha also awaited the presence of a certain maiden. He explained: "I have traveled thirty miles to assist a specific young girl. A young girl was not here yet. As soon as she appears, I will express my joy." With these words, he sat down and fell silent, and his listeners followed him and also fell silent.

After filling up the shuttle, the girl put it in the basket and she proceeded towards her father's workshop, pausing at the outskirts of the gathering on her way. At that moment, she glanced at the Buddha, who also raised his head to gaze at her. As the girl recognized from his behavior that the Buddha wanted her presence, she placed her little boat on the ground and walked towards the Buddha. She bowed to him and respectfully stood at his side before silently taking her seat in the middle of the assembly. A conversation ensued between the Buddha and the girl: The Lord Buddha inquired, "Where do you come from?" To which the girl responded, "I am not certain, venerable sir." Continuing the dialogue, the Buddha asked, "Where are you headed?" Again, the girl replied, "I am unsure of my destination, venerable sir." Perplexed, the Buddha questioned further, "You don't know?" The girl clarified, "I understand, venerable sir." Yet, the Buddha persisted, asking, "Do you understand?" The girl replied once more, "I'm uncertain, venerable sir." Those present took offense at this and commented, "You see, this weaver's daughter talks to the Buddha as she pleases. When he inquired, "Where do you hail from?" she ought to have responded, "I come from the weaver's residence."

Similarly, when he questioned, "Where are you headed?" she should have replied, "I am heading to the weaver's workshop."²¹⁹

A Buddha calmed an assembly and inquired of a girl why she reacted like that. She explained, "When you inquired, 'Where do you originate?' I responded, 'I am uncertain...' as you are aware of my origins in my father's abode. Thus, when you queried, 'Where do you hail from?', I comprehended your inquiry as, 'Where do you come from in terms of rebirth?' However, regarding my origins in terms of rebirth, I genuinely do not have knowledge." The Buddha then commended her, saying, "Nicely spoken, nicely spoken, O maiden! You have appropriately addressed the query posed to you."

For a second question, "Where are you going?" she replied, "I am unsure," she elucidated, "Respected sir, you're aware that my intention was to proceed to the weaver's workshop with my shuttle basket." Hence, when you inquired, "Where are you headed?" I fully comprehended that you were referring to, 'Upon death, where will your next rebirth occur?' However, as for myself, I lack the knowledge of where I will be reborn once I depart from this current life." The Buddha praised her because she had given the right answer to his question.

To the third question, she replied: "Revered sir, I am aware that death is inevitable, and that is why I have answered in this way." The Buddha confirmed that her answer was correct."

Regarding the fourth inquiry, she explained, "I am certain of my mortality, but the exact timing of my death—whether it be day or night, morning or another hour — I

²¹⁹Dhp 174.

cannot discern. That is why I responded in such a manner." Subsequently, the Buddha affirmed her response, stating, "You have provided the correct answer to my inquiry."

The Buddha praised them after each explanation. He also addressed the assembly, saying, "Those who were offended by their words simply lacked understanding. Those who lack insight are like the blind, while those who have insight truly perceive." With these words, the Buddha recited verses: " Indeed, many are blind to the realities of this world, and only a select few truly understand. Like birds escaping a trap, only a few will attain enlightenment (Dhp 174)."

After the speech, the girl achieved stream entry. She then left the assembly and went to her father with her shuttle basket. When she found him still asleep at the loom, Unintentionally, she passed the shuttle basket to him, causing it to collide with the loom's top and produce a loud noise, startling her father, he hastily grabbed the loom, whereupon it swung around and accidentally hit the girl's chest, killing her instantly. Afterward, she was reincarnated in the realm of the Tusita deities.

The weaver's father immediately turned to the Buddha, recounted the incident, and asked for consolation for his sorrow. The Buddha consoled him, advising, "Do not despair, my disciple, for in the infinite cycle of existence, you have shed tears similar to these upon the loss of your daughter, tears more plentiful than the waters of the four great oceans." Thus, the Buddha illustrated the endless nature of the cycle of existence, with no discernible beginning. A Buddha appeased the father and induced him to apply for

ordination as a monk. He was then accepted into the monastic order and quickly attained enlightenment.²²⁰

(41) The Story of a Young Bride (no name)

The Annatarakuladarika Vatthu narrates a story from the time when the Buddha resided in the Jetavana monastery and spoke verse 202, in which he addressed a young bride. The story begins with the day of the wedding of a young woman to a youth. Her guardians invited the Blessed One and eighty of his followers for receive alms. Upon arrival, the Buddha noticed that the bride was helping to serve the alms meal, which distracted the bridegroom from attending to attend to the requirements of the Buddha and the remaining monks. Understanding a young groom's emotions and sensing that both he and the bride were ready to gain stream entry (Sotāpanna), the Buddha used his supernatural abilities to make the bride invisible to the groom. This allowed the groom to focus entirely on the Blessed one and increase his affection and reverence toward him. Addressing a bridegroom, the awakened one said: "Dear young man, nothing burns as fiercely as the fire of desire; no wrongdoing equals the harm of anger and hostility; no burden compares to the weight of the five aggregates of existence (khandhas); and no joy matches the peace of Nibbana (Dhp 202)." As the discourse concluded, both the bride and groom achieved stream entry, marking the initial stage of enlightenment in early Buddhism.²²¹

²²⁰Dhp 174.

²²¹Dhp 202.

(42) The Tale of a Son of a Woodsman

According to the Paninnakavagga, the lord Buddha told this story when he was staying at Jetavana Monastery. The story depicted that once in Rajagaha, a woodcutter accompanied his son into the woods to cut firewood. After collecting the wood, they stopped near a graveyard to have dinner on their way home that evening. They took the yoke off the two oxen so they could graze nearby. While they ate, they ignored the oxen. The two oxen walked away. The father did not see the oxen. The woodcutter asked his son to watch over the wagon of firewood. He went to bring the oxen back. The father ventured into the city to look after the cattle. Upon his arrival to his child, he found the city gate locked because it was already late. As a result, the boy had to endure an entire night by himself beneath his cart, close to a graveyard.

A woodcutter's child had practiced mindfulness from an early age. Reflecting on the extraordinary qualities of the Buddha became his routine. That night, two monstrous creatures appeared with the intention of frightening and harming him. As one of the creatures tugged at the boy's leg, he shouted, "I offer my reverence to the Blessed One." One ogre heard this and became concerned, as he felt responsible for the boy's welfare. So one of them kept watch to protect a boy, meanwhile, the other proceeded to the royal palace and fetched King Bimbisara's food bowl. Creatures then nourished the boy as though he were their offspring. Within the bowl, the monster left a note inscribed with a message decipherable only by the king.

At dawn, the attendants of the king observed the absence of the food container. The king ordered them to look for it. They found the bowl among the firewood in the boy's wagon and brought it to the king. The young man assured the king that he was not a

thief. He explained that his parents came in the night to provide him with food, and he fell asleep after eating without fear. That was all the boy knew and nothing else. The king came across the note left by the creatures and understood that the boy was consistently contemplating the extraordinary virtues of the Blessed One. The king brought the boy and his father before the Buddha and asked: "Is focusing solely on the exceptional attributes of the Buddha sufficient for safeguarding against malevolence and peril, or does directing attention to the distinctive qualities of the Dhamma offer an equal level of strength and effectiveness?" To this inquiry, the Buddha responded: "O noble king, my devoted follower! There exist six dimensions where mindfulness serves as a potent shield against malevolence and danger." Subsequently, the Buddha proceeded to deliver a discourse, emphasizing the unwavering attentiveness of the disciples of the Buddha, who remain vigilant day and night, consistently mindful of the virtues of the Blessed One (Dhp 296), the Dhamma (Dhp 297), ... the Sangha (Dhp 298), ... the component parts of the body (Dhp 299), ... takes delight in being compassionate (Dhp 300), ... takes delight in the cultivation (Dhp 301)." After the discourse was over, the boy and his parents attained the status of stream-enterers. They subsequently renounced worldly life and finally attained the state of arahantship.²²²

(43) The story of four Samaneras

Verse 406 of the Dhammapada tells the story of four novice monks living in the Jetavana monastery. At that time, the spouse of a Brahmin instructed the spouse to invite

²²²Dhp 296 – 301.

four monks, especially high-ranking monks who were considered true Brahmins, to their house for an alms meal. The Brahmin agreed and went to the monastery, where he passed the request on to the monk who was responsible for distributing the food. The monk instructed Four Arahant novice monks, all seven years of age - Samkicca, Pandita, Sopaka, and Revata – to accompany him. When the brahmin's wife saw the young novices, she became dissatisfied and angry and accused her husband of bringing inexperienced novices into their home. She therefore urged him to return to the monastery and invite older monks instead. While she waited, she refused to give them honorable places and only offered them lower places, withholding any meal offerings.

A man returned to the temple, where he encountered the esteemed Sariputta and invited him to his home. Sariputta accepted an invitation and came to the Brahmin's residence where he observed the four young arahants. He inquired from them whether a couple had given them alms. The novices said they had not yet been given any food. Venerable Sariputta saw food being prepared for four people. He refused the food and returned home. Once again, the Brahmin's wife sent her husband to the monastery to fetch another elderly monk. This time he returned with the venerable Maha Moggallana, but both he and in the end, the monk, Sariputta, made his way back to the temple.

At this moment all four novices found themselves hungry. When Sakka, the king of the devas, saw their plight, he took notice and disguised himself as an elderly brahmin. He then visited the house, where the Brahmin and his wife received him reverently and offered him a seat. Despite their gestures, Sakka preferred to sit on the floor and pay homage to the four novices. Finally, he revealed his true identity. Noticing Sakka's deep respect for the young novices, the Brahmin pair was delighted and offered alms to all five

individuals. After the finished meal, the novices and Sakka demonstrated their supernatural abilities by climbing through the roof into the sky. The novices then returned to the monastery, while Sakka left for his heavenly realm.

The monks noticed the four novices and inquired whether they bore a grudge when the Brahmin couple refused to give them alms. The novices replied that they felt no anger. But the monks doubted their words and informed the Buddha. The Buddha then explained: "Monks who have freed themselves from negative emotions do not retaliate against those who oppose them." Then the Buddha gave a discourse: "I consider someone a true Brahmin if they harbor no enmity towards those who are hostile, remain tranquil in the face of aggression, and are unattached to worldly possessions. (Dhp 406)."²²³

(44) Pandita

Pandita, who hailed from an affluent household in the urban center of Savatthi, decided to renounce worldly life when he was seven years old. The next day after his ordination, he accompanied the Thera Sariputta to ask for alms. On their way, the Pandita observed farmers pouring water on their fields and asked Thera Sariputta about the ability to control unconscious elements. Thera Sariputta confirmed that the water could indeed be directed at will. As they continued their journey, Pandita witnessed archers shaping arrows with fire and carpenters making various objects out of wood. Again, he asked the same question about the control of these unconscious elements. Thera Sariputta replied that they can be directed according to one's intentions. Pandita reflected, "If water that

²²³Dhp 406.

has no consciousness can be directed where one wishes it to go, if a bent bamboo, lacking consciousness, can be straightened, and if wood, also devoid of consciousness, can be crafted into useful objects, then why should I, possessing consciousness, not be capable of cultivating mindfulness and insight through meditation?" Subsequently, Pandita sought permission from Sariputta to return to the temple. (DhA.iv.176ff). Once in the monastery, he devoted himself diligently to meditation and contemplation of the body. While he was engaged in the practice, celestial beings (sakka) helped to maintain peace in the monastery. Shortly before breakfast, the pandita attained the state of anagami fruition (non-returner).

Pandita continued to practice meditation continuously. At this time, the Thera Sariputta brought him food, but the Buddha knew that Pandita would not attain Arahantship if anyone disturbed him. Therefore, the Buddha intervened and prevented a monk from accessing the chamber where Pandita was staying. An awakened one engaged Sariputta in a series of questions. In the midst of this dialog, Pandita attained the state of arahantship, which he achieved on the eighth day following his ordination as a novice.²²⁴

(45) The story of a Samanera from Kosambi (no name)

According to the story in the Kosambivasitissattherasamanera Vatthu, a tale of a boy in Kosambi City took place during the Blessed One stay at the Jetavana monastery. This story includes the recitation of verse 96 about the novice, the disciple of the

²²⁴Dhp 76-89.

venerable Tissa. In this story, the young boy accepts the life of homelessness at the behest of his father. Before the ordination ceremony began, Thera Tissa, his teacher, gave him a meditation subject. While shaving, he meditated and concentrated his mind entirely on the object of contemplation. This intense concentration led to him attaining arahantship immediately after shorn his hair.

After a while, a youthful monk, accompanied by Thera Tissa, embarked on a journey to Savatthi to offer reverence to the Buddha. During their journey, venerable stopped for a night at a monastery in a nearby village. While Thera Tissa slept, the young novice spent the whole night meditating beside his bed. Early in the morning, Thera thought of waking the young novice and reached for a palm leaf fan that was next to the bed to wake the novice. In the dimness, the palm leaf fan's handle inadvertently struck the novice's eye, causing injury. However, he kept his composure and refrained from shouting, expressing his anger, or blaming Thera. Instead, he calmly carried out his duties, such as providing water for the Thera's ablutions and sweeping the floor of the monastery, although he covered his injured eye with one hand. Even when he offered water, he used one hand to protect his eye, which earned him a reprimand from Thera Tissa, who insisted on using both hands. Upon learning of the novice's injury, Thera Tissa realized his mistake and apologized, but the novice attributed it to karma and absolved both of their guilt. Nevertheless, Thera remained concerned about the incident. They then continued their journey to Savatthi, where they eventually sought an audience with the Buddha. Thera Tissa told Buddha about the young novice. He said that the young novice who accompanied him was the noblest person he had ever met. The Buddha listened to him and replied, "Monk, those who have freed themselves from

corruptions harbor neither anger nor hatred toward anyone." The Buddha then transmitted in verse: "A noble arahant, liberated by the end of sensation and awareness, remains serene alongside undisturbed amid fluctuations of worldly conditions. "He possesses a tranquil mind, speaks calmly, and acts with serenity. (Dhp 96)."²²⁵

(46) Sukha

Sukha was born into a wealthy clan in Sāvatti. His family was a patron of Sariputta. A boy was joined the order by Sariputta when he was seven years old. Only eight days after becoming a novice, he accompanied the alms collection. On the way, venerable encountered farmers cultivating their land, weavers making arrows, carpenters crafting items such as chariot wheels, and so on. Observing these activities, he asked the Thera Sariputta whether it was possible to direct these inanimate objects according to his will or to transform them into the desired forms, to which Thera replied in the affirmative. The Thera replied in the affirmative. Samanera Sukha then reasoned that if such control was possible, there was no obstacle preventing a person from training their mind alongside engaging in practices of tranquility and insight meditation.

Samanera Sukha asked the Thera Sariputta for permission to return to the monastery. When he returned, he retired to his chamber and devoted himself to solitary meditation. Sakka, the celestial beings, supported his practice by maintaining silence in the monastery. The Buddha also intervened by assigning Sariputta to guard the entrance to ensure Sukha's uninterrupted meditation. Eventually, after only eight days as a novice,

²²⁵Dhp 96.

Samanera Sukha attained the status of an arahant. As the Buddha reflected on this, he turned to the assembled monks and said, " With the dedicated practice of the Dhamma, even Sukha and heavenly beings offer protection and assistance."²²⁶

(47) Revata

Revata was the son of Kanta Brahmin and Sari Brahmin. He was the sibling of Sariputta, who served as the primary disciple of the Blessed One. Unlike the siblings, the boy had not yet aspired to a monastic life, which worried his parents, who wanted to arrange his marriage. At the age of seven, they arranged a wedding for him, but during the ceremony, Revata met an elderly woman who made him reflect on the inevitability of aging and decline. Filled with this realization, he fled the wedding festivities and sought refuge in a nearby monastery where thirty monks lived. These monks had been instructed by Thera Sariputta offered to ordain his brother if he sought sanctuary with them. Revata then renounced the worldly life and informed Thera Sariputta of his decision. Under the guidance of the monks, he chose a meditation topic and withdrew to an acacia forest to meditate. At the end of the Buddhist fasting period, Revata reached Arahantship.

Sariputta wanted to visit his youngest brother. He asked the Buddha for permission, who then declared his intention to accompany them. So, the Buddha, together accompanied by Thera Sariputta, Thera Sivali, and five hundred other monks, embarked on a journey to visit Revata. However, the monastery where Revata resided was far away and difficult to reach. The devas came and helped by paving the way. Revata also

²²⁶Dhp 145.

prepared to receive the Buddha and the monks. With his supernatural powers, he built feathered monasteries for the Buddha and five hundred monks. On her arrival, Revata ensured her comfort throughout her stay.

On their return journey, they retraced their steps and reached the Pubbarama monastery situated on the eastern periphery of Savatthi. Subsequently, they proceeded to the dwelling of Visakha, who graciously offered them sustenance. Following the meal, Visakha sought the Buddha's opinion regarding the suitability of Revata's abode within the acacia forest. The Buddha responded, stating, "Be it in a village or a forest, nestled in a valley or atop a hill, wherever arahants reside, that place is truly delightful."²²⁷

(48) Ekapanna

Ekapanna was the Licchavi prince, the evil one of Vesali (Ja 149). During Buddha's stay in the peaked-roof dwelling, which was located in the expansive woods adjacent to Vesali, the city was fortified with a triple wall. At that time, the kingdom was ruled by seven thousand seven hundred and seven kings. Among them was Prince Licchavi, who was known for his vicious behavior. He was a fiery, vehement, and ruthless person whose presence nipped any conversation in the bud due to his quick temper. Despite the efforts of his family and friends, they were unable to change his mind. His parents therefore decided to bring him before the Buddha in the hope of improving his behavior. The Buddha said to the young prince, "Prince, people should not be passionate or cruel or wild." The Buddha continued his teaching by using metaphors

²²⁷Dhp 412.

such as, “the ruthless individual displays cruelty and unkindness towards those closest to him, including his parents, children, siblings, spouse, friends, and relatives. His demeanor is akin to a viper poised to strike, a bandit ambushing prey in the woods, or a monster ready to consume. Such a person is destined for rebirth in hell or another realm of suffering after death. Furthermore, even in this lifetime, despite any external adornments, his inner ugliness remains apparent (Ja 149).”

The Buddha explained the violent consequences of someone who hurts others being hated in this life and going to hell and punishment after death. When one is reborn in the human world, disease, eye and ear ailments, and every kind of evil will afflict them from their birth. Therefore, we should cultivate kindness and goodness so that we do not have to fear hell and punishment.

The young prince appreciated Buddha's teaching. He immediately changed his behavior from pride to humility, from arrogance and selfishness to generosity, and from vituperation or beating to gentleness. This is akin to a snake retracting its fangs or a crab with its claws broken. The young prince became a kind and loving person.

The change in the behavior of a young prince with a single admonition amazed the monks. They gathered and talked about how the once fierce and ruthless Licchavi prince had been tamed and humbled by a solitary admonition from the Buddha. While they were discussing, the Buddha joined them and inquired about their topic of conversation. When he heard their report, he remarked: "Brothers, it is not unusual for a

single piece of advice from me to conquer misfortune; similar cases have already occurred." Then he told a story from earlier times.²²⁸

(49) A boy in Jetavana (no name)

A respected elder treated a young boy living in Jetavana unkindly (Ja 249). A prominent monk had ordained a youth, but he did not treat him rudely. In the end, the young novice reached a breaking point and wanted to return to worldly life. The elder tried to dissuade him by offering to give him his own robe and alms bowl, while he would keep an extra set for himself. At first, the novice refused, but after persistent insistence, he gave in. However, when he returned, he was mistreated in the same way by the older monks. Unable to bear it any longer, the novice left the order. Despite repeated pleas from the elder to reconsider, the boy steadfastly refused and declared: "Whether you accept me or exclude me, I prefer to be alone — I will not return!"

The monks were discussing this alongside with inquired about their conversation. When the Buddha was informed about the boy, he remarked, "Brothers, not only is the boy presently sensitive, but he remains true to his former disposition; when he realized this man's shortcomings, he refused to accept him."²²⁹

(50) Padakusalamanava

Padakusalamanava was a young son of Jetavana. He was the son of a householder. He was seven years old, but he was skilled at recognizing footprints. Now

²²⁸Ja 149.

²²⁹Ja 294.

his father wanted to test him. His father, without knowing it, went to the house of a friend. Without even asking where his father had gone, the boy came and stood in front of him, following in his footsteps. His father wondered how he knew where he had disappeared. He told his father about his ability. His father wanted to prove it to him again. After the early meal, he left his house, traveled to his neighbor's house, visited many places, and traveled to Jetavana to greet the Buddha. The boy retraced his father's steps and took the same path that his father had taken to Jetavana. Finally, he met his father at Jetavana. Lord Buddha saw them and heard them talking. He asked them, "What are you doing?" The father replied that this boy was skillful at recognizing the footprints he tested. The Lord Buddha said, "It is no wonder to recognize footsteps on the ground. The sages of old recognized footsteps in the air (Ja 432)" and then he told a story from the past.²³⁰

(51) Matta-Kundali or Matthakundali

Matta-Kundali, also known as Matthakundali, came from a wealthy Brahmin. At the age of sixteen, he resided near the Jetavana monastery where Lord Buddha was also present. Matthakundali's father, Adinnapubbaka, was a very wealthy but stingy person. He did not spend money, even on essentials. Although his son, Matthakundali, was his only son, he never spent much money. Even the jewelry for his son he made himself to save the cost of the craftsmanship. Since this Brahmin boy wore his father's cheaply made earrings, his name is "Matthakundali - he wears cheaply made earrings."

²³⁰Ja 432.

One day Matthakundali became ill. His father did not take him to the doctor. His father, Adinnapubbhaka, met the doctor, told him about his son's illness, and asked him what medicine to use. He returned home and made medicine for his son himself. But his symptoms were getting worse. Adinnapubbhaka did the same thing twice until he realized that Matthakundali was severe. He wanted to take his son to the doctor, but it was too late. Matthakundali was about to die. However, he kept his son on the porch. This was because he was afraid that the people who came to his house to see his sick son would see his expensive possessions.

One morning, when the Buddha looked out into the world, he saw Mattakundali and knew that if he helped him to have a compassionate mind even in the final moments of his life, he would be born in heaven after death. Therefore, the Buddha came to help him and stood at the doorstep of Adinnapubbhaka's house. However, Matthakundali was looking in the wrong direction and did not see the Buddha. Therefore, the Buddha emitted a beam of light to catch his notice. He slowly turned his face toward the side of the beam of light. Mattakundali saw the Buddha but could not speak. He could only confess his faith in his mind. Even though no one was alive, he thought that someone should care for him. The Buddha came to see him. He was pleased and spread loving kindness toward his parents and did not harbor any anger toward them. After a short period of time, he died and was then reborn in heaven.

Mattakundali, who was born in heaven, saw his father mourning for him in the cemetery. He wanted to help his father become the right man. At the time, he was mourning the death of his child at the cemetery. He stood at one side of the cemetery, holding his head in both hands and lamenting in a loud voice. Adinnapubbhaka heard the

sound and looked, and full of love, he carried his son. He asked the boy why he was crying. The boy replied that he needed two wheels for his cart. Adinnapubbaka told him that he would make two wheels of gold or silver for him. Then the boy said, I would like to have the sun and the moon as wheels. Adinnapubbhaka said, "Oh, my dear child, how can you have the sun and the moon as wheels"? Are you foolish? The boy replied, "I am crying for something that I can see. You are crying for something you cannot see. So, who is foolish now?"

Adinnapubbaka was shocked by this answer and wondered who this child was. Afterward, Mattakundali manifested himself in his celestial state as a divine prince and informed his father of his rebirth in heaven, attributing it to the compassion of the Buddha. He asked his father to take refuge in the Buddha and collect merit through generosity. Thereupon, Adinnapubbaka took refuge in Buddha and became an obliging person. He began to spend his wealth on charitable causes and accumulated a lot of merit. After this story, the Buddha taught a stanza: "The mind guides all actions in this life; the mind is their boss and makes all decisions. If you communicate or behave with a tranquil and morally upright mindset, happiness will consistently accompany you, like a shadow that never fades."²³¹

(52) Atthassadvara

According to Jataka, the master told the story about a boy, Atthassadvara, the son of a wealthy businessman, while he was in Jetavana. Atthassadvara showed remarkable

²³¹Ja 449.

spiritual wisdom, intelligence, and concern for his spiritual welfare at the age of seven. One day he approached his father and inquired about the paths leading to spiritual well-being. As his father could not give an answer, he asked the Buddha for advice. When the Buddha heard the question, he told a story from the past. Long ago, during the reign of King Brahmadatta in Benares, there lived a rich treasurer who had a seven-year-old son who wanted to understand the paths to spiritual well-being. The father imparted wisdom to his son in a verse and advised him to prioritize health and virtue, respect elders, study the scriptures, uphold the truth, and free himself from worldly attachments. For above all, these six paths lead to well-being. The Bodhisatta answered this question to his son. And the boy followed these six precepts from then on. After he died, he became the child he is today.²³²

(53) Nagasena

Nagasena went forth into homelessness at the age of seven. In numerous past incarnations, when he was the Buddha Kassapa, a monk, and a novice lived together in a Sangha community near the Ganges. On one occasion, a monk instructed the young novice to sweep a pile of dust, but the novice disobeyed the instruction and continued with his work. Despite being called upon one more and then again, a novice remained indifferent a monk's instructions. Then the monk was angry with the recalcitrant novice and gave him a blow with the broomstick. This time the novice could not refuse, he set to work, weeping and murmuring of his own this initial plea: “May I, through the merit

²³²Ja 84.

gained from disposing of this refuse, in every subsequent existence until I reach Nirvana, possess strength and radiance akin to the brilliance of the midday sun! (Mil 2)".

Once he finished his duties, he proceeded to the riverbank for a bath. Witnessing the powerful currents of the Ganges, swirling and flowing rapidly, he made his second wish: "May I, in every future existence until I achieve Nirvana, possess the ability to speak the right words instantly and effectively in any situation that arises, just as effortlessly as this mighty surge carries everything before it!" (Mil 2)."

The monk went to the river after stowing the broom in the broom closet. He listened to the novice's words and then contemplated: "Reflecting on the act of merit, which he ultimately initiated, the man contemplates, "If this individual, based on such a meritorious deed, can nurture such hopeful aspirations, what potential achievements may lie ahead for me?" His wish is formulated thus: "In every subsequent existence until I reach Nirvana, may I also possess the readiness to speak wisely and promptly. Moreover, may I have the ability to unravel and resolve each dilemma and perplexing question presented by this young man, just as effortlessly as this powerful surge carries all before it! (Mil 2)."

After they died, the monk and the novice were reborn in many different realms: They existed in both the divine and human spheres. Later they were reincarnated during Gotama's era. The novice was reborn to be King Milinda, while a monk was reborn as the venerable Nagasena. King Milinda mastered the arts and sciences that were prevalent during that time. He sought answers to his probing questions about metaphysics from various schools of thought. However, he was not satisfied with any of the ascetics or Brahmins he approached. He said, "India is indeed empty, India is indeed void! There is

no ascetic or brahmin who could converse with me and alleviate my uncertainties (Mil 2).”

At that time, many Arahants lived on a guarded plateau on a Himalayan slope. One of them, Venerable Assagutta, heard the utterance of the king with his psychic powers. He called together the order of monks and asked who would be able to speak to King Milinda to dispel his doubts. Venerable Assagutta asked the members of the Sangha three times, but all remained silent. Venerable Assagutta said, "Your devotees, in the realm of the Thirty-Three Deities there is an estate east of Vejayanta called Ketumati. In their midst was a youthful deity named Mahasena, who knew how to hold a dialog with the king to remove his insecurities. They then approached Mahasena and invited him to be reincarnated in the mortal realm.

Mahasena left the realm of the Thirty-three Deities and was reincarnated in the womb of Sonuttara's wife. During her pregnancy, the venerable Rohana, who was appointed by the Sangha to take the child into the monastic community, regularly visited Sonuttara's house for seven years and ten months. However, he never received any alms or a word from Sonuttara. Later, Sonuttara was impressed by his behavior and invited him to eat regularly in his house. Every day, after eating, he spoke a few words of the Buddha before leaving the house.

After ten months, Sonuttara's wife gave birth to a boy, Nāgasena. Reaching seven years old, a boy showed an exceptional aptitude for learning and made rapid progress in his studies. For example, he memorized the three Vedas in a single repetition. He was well-educated in a Brahmin family, and his father had nothing to teach him. Through his psychic abilities, the venerable knew what Nagasena was thinking. He went to him. The

young lad came up to him and requested instruction on the mantra. Venerable Rohana told him, "If you are without obstacles and have permission from your parents to go out, if you wear the robes as I do, then I will teach you." Nagasena then asked his parents for their permission.

After Nagasena had gone into homelessness, the venerable Rohana began to teach him the Abhidhamma. The Venerable Nagasena understood the entire Abhidhamma after only one lesson, and for seven months he meticulously recited the seven texts of the Abhidhamma. At the age of twenty, the Arahants conferred full ordination on Nagasena on a well-protected plateau. Later, he learned the sutta and vinaya from the Venerable Dhammarakkhita. Finally, he attained arahantship with the four analytical insights. He was ready to meet with King Milinda. One day, King Milinda learned about him through his servants and invited him to his palace. King Milinda approached him and asked him several questions. All questions were answered clearly by Venerable Nagasena, and King Milinda appreciated this. He sought refuge with the Triple Gem or Three Jewels.²³³

4.2.1 Table Chart of Children in the Pāli Canon

Fifty-three stories about children were found in the Pāli canon. The following table divides the children into the following categories.

(1) Gender of children in the Pāli Canon

A total of 53 children appear in Pāli Canon, 47 of whom are male and 6 females, as the following chart shows.

²³³Mil 2.

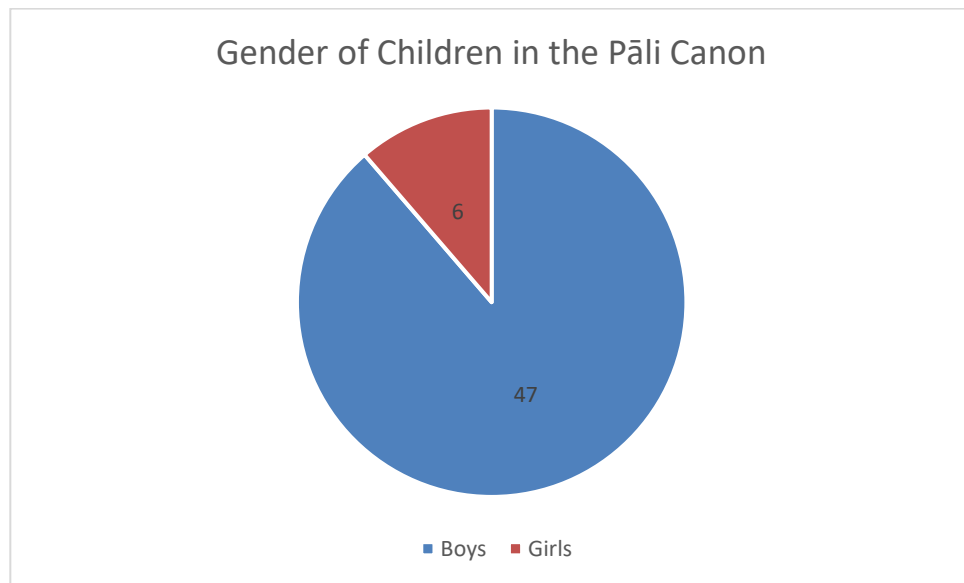


Figure 1: Gender of Children in the Pāli Canon

(2) The children age in the Pāli canon

Of the evidence, 36 children were seven years old, 3 children were five years old, 2 children were 16 years old, 1 child was 4 years old, and age was not specified for 11 children.

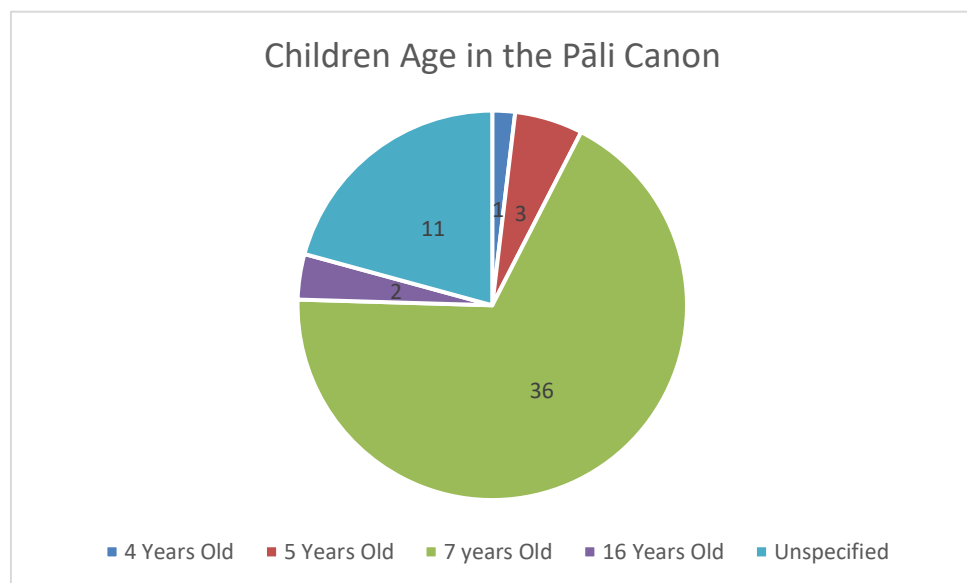


Figure 2: Children Age in the Pāli Canon

(3) Family status of children in the Pāli Canon

Taking into account the knowledge gained, the children recorded in the Pāli canon were mostly from wealthy families of 34, royal families of 3, impoverished families of 3, middle class families of 1, and unspecified families of 12.

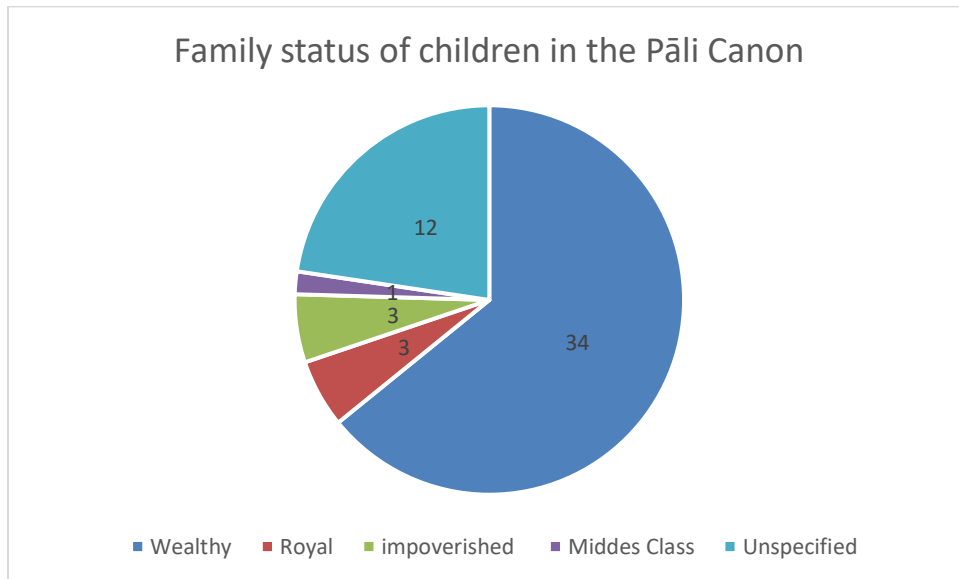


Figure 3: The Familial Position of Children as Depicted in the Pāli Canon.

(4) The position of children as described in the Pāli canon.

From the available evidence, 41 children were novices, 12 children were laymen. However, there is a story about a group of children in which the exact numbers were not mentioned.

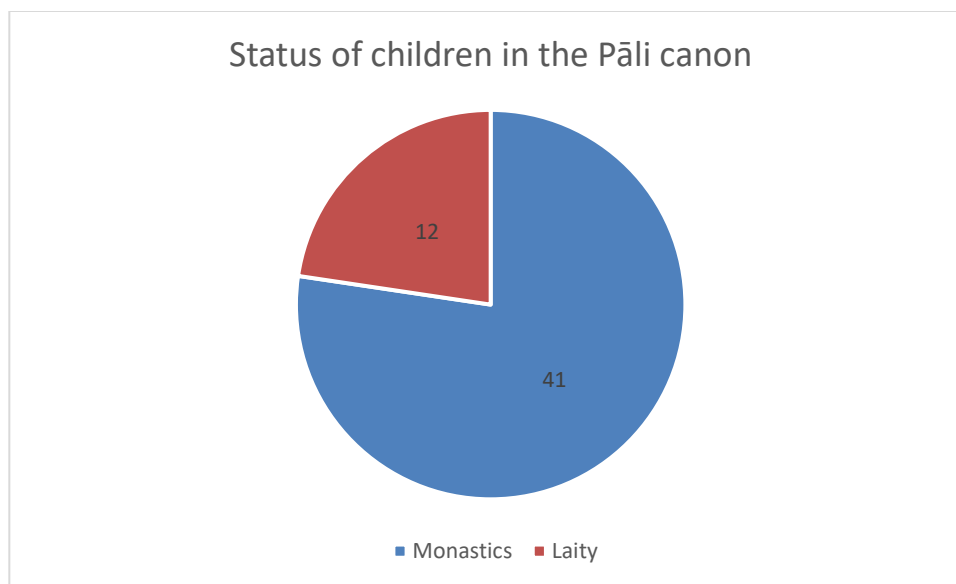


Figure 4: The Position of Children as Described in the Pāli Canon

(5) Achievements of children as documented in the Pāli Canon

Of the 53 children in the Pāli canon, 41 children attained an arahant after listening to Dhamma instruction or training, 4 children attained stream entry, and 8 children delighted in Buddhist teachings.

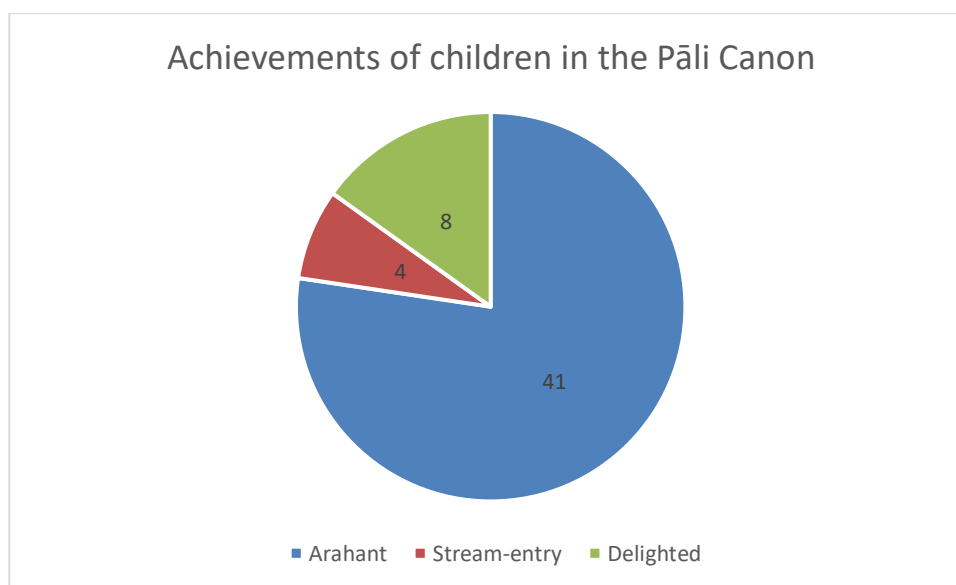


Figure 5: Achievements of Children as Documented in the Pāli Canon

(6) Children's sources in the Pāli Canon

Of the 53 children in the Pāli canon, 25 children are found in the Thera Apadāna, 9 children in the Dhammapada, 5 children in the Jataka, 4 children in the Udāna, 3 children in the Therī Apadana, 2 children in the Theragatha, 1 child in the Digha Nikaya, 1 child in the Majjhima Nikaya, One child is referenced in the Anguttara Nikaya, while another is mentioned in the Samyutta Nikaya, and another in the Milinda Panha.

However, some of them are found in many sources, such as the story of Visakha, Pandita, Sukha, Revata, Rāhula, Sumana, Sopāka, Pancadipika and the boy in Savatthi who beat a snake with sticks.

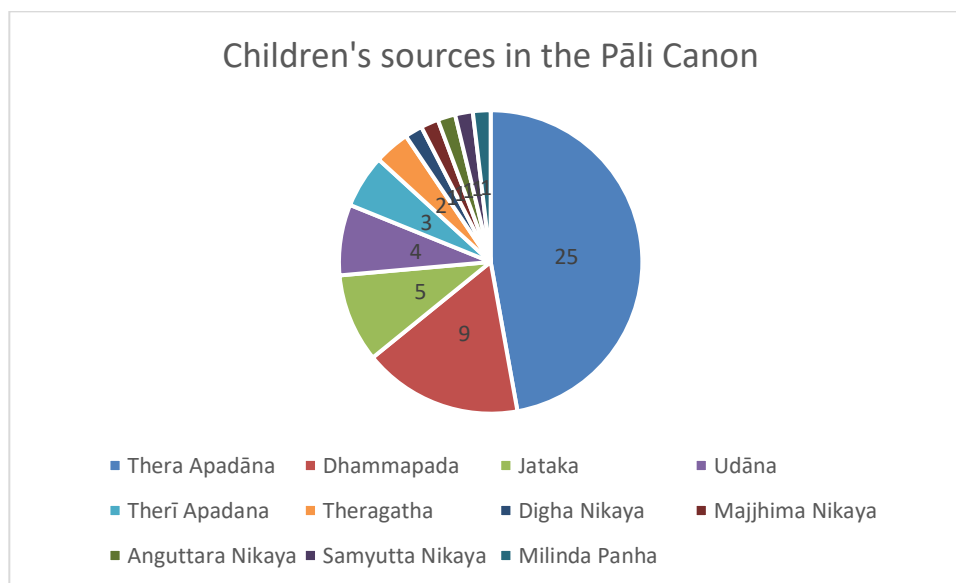


Figure 6: Children's Sources in the Pāli Canon

4.3 Monastic Children in Buddhism

4.3.1 Children Ordination

The ordination ceremony is a Buddhist tradition in which lay people become members of the Buddhist monastic order. Generally, there are two main procedures of

ordination when one enters the monastic order: the first procedure is Pabbajjā. It is an ordination as a “Sāmanera or novice” who takes the Ten Precepts, and the second procedure is Upasampadā. It is a full ordination as a “Bhikkhu or monk” who takes upon himself the “Two Hundred and Twenty-Seven Vows”. According to the Vinaya, the minimum age to become a bhikkhu is twenty years old. Candidates younger than twenty can be ordained as novices.

Pabbajjā, derived from the Pāli prefix "pa" and the root "vaja", which means "to go out", denotes initiation into a new life within the monastic order. Literally, pabbajjā means giving up the home life to adopt an ascetic existence. It symbolizes the departure from the worldly to a homeless state or the entry into novice monasticism (or nunhood) through the undertaking of the three refuges (tisarānagamana). After entering a monastery, the candidate must give up all worldly and family ties, adopt monastic dress, and adapt to a different lifestyle. The understanding of pabbājja is incomplete unless one knows exactly about Upasampadā. The term "Upasampadā" comes from the prefix "upa", which means abundance, and "sampadā", which means advantage. Therefore, the literal interpretation of "Upasampadā" is "highest benefit". Thanissaro Bhikkhu translated upasampada as acceptance.²³⁴ According to the Buddhist monastic code, a person who wishes to become a monk or nun must be twenty years old and have the permission of his or her parents. In addition, the candidate must be free of contagious diseases and financial obligations. Furthermore, they should not be born out of wedlock or live in servitude.

²³⁴Thānissaro Bhikkhu (Geoffrey DeGraff), trans., *The Buddhist Monastic Code II: The Khandhaka Rules* (San Diego: Metta Forest Monastery, 2013), 187.

Pabbajja and Upasampada were adopted by ancient Indian monachism and then gradually evaluated by Buddhism for use in its context. The meaning of pabbajja in ancient times meant a common religious group. Today, "pabbajja" in Buddhism "refers to the ordination of a samanera or novice monk, which involves passing through the three refuges. In the early days of Buddhism, the Buddha did not introduce a formal procedure for accepting people into the monastic order. According to the Vinaya Pitaka, the Venerable Aññātakondañña, the first disciple to be ordained, realized the truth and asked the Buddha for ordination. The Buddha replied: "Come, O bhikkhu, the teaching is well explained; live a sacred existence to achieve the ultimate end of suffering."²³⁵ Therefore, this esteemed Aññātakondañña underwent ordination. Then four more of his friends (Pañcavaggiyas) completed the admission procedure in the Buddhist order in the same way. This process was known as Pabbajja, which included Upasampada. Subsequently, Yasa and fifty-four companions were received into the monastic community with the same declaration: "Ehi Bhikkhu Pabbajjā, Tisarana gamana Pabbajjā'," marking the first ordination by accepting the three refuges. After their ordination, the Blessed One dispatched them to disseminate the Dhamma in various regions, attracting a considerable number of individuals desiring to enter the Buddhist monastic community.²³⁶ It was impractical to bring people from different regions to the Buddha for ordination. Therefore, the Buddha allowed the monks to administer pabbajja and upasampada to those seeking ordination in the Buddhist order. The procedure was streamlined for the

²³⁵T. W. Rhys Davids and Hermann Oldenberg, trans., *Vinaya Texts*, vol. 1 (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1881), 101.

²³⁶Sukumar Dutt, *Early Buddhist Monachism, 600 B.C.-100 B.C.* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner, 1924), 177.

convenience of the monks with the introduction of the Tisarana-gamanā formula (Refuge to the Three Jewels or Triple Gem). In this revised procedure, the candidate shaves his hair, after donning the robe, he bows to the monk and recites three times, "I take refuge in the Blessed One, I take refuge in the Dhamma, I take refuge in the Sangha." In this respect, a Pabbajjā and Upadampada did not differ.

The ordination was then changed again after some time. The reason for the third change was the inappropriate behavior of the monks who were not well trained because no teacher was appointed to teach newly ordained monks. Therefore, the Buddha changed the ordination procedure to "ñatti Catuttha kamma upasampadā: a request with three proclamations." Ñatti Catuttha kamma upasampadā is a procedure in which the Sangha gathers to hear the motion requesting admission to the Sangha, and then listens in silence to three proclamations.²³⁷ If there are no objections, indicated by silence, the candidate is admitted as a monk under a preceptor. During this process, numerous changes and improvements are made until the final form is achieved. In this stage, called the third stage, the practices for Pabbajja and Upasampada were refined to establish the most important and respected ordination rites within the Buddhist community. Over time, pabbajja denoted the initiation of a samanera or novice through the observance of the three refuges, while upasampada denoted the ordination of a bhikkhu.

From the first to the third stage of the development of ordination in Buddhism, the rules and procedures for ordination evolved in response to events. In addition, various Buddhist sects emerged that focused on the ritual of ordination but adhered to the basic

²³⁷Thānissaro Bhikkhu (Geoffrey DeGraff), trans., *The Buddhist Monastic Code I: The Pāṭimokkha Rules* (San Diego: Metta Forest Monastery, 2013), 501.

principles.²³⁸ In the Theravada Buddhist customs of Thailand, Myanmar and Cambodia, pabbajja initiation was a prerequisite for upasampada (full acceptance), a requirement not prescribed within Buddhist scriptures. According to the treatise of Buddhism, there was no instruction requiring pabbajja before upasampada. Thanissaro Bhikkhu, however, stated that "the pattern of giving the forward before the acceptance is ancient, as it is a complete ordination in the Mahavagga I that one has obtained the Going-forth; he has obtained the acceptance."²³⁹

Evidence shown in the scriptures, it seems that the beginning of Buddhist ordination, both Pabbajja and Upasampada, were not characterized by different ceremonies, as many monks were ordained at the same time as Pabbajja and Upasampada. However, after the third stage of ordination, Pabbajja and Upasampada were formulated separately.

4.3.2 Duties of a Novice (samanera)

Becoming a novice in Buddhism is not just about leaving worldly life behind and embracing monastic life in a community of monks. It also means fulfilling the commitment to pursue the ultimate goal of ordination. A Buddhist novice has two main tasks during his novitiate. Firstly, there is the duty of ganthadhūra, which involves both learning and teaching. There is also vipassanadhūra, which involves the practice of meditation aimed at attaining the path and its realization. The term "dhura" translates as

²³⁸Thānissaro Bhikkhu, *The Buddhist Monastic Code II: The Khandhaka Rules* (San Diego: Metta Forest Monastery, 2013), 187.

²³⁹Ibid.

"yoke", but in compound terms, it means something as the most important or predominant element." Thus, Ganthadhura can be understood as a life in which books come first, and Vipassanadhura as a life in which staying in the forest comes first. These two duties are not compulsory, but a novice should do them to improve his novice existence. Without these two burdens, a novice's life becomes worthless and meaningless. However, Walpola Rahula said that the two callings Ganthadhura and Vipassanādhura were invented later. The described subdivision of professions is missing in the early texts, or such a categorization is not present in the original writings. This division is found exclusively in the Pāli commentaries from the 5th century CE and in other non-canonical writings.²⁴⁰ This evidence is consistent with the claims of John Powers and Charles S. Prebish, who point out that there is no distinction before the fourth or commentaries from the fifth century. They emphasized that "Buddhaghosa does not discuss the two responsibilities in the Visuddhimagga or in the commentaries on the Dighanikāya and Samyuttanikāya. However, they are referenced four times in Buddhaghosa's commentary on the Anguttaranikāya."²⁴¹ Originally Buddhaghosa assigned responsibilities to the two, but it seems that later vipassanādhura was replaced vāsadhura. John Powers suggested that the widespread popularity of these two prominent narrative collections may have contributed to the term vāsadhura eventually fading away. The relative obscurity of the term may also have played a role in its disappearance.²⁴²

²⁴⁰Walpola Rāhula, *History of Buddhism in Ceylon: The Anuradhapura Period, 3rd Century BC – 10th Century AC* (Colombo: M.D. Gunasena, 1956), 160.

²⁴¹John Powers and Charles S. Prebish, eds., *Destroying Mara Forever: Buddhist Ethics Essays in Honor of Damien Keown* (Boston: Shambhala Publications, 2010), 60.

²⁴²Powers John and Charles S. Prebish. *Destroying Mara Forever: Buddhist Ethics Essays in Honor of Damien Keown*, 61.

There are a few other variants. The passage was found in the Suttanipāta with *pariyattidhura*, "the theory in the first place," instead of *ganthadhura*. A few sources mention a third task, "construction work". However, it is possible that this variant originates from Buddhaghosa himself, in the commentary of the *Majjhimanikāya*, it is explained: "The distinction arises from variances in mental faculties. Hence, among those pursuing tranquility (*samatha*), one monk attains liberation primarily through the concentration of mind - termed as liberation by the mind. Another achieves liberation predominantly through wisdom - referred to as liberation by wisdom. Similarly, among those cultivating insight (*vipaassanā*), one monk attains liberation primarily through wisdom, while another through the concentration of mind. The two chief disciples attained arahatship through the combined practice of both tranquility and insight. Of the two, the Chief of Dhamma initially attained liberation through wisdom, while the Elder Mahāmoggallāna through concentration."²⁴³

The notion of two burdens had not been consistently defined in the references made by Buddhaghosa. In the era of the Suttanipata commentary, however, the exact interpretation of the two options was clarified: "A young man who has chosen the monastic life should spend the initial five years under the guidance of his teacher and preceptor. During this time, he should diligently carry out his assigned duties and supplementary tasks. He should commit to memory the Patimokkha and Suttas, studying them thoroughly over two or three Bhānavāras. Additionally, he should acquire proficiency in meditation practice. Opting for the forest life, he should dwell without a

²⁴³Buddhaghosa, *Papañcasūdanī: Commentary to the Majjhimanikāya*, trans. N.A. Jayawickrama, ed. Toshiichi Endo (Hong Kong: Centre of Buddhist Studies, HKU, 2022), 147.

fixed abode, either within a family or monastic community, dedicating himself ardently to the pursuit of arahatship. This represents the path of vāsadhura. Conversely, if he chooses an alternative route, he should independently study one or two or all five Nikayas, comprehensively exploring the teachings to gain a profound understanding of both theory and significance. This embodies the path of pariyattidhura.”²⁴⁴

Some passage suggests that pariyattidhura functioned similarly to ganthadhura and involved memorizing and reciting the Buddha's teachings. This approach, the method employed during the era of the Buddha and persisted until the third century greatly aided in passing down Buddhist teachings through successive generations. Despite the availability for recordings, monks continued to learn and understand the teachings in order to spread Buddhism effectively. The Ganthadhura novices played a significant role in Buddhist education. It would probably not be too far from the villages or towns to become the Ganthadhura novices.

Another duty of a novice is vipassanadhura, the vocation of meditation or contemplation on life and the state of being characterized by impermanence (anicca), inherent suffering or dissatisfaction (dukkha), and absence of permanence or self (anatta). The practice of Vipassana can lead a novice to achieve the goal of moving on, which is the cessation of suffering, as Buddhadasa Bhikkhu said that Vipassanadhura is for people who want to eliminate suffering.²⁴⁵ Vipassanadhura is divided into two sections, samadhi (concentration) and vipassana (insight). Concentration practice consists of forty

²⁴⁴Buddhaghosa, *Papañcasūdanī: Commentary to the Majjhimanikāya*, trans. N.A. Jayawickrama, ed. Toshiichi Endo (Hong Kong: Centre of Buddhist Studies, HKU, 2022), 194.

²⁴⁵Bhikkhu Buddhadasa, *Me and Mine: Selected Essays of Bhikkhu Buddhadasa* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1991), 40.

traditional subjects as listed in classical Buddhism. A practitioner might focus solely on one object, like the breath, during meditation. This practice guides the practitioner into deeper states of calmness known as tranquility absorptions. The obstacles to sensuality that the practitioner must overcome are ill will, inertia, worry, and skeptical doubt. The external conditions for concentration practice also include tranquility, solitude, comforting company, etc. The aim of concentration practice is to develop a concentrated mind, which serves as the basis for Vipassana meditation. Vipassana is the approach that ultimately leads to complete liberation. It guides the practitioner to perceive reality as it really is and eradicate ignorance, the fundamental source of suffering originating from impurities within the mind. Vipassana means clearly seeing and understanding reality in its true nature. Using this tool one can reveal the awakened mind of purity and clarity. Buddhadasa Bhikkhu explains the meaning of vipassana as meaning clear insight and referring to unadulterated vision.²⁴⁶ It entails a profound comprehension of the genuine attributes of both the body and the mind. A method of Vipassana involves the attentive observation of every aspect of our mental and physical encounters from moment to moment, adopting an impartial attitude. The hallmark of Vipassana is to focus unbiased attention on the present moment. By practicing Vipassana, one can eliminate the cause of suffering.

The performance of the two duties, Ganthadhura and Vipassanādhura, is not only beneficial to the novice himself but also to the transition of Buddhism from one generation to the next. A child progressing in Buddhism must learn the Buddhist

²⁴⁶Bhikkhu Buddhadasa, *Me and Mine: Selected Essays of Bhikkhu Buddhadasa* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1991), 40.

teachings and put them into practice. This will enable him to free himself from suffering, which is the goal of ordination in Buddhism. A novice who can eliminate all causes of suffering is considered to have the full burden of ordination as a novice in Buddhism. There is no greater burden for a novice than to free himself from suffering.

4.4 Lay Children in Buddhism

4.4.1 Duties of a Lay Child

Buddhist teaching is the way of liberation from all the fetters of life. Buddhists who study Buddhist teachings strive to live morally in order to alleviate the pain of cyclical existence. Buddhism entails adhering to the five precepts and seeking refuge in the Triple Gem. In addition, people searching for a deeper understanding of Buddhist principles can opt for the eightfold path, this path can be categorized into moral conduct (sila), mental cultivation (samadhi), and wisdom (pañña). The eightfold path is believed to guide individuals toward the end of suffering. However, Buddhists freely opt for this path.; there is no mandatory precept in Buddhism. The Buddha can only point out the path to liberation; the Buddhist has the free choice to follow it or reject it.

The lesson for the laity to be happy in worldly life is to fulfill the duties necessary for a positive relationship with those around them as part of society. Everyone is a part of the community, the actions of each individual affect society as a whole. When we live in society, we have a status and a role to play. A role stands for the social expectations that are placed on individuals when they take on a certain position. For example, parents are expected to fulfill their role towards their children. This usually includes tasks such as

raising, guiding, and protecting children, as is customary in most societies. Children also have a certain role to play in society.

Although the Pāli canon does not directly mention the duties of children, they are rules of conduct for laymen that may relate to the burden of children. In the Sigalovada Sutta, the Blessed One encounters Sigalaga, a young householder who diligently pays homage to the six cardinal directions: east, south, west, north, below, and above. The Buddha inquired why he rose so early to pay reverence in these various directions. He said that his father had instructed him to do so before his death. The Buddha proceeded to enlighten him that his approach wasn't in accordance with the correct way of honoring the six directions as outlined in the Ariyan discipline.²⁴⁷ He also explained the correct method of showing respect to the six directions according to the discipline of the Ariya or Noble One. The six directions, as the Buddha explained, are the code of conduct for the layman. Honoring the six cardinal points entails fulfilling one's reciprocal duties within six social connections. These include the relationships between (1) parents and children, (2) spouses, (3) educators and learners, (4) companions and peers, (5) employers and employees, and (6) spiritual mentors and disciples. By fulfilling these obligations, people play a role in fostering harmony and stability within both their families and society. In each case, specific duties are described for both parties in the relationship.

According to the Sigalovada Sutta, children can choose the tasks that are appropriate for them. For example, offspring should fulfill their responsibility to their parents, because parents keep them from doing wrong, guide them to act virtuously, teach

²⁴⁷DN 31.

them practical skills, help them find a suitable spouse, and provide them with an inheritance.²⁴⁸ Buddhist teachings recommend that children take care of their parents in five ways, as described in the Sigalovada Sutta: "Since I have received their support, I will return the favor by supporting them. I will assume their responsibilities. I will uphold the customs of our family. I will prove my merit for the heritage. After my parents pass away, I will make offerings in their honor."²⁴⁹

All children should serve their parents as sons or daughters. There is no specific age range for performing these duties. When children are very young, it is impossible for them to handle these duties, such as supporting their parents. In this way, children can fulfill their duties when they are able. They do not have to fulfill all five duties at the same time but can choose one of them.

The children who follow the five traditional duties in Buddhism are called Atijāta, or a child who surpasses his parents in every way. All parents expect their children to excel in learning virtues and positions. They do not want their children to be inferior to them. Therefore, every child should strive to fulfill his parents' hopes. Since their birth, parents have taken care of their children and provided them with all of the necessary treatments. They provide all the necessary treatments for them. So, children should repay their parents by taking care of them as best they can.

Another duty that children should fulfill is their duties to their teachers. This is because the teacher imparts knowledge that can make students experts in their future careers. Students should show gratitude to teachers by serving them in the following five

²⁴⁸DN 31.

²⁴⁹DN 31.

ways. By standing up to welcome them, patiently awaiting their arrival, listening to them attentively, helping them, and by acquiring the skills they teach you.²⁵⁰

The five duties in Pāli terms can be interpreted both literally and figuratively. In the literal sense, the student should stand up to greet the teacher as a sign of respect, await the teacher's presence, pay attention to what the teacher teaches, learn with a respectful attitude, provide individual assistance to the teacher, and show respect to the teacher by welcoming their presence. Figuratively, this means showing energy, understanding the teacher, being attentive, showing obedience, and preparing the work thoroughly. The relationship between teachers and students in modern times may be different from ancient times, but students can apply the five duties to their lives as best they can.

The duties of friends and companions are also appropriate for children. A friend is important in a child's life because he has the power to influence their life. A trustworthy friend can lead a child to happiness and success. On the other hand, a disloyal friend can ruin a child's life. Children should have trustworthy friends as well as be good friends to themselves. The key to a stable relationship is loving-kindness, compassion, caring, and an empathetic attitude toward others. Buddhist teachings on interpersonal relationships emphasize spiritual friendships. In the Sigalovada Sutta, the Buddha suggests the five ways to treat friends:

"There are five methods through which a person should support their friends and associates, akin to the northern direction: through gifts, through kind words, by ensuring

²⁵⁰DN 31.

their well-being, by treating them as one would treat oneself, and by honoring one's commitments. Conversely, there are five ways in which friends and companions, whom one supports in this manner, will reciprocate: by attending to one's needs when one is inattentive, safeguarding one's belongings when one is absent-minded, offering refuge in times of fear, standing by one in times of adversity, and caring for one's children (DN 13).” Children can demonstrate their compassion for each other by following these five behaviors. A good friendship can help children practice the Buddhist path, as Buddhist teachings emphasize that the precursor to the Eightfold Path is to have trustworthy spiritual friends (*Kalyana mitta*). A good friendship is a precursor to the path of practice because a trusted friend can be a source of feedback. Our thoughtlessness and lack of ethical behavior can be highlighted by being with noble people.

The last thing children should do is perform the duties of Buddhists to ascetics and Brahmins. According to the Buddhist tradition, it was pleasant to associate with sages, virtue, and intellect. A monk dedicated to Buddhist teachings is reliable. They have renounced the world to find the truth. They cannot work for a living. The livelihood of a monk depends on the generosity of the laity. Conversely, lay people can seek advice from monks on how to lead a righteous life and study the Dhamma. In the *Sigalovada Sutta*, the Buddha gives five recommendations on how to take care of ascetics and brahmins: "One should serve ascetics and brahmins in five ways: through kind deeds, words and thoughts, by welcoming them into one's home and fulfilling their material needs" (DN 31).

Caring for ascetics in this way demonstrates compassion and dedication to the good, which is beneficial for both the individual and the community. In Buddhism, the

Bhikkhu member is referred to as the "source of merit" because Buddhists believe that offerings to the Sangha bring greater karmic rewards than offerings elsewhere.²⁵¹ The laity can accumulate merit by offering the monks things they need, and the monks reciprocate by giving Dhamma teachings. In this way, ethics will develop in the Buddhist community. Monks and lay people can help each other build virtuous communities. Normally, lay people are busy earning a living and cannot live mindfully, which leads to greed, anger, and illusion. When confronted with horrible things, people who live by passion will be frustrated. The monk can teach them, admonish them, and bring them back to the Dhamma and help them achieve happiness in their lives.

²⁵¹Peter Harvey, *An Introduction to Buddhism: Teachings, History and Practices* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 245.

Chapter 5 Children's Education in Buddhist Scriptures

For centuries, the instruction of children as depicted in the Pāli canon has remained a mystery. This study examines the variety of techniques that Buddha and the monks used to teach children and youth. The evidence shows that there were many children and young people who easily attained liberation. This indicates that the methods used by the Buddha and the monks were effective. Therefore, this chapter examines the method of educating children and young people, including the upāya, that the Buddha and the monks used to educate children to understand the Dhamma.

5.1 Children Education in the Pāli Canon

The Buddha taught a child based on his compassion. The goal of his teachings was to free people from suffering. Understanding the three fundamental aspects of existence — impermanence (anicca), non-self (anattā), and suffering (dukkha) — serves as the cornerstone for the dissolution of illusion and the attainment of Nibbana. For forty-five years, the Buddha traveled through the Ganges plain in northern India, spreading his teachings to all receptive ears. In Buddhist teaching, there is no belief in a supreme deity or in the immortal souls of human beings, and the Buddha never claimed divine status; he emphasized that his teachings came solely from personal experience. He could provide guidance, but each follower was responsible for finding their own path to Nibbana. According to Buddhist teachings, people have the ability to attain Nirvana whether they are children or adults. The Pāli scriptures show that many children attained Nibbana by the age of seven. This means that the educational methods used reveal how the Buddha and the monks taught the children and facilitated their attainment of enlightenment.

5.2. The Buddhist Method of Educating Children

The Buddha's teaching methods have been shown to help learners achieve their learning goals according to their learning potential. The Pāli texts illustrate that the Blessed One positioned the student as a focal point of the learning journey. This approach comprised three essential components: First, understanding the learner's needs, talents, and learning potential. Second, selecting content that matches the learner's potential, and third, using the right methods, approaches, and media that match the learner's learning style. These three aspects of instructional techniques can be found in almost every discourse of the Pāli canon.

Furthermore, the prerequisites for the transmission of the Dhamma were set out in the Padhāna Sutta,²⁵² which deals with the five factors that support meditation, in the Samaya Sutta,²⁵³ where the Buddha lists the "five wrong times for aspiration" (when one is old, when one is ill, when there is a lack of food, when there is social instability, and when the order is disunited), followed by the five right times for aspiration,²⁵⁴ (details at AN 3:103-105), that is, the ideal conditions for spiritual practice. Although the texts do not directly mention methods for educating children, they can be applied to teaching children. The Anāgata-bhayāni Sutta (AN 5:78) expands on the positive teachings of the Samaya Sutta by providing a thoughtful reflection on the urgency of spiritual practice and is abbreviated here with additional guidance for educating youth: "A monk is a youth, a simple youth, black-haired and blessed with the beauty of youth, the prime of youth. The

²⁵²AN 5.53.

²⁵³AN 5.54.

²⁵⁴AN 3.66.

monk says, "I am young now, but soon old age will touch this body; then it will be harder to turn to Buddhist doctrines, or to a forest or woods, or to a solitary abode." "Let me attain the unattainable, so that even in old age I may dwell in peace." "The monk who, even when young, commits to following the teachings of the Lord Buddha shines brightly in this world, much like a cloudless moon illuminating the night sky."²⁵⁵ This can be interpreted to mean that children can learn the Dhamma just as well as adults. A teacher who knows them well and chooses appropriate methods for them can help children achieve their goal more easily.

According to the Pāli canon, the Buddha used a variety of methods to teach children. They depended on the learner's aptitude, potential, and situation. The instructional approaches comprised the student-centered approach, lecturing, facilitating discussions, step-by-step instruction, hands-on practice, direct teaching, problem-solving techniques, and remedial instruction, delineated below:

5.2.1 Student-Centered

The purpose of education is to help the learner gain knowledge, acquire wisdom, and improve himself. To know the children, the system must allow them to decide for themselves without trying to impose ideas on them. In the Pāli discourses, the Buddha preached the student-centered technique and put it into practice. That he gave priority to disciples is evident derived from the term "ehipassika" within the verse discussing the merits of the teachings.²⁵⁶ From this, it can be seen that one is given the liberty to explore

²⁵⁵Dhp 382.

²⁵⁶DN ii 217, iii 5, 227; SN I 9, iv 41, 272; v 343; AN I 158, ii 198.

and study the teachings before making a decision to embrace or dismiss them. This standard was introduced as a philosophy in a Kālāma Sutta.²⁵⁷ Although the Buddha's free attitude is considered the behavior of a small disciple, it is considered a profound philosophy. This highlights the autonomy that learners ought to possess within the educational journey, a crucial principle applicable to individuals of any age. Everyone should be afforded the chance to cultivate knowledge and abilities based on their own volition and eagerness, without being forced to do so. From this it can be seen that it is not appropriate to force teachers to do certain things and make them follow a certain path. The Pali Discourse described these teaching methods used by the Buddha to cultivate virtues in children.

Many examples can be cited to prove the Buddha stressed the significance of education that revolves around the student's needs and interests in his teachings. The Pāli word "paccattam veditabbo"²⁵⁸ implies that comprehension should be personally attained. Purity and impurity are contingent on one's own actions. No one else can purify another individual.²⁵⁹ As per this excerpt, the primary feature of the Buddha's instructional approach revolves around the disciple. The disciple retains the freedom to examine the teachings of Buddhism.²⁶⁰ As students lack clairvoyance or the capacity to discern the teacher's thoughts, they retain the liberty to assess the teacher. This underscores the Buddha's rejection of teacher-centric and subject-centric approaches. Textual evidence indicates that the Buddha endorsed the principles of a student-centered approach.

²⁵⁷AN 3.65.

²⁵⁸AN 6.25.

²⁵⁹Dhp 157-166.

²⁶⁰MN 47.

To lead Rāhula to non-attachment, the Buddha used disciple-centered methods.²⁶¹ A significant aspect of this approach involves the teacher focusing on the student, assessing their capacity for comprehension, and aiding in its enhancement. An illustration is found in the story of Culla-panthaka, who struggled to memorize even a single verse over a period of four months. Using the methods of the Student Center, the Buddha presented him with a spotless cloth and advised him to cleanse it while reciting the phrases “rajoha-ranam - removal of impurity - removal of impurity”. Eventually, Culla-panthaka achieved arahantship, accompanied by proficiency in the four patisambhida (the four branches of knowledge).²⁶² In accordance with the student-centered method, it is essential to establish an atmosphere conducive to unrestricted learning. The Buddha opted for open settings for his teachings and encouraged students to engage in study in locations such as forests, under trees, or in vacant dwellings, conducive to introspection.²⁶³ In this way, there is some control over the environment. Therefore, the student's mind cannot wander here and there. There is also the possibility of finding remedies for physical and mental weaknesses in methods such as the culla-panthaka, which is centered on the student.

The Ahinsaka's tale, it can be understood that the teacher-centered method of education has failed, and the student-centered approach emphasizes greater specificity throughout this process compared to the teacher-centered method, where students are treated as slaves. The student must mechanically obey the teacher's commands. Through this method, Ahinsaka becomes Angulimāla, the murderer. He has persuaded himself to

²⁶¹MN 62.

²⁶²Tha Ap 14, Ud 5.10, and Dhp 25.

²⁶³MN 10.

obey the teacher's orders. However, he didn't contemplate the consequences, neither the positive nor negative aspects, of mutilation or murder. He didn't pause to question or inquire before acting, primarily because of his mental bondage. A Buddha approached Angulimāla, awakened his dormant potential, and posed a question that sparked curiosity within him. Angulimāla understood the reality or truth after the Buddha left and said he stopped. Additionally, the accounts concerning the monks and novices Rāhula, Samkicca, Pandita, Sopaka, and Revata Samanera prove the method of disciple-centering.

The ultimate aim of Buddhist education and spiritual growth is liberation from worldly attachments. This process is contingent upon an individual's spiritual progress and pace, thereby encouraging engagement in this challenging endeavor. However, it also places a significant responsibility on the teacher. He must get to know the variations of each student and arrange the lessons accordingly. From this idea, the method of the student center developed in Buddhist philosophy.

5.2.2 Lecture Method

The lecture technique is the basic technique of teaching. This method is well suited for working with a group of learners. When a person who can correctly assess a situation describes a sentence or a feature to a group of people, this could be delivered in the form of a lecture. Unlike the present time, historically, there was a scarcity of critical books and educational resources. Consequently, lecturing emerged as the primary mode of instruction. A well-educated individual was referred to as a "bahusuta" (one who has heard much), likely indicating that they amassed knowledge through listening to lectures. However, while less prevalent in primary education, the lecture method proves highly

beneficial in secondary and tertiary education. It is possible to apply for a higher level at an advanced level.

Examination of the Pāli discourse revealed how skillfully the Buddha used the method of lecturing to children. The commentary describes the Buddha's four types of discourse. They are known as Attajjhāsa, Parajjhāsa, Pucchāvasika, and Attuppatika (ANA, P12).

1. According to the Cetokhila Sutta, Attajjhāsa refers to preaching with one's own volition and without external invitation.²⁶⁴

2. Parajjhāsa, as per the Cetokhila Sutta, indicates delivering a lecture upon receiving an invitation from external sources or at the behest of others.²⁶⁵

3. Pucchāvasika, based on the Mahā-mangala sutta, signifies delivering a lecture in response to a question posed by an individual.²⁶⁶

4. Attuppatika, as outlined in the Kakacupama sutta, entails preaching by selecting a story or event from the fourfold community (monks, nuns, laymen, laywomen) or society.²⁶⁷

The Pāli canon states that the Buddha will inform about the arising of intentions when he gives the speech (Sankhārapapatti sutta).²⁶⁸ On occasion, the Buddha states the topic he intends to speak about. The monks then reply with the expression 'evam bhanteti' (indeed, revered sir) and attentively listen to the discourse. In order to arouse the interest of the devotees, he begins his talk in this way. As the text says, the success of the lecture

²⁶⁴MN 16.

²⁶⁵MN 22.

²⁶⁶SN 2.4.

²⁶⁷MN 21.

²⁶⁸MN 120.

depends on three elements: the beginning, the middle, and the end.²⁶⁹ Besides these, there are two additional components of a lecture known as Uddesa and Vibhanga.²⁷⁰

Elucidating the same element is referred to as vibhanga. Following this method, it becomes convenient for the student to recall Uddesa as the core of the lesson.

In the Saccavibhanga Sutta,²⁷¹ four evaluative strategies of a lecture can be seen.

It is possible to determine the intended meanings of these phrases from the commentaries.

1. To express, to express succinctly, to announce by phrases or to recognize what is to be communicated.

2. To plan, to give a clear description, to clarify the interpretation of the passage.

3. To let perceive and prepare perceptions in a certain way. By using this skill, you can reveal the meaning of what you are teaching by thinking about the student's psychological and clever abilities.

4. Place in a precise subject, elucidate the significance in a straightforward manner, accurately convey the intended sense, and underscore the importance.

5. Elucidate, rationalize, and unveil as one would open a sealed object.

6. To partition into smaller segments and provide the methods for linking them together.

7. Inverted exposition that conveys the meaning of a lecture by taking the time to explain in a way that the listener can understand.

In this way, listeners can receive various benefits after hearing a lecture. One perceives what was previously unheard, clarifies what was previously understood, and

²⁶⁹DN 2.

²⁷⁰MN 131.

²⁷¹MN 141.

resolves lingering uncertainties, one's views become clearer, one's mind becomes more serene (Dhammassavana Sutta).²⁷² Listening to a lecture will lead to these five results. These consist of expressing appreciation and commendation subsequently the discourse, together they ask to be regarded as disciples from that point onward (Culahattipadopama sutta).²⁷³

The Buddha used various parables, metaphors, and narratives to illustrate his teachings so that students would understand them during a lecture. In the Pāli texts, the value of similes for understanding a particular topic is expressed as follows: "Monks, this serves as a metaphor or analogy to clarify the concept...",²⁷⁴ and " Oh, monks! Thus, I draw a parallel. There exist individuals in this world who can grasp the significance of a metaphor (MN 22)."²⁷⁵ This indicates that the aim of using or passing on parables is to clarify the meaning. As an instructive approach, it can be suggested that the Buddha's utilization of parables relies on three components, aiming to convey the essence of the topic, tailoring them to the understanding of the audience, and using them at appropriate moments.

Basically, these goals are achieved. The similes used by the Buddha can be divided into different categories, such as the depiction of everyday situations, biological analogies, personal anecdotes, and incidents from daily life. Each type of simile was used to convey tangible or concise principles of behavior or to illustrate a particular ethical

²⁷²AN 5.202.

²⁷³MN 27.

²⁷⁴MN 22.

²⁷⁵Ibid.

concept. The ultimate goal, called salvation in Buddhism, is challenging to articulate. Nevertheless, this intricate idea was conveyed through a parable.

According to the Aggivaccha Sutta,²⁷⁶ The fire served as a metaphor to illustrate the character of people who have achieved liberation. The arahant who has attained enlightenment and lives in the midst of worldly affairs has been likened to a lotus flower emerging from the muddy depths of a pond and rising above the surface of the water, untouched by its surroundings. In order to transform someone who is overwhelmed by numerous desires or attachments, it is necessary to cultivate thoughts that are free from passion within him. To illustrate this, the Buddha compared passion to unproductive or barren beings, as described in the Alagaddupama Sutta.²⁷⁷ In the various scenarios we discussed earlier, the Buddha used similes. Here, however, an important aspect comes into play: the Buddha used his extensive life experiences as parables. He emphasized the lecture technique as an important teaching method and skillfully used parables to lead students to the intended concepts, as the above examples show.

In his teachings, the Buddha often used stories as a method of instruction. He would weave a short anecdote into his discourse, tailored to the intellectual capacities of his various audiences. In examining texts such as the Jātaka narratives and their commentaries, and the Dhammapada and its commentary, one can observe the skill with which he employed this technique. Instead of teaching data to elders, the stories can convey incidents to young teenagers. It makes sense to educate young people a moral

²⁷⁶MN 72.

²⁷⁷MN 22.

principles and to instill in them virtues such as compassion, benevolence, pacifism, helping others, and respect for autonomy, to name but a few.

5.2.3 Discussion Method

One of the educational methods often considered in the Pāli canon is the discussion method. Sometimes a lecture begins with a discussion (Ariyapariyesana sutta).²⁷⁸ When a dialog is held, thoughts take turns with each other. So, this is a way to appreciate the level of each other's talent. There are two approaches to discussion. The first form is a discussion between peers. It includes dialogs between students and exchanges between peers on a common subject. The second form, called irregular discussion, involves interactions between teachers and students and discussions between students that cover multiple topics. Examples of these forms of discussion is present within Buddhist doctrines. Regardless of the type of discussion, priority is given to questions. In the Pāli Canon (Pañha sutta),²⁷⁹ four ways of answering questions are mentioned. (1) Some questions require simple answers, such as categorical answers (e.g. yes, no, this, that), known as ekasavykaraya. (2) Other questions require analytical answers that offer qualified explanations, known as vibhajjavykaraya. (3) There are questions that warrant a counter-question as an answer, known as paipucchvykaraya. (4) Certain questions are best postponed or put aside, known as hapan'ya. In this context, the third category is relevant. Throughout the teaching process, both students and teachers will ask various questions. The conversation between the Buddha and the disciples of

²⁷⁸MN 26.

²⁷⁹AN 4.42.

Niganthanātaputta, recounted in the Devadaha Sutta, provides a valuable source of examples and insights on this topic.²⁸⁰ Most often, this technique is used to emphasize or demonstrate an introduced fact (Culasaccaka sutta).²⁸¹ This method of questioning is an effective means of ascertaining a scholar's view on a particular subject. For example, during a meeting with the Buddha, a Brahmin named Pottapāda asked a question: "Then, sir, does attention equate to the soul of an individual, or are attention and the soul distinct entities?"²⁸² Upon this, the Buddha pondered once more. "So, Pottapāda, are you truly succumbing to the notion of the soul once more?" He replied, "I assume, sir, that there is a soul made of substance, which has a structure composed of the four elemental components, and which is fed by strong nourishment." An illustration expresses a dialog cannot progress without questioning. If a student asks an unclear question in class, the teacher must ask the student for clarification to determine the optimal approach for addressing the inquiry. This leads to another necessary thought: it is important to be careful when phrases with extraordinary meanings are used in language. This is because when phrases are misused, problems or difficulties can arise.

The Kathāvatthu Sutta (AN 3.67) defines the elements of a man or woman and their ethical code. There are people who have been guided by Kaccha and Akaccha. Kaccha conveys ideas of suitability for communication and discourse, while akaccha means no longer being suitable. Individuals can be identified by their responses in a discussion.²⁸³

²⁸⁰MN 101.

²⁸¹MN 35.

²⁸²DN 9.

²⁸³AN 3.67.

When an *ekasavykaraya* question is asked during a dialog, it means a request for a direct answer. If such an answer is not given, a further question should be asked. If this remains unanswered, a question requiring a counter-question is appropriate. Failure to respond with a counter-question or to appropriately defer a question when necessary demonstrates an unwillingness to engage in meaningful discourse. This is evident when the person disregards possibilities and impossibilities, ignores assumptions, rejects alternative perspectives, and lacks a methodical approach. If the person avoids questions, interrupts the dialog, displays negative emotions or resorts to derogatory remarks, it becomes clear that they are unable to have a constructive conversation.²⁸⁴ This emphasizes the importance of engaging in discussions or dialogs that are free of the negative qualities already mentioned. Furthermore, there is a profound methodology for dialog of Buddhist instructions. The dialog can undesirable qualities not only promote productive discourse but also serve as a valuable learning tool for both participants.

There are two approaches that Buddhist scriptures cites the Awakened One indicates the time, and event for disciples' discussions. First, the Buddha, after starting a discussion, asked a senior scholar to continue with the rest. Second, after giving a short sermon, the Buddha gave way to an older disciple to ask him about the details. An example of the first type is found within *Sacchavibhanga* discourse, where starting of the discourse the Buddha asks the venerable *Sāriputta* to continue.²⁸⁵ An example of the second category can be found in the *Madupindika Sutta*.²⁸⁶ In this dialog it was customary for distinguished bhikkhus such as the Venerable *Sariputta*, *Mahakassapa* and

²⁸⁴AN 3.67.

²⁸⁵MN 141.

²⁸⁶MN 18.

Ananda to lead the discussions. The Buddha taught that participation in Dhamma discussions would ultimately serve as a catalyst for personal growth, in line with the principles set out in the Mahā Maṅgala Sutta: "Frequent study of the Dhamma— - this is one of the most auspicious paths to success."²⁸⁷ This sentiment is a conviction of the learned monks. Moreover, the Buddha praised and appreciated the discussions among his monk disciples. Similarly, when the bhikkhunis listen to Nandaka's teachings, upon achieving contentment, their desires are realized. Even the humblest among these five hundred bhikkhunis attains the status of stream-enterer, unwavering in their commitment and striving for liberation.²⁸⁸ This illustrates that the Venerable Nandaka's discourse proved beneficial and ultimately led to all bhikkhunis (nuns) attaining the state of stream-entry. This underlines that the Buddha recognized this method of conversation as a particularly effective means of instruction. In addition, the Udana (Udana 2.3) tells of an incident in which the Buddha approached boys in Savatthi who were beating a snake with sticks. When asked why they were doing this, they replied that they were afraid of being bitten. The Buddha advised them that if they wanted happiness, they should refrain from harming other beings. Those who cause harm to others will not encounter happiness in their future existences.²⁸⁹ Throughout a Pāli canon, there are numerous incidents in which the Buddha uses conversational methods to teach young people.

²⁸⁷SN 2.4.

²⁸⁸MN 146.

²⁸⁹Ud 2.3.

5.2.4 Step Method

The step-by-step method teaches children the process of attaining an objective incrementally. According to Pāli canon, the Buddha used this method to help novices and monks individually. In the Pahārāda Sutta, the Buddha emphasized the importance of understanding the teachings step by step. The Pāli texts emphasize that "Pahārāda, like the vast ocean, provides a gentle and gradual slope, guidance and inclination, and avoids sudden drops." "This educational disposition is based on gradual instruction, gradual achievement, and gradual ability to attain the goal (Pahārāda sutta)."²⁹⁰ This shows that the Buddha's recognition of liberation as the highest goal of humanity must be grasped through gradual understanding.

The verse from the Dhammapada (Dhp 235 - 255) illustrates that a wise person should remove their own impurities gradually, moment by moment, much like a blacksmith removes impurities from silver. This reflects the basic step-by-step approach. Similarly, the Kitāgiri Sutta (MN 70) outlines from the beginning fourteen different steps that a disciple must fulfill, emphasizing their progressive and varied nature.²⁹¹

Within the Buddha's pedagogical framework lies a step-by-step approach known as the method of gradual instruction (*ānupubbīkatā*). In this method, known as 'progressive instruction', education is delivered to individual students or groups in a way that suits each student's aptitude and potential (DN 1, 237). This progressive approach has two main components. First, the instruction begins with discussions about the act of giving and then moves on to illuminate the harmful aspects of ignorance and conceit.

²⁹⁰AN 8.19.

²⁹¹MN 70.

This process helps to align the student's mindset accordingly. Secondly, the method moves on to more sophisticated or profound teachings, which mainly revolve around the Four Noble Truths. For people whose minds are not yet attuned to grasping the Four Noble Truths, the path to spiritual progress is to practice meritorious deeds such as generosity. The Buddha pursued all these gradual techniques with the aim of enabling man to free oneself from the confines of this worldly existence.

In Singalovāda discourse (DN 31), the Buddha gradually instructed a young man named Singalovāda on the way to live a prosperous worldly life and illuminate the path to liberation, which a noble person achieved. First, Singalovāda was advised to eliminate four negative behaviors, followed by abstaining from wrongful actions in four aspects and avoiding six ways of wasting money. Then he must protect the six directions. It falls to him to perform duties for six very close groups of people named in the discourse in six directions. The teachings have been presented step by step to facilitate understanding, working, and acting.²⁹²

Another example of the gradual approach can be found in the concept of gradual attainment of the desired goal in the Ganakamoggallāna Sutta (MN 107). In this context, the Buddha elucidated the incremental approach to guiding his disciples towards the realization of truth, providing them with instructions in a progressive manner. The way he does it is like how a wise horse trainer first accustoms a purebred colt to the bit and then continues to train it. Ganakamoggallāna, a Brahmin who attended the Buddha, asked him if there was a way to impart gradual training, work, and method that would challenge

²⁹²DN 31.

his teaching. When the Buddha meets a person who needs guidance, he first instills discipline in him in the following way: "Come, monk, practice virtue and discipline through adherence to the patimokkha, excel in behavior and refuge, and recognize the potential repercussions of even minor transgressions, diligently train by upholding the training precepts."²⁹³

According to Pāli texts, liberation can be achieved after the completion of these steps. Through a detailed examination of each step, the connection between them becomes clear, which clarifies their meaning or essence. After hearing the sequential path of the Buddha, Ganakamoggallāna wondered if there were people who, despite the clear revelation of this path, would not grasp its reality. The Buddha's answer emphasized that those who deviate from the path he described refrain from comprehending actuality. The Blessed One instructs students to adhere to this step-by-step method. Basically, he is just showing the path to liberation. The expressions in the discourse make this clear.

The illustration of the step-by-step procedure, such as the narrative of Kisāgotami (Dhp 114) in the Dhammapada, shows a certain method that the Buddha gradually reveals to enable her to understand the truths. Having never heard of small children dying, Kisāgotami took her dead child to a doctor, thinking it was a disease. Because she had never heard that little children die. Although the doctors declared the child dead, Kisāgotami refused to accept this. Finally, she sought the Buddha's advice. He instructed her to get a handful of mustard seeds. At first, Kisāgotami thought this was a simple task, but she soon realized that death had afflicted every household she visited and even small

²⁹³MN 107.

children were among the deceased. It was only in the evening that she found a handful of mustard seeds in a household that had been spared from death (Dhp 114). This led her to the realization that death is a universal experience, for she received the same response from every household. It is clear, then, that the Buddha's method provided an effective understanding of reality. By applying this lesson practically, Kisāgotami achieved a successful result. In this case, the intention of the enlightened one was also realized.²⁹⁴

This pedagogy is a suitable technique for teaching children. It can help learners to recognize the subject matter easily and not confusingly. Moreover, this technique makes the content less complicated for adolescents to acquire their knowledge of the objectives.

5.2.5 Practical Method

Success in learning depends on its application. Therefore, the practical method is given priority in teaching methods. This method, called "understanding through action", aims to promote the virtues of the individual through the transmission of teachings on spiritual purity within the framework of Buddhist education. It is essential to examine whether Buddhism emphasizes practice and commitment to achieve these goals. Our activities are based on the expression "Tathāgatas are only teachers; strive for yourself."²⁹⁵ Buddhas only point to the right path. Another recommendation is to accomplish the duty on this day, as detailed in the Bhaddekarata discourse.²⁹⁶ These teachings illuminate the practical essence of Buddhism. The idea that the repetition of a single task leads to exhaustion, cessation, tranquility, insight, and finally cessation

²⁹⁴Dhp 114.

²⁹⁵Dhp 276.

²⁹⁶MN 131.

implies the importance of conditioning appropriate behaviors in order to attain liberation. These are some examples of the teachings that show that the entire teaching must be both experienced and fully understood.

In modern pedagogy, the use of hands-on activities for teaching involves the use of various aids or devices to convey physical substances or elements to students. These aids are known as visual and auditory aids. The Pāli discourse describes the Buddha's use of such techniques on appropriate occasions and in an appropriate manner. An example of this is the story of the girl named Rupananda (Dhp 392), who was proud of either her wisdom or her physical attractiveness. However, the Buddha gave her a younger wife and allowed her to experience the inevitable decline through aging (Jarā), illness (Vyādi), and finally the cessation of life (Marana).²⁹⁷ As she examined the figure, the Buddha preached a teaching appropriate for each situation. In fact, he applied a similar method to Khema.²⁹⁸

Another example is found in the account of Venerable Nanda, who was drawn to Janapada Kalyāni but hesitated to fully commit to the tasks within the teachings. The Blessed One once demonstrated a futility to show a charred monkey carcass in Chena. Using a teaching method similar to a teacher leaving the classroom to illustrate a lesson with tangible aids, the Buddha used a visual demonstration with a corpse or lifeless body to teach the court lady Sirimā (or prostitute), as reported in DA 387. Through this method, the Blessed One managed to relate Sirimā's past experiences to her present situation. This account underscores an important point: the use of aids went beyond the

²⁹⁷Dhp 392.

²⁹⁸Dhp 393.

visual and auditory senses to include the sense of smell. The auctioning of a corpse that emitted a disgusting smell seven days postmortem served as an effective tool for monks involved in loving relationships with people like Sirimā to recognize the impermanence and barrenness of the body. Just as a thorn is used to pull out another thorn, the help of the body is crucial in expelling lust and desire for the body from people's minds. In line with the overarching theme, this approach effectively implanted the desired idea into the minds of the pupils.

Even if the Blessed One refrained from using the plethora of aids that modern teachers use, this example proves that he used both auditory and visual aids that were fundamental to achieving his goals and that at the same time, he succeeded in bringing about a change in attitude among students. The use of aids to teach young people is effective. In the Pāli Canon, the Buddha deliberately used auditory and visual aids not only to convey a superficial understanding of physical objects but also to provide deep insights into the workings of the human mind. Educators can use this technique to train teenagers in today's world.

5.2.6 Imparting Education

The imparting technique is the approach a learner takes to learning about a particular topic, area, expertise, and skill at one event, which has implications for the delivery of any other topic, exercise, or area at a subsequent event. The process of educating people can be divided into three main types: (1) the positive transmission of knowledge, which enables learning about different situations. (2) negative mediation of education, which makes it difficult to acquire knowledge. (3) Without a connection and

mediation of education. According to the Pāli discussion, the transmission of education was once applied on some occasions by the Buddha. Theoretically, the transmission of education is helpful when the step-by-step approach is put into practice. The three virtuous acts — giving, ethical conduct, and meditation — are interconnected teachings that lead to the emergence of three wholesome roots of karma: renunciation, non-aversion, and wisdom, following their guidance. This serves as a form of moral education and promotes mental and physical discipline. This discipline proves useful for insight meditation (vipassana). Given the direct influence of one aspect of education on another, this can be seen as a form of positive, interrelated education taking place here.

When one examines the Eightfold Path, one can see this imparting of education in a similar way. The first stage, known as Right View, represents an individual's capacity to perceive with wisdom. From this strength of perception arises the Right Thought in their mind. This is the appropriate thinking that goes hand in hand with virtuous character and speech, the third stage called Right Speech. Thereupon the actions of the body are naturally directed towards the good, which is called Right Bodily Action. Such a person's way of life is considered virtuous due to their adherence to these four principles and is referred to as Right Conduct. Their virtuous behavior enables continuous refinement of skills and abilities, which is called Right Effort. By practicing the Right Mindfulness, one gains control over one's thoughts, which is further facilitated by the application of the Right Effort. People who have internalized these teachings can observe their mind with clarity, which is called the Right Concentration. Through the strength of concentration, they gain remarkable perception and wisdom, which enables them to perceive the world and beings as they truly are. This cohesive training facilitates progress toward the

ultimate goal, with the transformation gained from one aspect influencing the next and ultimately leading the individual to their goal.

An example that illustrates the Buddha's educational approach can be found in the story of a young man named Singala (Sigalovada Sutta, DN 31). According to the Sigalovāda Sutta, the young man followed the advice of his father, who was dying, to perform the ritual of worshipping the six directions every morning after bathing in the river. The Buddha, recognizing the importance of this practice, questioned him and aligned his teachings accordingly. The Buddha focused on interpersonal relationships and presented six social roles, emphasizing that a happy and peaceful life is possible by fulfilling one's responsibilities towards their roles. In this discourse, the Buddha replaced the deities traditionally associated with the protection of the six directions with six social institutions relevant to human life. This adaptation shifted the educational context from a personal ritual to a broader social framework. The similarity lies mainly in the introduction of six social groups in a way that resembles the six directions, with an emphasis on the fulfillment of duties rather than mere worship.²⁹⁹

In the discourse known as the Anatta-lakkhana Sutta (SN 22.59), Buddha applies a method of teaching that includes negation that deviates from conventional educational practices and does not agree with later approaches to learning. Therefore, it must be sacrificed and taught. The first disciples of the Buddha, the Five Ascetics, might encounter obstacles to attaining arahantship due to their preoccupation with egoistic concerns. Therefore, the Buddha made them aware of the futility of egoic thinking by

²⁹⁹DN 31.

preaching the Anantalakkhana Sutta.³⁰⁰ He also applied such an approach to the subjugation of the Jatilas.³⁰¹

However, the third idea of imparting education is no longer observed in the Pāli canon. This means that the Buddha refrains from discussing topics or concepts that do not contribute to worldly progress or to a person's daily life. This aspect becomes clear when the Buddha refrains from addressing the ten unanswerable questions, as can be seen in the Vacchagotta Sutta.³⁰² They are questions that the Buddha did not explain. This can also be shown by an incident described in the Abhayaraja Kumara Sutta.³⁰³ As I said, the Buddha avoids uttering empty or unproductive words, regardless of the preferences of others. Following this principle, the Buddha would refrain from passing on information related to the third aspect of the concept of "imparting education".

From the available evidence, it can be concluded that the Buddha used the concept of 'imparting education' as a teaching method that suited his aims and was aimed at helping followers alleviate suffering.

5.2.7 Method of Solving Problems

Methods aimed at problem-solving can be designed to both challenge and motivate students. Some problems cannot be solved quickly or immediately by Pāli speech. This method was put into practice by the Buddha with increased effectiveness. The Four Noble Truths were revealed to humanity after being developed through a

³⁰⁰SN 22.59.

³⁰¹UdA 74.

³⁰²SN 33.

³⁰³MN 58.

process similar to problem-solving. First, followers were confronted with the fundamental question: "What is suffering?". Second, the main reasons for the occurrence of this problem are discussed. Ultimately, these issues have been attended to or the problem has been resolved, and the situation is rectified. The last one, the method for solving the problem is described. When these four factors are fulfilled, the Buddha's goal of education is achieved (Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta).³⁰⁴

Since the goal of Buddhist education is to alleviate pain, teaching about reality initially presents suffering as the main concern. If one considers the essence teaching of Buddhism, the essential elements come into play. A problem and the reason for its occurrence, its solution, and the way to remedy it. An illustration of problem-solving in youth education is found in the story of Pandita Samanera (Dhp 76-89), a wealthy young man living in the city of Savatthi. One day, while watching Thera Sariputta on his way to collect alms, Pandita Samanera saw farmers pouring water on their fields. Curious, he asked Thera Sariputta: "Can water that lacks consciousness be directed as desired?" Thera Sariputta replied: "Indeed, it can be directed wherever you want." Later, he observed archers heating and aiming their arrows with fire and carpenters cutting and sewing wood to make items such as chariot wheels. He asked the Thera in the same way. Pandita reflected, "If water that has no consciousness can be directed as needed if a curved bamboo devoid of awareness can be straightened, and if wood lacking consciousness can be fashioned into useful objects, then why shouldn't I, possessing consciousness, be able to discipline my mind and engage in tranquility and insight

³⁰⁴SN 56.11.

meditation?" So Pandita returned to the monastery and diligently practiced meditation and contemplated the body. Finally, he attained liberation.³⁰⁵ The story of Sukha Samanera (Dhp 145) was taught by the same method by Pandita.

In examining the Pāli canon, two types of problems were identified: Problems originating from the students and problems created by the teachers. Certain problems require collaboration between the student and the teacher in order to solve them. Examples of such scenarios are documented in the Mahāpunnama Sutta,³⁰⁶ where there was an incident in which a monk asks questions about a problem that arises. The problem arose when the monk was struggling with being bound by more than five attachments (pañca upadānakkhanda). Addressing his inquiries, the Blessed One gave a series of answers. In the Mahā Dukkhandha Sutta (MN 13), the problems mentioned represent the origins of what the disciples used to think. The Buddha clearly solves their problems. Ultimately, it has evolved into a crucial lesson.³⁰⁷ Discourses such as the Mahā Maṅgala (SN 2.4), Parabhava Sutta (SN 1.6) and others followed a similar pattern. From this the possibility to conclude that many Buddhist instructions were conveyed in a problem-solving manner that proves effective for the education of children. Problem-solving methods can be organized to challenge or encourage students. Some problems cannot be solved quickly or immediately through Pāli talk. This method was put into practice by the Buddha with increased effectiveness. The Four Noble Truths were revealed to humanity after they were developed through a problem-solving approach. First, followers are familiarized with the main question: "What is suffering?" Then the main causes of this

³⁰⁵Dhp 76-89.

³⁰⁶MN 109.

³⁰⁷MN 13.

problem are explored. Finally, the scenario is explained these factors have been dealt with or the issue has been resolved.³⁰⁸ Additionally, the method of resolving the issue is elucidated. When these four criteria are met, the Buddha's educational objectives are attained (Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta).³⁰⁹

5.2.8 Remedial Teaching Method

The term healing instruction refers to instructing those who have weak or debilitated bodily organs or mental weakness with specific methods to improve their condition. The Buddha used the method of healing instruction to teach children like Matthakundali, who became ill and whose father did not take him to the doctor. His father met the doctor, told him about his son's illness, and asked him what medicine to use. He returned home and made medicine for his son himself. But his symptoms got worse and more severe. He did the same thing twice until he realized that Matthakundali was seriously ill. Finally, the doctor discarded the idea of curing his son's illness. He kept his son on the porch because he feared that people who came to his house to visit his sick son would notice his expensive possessions. The Buddha looked out into the world and saw Mattakundali. He came to help him and stood at the doorstep of Adinnapubbaka's house. But Mattakundali was looking in the wrong direction and did not see the Buddha. Thus, the Buddha emitted a radiant beam to catch his notice. He slowly turned his face to the side of the beam of light. Mattakundali saw the Buddha but could not speak. He could only profess his faith in his mind. Although no one was alive, he thought that someone

³⁰⁸SN 2.4; SN 1.6.

³⁰⁹SN 56.11.

should take care of him. The Buddha came to see him. The boy showed his parents loving kindness and did not harbor any anger toward them. In a brief span, he passed away and was then reborn in heaven.

There were many cases in which the Buddha used this teaching method, but they all involved adults. For example, the case of Pūtigattatissa (Dhp 41), who was struggling with a rash; After tending to his wounds and alleviating his pain, the Buddha imparted to him teachings for understanding reality.³¹⁰ Another example concerns a young farmer in the city of Alavi, who was first given food to satisfy his hunger before he received the teachings. It turned out that after he found ways for the physical weakness or disability, later the teaching (DA 161). In addition, there were cases in which the Buddha, upon his arrival at the monasteries, inquired of the monks about the ease and adequacy of their alms meals before delivering his teachings. Such incidents serve as a positive illustration of the Remedial Teaching Method.

The Buddha offered solutions to people suffering from mental illness to enable them to lead productive lives. According to Buddhist teaching, anyone affected by defilements can be considered a kind of mentally disturbed individual. Some sought solace from the Buddha due to various ailments and mental confusion. The Buddha adapted his approach to the beliefs of each individual. For example, Lady Patācāra (Thig 112-116) experienced deep unhappiness and misery due to various factors. Her life spiraled into despair as she struggled with lustful desires that were compounded by the loss of her two children, husband, parents, and brother. She was kindly approached by the

³¹⁰Dhp 41.

Buddha, who gave her the teaching, gave her true consciousness, and opened the way for her to realize the truth.

In addition, the Brahmaya discourse and Sela discourse illustrate how a Blessed One responded to people's mental states and conveyed his teachings to them. In both cases, the people speculated that the Buddha might be the Great Being referred to in the thirty-two suttas. When they realized this, the Buddha performed a remarkable feat and dispelled their doubts. This evidence indicates that the Buddha guided these disciples while dispelling their personal doubts. These examples illustrate the approach to remedial teaching found within in treatise. It is evident from these examples of Buddha used his method of remedial teaching in a psychologically effective way.³¹¹

5.3 Buddha's Teachings on Children's Learning

The evidence in the Pāli canon describes that children can learn the Dhamma like adults (Dahara sutta, SN 3.1). In the Dahara Sutta, the Buddha encounters King Pasenadi of Kosala, who finds it difficult to accept the Buddha's youth and recent emergence, especially in comparison to the well-known and older six sectarian teachers. In his reply, the Buddha advises Pasenadi not to underestimate people because of their youth and gives four examples: a young nobleman, a young snake, a small fire, and a young monk. In the verse portion of the sutta, the Buddha explains that a young nobleman should not be dismissed, as he can mature into a powerful and influential king who can take revenge. Similarly, a young snake has the potential to become dangerous over time, while a small fire can escalate into a flame that causes damage, but after a forest fire, new growth

³¹¹MN 91; MN 92.

emerges. Similarly, a young monk has the ability to develop moral virtues. Therefore, a wise person would show respect to these people regardless of their youth. In the Pāli canon, there are stories in which the children or samanera achieve liberation. The story of Sumana (the Sumana Sāmanera Vatthu) is one of the examples of a novice who became an arahant after good education.³¹² According to the Dhammapada commentary, the young novice Culla Sumana attains arahantship under the guidance of the elder Anuruddha and attains all supernatural powers the moment the razor blade touches his hair to shave, even though he is only seven years old.³¹³

There is evidence in the Pāli canon that children can understand the Dhamma as well as adults. The following question relates to how children learn and perceive the world. To address this query, we must examine the Buddhist teachings regarding the notion of individual identity, which sheds light on children's learning processes. According to Buddhist scriptures, the cosmos, akin to individuals, consists of diverse phenomena referred to as dhammas. Despite these occurrences being inherently impermanent and without self, Buddhism categorizes them into different groups to clarify the commonly accepted concept of person. The three basic concepts — spheres (ayatana), elements (dhatu), and aggregates (khandha) — serve as a framework for classifying these various phenomena. Regarding the doctrine of aggregates, Buddhist texts indicate that the Buddha often used the aggregate concept to explain the constituents that operate within an individual. According to this framework, what is commonly referred to as the concept of a "person" can be comprehended through the framework of five aggregates. The five

³¹²DhA 25.12.

³¹³DhA 4:129,11.

aggregates are the various parts that together make up a person. They contribute to who a person is by depending on causes and relating to each other through the five aggregates and experiencing the world (Khanda Sutta).³¹⁴

In the Buddha's inaugural sermon and subsequent teachings, a Buddha always presented khandhas as a unified whole. This unified view is an effective method for grasping the perspective of Buddhism on their role. In their collective capacity, the khandhas refer to the body as a living organism that serves as the basis for our ability to understand all phenomena. We cannot detach ourselves from our experiences, and our understanding is inseparable from the integrated unity of the khandhas and our lived experiences. Moreover, there is no clear boundary between mind and body. Human cognition, including the ability to develop ideas, is based on sensory input processed through the unified activity of the khandhas. Therefore, the education of children is essentially based on the interaction of the five aggregates of existence. Children learn to comprehend the world through the lens of the khandhas. Rather than viewing the khandhas as disparate physical elements, they should be perceived as a cohesive, dynamic physical mechanism. This mechanism primarily serves to ensure the survival of the organism and the functioning of cognitive processes.

All parts of the khandhas do not function separately; no perception depends solely on input from a particular organ. Every perception inherently comprises several senses. Modalities are not isolated entities but emerge in a dynamic process involving an embodied agent characterized by goals and sensations interacting with the environment.

³¹⁴SN 22.48.

Each facet of an individual's consciousness during a particular action needs to be comprehended within the broader context of the whole structure functioning during the activity. In essence, the khandhas, or the body as a living organism represent an integration of interacting modalities. However, this perspective offers a distinctly different analysis of the interplay between the khandhas, which serve as the cognitive apparatus through which humans construct their understanding of the world. In traditional Theravada analysis, emphasis is placed on the impermanence of each khandha as a source of pain. This is possible to say that human sorrow results from the impermanent cognitive constructions of oneself and the desires. The result of enlightenment is the cessation of attachment to both the object and the subject of experience.

Children learn through the five khandhas, which include the body, consciousness, sensations, perception, and volitional activities. The body is significant as it serves as a locus of experience and houses the senses through which children interact with the world. In accordance with Buddhist teaching, six senses are attributed to the body: sight, hearing, smell, taste, touch, and the mind. However, while the first five are generally recognized, there are also views that consider the mind to be the sixth sense. In early Buddhist teachings, the mind functions as the faculty or sense that filters and integrates all sensory information. It acts as a mediator for processing the wealth of data received by the human sense organs and gives them meaning. The mind is not fixed, but rather an ongoing conceptualization and emotional response.

The body serves as a channel through which children perceive the outside world via their sensory organs. The information received through these senses undergoes complex mental processing and forms the basis for children's understanding or

knowledge of the world. Children's sensory experiences are therefore not just sensations or perceptions but are also influenced by the organization, processing, and interpretation of the mind. This perspective is underlined in a doctrine, that emphasize an importance in bodily functions. This view contrasts with many contemporary Buddhist meditation practices and teachings about the body, which often portray it as viewed negatively as a cause of discomfort or undesirable substances. In fact, mainstream Buddhist interpretations tend to emphasize impermanence and encourage monks to cultivate detachment by viewing their bodies with distaste. However, the early Buddhist perspective on the body was neither wholly positive nor negative; rather, it was characterized by a neutral analytical approach. In fact, the Buddha often advocated a balanced lifestyle and proper care of the body.

5.4 Buddhism's Upāya for Teaching Children

The Pāli term Upāya means "skillful" or "expedient" in Buddhism. In Theravada Buddhism, upāya refers to the capacity of the Blessed One to tailor the needs of his listeners. Sometimes upāya is also spelled upāya-kusala, meaning "skillfulness in means." According to Buddhist scriptures, upāya was mentioned only briefly including in later texts. The extended conversation and Anguttara discourse regarding three levels of expertise: proficiency in entry (aya), proficiency in exit (apāya), and proficiency in approach or method (upāya). Regardless of etymological interpretations, this terminology indicates the spiritual mindset of a monk who is practiced in navigating his way to Buddhahood. In the Suttanipāta, a skillful boatman who guides others across turbulent waters is compared to a "skillful connoisseur of means."

Although there are few references to upāya in the Pali scriptures, it is significant that it takes on a dual role here, representing both the efforts of an aspiring monk and the guidance of a wise teacher who helps others on their spiritual journey. This dual usage is frequently observed in the early Mahāyāna teachings, although it is not explicitly followed. In Pali texts, other instances of upāya usage are either non-technical or appear later and incidental. However, the relatively low presence of the term in Pali texts does not mean that the underlying mindset is alien to Theravāda Buddhism in its developed form or to early Buddhists in general. While there is no direct evidence that the Buddha himself used this particular term to explain his teachings, there is ample evidence that his teachings were conveyed with deliberate, practical skill. This can be seen in the well-known parables found in the scriptures, such as the raft, the poisoned arrow, the marrow, and the water snake, which emphasize the provisional and pragmatic nature teachings of the Blessed One.

Instructing is challenging, even Buddha himself realized that. According to the treatise of Buddhism, the Blessed One thought about not sharing his newfound knowledge with others after liberation. He had doubts about people's willingness and ability to receive, let alone understand, his teachings. He therefore toyed with the idea of enjoying the peace of enlightenment just for himself. Fortunately, out of compassion, the gods asked the Buddha to teach anyway, assuring him that there would be at least a few people who would understand. As a result, the Buddha began to teach. The gap between the deep understanding and the limited understanding of living beings is resolved by the concept of upāya, which denotes a temporary method used to lead individuals to Dhamma. Essentially, while a Buddha recognizes an ineffable and inherent nature of

nirvana, he conveys the teaching of nirvana as a "means" to lead people to detachment, knowing that the ultimate truth cannot be precisely expressed in words.

When teaching children, the Buddha used methods appropriate for each child. The upāya that the Buddha used for teaching children are as follows:

1) In teaching, the Buddha took into account the difference of each child. In the Ugghatitaññu Sutta, the Buddha described four categories of individuals existing in the world: those who grasp concepts immediately, those who understand them only with the help of explanations, those who require formal instruction and those who acquire knowledge solely through repetition.³¹⁵ For this reason, the Buddha chose the appropriate teaching and content for each child. For example, the Buddha went to the town of Ālavi to teach the daughter of a weaver. One morning he observed the world and noticed that the weaver's daughter had become entangled in the web of his mind. Realizing that she had the potential to attain enlightenment, he decided to approach her and ask her four questions. The weaver's daughter was sixteen years old, but she practiced meditation on death every day. Her five mental faculties were cultivated. Then the Buddha traveled to teach her and finally, she attained stream-entry.

2) The Buddha adapted the teaching method to each person. Although he taught the same doctrine, he was to use a different method for each child. The reason for this is that the abilities of the students are different. Choosing an appropriate teaching method can help children learn faster. For example, the Buddha went to teach Sopāka, who was doing his exercises and living in the graveyard. He taught him the principle of love and

³¹⁵AN 4.133.

how to make no distinction between those who are friendly and those who are hostile. Eventually, Sopāka attained Arahantship.³¹⁶ The Buddha taught Matthakundali, who was about to die, a different method. But finally, Matthakundali could rejoice and spread loving-kindness towards his parents and did not harbor anger against them. His mind was compassionate in his last moments. After his demise, he was born in heaven.³¹⁷

3) The Buddha considered the maturation of the five faculties of children before he taught. Each of the five faculties has the task of overcoming certain mental obstacles and mobilizing the corresponding mental power necessary to achieve final enlightenment. These faculties serve as active agents that direct and channel our innate energies towards achieving inner balance and tranquility, which is crucial for true happiness and peace. Rather than teaching these dispositions from scratch, the Buddha's teachings harness the innate capacities of human nature and direct them towards a transcendent goal — the realization of the unconditioned — giving them profound meaning. By guiding man on a path that can realize this potential, the Dhamma elevates these worldly mental qualities to spiritual abilities. These abilities serve as powerful tools in the quest for liberation, capable of understanding the deepest principles of existence and opening the gates to the eternal. In the Cula-Rahulovada Sutta (MN 147), for example, the Buddha waited patiently for the maturation of the five Rāhula faculties. When he realized their readiness, he thought about leading Rāhula further along the path to the realization of arahatship.³¹⁸ With this idea, the Buddha entered the city of Sāvatti in the morning to receive alms. After finishing his meal, he left the alms resort and said to Rāhula, "Bring a mat to sit on,

³¹⁶Tha Ap 19.

³¹⁷Ja 449.

³¹⁸MN 147.

Rāhula, and let us go to the Andha grove to spend the day." "Very well, Exalted Buddha," he replied, and followed closely on the Buddha's heels, carrying the mat. The Buddha then reflected on encouraging and guiding Rāhula, realizing that his faculties of faith, energy, mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom had reached maturity. In anticipation of this auspicious moment, several thousand celestial beings, driven by a common aspiration for spiritual development, gathered exclusively in the Andha Grove, awaiting favorable circumstances for their own progress.³¹⁹

In the study of the Dhamma, each of these faculties must fulfill its unique role while harmonizing with the others in order to achieve the balance necessary for deep understanding. They reach their full maturity during mindfulness cultivation, which is a path that lead to liberation. The attribute of belief instills inspiration and aspiration, dispels doubt, and instills serene confidence in the Triple Gem as the ultimate source of liberation. Energy provides sustained determination, overcomes obstacles, and fosters the qualities necessary for awakening. Mindfulness promotes clear awareness, counteracts distractions, and enables penetrating insight. Concentration maintains focus on the stream of physical and mental occurrences and promotes calmness. Finally, wisdom, which the Buddha valued as the most important virtue of all the prerequisites for enlightenment, dispels ignorance and reveals the true nature of phenomena.

In his teachings, the Buddha mentioned several mental qualities that children can already possess to varying degrees. He encouraged them to cultivate these qualities until they develop into factors of enlightenment. Children require education and nurturing until

³¹⁹MN 147.

these attributes take precedence and wield significant influence, empowering them to adeptly confront and surmount any mental hindrances or impurities obstructing their growth. As one advances through the four noble stages of the spiritual journey — stream-entry (sotāpanna), once-returner (sakadāgāmi), non-returner (anāgāmi), and arahant — the five spiritual faculties progressively evolve and fortify. As these faculties reach full maturation, they transition into five spiritual powers (pañcha bala) that are steadfast and capable of withstanding and repelling all opposing influences.

4) The Buddha used the method of "teaching through practice" to teach children. According to Buddhist tradition, Buddha's enlightenment was not bestowed by an external deity but arose from deep meditation that revealed insights that freed his mind from the root causes of suffering: selfish desire, anger, and distorted perceptions. This key experience shaped the essence of his teachings. Since wisdom is the most important tool for enlightenment, the Buddha always emphasized independent understanding over blind obedience or unquestioning faith. He described his Dhamma as ehipassiko, meaning "come and see for yourself", and encouraged seekers to explore and evaluate his teachings with their own intellect and mind. He urged them to question his teachings critically and to verify their validity through personal investigation. Moreover, the Buddha claimed that disciples have the potential to reach the same enlightened state as the teacher. According to Buddhist teachings, people are responsible for their own purity and impurity. If one commits evil, immoral, and unwholesome acts through thoughts, words, and actions, then one is defiled and creates his own hell and misery. Man must be responsible and accountable for himself.

The Pāli canon expressed that in some cases the Buddha taught children by doing. Since children must cultivate the Dhamma themselves, the Buddha gives them the Dhamma as a torch to find their way and as the path to enlightenment, but they must walk that path themselves. The Dhamma is compared to a guide who shows the way to the destination, but the children have to walk the path themselves; no one will carry them to their destination. An example of the method of this teaching is the story of Culla-Panthaka (Tha Ap 14. and Dhp 25). Culla-Panthaka was a young brother of Maha-Panthaka who managed to become an arahant with ease. In contrast, Culla-Panthaka was weary of learning the Dhamma. He was unable to memorize even a single stanza in four months. Maha-panthaka was unable to teach him. The Buddha then urged him either to renounce the monastic order or to lay down his robes, but Chulla-panthaka was reluctant to go back to worldly living. A Blessed One recognized a predicament and personally accompanied him. The awakened one gave him a fresh cloth and instructed him to turn to the east and recite the phrase 'rajoha-ranam - As he wiped the cloth, he repeated the phrase 'cleansing impurity - cleansing impurity'. Culla-panthaka followed the Buddha's instruction and performed this practice. As he watched the cloth become soiled, he contemplated the impermanence of all phenomena. Eventually, he attained arahantship and possessed the four patisambhida (branches of knowledge), including mastery of all the sacred texts.³²⁰

The "teaching by doing" method is an effective way to improve student experiences. The experiences from the activities stay longer in the minds of the students.

³²⁰Tha Ap 14, Ud 5.10, and Dhp 25.

It is said that real knowledge comes from experience. No wonder children do not learn to meditate by reading instructions. Students must practice on their own. Experiential learning is the natural way to teach children.

5) The Buddha used participatory learning methods to teach children.

Participatory learning approaches focus on experiential learning and encourage children to go beyond their comfort zone, question stereotypes, and actively participate in their personal development. Through this process, they not only experience, think and act but also develop important life skills. At the heart of this method is the recognition that everyone deserves to learn and that everyone deserves an education that nurtures their potential. Participatory learning believes that it helps develop lifelong learning and transferable skills in children. An example of its application is found in the Udāna (Ud 2.3) and the Dhammapada (Dhp 131-132): On a certain day, the Buddha traveled to collect alms. On a path between Savatthi and the Jeta forest, he came across numerous boys attacking a snake with sticks. He inquired about their behavior and asked them why they were harming the snake. Their answer was fear of being bitten. The Buddha gave them advice and imparted the wisdom that the desire for happiness should not go hand in hand with harming other living beings. Those who harm other beings will not find pleasure in future lives.³²¹ Another example is found in Udāna (5.4): One day the Buddha went to Savatthi to receive alms and saw many boys catching fish. He said to them, "Are you apprehensive, young men, of experiencing suffering? Does suffering cause you discomfort?" The young men responded, "Yes, venerable sir, we are fearful of suffering.

³²¹Ud 2.3, Dhp 131-132.

Suffering is indeed unpleasant to us." The Buddha then imparted a profound statement, "If you fear suffering, if suffering brings you displeasure, then abstain from committing wrongful acts, whether openly or covertly. However, if you engage in such acts, or are considering doing so now, there is no freedom from suffering for you, even after walking, running away (Ud 5.4)."³²² With this method, children have the opportunity to reflect on key moments in their lives to choose one that led them to learn about themselves, in terms of emotions, understanding, and change of perspective.

6) The Buddha focused on a child who was able to learn his teaching. In stories from the Pāli Canon, it is reported that the Buddha regularly practiced this type of teaching as part of his daily routine. Every morning when he woke up, he would meditate and then look at the world with his inner vision to see who needed help. He would then dress and either help those in need or collect alms. For example, he focused his attention exclusively on the weaver's daughter. Although he received an invitation from the people of Alavi for a meal and alms, he accepted the offer because the weaver's daughter had been meditating on mortality for three years. One morning as he meditated, he observed the world with his inner vision to perceive if there were people in need of help. He saw the weaver's daughter and realized that if he came to her and asked her four questions, she could receive the fruit of entering the stream. Then he went to Ālavi. The people of Ālavi offered him food and waited for him to speak the words of joy when the meal was finished. The Buddha was also waiting for the girl to be present. He said, "I have come here on a journey of thirty miles to help a certain maiden. So far she has not encountered

³²²Ud 5.4.

an opportunity to attend. When she arrives, I will express my words of appreciation. Following this statement, he seated himself and remained quiet, with his audience also observing silence. Until a girl appeared and he began to teach. Finally, the girl attained stream entry.³²³

7) The Buddha did not neglect the children who were slow learners and the children who had difficulties in their lives. The story of Culla-pantaka is an example that can be used here. Culla-pantaka's brother, Mahāpantaka, had tried to teach him in a subject-centered way without success. Culla-pantaka had become jaded in learning the Dhamma. He was unable to memorize even a single stanza in four months. Mahāpantaka resolved to dismiss him from the monastery, deeming him intellectually challenged. However, the Buddha intervened, conversed with him, affectionately caressed his head, and through compassion, succeeded in halting his actions. By tapping into Culla-pantaka's latent potential, the Buddha guided him towards enlightenment, revealing the truth and guiding him onto the correct path. Reflecting on Culla-pantaka's narrative, it becomes apparent that he was not intellectually impaired or feeble. Rather, it was an error in the teacher's instructional approach that labeled the disciple as weak and disregarded him.

Moreover, a Buddha does not neglect a child who has difficulties in his life. For example, the life of Sopāka, who was the son of an impoverished woman in Sāvatti. During her labor, his mother fell into a long faint, so her relatives said, 'She is dead.' They took her to the cemetery and prepared to cremate the body. However, a storm of wind and

³²³Dhp 174.

rain prevented the fire from burning, so they left. Then the spirit took the infant and brought it to the guardian's house, where he provided it with proper nourishment for a while. Thereupon the watchman adopted the child. He was given the name Sopāka, the abandoned one, due to his birth occurring in the graveyard. Once in the morning, the blessed one meditated, and looked around the world if anyone needed assistance. Sopāka, who was seven years old, came to pass his divine net. The Buddha went to the cemetery. The boy approached the Buddha with a delighted mind and greeted him. The Buddha taught him, and he understood the Dhamma. He wanted forth into houselessness and finally attained arahantship.³²⁴

8) The Blessed One simplified challenging concepts for comprehension and elucidated abstract ideas. For instance, he depicted the horrors of hell, instilling fear of wrongdoing, awakening consciousness, and apprehension regarding the repercussions of incorrect deeds. He used a variety of methods to explain abstract concepts to his students, such as metaphors, similes, and even superpowers. The story of Rupananda can be used as an example. Rupananda was very beautiful and Rupananda, married to Nanda, a cousin of the Buddha, avoided him due to fears of his criticism regarding her beauty, reflecting on his teachings about impermanence. Encouraged by other bhikkhunis' praises of the Buddha, she visited the monastery. The Buddha, recognizing her attachment to her appearance, used his supernatural abilities to reveal the aging process to her, leading to her realization of the impermanence of the body and subsequent enlightenment. This illustrates the Buddha's adeptness at simplifying complex teachings for understanding.

³²⁴Tha Ap 19, Thag 1.33, Thag 7.4.

9) The Buddha used teaching materials in his teaching. For example, he taught Rāhula, who approached him and provided water to wash his feet. After bathing his feet, the Buddha left a small amount of water in the vessel and turned to Rāhula and uttered, "Do you perceive, Rāhula, this remaining drop of water in the vessel?" a novice replied in an affirmative. The Buddha compared it to the insignificance of the monastic community for those who are not ashamed to deliberately speak untruths. Then he discarded the remaining water and declared, "The monastic assembly comprising individuals unashamed to utter deliberate falsehoods is truly extinguished." He also tipped the vessel over and said, "Overturned indeed is the monastic life of those who are not ashamed to deliberately spread falsehoods." Finally, he positioned the vessel upright and remarked, "Truly vacant and devoid is the monastic existence of those unashamed to intentionally propagate falsehoods." I maintain that one who is not ashamed to spread willful falsehoods is capable of any evil deed. Therefore, Rāhula, you should practice in this way — never will I speak a lie, not even in jest." Another vivid example from the same discourse is when the Buddha uses a mirror as a teaching tool and asks Rāhula, "What do you observe, Rāhula? What is the purpose of a mirror?" Rāhula responded: "It is used to look at one's own reflection, Lord." The Buddha then explained the deeds performed by the body, speech, and thoughts should also only be undertaken after careful examination.³²⁵ From the above example, it is clear that the Buddha helped Rāhula understand abstract concepts by using a suitable tool to hook the concept. This is one way, rather than just telling abstract concepts. It can be challenging to teach abstract

³²⁵MN 61.

concepts to children because they may not yet be developmentally able to grasp less concrete ideas. But using tools in the classroom can help younger children understand abstract ideas.

10) The Buddha has the discernment to impart teachings at the right time, which aligns with the cultivation of the five faculties (indriya). This is illustrated in the Dhammaññū Sutta (AN 7.68), it describes how the Buddha taught Vakkali, whom he did not teach immediately because Vakkali wanted to, but he waited for the right time to teach him. Vakkali was fascinated by the body of Awakened One and decided to become ordained. The motivation of him to follow the Buddha was not to listen to his teachings, but to admire the Buddha's attractive physique. When Vakkali was newly ordained and followed the Buddha everywhere just to admire his beauty, the Buddha kept silent about it because he considered Vakkali to be someone who had been ordained into monasticism out of "faith," although it was not faith in the Dhamma but in his physical splendor. Later, when the right time had come, he said to monk Vakkali, "Look, Vakkali, when you look at me, you do not really see me. A person who sees the Dhamma can be said to see the Buddha." Eventually, Vakkali attained arahantship.³²⁶ In the same way, the Buddha taught Rāhula and other children of whom he knew when the time was right to teach.

11) The Buddha praises his students to encourage them in their learning. Praise is one of the most effective ways to motivate and engage students. When used effectively, praise can reverse behavioral problems and improve students' attitudes toward learning. The power of praise is that it both signals the teacher's appreciation and lets students

³²⁶AN 7.68.

know that their academic performance or behavior is meeting the teacher's expectations. The weaver's daughter tale in the treatise can serve as an example. After gathering her yarn, she proceeded towards her father's workshop, stopping by the outer perimeter of the gathering, where she then approached the Buddha, bowed respectfully to him, and stood next to him. Shortly afterward, she sat down quietly in the middle of the assembly. They started talking and the Buddha opened the conversation: "Miss, where do you hail from?" She responded: "I am uncertain, revered sir." The Buddha inquired further: "And where are you headed?" She also replied: "I am uncertain, revered sir." Perplexed, the Buddha pressed on: "Are you really not sure?" She then declared, "Yes, venerable sir, I am." The Buddha pressed further: "You do not know?" The girl explained, "Indeed, venerable sir, I know...". The Buddha then asked for an explanation for her seemingly contradictory answers. She explained, "When you asked, where are you from, I replied, I am not sure... because you know I come from my father's house. Thus, when you inquired, 'From where do you come?' knowing that you were referring to my origins after reincarnation to the world. But the insight of my do not know where I am from when I am born again here."³²⁷ The Buddha praised her and said: "Excellent answer, really well spoken, young lady! You have answered my question aptly." Every time she answered a question correctly, the Buddha praised her in the same way. In the end, she attained stream entry. The Pāli canon shows the Buddha praising many children, including Rāhula, Samkicca, Pandita, Sopaka, and Revata samanera.

³²⁷Dhp 174.

5.5 The Ti-sikkhā Process as a Means of Educating Children

The Threefold Training or Ti-sikkhā is the central teaching in Buddhism, which can be further subdivided into the Noble Eightfold Path. These three forms of learning are essential for those who aspire to enlightenment. They encompass all facets of Buddhist practice and are arranged in a sequential manner. First comes sila, the concentration on moral behavior that prepares the body and mind for concentration. Then comes samadhi, the practice of meditation, where a concentrated mind is necessary to gain insight into the truth. Finally, there is prajñā or wisdom, which is not just intellectual knowledge, but an intuitive understanding of ultimate reality that is attained through deep meditation. It is important for children to incorporate these three practices into their daily lives in order to cultivate a wholesome existence.

5.5.1 Steps that Lead to Threefold Training.

The learning process that will lead to Threefold Training is the cultivation of Right View. In the Asāduppajahavagga discourse (AN 2.126), The passage elucidates the factors acting as the starting point or trigger for the emergence of Right View: "Monks, two factors contribute to the development of Right View. What are they? Attentive listening to the teachings of others and diligent observation. These are the pivotal factors for the cultivation of Right Views."³²⁸ This discourse deals with the concept of right views, which can be divided into external and internal factors. The external factor includes outside influences such as the speech or advice of others, their perceptions and

³²⁸AN 2.126.

learning from them (paratoghosa). The internal factor includes conscious and systematic contemplation as well as reflective and analytical thinking (Yonisomanasikara). Both elements contribute to the shaping process of the right view (sammā ditthi) and interact with each other in a dynamic way. This serves as a fundamental aspect of the education and development of children.

The first is paratoghosa. The Pāli term paratoghosa means sound of others, including words, instructions, statements, adverbs, message flow, writings, articles from various people or sources. There are two types of paratoghosa: 1) the types of truth with benefit and that of a good friend (kalyanamitta) and 2) that are false, unreasonable, unhelpful and aimed at destruction. After hearing something, children must consider what is beneficial to them and what they should avoid. Consequently, listening or acquiring knowledge from others is the most important method of gaining wisdom and understanding. However, paratoghosa alone is not enough; it must be paratoghosa (hearing from others) accompanied by Yonisomanasikāra (considered attention). If there is paratoghosa without Yonisomanasikāra, children may quickly believe and know without reason, and this will lead to injustice. The Theravāda clearly states how one must listen to gain merit and become a wise man, which depends on listening and learning with Yonisomanasikāra (as right knowledge) and also a good friend. Listening from others, that is, listening and learning from parents, teachers, monks, and other people who speak and teach, who lead in a good way into the concept of the wise man. The aim of listening is to absorb and acquire knowledge, whereby the mind must decide what is useful or harmful, what to accept and what to avoid.

The second is Yonisomanasikāra. It refers to conscious observation, methodical investigation, analytical thinking, reflective analysis, thinking about certain causalities and thinking about solutions. This aspect represents an internal and individual element that falls within the realm of insight and wisdom. Yonisomanasikāra (as right knowledge), the word Yoniso refers to "to the womb," "birthplace," or "origin," which is the essence or core of a particular thing. Manasikara means "to keep something in mind" or to direct one's attention. Through the use of wise attention, the individual focuses his consciousness on the fundamental essence of a particular object or event to achieve a profound comprehension of an inherent reality.

By wise attention one will recognize the impermanent as impermanent, the unsatisfactory as unsatisfactory, the not-self as not-self, and the corrupt as corrupt. There are four qualities of Yonisomanasikāra: (1) Upayamanasikāra is thinking in the right way, (2) Pathamanasikāra is thinking in thoughts, (3) Karanamanasikāra is thinking in rational thoughts, (4) Uppathakamanasikāra is thinking with mindfulness. These were the other ten methods of Yonisomanasikāra: (1) finding the causes and factors, (2) classifying the components, (3) thinking by concentrating on common features, (4) reflection on the Four-Noble-Truths, (5) contemplation with the connection between principle and purpose, (6) reflection on benefits, drawbacks, and liberation, (7) critical evaluation of real and illusory value, (8) reflection on actions rooted in virtue, (9) reflection on the present moment, and (10) analytical thinking.³²⁹

³²⁹P. A. Payutto, "yonisomanasikāra," in *Dictionary of Buddhism: Thai-English & English-Thai*, vol. 6 (Bangkok: Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, 2021), 57.

Yonisomanasikāra is an important element in creating the right view, bringing forth all kinds of wholesome actions, and eradicating mental intoxicants in children. Moreover, the Pāli discourse depicts the Yonisamanasikāra, which had causes in various aspects such as advantages, disadvantages and solutions, in order to attain enlightenment.

5.5.2 Threefold Training Process.

Threefold Training is the systematic process of developing behavior, mind, and wisdom. This learning process is the basis of Buddhist education leading to the final goal. In the learning process, each perception consists of sense objects, external factors, and testimonies as the starting point and has internal factors, yonisomanasikara and conscious factors as the collecting center. It is learning from outside to inside through the learning process based on the Threefold Training and experiences. This leads to self-development, changes in behavior, mind and wisdom.

According to the Buddhist system of education, the threefold system of education can follow the three stages, namely, (1) pariyatti: learning the teaching, the wording of the teaching, (2) patipatti: practicing it, (3) pativedha: penetrating it and realizing its goal. At these three stages, the Dhamma teachers impart the knowledge of Buddhism to the children and lead them on the path of practice. Next, they must put what they have learned into engagement for acquiring a practical understanding.

The Pathamasikkhattaya and the Dutiyasikkhattaya discourse emphasis on Threefold Training. These suttas succinctly outline the gradual progression of a way to liberation with emphasize a gradual attainment in the three trainings.³³⁰ The first training,

³³⁰AN 3.89; AN 3.90.

Sīla (discipline), is taught as a foundation for the second training, Samādi (meditative concentration), which in turn is a prerequisite for Paññā (wisdom), the third training. This system can be applied in Buddhist education by both adults and children. Engaging in this training can lead you to let go of cravings, aversions and ignorance. Attaining mastery in this training leads to the attainment of Nibbana.³³¹ Keren Arbel mentions that in his article on the Kosambī Sutta, Bhikkhu Bodhi concludes, "All arahants attain their goal through the same way."³³² Moreover, Threefold-Training is concluded in several canonical discourses with the Eightfold-Noble-Path.

1) A training on heightened virtue

Beginning in the three trainings, Sīla (morality), deals with how children should behave outside their meditation practice. Sīla, which refers to moral conduct, serves as the cornerstone of human behavior and forms the basis for the process of purifying the mind. It also means harmonizing our actions in body and speech and promoting good relationships in a community. Observing the principles of Sīla can bring children's inner faculties into a balanced and centered state of unity. Buddhists do not have just one set of precepts. There are five, eight, ten (for novices), two hundred and twenty-seventh (for monks), and three hundred and eleventh (for nuns). Lay people can choose to take five or eight vows. The basic list of precepts that Buddhists should observe is called the Pancasila or five precepts in the Pāli, namely (1) Abstain from causing harm to sentient

³³¹AN 305.

³³²Keren Arbel, *Early Buddhist Meditation: The Four Jhānas as the Actualization of Insight* (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2016), 197.

beings, (2) Abstain from taking what is not offered freely, (3) Abstain from engaging in inappropriate sensual behavior, (4) Refrain from not telling the truth, (5) Refrain from consuming intoxicants that can cloud mental clarity.

In teaching Buddhist doctrine to children, teachers should inspire children to become accomplished in morality (Sīla). Children can observe the first five precepts at any time. Occasionally, such as on Uposatha Day (a Buddhist Memorial Day), the teacher should inspire them to observe eight precepts. In the initial stages, teachers should explain to them the precepts, what the Sīla is and the purpose of observing the Sīla, why they need to observe the Sīla, and how they can apply the Sīla to another situation. Bhikkhu Bodhi suggested that instructors should ensure that students have a thorough understanding of the precepts, understand the reasons for keeping them, and recognize the noble qualities they represent: Compassion, Integrity, Purity, Honesty and Mental Clarity.³³³ In another way, Henepola Gunaratana recommended that in the beginning, a child needs the parents to enforce the rules. As they grow up, they will realize the benefit of the precepts and skillful actions will become automatic for them.³³⁴ A role model is also important in training a child.³³⁵ Primary influences come from parents, caretakers, and educators, as they serve as significant examples for children. Children observe and emulate these role models to understand appropriate conduct in various settings such as school, interpersonal relationships, and when confronted with challenging choices.

³³³Bhikkhu Bodhi, "Dhamma Reflections: Collected Essays of Bhikkhu Bodhi," in *Dhamma Reflections: Collected Essays of Bhikkhu Bodhi*, ed. Nyanatusita Bhikkhu (Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 2015), 160.

³³⁴Henepola Gunaratana, *Eight Mindful Steps to Happiness: Walking the Buddha's Path* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2011), 111.

³³⁵Heather E. Hunter, *K.i.s.s. Always, for Parents* (Mustang, OK: Tate Publishing, 2011), 47.

Therefore, guardians, caregivers, and teachers should consider the five precepts that benefit themselves and serve as role models for their children or students.

2) The practice of cultivating an elevated state of consciousness

This aspect within the tripartite training, contemplation holds significance.

Buddhist meditation includes two main techniques known as samatha, which focuses on calming the mind, and vipassana, which aims to gain insight. Concentration is about focusing the mind by directing it to a fixed point. Vipassana, also known as insight or mindfulness meditation, allows for heightened awareness and sensitivity. These practices complement each other when practicing meditation. In Buddhism, meditation serves as a fundamental means of achieving inner stillness and openness. The supreme objective of meditation is to cultivate and expand the consciousness. Through the process of meditation, practitioners slowly become aware of what they really are. It is a process of self-discovery. Kabat-Zinn also explained that mindfulness in Buddhism goes beyond mere benefit. It represents a holistic approach to existence and understanding the world. It is able to alleviate suffering by bringing calm and clarity to the mind, promoting emotional openness, and directing focused attention.³³⁶ He also noted that the practical application of meditation in Buddhism is based on a broad framework of non-attainment.³³⁷

³³⁶Jon Kabat-Zinn, "Mindfulness-Based Interventions in Context: Past, Present, and Future," *Clinical Psychology: Science and Practice* 10, no. 2 (2003): 144–156.

³³⁷*Ibid.*

The introduction of children to meditation practice is increasing in the twenty-first century. In certain nations like Australia and Bhutan, mindfulness is acknowledged as a crucial component of children's education and has been extensively incorporated into school curricula.³³⁸ Mindfulness education for children has proliferated worldwide, and various forms of meditation practice exist. Currently, there are more than eighty fiction and non-fiction texts on teaching meditation to children and countless free online resources.³³⁹ There are many benefits to children from meditation, such as stress reduction, improving self-confidence, building a good relationship with others, increasing attention, optimism, and self-esteem.³⁴⁰ Young people gain balance, discover inner serenity, improve their self-confidence and self-discipline, show respect for their peers and classmates, develop empathy and show improved concentration in class. Jennifer Lee and Miller also point out that mindfulness-based approaches can help prevent negative thoughts from escalating into brooding patterns characteristic of depression.³⁴¹ For this reason, some schools have begun teaching meditation to children. Current research suggests that teaching meditation to children should not be treated like homework or music practice. The educator should encourage and motivate them to meditate by explaining the purpose and benefits of this practice tailored to their needs. Without their genuine interest, the effectiveness of teaching meditation to children remains elusive.

³³⁸Nicole Albrecht, "Teachers Teaching Mindfulness with Children: Being a Mindful Role Model," *Australian Journal of Teacher Education* 43, no. 10 (2018): 2–13.

³³⁹ *Ibid.*, 3.

³⁴⁰Kim Rempel, "Mindfulness for Children and Youth: A Review of the Literature with an Argument for School-Based Implementation," *Canadian Journal of Counselling and Psychotherapy* 46, no. 3 (2012): 203.

³⁴¹Jennifer Lee et al., "Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy for Children: Results of a Pilot Study," *Journal of Cognitive Psychotherapy: An International Quarterly* 22, no. 1 (2008): 16.

Children's interest guides them and determines how much time they spend meditating. They may want to practice one day and not the next, or they may lose interest after a few weeks or months. Therefore, children need support and a gentle suggestion from the teacher or parents to maintain their interest.

Before beginning the teaching, the teacher should provide a suitable environment for practice and create an appropriate setting in which a child can enjoy the practice and continue to practice meditation.³⁴² Children can handle silent time if the teacher creates the right conditions for them. In addition, teachers should prepare for the class. Preparation can begin with a discussion of meditation, inner stillness, silence, and listening to oneself. Sally Harper suggests that the discussion should begin casually.³⁴³ In preparing, the teacher should ask many questions to find out what the children know and believe about silence. If a child is upset, agitated, or angry, try to pause and let them notice how they feel. Sally Harper recommends that a teacher be careful about trying to impose a sense of calm on a child in the moment. The teacher should try to get the child to compare and notice, not change how he feels.³⁴⁴ The teacher should give the child a chance to work through the problem and gently give him a chance to notice the difference in his feelings. In addition, teachers should talk with their children about the benefits of meditation. The discussion can help children develop an attitude and understanding about meditation. In addition, teachers should agree with their child that they are willing to try the process. Sometimes teachers may feel uncomfortable teaching or teaching children

³⁴²Sarah Wood Vallely, *Sensational Meditation for Children: A Complete Guide to Child-Friendly Meditation Based on the Five Senses* (Napa, CA: Satya International Inc, 2008), 44.

³⁴³Sally L. Harper, *Teach the Children Meditation* (Iowa City, IA: 1st World Publishing, 2003), 9.

³⁴⁴*Ibid.*, 10.

may not work as expected. One way to overcome this is to set aside a specific amount of time for this process. And a child might also know about the teacher's commitment.

There are several techniques for teaching children between the ages of three and twelve to meditate. For example. For children ages three to seven, the teacher should use fun activities to get them excited about learning or use a tool to help children learn. At this particular age, children love stories. The teacher can tell the story before it begins. During meditation, do not practice for too long. For children eight years and older, teachers should teach them the right way to breathe, which helps children to have more concentration and mental clarity. Visualization is one of the tools teachers should use to teach meditation at this age.

Within the Buddhist traditions, there are various meditation methods, each tailored to address specific challenges or promote certain psychological states. The Visuddhimagga describes forty different meditation objects that can be used in meditation practice. Of these forty objects, Buddhaghosa explains that the main factor of concentration is fundamentally inhaling and exhaling. And after that, everyone should strive to awaken knowledge and concentration. These forty techniques are applied to adults. It is questionable whether we can use these forty techniques for teaching children.

Teaching children to meditate can be more difficult than for adults because children cannot concentrate on one object for as long as adults, and they may not have enough patience for the pain that may occur during meditation. However, this does not mean that children cannot practice meditation. The evidence in the Pali Canon shows that there are many children who can practice meditation and who have awakened by the age of five or seven. For example, Pandita Samanera, who was a disciple of Sariputta. Once

he accompanied Sariputta on alms round and observed farmers irrigating their fields. Then he asked Sariputta, "Can water flow wherever it wants without consciousness?" Sariputta replied. Yes, it can be directed wherever you want it. Later he saw Fletcher and Carpenter and asked them in the same way. After receiving Sariputta's answer, he thought, "If water, which has no consciousness, can be directed where you want it to go, the wise individual questioned Sariputta, "Given my consciousness, shouldn't I be capable of controlling my mind and engaging in both tranquility and insight meditation?" Afterward, the learned person sought Sariputta's approval to go back to a monastery.³⁴⁵ When he arrived at the monastery, he meditated enthusiastically and conscientiously, concentrating on his body. Before breakfast, Pandita attained Anagami Fruition (non-returning) and finally, he attained Arahantship. The tale of Sukha samanera illustrates his journey to attain arahantship in a similar way.³⁴⁶

The evidence presented in the Pāli Canon shows that children have the ability to learn and meditate as effectively as adults. It depends on how one applies the technique of variety when teaching children. In the beginning, the teacher can inspire them to practice at least five minutes a day in daily life. If the teacher can teach children how to maintain meditation in daily life and find peace, then there is no limit to what children can achieve. Learning meditation from an early age can be extremely beneficial for children.

³⁴⁵Dhp 80.

³⁴⁶Dhp 145.

3) The practice of cultivating increased insight or wisdom

The third aspect of the threefold training is Paññā, which refers to wisdom or insight. It is about gaining a comprehension on fundamental truths, such as transience, dissatisfaction and emptiness.³⁴⁷ Paññā is essential to liberation. The vipassana, is an intuitive understanding that leads to the attainment of enlightenment through the progression of the four stages of spiritual purity.³⁴⁸ According to the Pāli Canon (DN 33), there are three categories of knowledge: reflective knowledge (cintā-mayā-paññā), acquired knowledge (sutta-mayā-paññā) and experiential knowledge (bhāvanā-mayā-paññā).³⁴⁹ Nyanatiloka Thera explained the three types of knowledge as follows:

"Thinking- based knowledge is acquired through personal contemplation, independent of external instruction. Learning- based knowledge is obtained through teachings received from others. Mental development- based knowledge is attained through various mental exercises, leading to deep concentration."³⁵⁰

Paññā, arises as a result of the cultivation of moral conduct (sīla) and concentration (samadhi) through practice. Silas or precepts are rules that keep children from committing offenses. While refraining from offenses, children should also cultivate the path, which is the power of samadhi. Children who have the power of samadhi can develop wisdom, and if they go one step further, by comprehending the true essence of

³⁴⁷Christmas Humphreys, "paññā," in *A Popular Dictionary of Buddhism* (London: Routledge, 2005), 170.

³⁴⁸Nyanatiloka Thera, "paññā," *Buddhist Dictionary: Manual of Buddhist Terms and Doctrines* (Onalaska, WA: Pariyatti, 2019), 135.

³⁴⁹DN 33.

³⁵⁰Nyanatiloka Thera, "abhiññā," in *Buddhist Dictionary: Manual of Buddhist Terms and Doctrines* (Onalaska, WA: Pariyatti, 2019), 4.

existence, they can attain the state of an arahant. Consequently, the three practices (virtue, contemplation, wisdom) are among basic components for child development.

5.6 Developing a Body of Knowledge for Children in the Pāli Canon

Learning management for the development of a body of knowledge for children in the Pāli canon is management for physical and mental development. The Pāli discourses contain numerous references to the fact that the physical state of the body can influence spiritual growth. For example, it is mentioned that the Buddha attained the meditative state of jhāna only after renouncing extreme ascetic practices and eating proper food. Likewise, good health and good digestion are mentioned as factors that facilitate the rapid attainment of enlightenment. Furthermore, cultivating the essential spiritual quality of mindfulness (sati) involves the body as the first object of concentration. Therefore, mindfulness can be enhanced through bodily processes before it is directed towards more abstract states of mind. However, the development of knowledge for children is not a simple process. It contains different variables within itself. As unique individuals, students bring different characteristics from their past to their current learning environment. These characteristics influence their perspectives, emotions, and individual beliefs about learning. Therefore, it is important that educator employ diverse methods to aid children achieve their educational goals.

The objective of Buddhist education revolves around achieving enlightenment (nibbāna), signifying the cessation of suffering and freedom from the cycle of birth and death (samsara). This aspiration is pursued through rigorous spiritual training focused on comprehending the Four Noble Truths, which outline the nature of suffering, its origin,

its cessation, and the path leading to its end. The journey toward alleviating suffering is delineated by the Noble Eightfold Path, often referred to as the Middle Path. In practice, the eight aspects of the Eightfold Path are categorized into three sets of practices: Sila (ethical behavior), Samadhi (meditative concentration), and Panna (wisdom), collectively known as the threefold training.

A dedicated Buddhist practitioner seeking enlightenment follows a path of spiritual purification consisting of seven progressive stages. It begins with the establishment of proper moral behavior, continues with the cultivation of focused concentration, and culminates in the attainment of deep wisdom and ultimate liberation, as set forth in the Rathavinita Sutta.³⁵¹ The seven phases of purification provide a structured framework for building a knowledge base that is tailored to the education of children and is described below:

5.6.1 Purity of Morality (Sila-visuddhi)

The moral purification described in the Rathavinita, the Dasuttara, and the Sāmūgiya discourse revolves around the understanding and observance of four forms of restraint. First, it is about keeping the self-imposed precepts and preserving them with utmost care, treating them as vital as one's own life. Secondly, practitioners are encouraged to watch over the six senses and prevent the arising of impurities that could lead to moral transgressions. Thirdly, righteous living is emphasized, encouraging individuals to nourish themselves in an ethical and honorable manner. And finally, it is

³⁵¹MN 24.

about being wise in the use of the necessities of life and ensuring that they are used wisely and prudently.³⁵² Although these four principles were originally intended for monks and nuns, lay people, including children, are encouraged to adapt them to their circumstances. In the Buddhist tradition, monks and nuns adhere to the educational guidelines described in the two codes of moral conduct, known as the Pātimokkhas. Male and female novices take ten vows, while lay people keep a standard of five vows as a testimony to their virtue. Those who are particularly dedicated may choose to take and keep the eight vows, with livelihood being the eighth.

As in the Pāli texts, the explanation of the purification concepts in the Rathavinā Sutta and the Sāmūgiya Sutta seem to be closely linked. However, the use of the term "purity" in the Sāmūgiya Sutta differs from the term "purification" in the Rathavinā Sutta (MN 24), since purity of morals in the Sāmūgiya Sutta (AN 4.194) refers to the observance of the precepts, a term that can easily be applied to moral purification. In addition, the Sāmūgiya Sutta mentions four types of purity: Purity of ethical conduct, of mental cultivation, of perspective, and of liberation. In contrast, the Rathavinā Sutta deals with Sāriputta's request to Punna and offers a more detailed examination of whether one of the seven phases of cleaning are an ultimate goal for a holy life under the Buddha's guidance. Punna replied in the negative, explaining that none of them was the ultimate goal, although each was necessary to achieve that goal. Furthermore, Punna explained by bringing the parable of the chariot relay after which the Rathavinā Sutta has its title. In this allegory, King Pasenadi had to urgently reach Sāketa, a city more than forty miles

³⁵²MN 24; DN 34; AN 4.194.

away from Sāvatti. To speed up his journey, he sent seven chariots one after the other. Just as each chariot formation served the purpose of reaching Sāketa quickly, each of the seven stages of purification served as a means to reach the final destination. However, the Rathavinā Sutta does not elaborate on these seven stages. According to Buddhaghosa's interpretations of Visuddhimagga, the initial two phrases of cleansing mean the cultivation of morality and concentration. These phrases are also mentioned elsewhere within Pāli discourses and are part of a sequence of nine purifications in total, as described in the Dasuttara discourse.³⁵³ A terminology used for seven stages in this discourse is the same as in the Rathavinā Sutta. The distinction is evident in the aspect on the latter mentions purification directly in each case, while the Dasuttara Sutta specifies each stage as a component that contributes to the pursuit of purity through effort.

5.6.2 Purity of Mind (Citta-Visuddhi)

Purification of the mind is about making progress in concentration by overcoming the five hindrances through focused attention and complete absorption. This stage aims to develop a level of concentration that is conducive to insight meditation. There are two methods to achieve this purification which are contemplation and insight. The first one is about cultivating deep mental calm and concentration by focusing contemplation on a specific thing. This condition persists as much as the practitioner remains completely absorbed in this object. By practicing concentration meditation, the five mental hindrances can be temporarily suppressed.

³⁵³DN 34.

According to the Sāmugiyā Sutta, purity of mind corresponds to the cultivation of the four jhānas, indicating a clear connection between this concept and the "purification of mind" as referenced in the Rathavināya discourse as a second phrase of purification. This suggests a connection with the development of concentration, which serves as a fundamental prerequisite for insight and understanding. However, in the context of the Rathavināya Sutta, attaining the necessary stage of mental purification does not always mean attaining all four jhānas, as certain discourses suggest that full awakening can be achieved without attaining this stage of mental purity. Thus, in a sequential framework of purification stages leading to realization, mastery of all four jhānas does not seem to be mandatory before going through the subsequent stages. To enter a jhāna, it is essential to first purify the mind of all mental obstacles. Consequently, "purification of the mind" within the seven stages of purification could mean the successful establishment of an initial stage of mental tranquility. This initial purification is a prerequisite for achieving deeper concentration and developing insight. Such purification of the mind can then pave the way for the attainment of the phrases of cleansing described within Sāmugiyā discourse, namely four jhānas. Relationship between the terms used in the Rathavināya discourse and the Sāmugiyā discourse therefore suggests about that "purification" is a process that leads to "purity".

In parenting, introducing mindfulness and meditation to children can provide lifelong benefits. At the very least, mindfulness helps children concentrate better, reduce anxiety, and improve their academic performance. At the same time, meditation provides tools for self-soothing, stress management, and alleviating inner anxiety related to challenges in various aspects of life, whether at home, at school, or in the community.

5.6.3 Purity of View (**Ditṭhi-visuddhi**)

The Pāli term ditthi means views. Purity of views means seeing or determining correctly the true nature of the mind. The Pāli discourses, including the Rathavinā Sutta and the Sāmuḡiya Sutta, offer no further clarification on the meaning of the term. According to the Sāmuḡiya Sutta, a similar term, "purity of view" (ditthivissuddhi), denotes comprehension in its true essence. This expression appears repeatedly in various discourses, especially in relation to the attainment of a deep understanding of the Four Noble Truths at a stage of stream entry. In numerous discourses, a similar phrase often signifies progression to higher stages of development leading to the complete eradication of defilements (āśava). Within the Rathavinā Sutta's framework of successive stages of purification, the term probably refers to the process of attaining "purity" of view upon stream entry.

According to the Abhidhammattha Saṅgaha, purification of view involves distinguishing between mind and matter on the basis of their properties, functions, manifestations, and proximate causes. Developing a correct understanding makes it easier to comprehend the reality of suffering. Recognizing the absence of an inherent self in these aggregates helps dispel the illusion of a permanent ego. Purity of view eliminates wrong views and allows phenomena to be perceived as impermanent, arising and passing away, which is the ultimate truth.

5.6.4 Purity of Transcending Doubts (**Kaṅkhāvitaraṇa-visuddhi**)

The purity of transcending doubt is the purity achieved by overcoming doubt. In this treatise, "kankha" refers to doubt, whereas "visuddhi" signifies the purification

attained by resolving doubt. Upon reaching the second phase of insight knowledge, the meditator grasps the relationship between cause and effect, and doubts about past existence dissolve. Thus, doubt is overcome, which means purification through the removal of doubt. After the Revata Sutta (Ud 5.7), the venerable Revata meditated and reflected on his own purification, which he had achieved through the removal of doubt. This theme is repeated in the concluding verses of the discourse, emphasizing the eradication of any uncertainty about worldly affairs, the afterlife, oneself or others through meditation practice.³⁵⁴ The commentary to this discourse makes it clear that the venerable Revata had considerable concerns and worries about how he should behave as a monk while observing the monastic rules, which earned him the nickname "Revata the Doubter" The commentary states that Revata was reflecting on his purification, which he had attained through the removal of doubt after he had achieved full liberation. Through the wisdom he had cultivated on the path, he had cleared away all uncertainties about ideas about himself over time, as well as all doubts about the Triple Gem.

To deepen this aspect, Dhammasavana Sutta (AN 5.202) from the Anguttara Nikāya illustrates that doubts can be dispelled by participating in a discourse on the Dhamma. Numerous discourses report cases in which younger monks turn to older monks and ask for clarification in order to dispel their uncertainty.³⁵⁵ These occurrences seem to have nothing to do with stream-entry but rather focus on these young monks improving their theoretical understanding of the Dhamma. These illustrations show that the concept of "purification by overcoming doubt" (*kankhā*) does not necessarily imply a

³⁵⁴Ud 5.7.

³⁵⁵DN 34, MN 33, AN 3:20, AN 8:2, AN 10:11, and AN 11:18.

transcendental interpretation.³⁵⁶ The problem that arises when this purification is interpreted in a transcendental sense is that by entering the stream, not only is the fetter of doubt removed, but also the fetter of self-view, which leads to a purification of one's perspective. Furthermore, according to the Abhidhamma, it is about distinguishing between mental and physical states, relying on the wisdom and understanding the causes and conditions of the mind-body complex, its origins, and continuity due to karma, which dispels doubt.

For the education of children, asking questions is appropriate and practical to eliminate doubts. By asking questions and seeking answers, children can understand the True Dhamma. Fostering an inquiring mind promotes genuine engagement in education, and cultivating the ability to ask insightful questions is an important cornerstone in enhancing children's learning experiences.

5.6.5 Clarity of Insight into the Path and Non-Path (Maggāmaggañāṇadassana-visuddhi)

The term "maggā" in the Pāli refers to the path, while "maggāmagga" refers to what constitutes the right path and what does not. This is known as cleansing through discriminative wisdom alongside insight into defining a way and non-way. On a basis of wisdom, it is about recognizing the difference between the right and the wrong path and thus arriving at the realization of the Four Noble Truth. This truth ultimately brings about the end of sorrow, known as "maggasacca".

³⁵⁶AN 5.202.

The Tevijjā Sutta in the Dīgha Nikāya elucidates the distinction between the correct and incorrect paths, where two Brahmins debate the ability of their teachers to lead their followers to communion with Brahma. This dialog emphasizes that "path" and "non-path" refer to the distinction between appropriate and inappropriate paths. This essential distinction is emphasized in various Pāli discourses.³⁵⁷ The Kāli Sutta in the Anguttara Nikāya (AN 10.26) illustrates the phase of purification and describes the Blessed One's deep understanding into the difference between the way and non-path. This insight is presented as an integral part of his profound understanding of the deep states of concentration attained through kasina meditation.³⁵⁸ Furthermore, Abhidhammatta sangaha explained that the meditator comprehends the formations (sankhāra) regarding the Three Marks of Existence (tilakkhana) regarding duration, continuity, and moment, and as he contemplates with the knowledge of rise and fall, ten states arise within him, including an aura characteristic of supreme enlightenment. If the meditator cannot discriminate, he tends to mistakenly believe that he has attained the ultimate path and ultimate fruit. With discernment, he understands that they are actually imperfections of insight and that he has not yet reached the ultimate goal. The ability to distinguish between the ten imperfections that deviate from the right way and the practice of contemplation that is oriented towards the right way is called purification through discriminating knowledge and insight into what constitutes the right way and what deviates from it.

³⁵⁷SN 8:6, AN 4:35, AN 10:26, Dhṛp 403.

³⁵⁸AN 10.26.

5.6.6 Clarity in Understanding and Insight into the Path of Advancement

(Paṭipadāñāṇadassana-visuddhi)

The Pāli word patipadā means the path or means to reach a goal or destination. Therefore, this stage represents clarity gained through understanding and insight into the path, especially the way toward achieving liberation. The term "patipadā" in this context has a similar meaning to "magga'," both referring to a path or way, although "patipadā" has a slightly stronger connotation, indicating a path of active practice. It often appears in the context of the Forth-Noble-Truth as the way of practice bringing about eradicating pain, also known as a middle-way. This emphasis on practice is particularly emphasized in the Mahāsakuludāyi Sutta (MN 77), which lists various meditation practices that are summarized under the term "patipadā".³⁵⁹

According to the Abhidhammattha Sangaha, this purification involves a series of specialized insights known as insight knowledge, described as follows: (1) understanding of origination and cessation (Udayabbayanāna), (2) understanding of dissolution (Bhanganāna), (3) realization of the intimidating (Bhayatupatthāna Ñāna), (4) perception of danger (Adinavañāna), (5) the realization of disenchantment (Nibbidā nana), (6) the striving for liberation (Muñcitukamyatāñāna), (7) contemplative reflection (Patisankhānupassanāñāna) and equanimity towards formations (sankhārupekkhāñāna). Furthermore, knowledge in harmony with the truth or knowledge of conformity (anlomañāna) as the ninth stage of insight is also considered part of this purification. The above-mentioned knowledge arises from the equanimity toward all formations that the

³⁵⁹MN 77.

meditator develops after giving up both terror and rapture, at the stage when he does not regard anything in the formations as I or mine.

5.6.7 Clarity of Understanding and Insight (ñāṇadassana-visuddhi)

Clarity of understanding and insight refers to the understanding linked to one of the four transcendental way consciousnesses, or the understanding of these ways (stream-entry, once-returning, non-returning, and arahant) that serve as paths to the attainment of final liberation (anupadā parinibbana), as explained in the Rathavinitha Sutta.

According to the Dhammacakkapavattana Sutta, knowledge and vision include understanding the four truths. Similarly, traditional descriptions of the complete enlightenment mention knowledge and perception as activities that lead to the extinction of defilements. This may include understanding the difference between the physical body and consciousness, perceiving the minds of others, recognizing past and future events, or experiencing inner meditative visions of light. It is worth noting that knowledge and vision are not necessarily synonymous with realization, as highlighted in the Sangīti Sutta, which distinguishes between different types of concentration that lead to enlightenment. While one focuses on the perception of light, the other requires insight into the impermanent nature of the five aggregates. This illustrates that knowledge and vision encompass different stages of realization and do not necessarily imply the attainment of nibbāna. In the Mahāsāropama and Cūlasāropama suttas, knowledge and vision are presented as stages that lead to realization but are not yet synonymous with it. These explanations are consistent with the Rathavinitha Sutta, which emphasizes that moral purity, a deep concentration and even the attainment of knowledge and vision

should not be confused with the final goal. The dialog between Sāriputta and Punna within Rathavinita discourse emphasizes that the seven phrases of purification mean to reach the goal; none of them represent the final purification, which is meant to be complete nibbāna without attachment. While later interpretations suggest that the seventh stage includes the attainment of all four stages of awakening, such as in the Visuddhimagga, the primary focus remains on the process of purification towards final liberation.

According to the Dhammacakkapavattana Sutta, knowledge and vision are insight into the four noble truths. Similarly, traditional descriptions of complete enlightenment refer to knowledge and vision as activities that lead to the eradication of defilements. These may include understanding the difference between the physical body and consciousness, perceiving the minds of others, recognizing past and future events, or experiencing inner meditative visions of light. The Sangīti Sutta clarifies that knowledge and visions can denote different realizations, not necessarily Nibbāna. For example, it distinguishes between concentration on the perception of light and insight into the impermanence of the five aggregates. In the Mahāsāropama and Cūlasāropama suttas, knowledge and vision are presented as stages on the path to realization, but they are not identical with it. These interpretations are consistent with the Rathavinita Sutta, which emphasizes that moral purity, deep concentration, and even knowledge and vision should not be confused with the final goal. The dialog between Sāriputta and Punna within Rathavinita discourse emphasizes that the seven phrases of purification represent a process that does not yet culminate in the final goal, as all these stages serve as means to reach it and do not represent the final purification of complete nibbāna without

attachment. The interpretation that the seventh stage involves the attainment of all four stages of awakening is found in later works such as the *Visuddhimagga*.

Child education within the framework of Buddhism focuses on wisdom and value-oriented education that leads to a correct understanding of everything. This study focuses on the mind for transforming the encounters of children realizing the Four Noble Truths that lead to enlightenment. This process is facilitated by following the Eightfold-Noble-Path. Once, children have found the right morality and concentration, they can engage in insight meditation (*vipassana*) to get closer to the ultimate goal of awakening. As mentioned in the *Rathavinitha Sutta*, practitioners embark on a journey of seven stages of purification, beginning with moral purification and culminating in purification through knowledge and vision. During this spiritual odyssey, the practitioner cultivates sixteen types of understanding and eventually achieves path realization and fruition, progressing from stream entry to arahantship and finally reaching the state of *Nibbana*.

5.7 Teaching Meditation to Children

At the center of the Buddhist view are meditation practices that are fundamental to the worldview. The primary aim of Buddhist meditation is enlightenment, also known as achieving awakening. On a path to *Nibbāna*, meditation practices facilitate spiritual growth, alleviate suffering, bring peace of mind, and uncover the fundamental truths of existence. In addition, they cultivate qualities such as greater kindness and compassion, promote a more profound comprehension of life's significance, and diminish apprehension towards death.

Contemplation is not only for adults but also for children of all ages. There have been many instances in the Pāli canon that show that children can practice meditation and that they can reach the ultimate goal just as adults can. Children who practice mindfulness in daily life can gain many benefits, such as developing more happiness, stress relief, compassion, concentration, curiosity, and empathy.

5.7.1 The Importance of Meditation

In Buddhism, meditation serves as part of the journey to freedom from impurities and worldly attachments, known as awakening, which ultimately culminates in the realization of Nibbana. Meditation is an important approach in Buddhism to nurture the components of the Eightfold Noble Path. It acts as a mechanism through which practitioners can gain deep insights and experience transformative inner growth, enabling them to understand both the outer world and their inner self more deeply.

Meditation was not a new method for seeking spiritual purification. In the ancient Indian religious traditions, meditation is older than Buddhism, as the accounts in the Ariyapariyesana Sutta (MN 26) by Majjhima Nikāya show. The narrative pertains to the advanced meditation practices of two ascetics, Aḷāra Kālāma and Uddaka Rāmaputta, whose accomplishments align with the third and fourth stages of arūpajjhāna ("immaterial absorption") within the Buddhist context.³⁶⁰ Siddhartha, who later became the Buddha, practiced these meditative states with these teachers before his enlightenment but eventually rejected them. This rejection stemmed from the realization that the states achieved through these meditations did not lead to Nibbana, the cessation

³⁶⁰MN 26.

of suffering. The Bodhisatta then searched for and discovered a new method that finally led to the cessation of suffering. This made meditation in Buddhism unique from other traditional meditation practices.

As explained in Buddhist scriptures, contemplation practice relies on the personal experiences of the Blessed One and the techniques he used to attain enlightenment. Consequently, meditation occupies a central place in Buddhist teachings and is considered a fundamental aspect of religious practice. Over time, it has evolved into two methods, samatha and vipassanā. A comprehensive analysis of this practice, taking into account its fundamental teachings, shows that it is a journey to elevate consciousness (citta) in order to get enlightened.

In Buddhism, meditation is primarily concerned with the cultivation of the right contemplation. It is referred to as the "middle path" (majjhimā patipadā) and advocates moderation.³⁶¹

The proper cultivation of samādhi promotes mental flexibility and purity, which are essential for the attainment of complete understanding. These qualities, which serve as immediate precursors, pave the way for inner enlightenment and clarity. This clarity, which arises from Right View and willingness, leads to insight that delves into the essence of all observable phenomena. This cultivation of insight or discernment into the observed nature of things is called "vipassanā-bhāvanā" and culminates in deep understanding, whereby the practitioner who strives for liberation.

³⁶¹SN 56.1.

5.7.2 Meditation in Buddhism

Mindfulness is primarily concerned on the experiences of the Blessed One and the methods he used to achieve enlightenment. Consequently, meditation occupies a central role in doctrines and serves as an essential role in religious culture. A term used for meditation in the Pāli canon is *Bhāvanā* which means spiritual development or cultivation. Essentially, it is about cultivating and promoting wholesome qualities in the mind. When the mind lacks virtuous qualities, one develops it, which is called *bhāvanā*. Similarly, cultivating any inherently virtuous quality is called *bhāvanā* and includes fostering faith, loving-kindness, concentration, wisdom, and discernment. Although the term "meditation" is often equated with *bhāvanā*, it is important to recognize that these are merely linguistic conventions used for clarification. When it comes to *bhāvanā* or the cultivation of mental faculties and wisdom, it is sometimes referred to as *kammatthāna*. *kammatthāna* is found in the canonical Pāli texts in the sense of occupation, business, or work. But in the Pāli commentaries, it takes on the specific meaning of the work of meditation practice and is understood both as a specific object of meditation practice and as a way or method of meditation practice, such as that of tranquility (*samatha*) or insight (*vipassanā*).

Tranquility meditation aims to promote inner serenity that leads to *samādhi* or deep concentration. Insight meditation, on the other hand, focuses on fostering wisdom that enables practitioners to realize the true essence of existence. It enables individuals to recognize the impermanence inherent in all phenomena — how they arise, cease to exist, and change. This understanding emphasizes that nothing is stagnant, but everything changes according to causal factors. The acquisition of this realization is called insight.

Samatha meditation is about focusing intensely on a particular point of attention and raising the mind's perception of this object to an abstract level. Through this practice, distractions known as "hindrances" are gradually removed, allowing the consciousness to rise from lower to higher levels. This process culminates in the attainment of jhāna states, in which the mind is deeply absorbed in the abstract concept of the object. This method of meditation, known as "samādhi" or "samatha-bhāvanā," aims to develop the highest level of concentration. In contrast, vipassanā meditation focuses on cultivating an understanding of the guideline essence of observed phenomena, leading to complete understanding. Practitioners who reach the highest level of bhāvanā through vipassanā become arahants.

5.7.3 Meditation for Children

Children of all ages can practice meditation, and they can derive much benefit from it in their daily lives. In the Pāli discourses, there is evidence of children practicing meditation and attaining arahantship including superknowledge, such as Samkicca Samanera, Pandita Samanera, Sopāka Samanera, and Revata Samanera. However, the Buddhist texts do not mention any type of meditation specifically for children. The meditation found in the Pāli discourse is suitable for any age group. Anyone can apply Buddhist meditation practice to their lives as they wish. Let us consider the case of a sixteen-year-old weaver's daughter from Ālavi and Dhammarucī, the son of the Brahmin from Savatti. When the weaver's daughter heard a Dhamma discourse by the Buddha on meditation on death, she devoted herself to this practice unceasingly for three years. Similarly, Dhammarucī, who lived in Savatti, devoted himself to meditation and eventually

achieved the state of an arahant. Therefore, Buddhist meditation is suitable for all ages, with no distinction between meditation for adults and for children. Everyone who practices Buddhist meditation will receive the same result, which is tranquility and liberation from suffering.

Current research on meditation in children has found many benefits. Although the number of studies on meditation in children and adolescents is limited, they point to its potential effectiveness in improving their well-being. Research conducted with children generally highlights several benefits of meditation, such as increased alertness during rest periods, improved self-control, introspection and adaptability, and better academic performance (Rosaen & Benn, 2006).³⁶² The use of meditation techniques with children has been shown to improve emotional well-being and reduce anxiety (Linden, 1973),³⁶³ behavioral disorder (Barnes et al., 2003),³⁶⁴ and excessive activity, lack of concentration and impulsivity (Harrison et al., 2004).³⁶⁵ Meditation in children has been associated with improved prosocial behavior (Steiner et al., 2013) and improved self-esteem, social skills and relationship quality (Harrison et al., 2004).³⁶⁶

³⁶²Cara Rosaen and Rita Benn, "The Experience of Transcendental Meditation in Middle School Students: A Qualitative Report," *Explore: The Journal of Science & Healing* 2, no. 5 (September 2006): 422–425.

³⁶³Linda Wagener, "Practicing Meditation by School Children and Their Levels of Field Dependence-Independence, Test Anxiety, and Reading Achievement," *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology* 41, no. 1 (1973): 139–143.

³⁶⁴Colin Barnes, "Rehabilitation for Disabled People: A 'Sick' Joke?," *Scandinavian Journal of Disability Research* 5, no. 1 (July 2003): 7–23.

³⁶⁵Paul J. Harrison, "The Hippocampus in Schizophrenia: A Review of the Neuropathological Evidence and Its Pathophysiological Implications," *Psychopharmacology* 174 (March 2024): 151–162.

³⁶⁶*Ibid.*

5.7.4 The Four Bases of Meditation

The four bases (body, sensation, mind, and phenomena) are also referred to as the four frames of reference or four consciousnesses. The Pāli discourses devoted to understanding mindfulness are called the Satipatthāna discourse and Mahā-Satipattāna discourse. These teachings serve as the basis of the vipassanā tradition. The texts describe the four foundations in the following way:

(1) The body meditation

Establishing mindfulness directed towards the body, known as Kāyānupassanā Satipatthāna, involves focusing on various aspects of the body, such as posture (including walking), breathing, and the material elements that make it up. This practice falls under the umbrella of mindfulness and involves examining the body from both the outside and the inside. By looking at the body from these perspectives, practitioners cultivate awareness and insight.³⁶⁷ The aim is to focus attention on the body until a state of pure awareness, oneness, intuitive understanding, and insight is achieved. In the Pāli treatises, the methods for practicing contemplation of the body are described in detail:

First, practice by concentrating on breathing. The practitioner can initiate mindfulness by focusing on the natural rhythm of breathing in and out, known as anāpānasati. This practice emphasizes mindfulness rather than intentionally altering the breath. In line with Buddhist tradition, practitioners do not manipulate or hold back the breath, but observe it calmly and attentively. The breath is observed as it flows naturally, with a gentle and relaxed focus without tension or stiffness. Even if the practitioner

³⁶⁷MN 10; DN 22.

notices fluctuations in the length of the breath, there is no deliberate attempt to control the breath. However, through consistent practice, the breath becomes calmer, more balanced, and deeper, leading to a general physical and mental well-being. Mindfulness in breathing plays a crucial role in promoting physical and mental health by encouraging a harmonious and deepened rhythm of life.

Although mindfulness of the breath is traditionally seen primarily as a method of cultivating tranquility meditation (*samatha-bhāvanā*) aimed at achieving meditative absorption (*jhāna*), it can also serve as a means of developing insight (*vipassanā-bhāvanā*). By simply observing the breath, one can become acutely aware of the incessant flow of impermanence, similar to the ebb and flow of an ocean. Furthermore, mindfulness of the breath promotes a fuller comprehension of the body. Through an apparent impermanence of breath, we recognize the impermanent nature of the body. Similarly, sensations such as heaviness, shortness of breath, or tension in the breath, as well as discomfort in the respiratory organs, reveal the suffering associated with the body. Mindfulness of the breath therefore helps us to gain a true understanding of the body and to detach ourselves from it.

Second, practice through mindfulness of the postures. Practitioners can begin their practice by cultivating mindfulness of their immediate body movements during engagements such as strolling, being upright, resting, or reclining. Often, fixating on the goal while walking can overshadow the mindful experience of the action itself, or focusing exclusively on standing or sitting can lead to a lack of conscious awareness of these postures. While it may not be feasible or necessary to be constantly aware of postures in everyday life, integrating this mindfulness into your practice can offer

numerous practical benefits. A person can curb nervous haste in walking by paying attention to his posture. In the other postures, unnecessary and harmful distortions of the body are avoided or corrected. In this way, the bodily deformities that medicine is used against in children are averted. The conscious control of bodily movements reflects a disciplined state of mind. As for the ultimate aim of Satipaṭṭhāna, mindfulness of the postures leads to initial recognition of the impersonal nature of the body and promotes detachment from it. As one deepens the practice, one begins to perceive the postures as the automatic movements of a mechanical doll. This perspective leads to a deep sense of detachment and even mild amusement, similar to that of a spectator watching a puppet show. By observing these bodily positions with a detached perspective reduces the habitual attachment to the body over time. In intensive meditation practice, awareness of the postures serves as a starting point for daily practice and attention must return to it when it is not occupied with other objects of mindfulness. Through diligent practice, increased mindfulness enables the observation of the fleeting appearance and disappearance of phenomena during the postures. In addition, they allow us to make the aforementioned observations about the nature of the body.

Third, the practice extends to all bodily functions with a clear understanding: It includes the four postures, activities such as observing, bending, extending, dressing, consuming, imbibing, eliminating, communicating, quietness, wakefulness, and entering sleep, and much more. The overarching goals of this practice are manifold: they serve practical purposes, progress in the Dhamma, the gradual merging of everyday life with spiritual practice, deepening insight into the impersonal nature of bodily processes by observing them in daily experiences, and consistent detachment from the body. Unlike

the previous exercise, where mindfulness accompanies the bodily postures and merely takes note of their presence, the first and second types of clear understanding ('purpose' and 'appropriateness') guide the various bodily activities. The former practice involved a complete but general awareness of the postures and their impersonal nature. The fourth type of clear understanding ('reality') can entail a more thorough investigation by examining the procedures involved, leading to a more profound comprehension of their impersonal essence.

Fourth, engage in mindfulness of the parts of the body. This contemplation involves stripping away the layers of the body and exposing what lies beneath the surface. By mentally dissecting the body, you dissolve the idea of its unity, expose its various components, and dispel the illusion of its beauty by revealing its impurities. Imagining the body as a skeleton loosely wrapped in flesh and skin, or as a collection of different, oddly shaped parts, reduces the tendency to identify with one's own body or to desire that of another. By practicing this method, one can achieve a considerable degree of mental concentration without becoming entangled in emotional aversion or attraction. It also allows for a growing detachment from the body and a natural disillusionment with sensual desires. Although this detachment may be temporary and incomplete until the later stages of spiritual realization, incorporating this contemplation into general mindfulness practice is a valuable step towards this sublime goal. The ability to readily apply this technique helps to resist sensual temptations in practical situations where one needs to fight strong attachments to the body, such as during serious illness or in dangerous situations.

Fifth, practice mindfulness of the four elements. In this practice, the body is further broken down into increasingly impersonal components and identified with the four primary manifestations of matter that also occur in the inanimate world. The result is a sense of disenchantment, alienation, and detachment, along with a heightened realization that the body has no essence of its own. Analyzing the body into the four elements (dhātu-vavatthāna) is considered extremely valuable in the Buddhist tradition and serves as an effective means of dissolving the illusion of the solidity and substance of the body. Although this meditation is not explicitly described as a stand-alone practice in the systematic approach of Satipaṭṭhāna, it leads to profound insights, especially into the element of vibration (air), which plays a central role in recommended focuses such as the observation of abdominal movements and the breath. The practitioner realizes that the various attributes and functions of the air element in the body, as expounded in later Pāli Buddhist commentaries, are not merely theoretical constructs but are rooted in direct meditative experience. Through diligent practice, understanding of the other three material elements gradually unfolds.

Sixth, engage in contemplation by looking at cemetery images. Either look directly at objects associated with death or, if this is not possible, imagine them vividly through mental imagery. These contemplations depict corpses in various stages of decomposition and are intended to evoke a sense of revulsion from sensual desires and attachments. They are also a lesson in impermanence, as they show the decay of the composite body, which in other examples, but especially in its own, is walking around full of life. These reflections will also expose the self-deception involved in identifying and valuing this body as "mine", knowing that tomorrow it may belong to the elements

or serve as prey for birds and worms. Furthermore, these reflections will help us to get used to the inevitability of death.

These are the techniques of contemplation of the body, which include elements of both bare attention and clear understanding. A common aspect of all these methods is their ability to promote detachment from the body, which is achieved by observing its essence and gaining a true understanding. This detachment provides both control and liberation in relation to the body and its phenomena.

(2) The practice of observing sensations

Establishing mindfulness of feelings involves observing sensations — whether they are neutral, pleasant, or unpleasant. The Pāli term "vedanā" encompasses not only feelings but also sensations. Within the framework of mindfulness practice, it is the initial reaction to any sensory encounter deserves special attention for those who want to master the mind. According to teachings, which illustrate the interconnectedness of sorrow, sense impressions serve as the primary condition for feelings. These feelings, in turn, can lead to cravings and increased attachment. By stopping the process at the level of sense impressions and simply observing them without reacting, one can prevent feelings from leading to craving or other emotions. This allows the clear mind to assess the situation and determine the appropriate response.

In Buddhist writings, feelings are first categorized as pleasant, unpleasant, or neutral. These feelings are then further analyzed in terms of their worldly or transcendent nature. Such nuanced considerations help to refine emotional responses over time, encouraging noble feelings and diminishing ignoble ones. The direct approach of simply acknowledging feelings, much like statements of fact, can be very helpful in gaining

insight into and managing the subtle nuances of emotions. This approach proves particularly valuable in everyday life as it offers a quick, straightforward yet effective way to deal with one's own emotions and those of others.

(3) The practice of observing the mental state

Mindfulness establishes the reflection on the condition of the mind. In early Buddhist texts, this practice typically begins by noting the existence or lack of unwholesome: lust, anger, and delusion. This approach is similar to other early teachings in which practitioners were advised to examine their minds, distinguish between wholesome and unwholesome thoughts, and reflect on the harmful nature of unwholesome thoughts in order to abandon them. The benefit of contemplating the state of mind lies in its effectiveness for self-examination, which promotes greater self-awareness and honesty with oneself, which is crucial for inner development and mental well-being.

In systematic meditation practice, reflecting on the state of the mind helps to assess one's own progress or setbacks, such as whether the mind is concentrated or scattered. In addition, the simple acknowledgments made during this contemplation are useful for addressing interruptions and disturbances that occur during meditation. For example, if a practitioner is bothered by a disturbing noise, simply acknowledging the presence of the irritation in the mind can often alleviate the feeling of annoyance and shift from an emotionally charged state to a calm state of self-awareness. This approach also directs attention away from the external disturbance (the noise) and towards internal processes.

(4) The practice of observing the contents of the mind

Dhammānupassanā Satipatthāna - Establishing mindfulness of the mental content. This includes examining one's own experiential reality on the basis of the principles

described in the Dhamma categories. For example, the obstacle in the mind, the aggregates, the factors of enlightenment, etc. When some phenomenal events occur in the mind, the practitioner simply endures or holds the inherent nature of them, such as phassa (contact), which has the nature of contact with the object, and citta (awareness), which has the nature of cognition of the object. In this way, the practitioner can come to comprehend the genuine nature of the mental and physical phenomena, also referred to as nāma and rūpa.

The first exercise focuses on the five primary mental hindrances (nīvaraṇa), while the following one includes the seven factors contributing to enlightenment (bojjhaṅga). These exercises are aimed at giving up certain qualities and cultivating others. Essentially, the point is to be fully mindful during meditation of whether or not any of the mental hindrances or enlightenment factors are present. Mere awareness also includes the part of the practice. These passages, which simply clarify the current state of consciousness, are an integral part of the consideration of the state of the mind. They play an important role as an essential foundation for the subsequent phase of these practices.

In this subsequent phase, the methodical and thorough investigation made possible by Clear Understanding is used for the following purposes: (1) to circumvent, temporarily overcome, and eventually eliminate the obstacles and limitations, (2) to promote and cultivate the factors conducive to enlightenment. Achieving these two goals — negative and positive — requires an accurate understanding of the circumstances that favor the manifestation or absence of these states of mind. The discourse outlines this examination of conditions in broad terms: The practitioner understands exactly how the

occurrence of non-enlightenment (hindrance, limitation, factor of enlightenment) comes about.

By carefully observing the obstacles, limitations, or factors of enlightenment within oneself, one gradually gains insight into the external and internal conditions that facilitate or hinder the manifestation of these qualities. These conditions can vary from person to person, and often one does not initially recognize the typical circumstances that particularly promote or hinder the appearance of these positive or negative qualities. However, through repeated and mindful attention to these circumstances, one can learn to avoid unfavorable situations and cultivate favorable ones. This practice can be of great benefit on the path of spiritual progress.

In the following, our attention is directed towards five elements: attachment categories, sensory bases, and the Four-Noble-Truths., which together encompass the whole of reality from different perspectives. Through these practices, practitioners can harmonize their daily perceptions, which are often rooted in the illusion of a permanent self, with the reality of impermanence and non-self. This integration makes it possible to understand individual life experiences in the broader context of the Dhamma teachings.

The commentary offers a convincing illustration of the application of contemplation of spiritual content, which is particularly striking for its constant repetition. After explaining each exercise described in the discourse, the commentary consistently links it to the Four Noble Truths. For example, mindfulness of breathing corresponds to the reality of pain, while desire precedes this mindfulness reflecting the arising. The absence of both represents the cessation, while the path to understanding these truths represents the Eightfold-Noble-Path. This is a vivid example of how to

integrate spiritual contemplation into daily life. Whenever possible, reflecting on important or insignificant events with mindfulness and consideration in the light of the Four Truths brings life closer to spiritual practice, promoting a holistic approach where practice and life are harmoniously intertwined.

The three contemplations focusing on feeling, mental state, and mental content, which explore the spiritual aspect of human experience, converge with the contemplation on the body around the central tenet of the doctrines: Anattā, or not-self. The entirety of the teachings on the Fundamentals of Mindfulness serves as a comprehensive theoretical and practical roadmap to realizing the liberating truth of Anattā, which includes both the absence of ego and the non-substantial nature of the self. Satipaṭṭhāna's guidance not only provides a deep and comprehensive understanding of this truth but also leads to an immediate realization of this truth through practical exercises, which have a transformative and compelling power over one's life.

The four foundations of mindfulness are applicable to children of different ages and help them to calm their bodies and minds. This promotes a calm and constructive atmosphere that can positively influence their behavior, communication, and emotional management. Meditation can also help children develop patience and explore feelings of appreciation and affection. Teachers can incorporate mindfulness practices into children's daily routines, for example by encouraging deep breathing or organizing structured relaxation exercises such as meditation or yoga. This helps children stay in control and promotes positive interactions and relationships.

5.7.5 Guided Meditation for Children

Meditating together with children is very different from simply reading Dhamma stories aloud. When reading aloud, children passively grasp the story and engage with it, whereas they actively participate in the guided meditation. Reading stories aloud and guiding meditations serve different purposes. Storytelling promotes learning and literacy, while meditation enables the mind to wander freely and immerse itself in exploration.

Each meditation session revolves around a specific theme and offers the children the opportunity to immerse themselves in different experiences. These include fostering kindness, compassion, perseverance, and more. Through various methods, the children can deepen their understanding and appreciation of the Dhamma. Essentially, through active participation in meditation, they learn to connect with the source of love, power, and wisdom within themselves.

According to the Pāli canon, Buddha and the monks used various techniques to guide children to meditate. Choosing the appropriate meditation objects for each child helps the child improve more quickly. As an illustration, the Buddha instructed Culla-panthaka to take a clean cloth, turn to the east, and recite the phrase 'rajoha-ranam' while wiping the cloth. Following the Buddha's instruction, Culla-panthaka practiced diligently. As he cleaned the cloth, he observed its gradual defilement, which led him to contemplate the impermanent nature of all phenomena. Eventually, he attained arahantship, accompanied by mastery of the four branches of knowledge, which includes a comprehensive treatise.³⁶⁸ In the case of a teenager, the Buddha applied the normal

³⁶⁸Tha Ap 14; Ud 5.10; Dhp 25.

techniques as taught to adults. Take, for example, the weaver's daughter, who lives in the town of Alavi. In this encounter, the Buddha imparted teachings on the contemplation of death: Engage in contemplation on mortality and remind yourself: My life is uncertain, but death is inevitable. I will undoubtedly face death, marking the conclusion of my existence. Life is transient, and death is definite. She practiced the meditation on death recommended by the Buddha day and night for three years. There are many children who learn meditation from their masters and then practice it themselves. For example, Pandita Samenera, lived in the city of Savatthi. He learned meditation from Thera Sariputta and then practiced it himself. The Samanera from Kosambi also learned Dhamma and meditation from Thera Tissa. Thera Tissa gave him a meditation theme. While shaving his head, he meditated and concentrated his mind on the chosen object. When he had finished shaving his head, he attained the state of arahantship. However, the evidence from the Pāli discourse on guiding children to meditation did not clearly describe how the Buddha and the monks guided children. The statement that children can be taught similarly to adults, differently to adults, or on the basis of individual differences between children. According to the doctrines, a preferred approach is to select meditation objects tailored to each child, which includes the teaching of Dhamma teachings.

In the *Visuddhimagga* written by Buddhaghosa, forty objects of meditation (kammattana) have been mentioned. These forty objects cannot be practiced by everyone. It is necessary to identify the appropriate meditation objects according to the character of the practitioner.³⁶⁹ Certain objects of meditation may be recommended to a

³⁶⁹Henry Clarke Warren. *Buddhism in Translations; Passages Selected from the Buddhist Sacred Books and Translated from the Original Pali into English*. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1922), 291.

particular disciple, especially by a spiritual mentor, considering the kid's disposition and current state of mind. In the *Visuddhimagga*, forty meditation objects are categorized into different groups.³⁷⁰

(1). The ten totalities or devices, also known as *kasina*, help to promote focus and concentration during meditation practice. They serve as focal points for visualization and concentration and help the practitioner cultivate mental clarity and calm. From elements of the natural world such as the ground, liquid, flame, and breath to more abstract concepts such as azure, gold, crimson, ivory, bounded realms, and radiant illumination, each *kasina* offers a unique way to deepen one's meditative experience. Through disciplined exploration of these devices, practitioners seek to refine their awareness and reach a higher state of mindfulness.

(2). The contemplation of ten different forms of putrefaction, called *asuba*, involves thinking about the different stages of putrefaction observed in deceased bodies or other repulsive living beings. These stages include a range of decomposition states, from the swelling of the corpse to its final state as a skeleton. These stages include the bloated, discolored, festering, lacerated, gnawed, dismembered, bleeding, worm-infested remains, and finally the skeletonized form. Each stage serves as a focal point for contemplation in order to illustrate the impermanence and transience of physical existence.

(3). The practice of the ten contemplations, known as *anussati*, includes a variety of objects for contemplation. The first trio of contemplations focuses on the veneration of

³⁷⁰Buddhaghosa, *The Path of Purification (Visuddhimagga)*, trans. Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli (Seattle, WA: BPS Pariyatti Editions, 1999), 81.

the virtues of Triple Gem. This is followed by contemplations on the merits of morality (Śīla), generosity (cāga), and the virtuous qualities of celestial beings. In addition, practitioners deal with the body (kāya), mortality, the rhythm of breathing (ānāpāna), and the attainment of inner peace. Each contemplation serves as a means of deepening mindfulness and spiritual insight and guides the individual on the path to enlightenment.

(4) The four divine abodes, known as the sublime states or brahmavihara, encompass a range of sublime emotional qualities. These include unconditional kindness and benevolence, compassion, joy at the happiness and success of others, and equanimity. Each of these states represents a pinnacle of human virtue and serves as a foundation for the cultivation of harmony, compassion, and inner peace. By practicing these sublime states, the individual strives to overcome personal limitations.

(5) The four immaterial states, known as arupajhānas, comprise the development of the four formless jhanas. These states involve the transcendence of physical form and delve into realms of pure mental abstraction. The progression includes the experience of infinite emptiness and culminates in a state beyond perception and non-perception. Each of these states represents a deepening level of mental absorption and serves as a path to deep insight and liberation from worldly attachments. Through dedicated practice, the individual navigates through these formless realms to attain higher states of consciousness and spiritual realization.

(6) One aspect is the contemplation of the rejection of food, which is called aharepatikulasanna.

(7) The practice of analyzing the four elements, known as catudhatuvavatthana, involves contemplation on earth, water, fire, and air.³⁷¹

According to sutras and commentaries, it is best to match the exact technique or techniques and also the exact variation (which can sometimes be very subtle) to the people, depending on a variety of parameters that include temperament. For example, Vipassana meditation, as described in the Mahasatipatana Sutta (DN 22), can be implemented through various methods that can be divided into four frames of reference: Consciousness is directed towards the body, sensations, thoughts, and mental phenomena.³⁷² The commentary depicted that each of these "frames of reference" is more appropriate for a different type of person: extroverted, slow temperament: mindfulness on the body. introverted, slow temperament: mindfulness on the mind. extroverted, fast temperament: mindfulness on the sensations. introverted, fast temperament: mindfulness on the mental content. In practice, a serious practitioner should not only explore all frames of reference in vipassana as well as various styles of samatha, but also attain mastery over his or her own temperament, thus exploring all facets of mindstream and phenomena.

Therefore, when teaching meditation to children, master must choose appropriate meditation objects that suit the child's temperament. Nevertheless, certain meditation focuses outlined in the Satipatthāna Sutta, such as awareness of the four postures and mindfulness in everyday tasks, are universally applicable techniques. Children should

³⁷¹Buddhaghosa, *The Path of Purification (Visuddhimagga)*, trans. Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli (Seattle, WA: BPS Pariyatti Editions, 1999), 113.

³⁷²DN 22.

also extend their mindfulness to the feelings, thoughts, and mental objects when mindfulness is directed to the body. It is not enough to pay attention only to the breath; children should also observe the mind. When the mind is out of balance, such as when overwhelmed by anger, guide children to practice loving kindness. If children are anxious, reminding them of the qualities of the Buddha can serve to restore confidence. If it is lustful, the repulsive aspect of the body should be contemplated, and if it is greedy for food, awareness of the repulsive in food can be effective. Choosing meditation objects for children is like a good doctor who does not prescribe antibiotics for every illness. After examining and questioning the patient, he or she prescribes the appropriate medicine.

5.8 The Achievement of Children Pedagogy

The goal of educating children corresponds to the pursuit of wisdom and reflects Buddhism's pursuit of ultimate enlightenment. The main goal of child rearing is the comprehensive development of the child's character, which includes physical, spiritual, moral, and intellectual growth. In addition, the Buddhist education of children strives to cultivate freedom, wisdom, intelligence, morality, and non-violence in the young person. Children educated in the Buddhist education system are expected to solve their problems and transform suffering into happiness.

The core tenets consist of three key components: Discipline, meditation, and wisdom. Wisdom serves as the ultimate objective, with profound meditation — deep concentration—being the fundamental method to attain it. The discipline observed through the precepts facilitates the cultivation of deep meditation and ultimately leads to

the natural realization of wisdom. In Buddhist teaching, as elucidated in the discourses, these three principles remain constant and form the core.

5.8.1 Dharma Methods for Developing Knowledge for Children's Achievement

The goal of children's education in Buddhism is to attain wisdom. It aims to unleash the dormant potential of children by authentically exploring and understanding the nature of the mind and its various states. This exploration begins, of course, with self-knowledge. At the heart of Buddhist philosophy is the belief in each child's inherent wisdom and capacity for enlightened understanding. Consequently, the goal of educating children is to awaken this innate potential. The purpose of learning is to realize this innate wisdom, which is characterized by a mind free from attachment and limitation while cultivating a compassionate reverence for all living beings.

Therefore, the Buddhist approach to child rearing must avoid rigidity from the outset, as it works on an inner basis. Its aim is to awaken the innate wisdom and nurture the seeds of compassion in each individual. It is not just about imparting a certain knowledge and belief, but about giving children tools for self-discovery and activating their own potential. Rather than imposing external truths, the focus is on awakening and illuminating enduring truths from within. This is the essence of 'education' (educere), which means 'to bring forth'. Such education, if done effectively, does not impose doctrines but facilitates understanding and enables individuals to unravel ignorance and discover their innate virtues. In essence, Buddhist education should create an environment for children that is conducive to self-discovery, fosters genuine understanding, and instills a commitment to the good of the world.

The essence of Buddhist education is summarized in the traditional triad of moral conduct, mental equilibrium, and deep understanding. Clear perception arises from a concentrated and calm mind. This state of mental clarity and concentration arises naturally from a conscientious and virtuous existence. Thus, morality, concentration, and wisdom form the nature and essence of education in the Buddhist ethos, shaping its purpose, methods, and results.

Wisdom is a direct, first-hand understanding of the truths of the Dhamma, cultivated through disciplined mental practice. It arises through the conscious absorption of acquired knowledge and principles into the structure of the mind and requires profound contemplation, thoughtful conversation, and thorough investigation. This wisdom is refined through systematic mental training and encompasses both serenity and insight — essential components of Buddhist meditation that are often compared to two wings. Meditation plays a central role in Buddhist education, where it combines progressive introspection with insightful revelation, ultimately fostering wisdom, or *paññā*, at its deepest levels.

Meditation practice forms the core of the Buddhist view on existence. While nirvana remains the ultimate goal of Buddhist meditation, these practices serve various purposes along the way. They help with spiritual growth, alleviate the burden of suffering, calm the mind, and reveal the fundamental truths of life. Through meditation, children can learn to disengage from the constant chatter of the mind, minimize irrelevant thoughts, and quiet the inner dialog through focused attention. By emphasizing the present moment over dwelling on the past or future, meditation teaches children to focus on a chosen object or process, fostering resilience in the face of distractions. It cultivates

introspection, and calmness and promotes a sense of inner peace and emotional balance in young minds. Meditation improves calm alertness, self-control, introspection and adaptability, leading to better academic performance and emotional well-being. It also helps manage anxiety, behavioral problems, hyperactivity, and impulsivity, while promoting prosocial behavior, boosting self-esteem, and fostering better interpersonal relationships.

The methods of meditation vary widely, but a common denominator is to sharpen focused attention in order to minimize or extinguish thoughts. The core of most meditation practices lies in the conscious control of thoughts through focused attention. Different styles of meditation use the mental faculties in different ways. In the Theravada tradition, meditation involves two main aspects: serenity and insight. Just as serenity meditation needs mindfulness but emphasizes concentration and absorption, insight meditation needs concentration but emphasizes mindfulness and investigation. Both are called *bhavana*. The term *bhavana* encompasses a broader interpretation of the Noble Eightfold Path than the more common terms mindfulness or meditation. *Bhāvanā* literally refers to the cultivation or cultivation of various aspects such as heart, mind, attention, and virtues such as patience, tolerance, equanimity, wisdom, compassion, and loving-kindness. In the Pāli scriptures, *bhāvanā* often appears in compound sentences and means making a personal and intentional effort to cultivate certain skills over an extended period of time. Examples from Pāli texts and later literature include *kāya-bhāvanā* for the development of the body, *mettā-bhāvanā* for nurturing of benevolence, and *paññā-bhāvanā* for growing of wisdom or understanding.

According to the Pāli canon, they are the four *Bhāvanā* Principles have been presented in the *Tatiyaanāgatabhaya Sutta* (AN 5.79) which the four practices used to attain and maintain mindfulness from moment to moment and are basic techniques of Buddhist

meditation.³⁷³ These four Bhavana Principles can be applied as methods for developing knowledge for children's performance. The four Bhavana principles embody challenge and practice. They represent a way of living and perceiving that encompasses the entire human experience— - a way of seeing that is often exemplified by children at play, fully immersed in the present moment. Through the practice of Bhavana, children can heighten their awareness of thinking, feeling, and physical sensations in the current instant. This observant, non-reactive attitude allows for conscious responses that are characterized by clarity and focus rather than reflexive, habit-driven reactions. It promotes the ability to master life's challenges with greater wisdom and to make nourishing decisions for oneself and others. According to the discourse, the approach is a direct path to purifying beings, overcoming suffering, alleviating pain and grief, attaining the right method, and realizing detachment - essentially, the four frames of reference. Therefore, integrating the four Bhavana principles into daily life can help children achieve their educational goals and can be assessed through their daily experiences.

(1). Achievements from the practice of kaya-bhavana, which involves an evolution of the body and its environment. This is about recognizing the body as a tangible unit of flesh and bone. Traditionally, mindfulness practice begins by focusing attention on the breath, fully experiencing and embodying it, rather than contemplating or conceptualizing it. As mindfulness deepens, awareness expands to include the whole body. In addition, this approach allows children to understand the importance of nutrition, physical activity, moderation, and managing physical needs. It also teaches them about financial management

³⁷³AN 5.79.

and the responsible use of personal items such as toys, clothes, cell phones, and computers. They can also develop responsibility for the well-being of the planet on which they live.

(2). Achievements from the practice of sila-bhavana. Sila embodies the ethical principle that directs human behavior towards order and tranquility within a community. It helps children to maintain a prudent and harmonious relationship with society. It is based on Buddhist moral values that emphasize trust, integrity, and social responsibility. Five silas are recommended for children to practice daily and form the basis for moral development from childhood to adulthood. Morality develops over time and is shaped by individual experiences and behaviors in ethical dilemmas at different stages of physical and cognitive maturity. It revolves around the developing understanding of right and wrong, with children exhibiting different moral judgments and character traits compared to adults. Morality, often synonymous with righteousness or goodness, is a guide that determines an individual's actions, behavior, and thoughts.³⁷⁴

(3) Achievements from the practice of citta-bhavana. Citta-bhavana, which means the development of the mind or consciousness, refers to a particular aspect of the mind that is separate from thinking or judgment. Citta resembles consciousness or awareness, free from conceptual constructs, but not the pure consciousness represented by the fifth khandha. Children can cultivate the ability to observe their mental states impartially, without forming judgments or opinions. By recognizing the impermanent nature of these states, children gain insight into their impermanence. Practicing citta-bhavana offers numerous benefits to children as they simply become aware of where they are directing their conscious attention.

³⁷⁴AN 11.1, SN 47.3

While the results may vary in pleasantness, by approaching inner exploration with unbiased attention, children can find an inherent inner peace.

(4) Achievements from the practice of panna-bhāvanā. Wisdom is the goal of Buddhist education. According to the Pāli Discourse (AN 3.85, AN 3.89, AN 3.90), wisdom is characterized as a comprehension of either the Four Noble Truths or the dependent origination. It is also described as a realization that things are impermanent (anicca), a source of suffering (dukkha), and insubstantial (anatta).³⁷⁵ Reaching this level of wisdom is equivalent to reaching enlightenment, which marks the path to liberation, freedom from suffering and Nibbana. Children can develop wisdom by training their ability to think logically and impartially, encouraging creativity, constructive thinking, and the ability to reflect and learn from experience.

The Buddha's success in teaching children was described in the Pāli canon. He used various techniques in teaching. He also chose the appropriate techniques and tools for each child and situation. Therefore, many children reached the goal at the age of seven, or in some cases even earlier.

5.8.2 The Achievement Level of Children in Buddhist Education

In the ancient teachings, the aim of Buddhist education presented as the attainment of the four stages of awakening, which also serves as the goal of child-rearing in Buddhism.³⁷⁶ These four stages of realization, known in the Theravāda tradition as

³⁷⁵DN 1.

³⁷⁶James B. Apple, *Stairway to Nirvāṇa: A Study of the Twenty Saṅghas Based on the Works of Tsong kha pa* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2008), 143.

"Ariya-puggala"³⁷⁷, refer to the four main categories of noble individuals who adhere to the teachings:³⁷⁸

(1) Sotāpana, the term "sotāpana" (stream-enterer) means entering the stream. A stream-enterer has a clear understanding of the principles of the Dhamma, listens attentively to the teachings, maintains systematic mindfulness, and abides by the precepts of the Dhamma. At this stage, they have cast off the three initial fetters, namely misconceptions about their own identity. After overcoming these lower fetters, they attain the status of stream-winner (Sotāpatti-phala) and thus close the doors to rebirth in realms of suffering such as the hells, the animal realm, and the realm of hungry ghosts (petas) have a limited potential for rebirths, not exceeding seven, in the favorable realms of humans and celestial beings.

(2) Sakadāgāmī, "Sakadāgāmī" (once-returner) means "once-returner", which means that they are not reborn more than once on earth. A once-returner diminishes the grip of the remaining five lower fetters — sensual desire (kama-chanda) and ill will (dosā) — to the extent that they lose their significant hold. A once-returner is bound for just one more birth in this realm and will then transcend suffering.

(3) Anāgāmī (non-returner) literally means "one who does not return, never returns" An Anāgāmī is reborn after death in one of the highest celestial realms and attains arahantship there. They free themselves from the five lower fetters. They will never again experience rebirth in the lower realms. Born in the Pure Abodes, they perish there and are destined never to return.

³⁷⁷SA 264

³⁷⁸AN 9:5, UD 5:5.

(4) Arahant, translated as the perfected one, denotes the attainment of perfection in the Buddhist context, which is to be equated with Nibbāna. He fully perfects "virtue (Sīla), concentration (Samādhi), and wisdom (Paññā)." He has liberated himself from the five remaining fetters, recognized as the five higher fetters, and undergoes the fruition of holiness (Arahatta-phala). "Rebirth has ceased. The noble life has reached its culmination. What needed to be achieved has been fulfilled. Following this existence, there will be no more subsequent lives". To summarize, when an individual embarks on the irreversible journey to Nibbāna, he or she ascends to the status of a Noble Being (Ariya-puggala), where "Noble" (Ariya) means spiritual excellence. Essentially, in Theravāda Buddhism, the journey towards enlightenment entails developing the thirty-seven attributes to progress through the four stages of awakening: the stream-enterer, the once-returner, the non-returner, and ultimately the arahant, who has transcended the ten fetters.

These four stages of enlightenment are of great importance in the early Buddhist teachings, as they are preserved in textual records. They represent a progressive cleansing of the mind attainable via the cultivation of insight through mindfulness exercises. The Cūlagopālaka Sutta (MN 34) depicts the Blessed One depicted as a cattle herder and offers insight into these stages. In this discourse, a wise cowherd leads various types of cattle, including strong bulls, less strong cows, and juvenile calves, safely of the Ganges. This allegory represents Buddhist practitioners going through various stages of

enlightenment. In this way, a teacher can also train children at different levels to reach the goal.³⁷⁹

The main goal of children's achievements is to eradicate or eliminate spiritual impurities that manifest themselves in the form of fetters and influences. This goal can be achieved not only through the study of the teachings but also through mindfulness practices aimed at completely overcoming these negative states of mind (and not just calmly managing negative emotions). Another discourse (MN 40 and MA 183) mentions the essences of mental cleansing and stresses that disciples of the Buddha, especially monks, must prioritize the purification of their minds in order to attain the esteemed designation of recluse.³⁸⁰

5.8.3 The Achievement of Children's Education in the Pāli Canon

When the Pāli canon was examined, fifty-three children of both laymen and monks were found. Groups of children were also mentioned with no indication of the number. Of the total number, forty-one children attained the status of arahants, four attained stream entry, and eight received teachings on Buddhism. Remarkably, there were no children who attained the levels of once-returner or non-returner. There are three possible reasons for this. Originally, the authors decided to document only exceptional cases in the Pāli canon. During the forty-five years in which he spread his teachings, the Buddha traveled to various places. He also sent out the monks to spread his teachings. It may be that many children converted to Buddhism and attained various stages of

³⁷⁹MN 34.

³⁸⁰MN 40; MA 183.

awakening, but they are not recorded in the treatise. Second, the compilers did not intend to record children specifically. Their aim was to document the teachings of the Blessed One, although the inclusion of children in the treatise was only a fraction of the total teachings. Third, children have fewer defilements than adults. As shown in the Pāli Canon, most children attain the highest level of awakening. This may be because children have fewer attachments or an empty mind, which makes it easier for them to absorb the new teachings and attain awakening. However, there is no explanation for this in the Buddhist treatises.

The point of interest for this study is the factors that help children achieve awakening. Of the fifty-three children, there are several factors that help children achieve the goal, which can be grouped as follows:

(1) Merits acquired in the past.

The stories recorded in the Buddhist treatises such as Suttas, Apadana, and Dhammapada on the accomplishments of children show that there were nineteen children in the Pāli canon born in past lives who met the Buddha of that time, such as Padumuttara Buddha, Sumedha Buddha, Kassapa Buddha, and Tissa Buddha. They performed good kamma by offering food or flowers to the Buddha, as well as lamps to worship the Buddha. After they died, they were born many times in heaven and then reborn in human life. When they met the Buddha (Gotama Buddha), they rejoiced because of their merits, offered food to him, listened to the Dhamma sermons, rejoiced in the Buddha, etc., and then attained awakening. Thus Maggasañña (Tha Ap 118), who was born at the time of Padumuttara Buddha, encountered forest monastic. He showed them the way and gave

them food. Because of this top deed, he was reborn in human form and attained arahantship and six special knowledge at the age of seven.³⁸¹ The Apadana (Tha Ap 327) describes the story of Niggundipupphiya, who was born in Savatthi. He met the Patumuttara Buddha and delighted in him. He was received with such warmth that he passed away and reborn in Tavatimsa heaven. After that, he was reborn in the human world. He was a clever boy. At the age of seven, he witnessed the monks of the teacher and the elephant carriage of King Kosala. When he saw this, he remembered his past karma. Thereupon, at the age of seven, he decided to go into homelessness. One day he heard Ananda's teaching and remembered his past karma. Standing in that place, he attained arahantship.³⁸² The last example is the story of Dhammasavaniya from the Apadana (Tha Ap 336). {339}. He was born in the reign of Padumuttara Buddha, who preached the Four Noble Truths. One day Dhammasavaniya met the Buddha and learned to recognize impermanence. After that, he practiced for the rest of his life. After passing away on the spot, he went to Tavatimsa for thirty thousand eons. During the era of Gotama Buddha, he reincarnated in the realm of humans. At the age of seven, he heard verses expounding the truth of impermanence at his father's residence. He remembered his past perception. He sat in a single session and attained the arahantship and also acquired the six special knowledge.³⁸³

This is the example of a factor that helps children to attain arahantship. They accumulate good deeds in many past lives. When they are reborn again in human life, they cultivate more good merits. Finally, they attain awakening.

³⁸¹Tha Ap 118.

³⁸²Tha Ap 327.

³⁸³Tha Ap 336. {339}.

(2) Listening to the Dhamma sermon.

Listening is a powerful way to gain knowledge. It has the potential to lead Buddhist practitioners to liberation and free them from the cycle of rebirth. In the philosophy of Theravada Buddhism, hearing is considered the basis of knowledge, which is referred to as *suta-maya-pañña* - knowledge from hearing. This wisdom is acquired through listening to the teachings of others, personal experiences and other sensory impressions. It represents a comprehensive understanding and serves as a catalyst for the individual to pursue the path of Dhamma. According to the Pāli canon, there are many children who attain awakening by listening to Dhamma peaching. Take, for example, Vāsettha and Bhāradvāja, who attained the status of samanera arahants after afterward listening to the teachings about the origination of the world.³⁸⁴ Niggundipupphiya also listened to Ananda's teaching and remembered his past karma. Then he attained arahantship (Tha Ap 327). Another illustration is the tale of Visakha, a girl who was known for her extraordinary beauty and deep insight. At the age of seven, she heard the teachings and achieved stream-enterer, known as stream-entry (Sotāpanna).³⁸⁵ These examples suggest that children who listen attentively can gain understanding, while those who do not listen attentively do not develop discernment. According to the Buddha's teachings, effective listening requires a concentrated and unwavering mind. Success depends on children's minds being firmly determined. If children are not intentional, they will not succeed. The children in the Pāli canon who gained awakening thought they were

³⁸⁴DN 27.

³⁸⁵AN 8.43; AN 8.47; Ud 2.9.

listening because they were listening well. They gained discernment. They understood. In other words, they took it to heart.

(3) Discussion

Dhamma discussions are conversations in a dialogue format with the people. They are for the purpose of gaining or increasing wisdom with a clear mind. Dhamma discussions are discussions about the good things one should do, but also about the wrong deeds so that one does not practice them. This includes talking about the natural truths and accepting the fact that the truth is the truth. Conversations give teachers insight into students' existing knowledge and areas where they need to develop. By actively listening to students' contributions during discussions, teachers can make formative assessments to inform their instructional decisions. Through organized discussions, an exchange of ideas takes place that provides valuable insight into the intellectual abilities of the participants. According to the Pāli canon, there were many children who came to awakening through discussion. For example, the story of the weaver's daughter who lived in the town of Ālavi. The Buddha went to Ālavi and discussed four questions with her. She answered the questions very well; the Buddha congratulated her each time after her explanation. The weaver's daughter also gained entrance into the stream. The story of Pandita Samanera and Sukha Samanera, who were disciples of Sariputta Thera. Their story is similar. They went on alms round. They observed farmers irrigating fields, archers firing arrows and carpenters making objects such as chariot wheels. They asked Thera Sariputta whether it was possible to control the movements of these inanimate objects or to change them according to their own wishes, which Thera confirmed. When they thought about it, they came to the conclusion that if such control were possible, there was no hindrance

preventing an individual from disciplining their mind and engaging in tranquility and insight meditation. They went back to the monastery and practiced meditation.

Eventually, they attained arahant.

Discussions of the Dhamma are of great benefit to children, as there are many proofs and stories in the Buddhist treatises. Also, for non-Buddhists. Before, they had wrong views and after the discussion they had the right views and knew how to live their lives. Many of them attained awakening after the discussion. Dhamma discussion and dialog are most commonly practiced in early Buddhism.

(4) Practice meditation

Meditation is the gateway to spiritual awakening. This is because meditation helps the practitioner to gain control over his conscious mind and thereby become more aware. It has great significance in a person's life, as it enables them to focus on the fundamental aspects of their existence. In the Theravada tradition, there are two types of meditation, Samatha, and Vipassana. The Samatha means full concentration, where a person's mind is expected to be free of all disturbances, calming down and bringing peace and serenity to the person. Vipassana meditation, on the other hand, is about finding out how the mind works by first noticing how often it is disturbed with various problems. Vipassana thus helps in the search for insightful knowledge and a better understanding of problems. The continuous practice of Vipassana meditation leads to Nirvana or Pāli Nibbana, a state in which a person is free from all forms of defilement.

Meditation is not only beneficial for adults but also for children. In the Pāli canon, there were many children who attained liberation through meditation. For example, Tissa was the son of Sāriputra's disciple. He was ordained with Sāriputra when he was seven

years old. He received instruction in Kammatthāna (meditation practice) from the Buddha and then withdrew to the forest to practice in seclusion. Three months later he attained liberation.³⁸⁶ The story of Dhammarucī is another example. He came from high-status household. At age of seven, he met the Buddha and later visited Jetavana to hear the preaching. He decided to go forth into homelessness. Shortly after ordination, he practiced meditation and attained arhantship.³⁸⁷ Another example is Bhadda, a young boy from a counselor family. The parents gave him to the Blessed One in childhood and entrusted to his care of the Enlightened One. The Buddha accepted him and said to Ananda, "Give way to him quickly - he will be a thoroughbred!"³⁸⁸ After the Buddha sent him off, Ananda instructed him. Bhadda practiced meditation. Then he attained arahantship.³⁸⁹ These are just a few examples of children who practiced meditation and attained liberation. In the Pāli canon, there are still many children depicted who attained arahantship through meditation.

Most of the children depicted in the Pāli canon have attained awakening. This shows that children, even if they are younger than seven years old, have the ability to attain awakening as long as the teacher teaches them on the right path and gives them appropriate teaching or teaching suitable for each child. Children can learn quickly and reach the highest goal of education, Nibbana.

³⁸⁶SN 21.9; SN 22.84.

³⁸⁷Tha Ap 486, {489}.

³⁸⁸Thag 7.3.

³⁸⁹Thag 7.3.

Chapter 6 Comparative Analysis of Child-Centered Education and Buddhist Education for Children

Comparative analysis of child-centered education and Buddhist education for children has highlighted the similarities and differences between the two approaches to educating young minds. Child-centered education emphasizes personalized learning, experiential and inquiry-based learning, and an active role for the student in his or her own education. Buddhist education for children, on the other hand, emphasizes mindfulness, compassion, and wisdom and aims to promote the child's holistic development through contemplative practices.

The result of this research has shown that both approaches contain valuable insights and techniques that can be integrated into modern educational systems. Child-centered education can benefit from the mindfulness practices of Buddhist education, while Buddhist education can benefit from the emphasis on experiential and inquiry-based learning in child-centered education.

Research has also shown that the goal of both approaches is to help children develop into happy, healthy, well-rounded individuals. By merging the most effective strategies from child-centered education and Buddhist educational principles, both educators and parents can develop a well-rounded educational method that promotes the holistic growth and development of children in a thorough and effective way.

6.1 Similarities and Differences Between Child-Centered Education and Buddhist Education for Children

Child-centered education is a pedagogical approach that focuses on the individual needs and interests of each child and in which the teacher assumes the role of a facilitator

or mentor rather than a rigid authoritarian figure. It positions the child as the focal point of the educational endeavor and encourages active participation, critical thinking, and self-reflection.

Buddhist Education for Children is a teaching and learning approach that incorporates Buddhist philosophy, principles, and practices into the education of children. It aims to promote mindfulness, compassion, and wisdom, and to aid children in cultivating a more profound comprehension of themselves and their position in the world. This approach can be religious or secular in nature, depending on the context in which it is implemented.

Comparing child-centered education and Buddhist education for children is important because it allows educators and policymakers to gain a deeper understanding of the different approaches to teaching and learning and to examine the potential benefits and limitations of each approach. By examining the similarities and differences among these approaches, it is possible to identify areas of overlap and potential integration, as well as areas of tension or conflict. This can lead to more informed decision-making and more effective pedagogical practices that take into account the needs and interests of children together with the wider social and cultural environment in which education takes place. The following are similarities between child-centered education and Buddhist education for children:

1. Emphasis on holistic development of children

One of the commonalities between child-centered education and Buddhist education for children is the emphasis on the holistic development of children. Both

approaches recognize that education should not be limited to cognitive or academic development, but should also address children's social, emotional, and physical needs.

Child-centered education focuses on the whole child and not just his or her academic performance. This method recognizes the individuality of children, understands their different needs and interests and thus advocates personalized educational experiences. Child-centered education emphasizes the promotion of analytical reasoning, innovation, and problem-solving capabilities, along with the development of social skills and emotional intelligence.

Similarly, Buddhist education for children emphasizes holistic personal growth and focuses on mindfulness, compassion, and the development of wisdom. This approach recognizes that children are not only intellectual beings but also emotional and spiritual beings. Buddhist education aims to encourage self-understanding, compassion, and a feeling of interconnectedness with others and the environment.

In addition to promoting the development of the whole person, one of the primary objectives of Buddhist education aimed at children is liberation or Nibbana. In Buddhist ideology, Nibbana means the attainment of liberation from suffering and the realization of one's authentic essence. By fostering mindfulness, compassion, and wisdom, Buddhist education strives to help children develop the inner strength necessary to overcome life's obstacles and achieve a sense of inner peace and joy.

This approach recognizes that children face many challenges in their lives, including stress, anxiety, and social pressures, and that these challenges can affect their development and well-being. By fostering the development of mindfulness, compassion,

and wisdom, Buddhist education equips children with the necessary resources to overcome such obstacles and promote an inner state of peace and well-being.

Moreover, the goal of nibbana in Buddhist education goes beyond the individual to include the larger community and world. Through the cultivation of compassion and empathy, Buddhist education encourages children to recognize their interconnectedness with others and the world around them and to act in ways that promote the well-being of all beings.

In this way, the goal of Nibbana in Buddhist education goes beyond personal development to include the development of a more compassionate, just, and sustainable society.

Both child-centered education and Buddhist education for children share a focus on holistic development and emphasize the importance of a well-rounded approach to education. This approach recognizes the different facets of a child's development and strives to promote their well-being in all areas of life.

2. Children actively engaging in the learning process

Active participation of children in learning means that children are involved in the educational process as active participants and are not just passive recipients of knowledge. It is an approach that encourages children to take charge of their own learning, ask questions, explore ideas, and engage with the material in meaningful ways.

In child-centered education, active participation is a fundamental principle. The teacher acts as a facilitator, allowing children to explore and discover knowledge for themselves rather than simply imparting information. Children are encouraged to inquire,

explore, and collaborate with their peers, while it is the teacher's role to facilitate and guide their learning journey.

Similarly, Buddhist education for children emphasizes the significance of engaging actively in the learning process. The perspective recognizes that children thrive in learning environments where they are involved in and intrigued by the subject matter, and where they have the opportunity to explore and test ideas. Buddhist education seeks to cultivate a sense of curiosity and wonder in children and encourage them to ask questions, explore, and discover for themselves. For example, the Buddha taught Rāhula, who was his son. The Buddha had a special interest in teaching Rāhula and sharing his wisdom with him. In this lesson, the Buddha uses a simple but powerful analogy to emphasize the importance of being mindful of one's thoughts, words, and deeds. The Buddha asked Rāhula to bring him a bowl of water and asked him what he saw in the bowl. Rāhula replied that he saw his own reflection. The Buddha then asked Rāhula what would happen if the water in the bowl was stirred up or disturbed. Rāhula replied that his reflection would become distorted, making it difficult to see clearly. The Buddha then explained to Rāhula that our mind is like the water in the bowl and our thoughts, words, and actions are like the disturbances that can agitate the water. When our minds are disturbed, our ability to see things clearly becomes distorted, just like Rāhula's reflection in the agitated water. The Buddha urged Rāhula to henceforth be vigilant about his thoughts, speech, and behavior and to strive for inner peace and a calm state of mind. This lesson not only emphasizes the importance of mindfulness within the Buddhist teachings but also shows the dedicated learning process of a young disciple like Rāhula.

The emphasis on active participation in learning in both child-centered education and Buddhist education for children underscores the importance of creating a dynamic and engaging learning atmosphere that fosters children's active engagement in their own educational journey. By enabling children to take control of their learning journey and interact with content in meaningful ways, educators can foster an enduring passion for learning that lasts into adulthood.

3. Acknowledgment of the teacher's function as a facilitator or mentor

Both child-centered education and Buddhist education for children recognize the teacher's function as a facilitator or guide and not as an authoritarian figure. In child-centered education, the teacher serves as a facilitator, allowing children to explore and discover knowledge for themselves rather than simply imparting information. Instructor's responsibility can support and direct the growth of knowledge, provide resources and materials, and create a safe and nurturing environment in which children can flourish and develop.

In the Buddhist education of children, the teacher additionally assumes the position of a mentor or guide rather than a conventional authority figure. His responsibility is to encourage and inspire the child's growth, provide guidance and instruction, and model compassionate and mindful behavior. For example, the Buddha facilitated Pandita's spiritual progress by providing him with a conducive environment for his practice. The Buddha recognized Pandita's potential and his devotion to the path of liberation, so he ensured that Pandita received the necessary support to continue his practice undisturbed.

After Pandita had doubts about the nature of his mind, Thera Sariputta gave him guidance and answers to his questions. He asked for permission to go back to the monastery. He then returned to the monastery to practice meditation. The Buddha realized the importance of a conducive environment for practice. The Buddha prevented anyone from interfering with Pandita's meditation practice, even a respected elder like Thera Sariputta. This shows that the Buddha knew how important a peaceful and supportive environment was for meditation practice.

In the end, when Pandita was about to attain arahantship, the Buddha himself facilitated his attainment by denying the Thera Sariputta access to the chamber in which the Pandita was meditating. The Buddha also engaged Thera Sariputta in conversation and gave Pandita the space and time necessary to complete his spiritual journey.³⁹⁰

The Buddha's role is to facilitate Pandita's spiritual progress by providing a supportive environment, guidance, and the space necessary for him to meditate undisturbed. The Buddha's actions demonstrate his teaching method, which focuses on the learner.

By recognizing the teacher's function as a mediator or mentor, both child-centered education and Buddhist education for children foster a cooperative and supportive learning environment that encourages creativity, critical thinking, and personal growth. The teacher is not an authority figure, but a partner in the child's learning journey, working with the child to explore new ideas and develop new skills.

³⁹⁰Dhp 76-89.

4. Incorporation of experiential and hands-on learning

Both child-centered pedagogy and Buddhist pedagogy for children include experiential and hands-on learning as a core component of their educational approach. In child-centered education, experiential and hands-on learning is a fundamental principle. Children are encouraged to learn through exploration, discovery, and experimentation rather than simply being told what to do. The teacher provides opportunities for children to engage in hands-on activities such as projects, experiments, and group work. This allows them to learn by doing and develop practical skills that are relevant to their lives.

Similarly, Buddhist education for children emphasizes learning through experience. The emphasis is on cultivating a sense of mindfulness and awareness in children and providing them with opportunities to learn through direct experience. For example, children may be encouraged to do mindful breathing exercises or explore nature to cultivate a more profound comprehension of themselves and their surroundings. A Sopāka's tale is one of the examples that illustrate the Buddha's emphasis on learning through experience, a central tenet of Buddhism. The story describes how Sopāka, although born and abandoned in a graveyard, was able to attain enlightenment by following the Buddha's teachings and practicing meditation.

Both child-centered education and Buddhist education for children provide children with a more engaging and meaningful learning experience by incorporating experiential and hands-on learning. This approach allows children to connect more deeply with the subject matter, develop practical skills that are relevant to their lives, and become more invested in their own learning journey.

6.2 The Holistic Development of Children in Child-Centered Education and Buddhist Education

The holistic development of children involves nurturing all aspects of their growth, which include physical, emotional, social, and cognitive growth to help them develop their maximum abilities. The study found that both child-centered education and Buddhist education emphasize the holistic growth of children, which includes their physical, emotional, social, and cognitive development. Child-centered education adapts learning to the child's individual interests, needs, and abilities, allowing them to learn and discover at their own pace. In contrast, Buddhist education focuses on fostering inner qualities such as mindfulness, compassion, and wisdom, which are believed to improve the child's overall well-being and happiness. Both child-centered education and Buddhist education can provide a well-rounded approach to education that promotes the holistic development of children and helps them develop into well-adjusted and responsible adults. The following is a holistic development of child-centered education and Buddhist education.

1. Philosophical underpinnings and cultural contexts

Philosophical foundations and cultural contexts refer to the theoretical foundations and sociocultural factors that shape the beliefs, values, and practices of a particular educational system or approach. Research found that both child-centered education and Buddhist education have philosophical foundations and cultural contexts that influence their approach to education. Child-centered education has its roots in the philosophy of progressive education, which emphasizes the child's natural curiosity and

desire to learn. It places great emphasis on the child's individual needs and interests and seeks to establish an educational atmosphere that is responsive to those needs. Child-centered education is often associated with Western educational philosophies and has been influenced by the works of educational theorists such as John Dewey and Maria Montessori.

Buddhist education, on the other hand, is rooted in the teachings and practices of Buddhism, a spiritual and philosophical heritage that originated in ancient India and aims to promote the physical development of a child, mind, and spirit, with an emphasis on cultivating compassion, wisdom and ethical behavior. Buddhist education is often associated with Eastern cultures and has been influenced by the teachings of Buddhist masters such as Nagarjuna, Buddhaghosa, and Buddhadasa.

The cultural context in which each of these approaches is practiced also plays an important role. Child-centered education is often associated with individualistic Western societies, where the emphasis is on personal achievement and independence. In contrast, Buddhist education is often associated with collectivist Eastern cultures where the emphasis is on community and interconnectedness.

Understanding the philosophical underpinnings and cultural contexts of child-centered education and Buddhist training enables us to gain a deeper insight into different points of view and approaches to the two concepts and how they can contribute to the holistic development of children in diverse cultural and social contexts.

2. Religious component in Buddhist children's education

Buddhist education for children usually includes a significant religious element rooted in the principles and rituals of Buddhism. Buddhism, which originated in ancient India, emphasizes the cultivation of compassion, wisdom, and moral behavior.

In Buddhist education for children, the religious component is to familiarize children involving the experiences and lessons imparted by the Buddha. It aims to encourage them to meditate and engage in other spiritual practices. The teachings of Buddhism are used to cultivate virtues such as kindness, generosity, and mindfulness, and to assist children in gaining a more profound comprehension of themselves and their surroundings.

In modern times, Buddhist education of children includes learning Buddhist traditions and rituals, such as chanting, offering incense, and making offerings. These rituals help children develop a sense of connection to the Buddhist community and the world at large and can provide a framework for ethical and spiritual growth.

The spiritual aspect of Buddhist education for children is of great importance for their educational path and can help children develop a strong sense of meaning and significance in their lives. It offers a unique approach to education that stresses not solely cognitive advancement, but also the nurturing of a child's ethical and spiritual nature.

3. Focus on mindfulness, compassion, and wisdom in Buddhist education

Buddhist education focuses on promoting mindfulness, compassion, and wisdom in children. These three qualities are considered essential for cultivating a balanced and fulfilling life and are central to the doctrines and rituals of Buddhism. Most of the

children's stories in the Pali canon practice mindfulness. The tale of the weaver's daughter is among the narratives imparted by the Buddha when he gave a Dhamma teaching on meditation on death. He encouraged people to practice meditation on death, to recognize the unpredictability of life and the inevitability of death, and to realize that life is impermanent and death is certain. The weaver's daughter, who had heard this teaching, meditated on death continuously for three years, day and night. She realized the impermanence of life and how important it is to be mindful of death. When the Buddha met her, he asked her four questions to help her gain insight into the nature of existence. She answered them mindfully, showing her understanding of impermanence and uncertainty.

Through this story, the Buddha conveyed that mindfulness is essential for attaining insight into the essence of existence, understanding the impermanence of life, and grasping the significance of meditation. When one is mindful, one can understand the truth of life and overcome suffering.

Mindfulness means focusing on the present moment without judgment or distraction. In Buddhist education, children are taught various mindfulness practices such as meditation, breathing exercises, and mindful movement to help them develop greater awareness of their thoughts, feelings, and surroundings.

Compassion is the ability to empathize with others and respond with kindness and care. In Buddhist education, children are taught to cultivate compassion through various practices, such as loving-kindness meditation and acts of kindness toward others. These practices help children develop a sense of empathy and connection with others and can contribute to a more harmonious and compassionate society. For example, the Buddha

taught compassion to the boys in Savatthi who were beating a snake with sticks for fear of being bitten. When the Buddha saw this, he asked them why they were harming the snake and preached to them that harming others does not lead to happiness. He taught them that those who harm others will not find pleasure in future lives and emphasized the significance of showing kindness and compassion towards all beings.³⁹¹

Wisdom is the capacity to comprehend the essence of reality and perceive things in their true form. In Buddhist education, children are taught to develop wisdom through the study of Buddhist teachings and through reflection and contemplation. This can aid children in cultivating a more profound comprehension of themselves and their environment and can contribute to their overall well-being and sense of purpose.

The focus on mindfulness, compassion, and wisdom in Buddhist education provides children with valuable tools to meet life's challenges and develop a more fulfilling and meaningful life. These qualities are considered essential for personal growth and for contributing to the well-being of society.

4. Curriculum flexibility and individualism in Child-centered education

Child-centered education emphasizes curriculum flexibility and individualism. The approach recognizes that each child is unique, with his or her own interests, strengths, and learning styles, and seeks to create a learning environment that accommodates these individual differences.

³⁹¹Ud 2.3.

In child-centered education, the curriculum is designed to be flexible and adaptable, based on each student's needs and interests. This may mean involving students in curriculum design, student-led projects and activities, and providing opportunities for individualized learning.

The method also emphasizes the importance of giving students the opportunity to make choices and exercise autonomy during the learning journey. Children are motivated to actively co-create their education and engage in learning activities that match their interests and enthusiasm. This approach can foster a sense of responsibility and engagement in learning, increasing motivation and eagerness to acquire knowledge.

The emphasis on curriculum flexibility and individualism in child-centered education provides children with a more personal and meaningful learning experience. It recognizes the unique qualities of each child and seeks to create an educational environment that supports his or her growth and development as effectively as possible.

6.3 The Role of Teachers in Each Approach and Their Relationship with Students

The role of teachers and their relationship with students is a crucial aspect of both child-centered education and Buddhist education for children. In both methods, the educator holds a crucial function in directing and supporting the learning process while maintaining a constructive and supportive relationship with their students. However, the nature of this role and the relationship between teacher and student can differ significantly between the two approaches. The following sections describe the tasks of educators in child-centered education and Buddhist training.

1. Teacher's role as facilitator or guide in both approaches

In both child-centered education and Buddhist education for children, the teacher plays a vital role in guiding. Rather than simply imparting information and guiding the learning process, the teacher serves as a supportive and responsive presence who helps the child explore and understand the world around him or her.

In child-centered pedagogy, the teacher acts as a learning guide, creating a flexible and responsive learning environment that supports the child's individual interests and learning style. The teacher can guide and direct the child as needed but also motivates the child to actively participate to engage in their personal learning journey and pursue their unique interests and enthusiasms.

Similarly, in Buddhist education, the teacher serves as a guide for the child's spiritual and moral development, helping to foster the cultivation of mindfulness, compassion, and wisdom. The teacher may use a variety of methods, including meditation, storytelling, and contemplation, helping the child to cultivate a profound comprehension of themselves and their surroundings.

A teacher's role as facilitator or mentor emphasizes the importance of creating a nurturing and stimulating learning atmosphere that enables the child to explore, discover, and learn on his or her own terms. The teacher's role is to provide guidance and support while recognizing and respecting each child's unique qualities and interests.

2. Differences in the teacher's role in promoting holistic development and spiritual growth in Buddhist education

In Buddhist education of children, the role of the teacher often focuses on nurturing not only the child's intellectual and emotional development but also his or her

spiritual growth. Unlike child-centered education, which focuses on promoting the child's holistic development through exploration and self-discovery, Buddhist education places great emphasis on cultivating mindfulness, compassion, and wisdom in the child.

To promote spiritual growth, the teacher in Buddhist education assumes the role of a spiritual guide, imparting and guiding Buddhist teachings and practices. The teacher may use methods such as meditation, chanting, and storytelling to assist the child in gaining a more profound comprehension of themselves and their environment. They also encourage the child to develop virtues such as generosity, kindness, and patience.

In addition, the teacher in Buddhist education serves as a role model for the child and embodies the values and principles of the Buddhist faith. They provide guidance and support to help the child develop a strong moral compass and sense of social duty.

The function of the instructor in Buddhist pedagogy emphasizes the importance of spiritual growth and moral development in addition to intellectual and emotional development. The teacher serves as a guide and role model, providing guidance and support for the child to cultivate mindfulness, compassion, and wisdom, and to develop a strong moral compass.

6.4 The Successful Child-Centered and Buddhist Education

The effective execution of child-focused education and Buddhist educational approaches to children can have a profound impact on their intellectual, emotional, and spiritual development.

Child-centered education emphasizes the importance of individualizing instruction to fit each child's needs, interests, and learning styles. This method empowers

children to assume accountability for their learning, cultivate critical thinking abilities, and evolve into self-driven learners. The success of child-centered instruction depends on skilled and knowledgeable teachers who are able to help children discover their interests and talents, set goals, and develop a growth mindset. There are some successful implementations of child-centered education, such as Montessori schools, which are a well-known example of child-centered education and are used successfully in schools around the world. This approach emphasizes self-directed learning, hands-on exploration, and a flexible, personalized curriculum. Another example is Reggio Emilia Schools, an educational approach that originated in Italy and is characterized by an emphasis on collaboration, creativity, and exploration. Teachers in Reggio Emilia schools act as facilitators, guiding children's learning and encouraging their curiosity and self-expression.

On the other hand, Buddhist education for children in the Pāli canon emphasizes the cultivation of moral and spiritual values such as compassion, generosity, wisdom, and mindfulness. Successful implementation of Buddhist education requires a deep understanding of Buddhist principles and practices, as well as the ability to create a supportive and compassionate learning environment. Buddhist teachers serve as role models for children by embodying the values and principles of the Buddhist faith and guiding children toward self-knowledge, inner peace, and social responsibility. There are many successful examples in the Pāli canon, such as the teachings of Rahula, Samkicca, Pandita, Sopaka, and Revata Samaneras, all of whom became arhants.

Together, child-centered education and Buddhist education can create a holistic learning experience that promotes the child's intellectual, emotional, and spiritual growth.

Successful implementation of these approaches, however, requires careful planning, training, and support for teachers, as well as a supportive community that values education and respects the unique needs and abilities of each child.

The unique characteristics of each approach have also contributed to their success in promoting child development and well-being. Child-centered pedagogy, for example, recognizes that each child is unique and has his or her own learning style, interests, and abilities. By providing individualized learning opportunities, children can learn at their own pace and in ways that meet their needs. And learning together: Child-centered education also stresses collaboration and engagement of social in the methods. By working with groups and sharing ideas, children can develop social skills and learn from each other.

In the Pāli canon, mindfulness and meditation are emphasized, which shows the great importance Buddhist teachings attach to them as a means of promoting inner peace, compassion, and wisdom. When children learn these practices, they can better regulate their emotions and develop better self-awareness. And moral education, Buddhist education also includes a strong emphasis on moral education, with a focus on ethical behavior and compassion for all living beings. By teaching children these values, they can develop a sense of social responsibility and care for others.

These unique characteristics have helped child-centered education and Buddhist education successfully promote children's holistic development and well-being.

6.5 Possible Ways to Combine Child-Centered Education and Buddhist Education for Children

Possible ways to combine child-centered education and Buddhist education for children include incorporating mindfulness practices, creating a compassionate and inclusive learning environment, incorporating stories and literature that promote Buddhist values, integrating art and creative expression, and encouraging child-centered inquiry and exploration. Below are some suggestions for combining child-centered education with Buddhist education:

First, integrate mindfulness and meditation practices into child-centered education: child-centered education can benefit from incorporating mindfulness and meditation practices as a means of promoting emotional regulation and self-awareness in children. These practices can help children develop inner peace and a sense of calm, which can improve their learning and overall well-being.

Second, integrate ethical education into child-centered education: Child-centered education can also benefit from integrating ethical education that emphasizes compassion, kindness, and social responsibility. By teaching children these values, they can develop greater empathy and interest in others, which can contribute to their personal growth and development.

Third, incorporate child-centered learning strategies into Buddhist education: Buddhist education can benefit from incorporating child-centered learning strategies that emphasize individual learning and learning through collaboration. By enabling children to learn at their own pace and work together in groups, they can develop social skills and learn from each other while remaining grounded in Buddhist values and principles.

Fourth, teach Buddhist values and principles in Child-center education: teaching Buddhist values and principles such as compassion, wisdom, and non-attachment can also benefit Child-center education. By incorporating these values into the curriculum, children can learn to approach life with mindfulness and self-awareness while pursuing their own interests and passions.

6.6 Conclusion

Child-centered pedagogy and Buddhist pedagogy for children in the Pāli canon share some similarities in that they emphasize the holistic development of children, recognize the teacher as a facilitator or guide, and incorporate experiential and hands-on learning. However, they also have some differences, such as the religious component in Buddhist education, the focus on mindfulness, compassion, and wisdom in Buddhist education, and the flexibility and individuality of the curriculum in child-centered education. Despite these differences, there are ways to combine the two approaches, such as incorporating mindfulness and meditation practices in child-centered education or teaching Buddhist values and principles in child-centered education.

For educators and policymakers who seek to incorporate aspects of both child-centered education and Buddhist education for children into their educational practice, there are several implications to consider.

First, it is important to recognize the similarities and differences between the two approaches and find ways to integrate them effectively. This may mean adapting certain aspects of each approach to the cultural and educational context of a particular setting.

Second, educators and policymakers should consider the significance of offering training and ongoing development opportunities for teachers to ensure that teachers have the necessary skills and knowledge to implement these approaches effectively.

Third, engaging parents and the wider community is crucial in implementing these approaches to ensure that they are supported and sustained over time.

Incorporating aspects of child-centered education and Buddhist education for children into educational practice can have significant benefits for children's holistic development and well-being but requires careful thought and planning to ensure successful implementation.

Chapter 7 Conclusion and Suggestion

Studies on children and adolescents as presented in Buddhist scriptures, offer insights into attitudes toward children and adolescents in ancient Indian society. This research also compares pedagogy for children in the Pāli canon with the principles of child-centered education. The result can address the unique needs and interests of each child in the learning process. By analyzing the Pāli discourse can gain insight into the application of Buddhist principles and practices in contemporary education. The findings that emerge from this investigation are as follows:

7.1 Conclusion

The study revealed that there were fifty-three children in the Pāli canon. Forty-seven of these were male and six were female. Of the fifty-three children, forty-one children attained arahant, four children attained stream-entry, and eight children enjoyed Buddhist teachings.

The Buddhist system of education for children, as described in the Pāli canon, was not systematically organized, but took place mostly on a one-on-one basis between a Buddha or monk and each child. The aim of Buddhist education was the comprehensive development of a child's character, including physical, spiritual, ethical, and intellectual development. The system was divided into three categories - discipline or ethical living, concentration, and insight or wisdom - which together summarized the complete path to enlightenment.

The Buddhist education system aimed to change the inner nature of children, cultivate knowledge and wisdom, and understand the genuine essence of phenomena.

Through wisdom, children can solve all their problems and turn their sorrow into joy. The root of human suffering, according to Buddhism, was ignorance, and learning Buddhism would help a Buddhist child carry a light within him that could extinguish ignorance.

In contrast, child-centered education focuses on the unique needs and interests of each child in the learning process. It targets the development of the whole child - physically, socially, emotionally, and intellectually - and recognizes that children learn in different ways and at different rates. Teachers who practice child-centered pedagogy use a variety of approaches to engage children, including hands-on activities, group projects, and personalized learning plans. The objective is to assist children in cultivating a profound comprehension of fundamental principles and values while equipping them with the necessary skills and understanding they need to survive in a rapidly evolving world.

The Buddha used different methods to teach children, depending on the child's personality and level of spiritual development. He skillfully conveyed different teachings and chose an appropriate method for each child. For example, he used the parable method with Rāhula, the question method with the weaver's daughter, and the step method with Singalovāda, to name a few.

To summarize, the Buddhist educational framework for children, as outlined in the discourses, seeks to foster the comprehensive growth of a child's character, the promotion of knowledge and insight, and the understanding of the nature of reality. Teaching methods were selected based on the child's personality and level of intellectual development. In contrast, child-centered education centers on the distinct requirements

and passions of individual children. It acknowledges that children absorb knowledge diversely and at varying paces, employing a range of strategies to inspire them.

7.2 Suggestions

Further research on children and adolescents in the Pāli canon and on child-centered education could offer a significant understanding of the adaptation including the implementation of the ancient principles of Buddhism and practices within modern education. For example, future research could examine the consistency of child-centered parenting practices with Buddhist principles of developing individuals' spiritual, moral, and intellectual capacities. In addition, the effectiveness of incorporating mindfulness and meditation practices into child-centered parenting models could be explored, as these practices promote well-being, concentration, and self-awareness. Further research could also explore the potential benefits of integrating Buddhist principles and practices into mainstream education to combat the growing concerns about the health and psychological welfare of youth. Here are additional suggestions for further research:

7.2.1 Comparing the portrayal of children in different canons, e.g., the Agama and Sanskrit versions, to gain new perspectives and understand the role of children in Buddhism.

7.2.2 Comparing child rearing, teaching methods, or meditation training in Buddhist treatises with those of a particular culture, such as American or Chinese, and analyzing the differences and similarities.

7.2.3 Investigating the factors that help children successfully learn and practice Buddhist teachings by examining the educational methods used in Buddhist treatises,

how children achieve the ultimate goal of Buddhist education, and how these methods can be applied to current situations.

7.2.4 Longitudinal studies are being conducted to examine the effects of child-centered education in Buddhist schools or centers on children's academic, social, emotional, and spiritual development. These studies aim to compare child-centered education with traditional Buddhist educational methods.

7.2.5 Exploring the use of technology, such as virtual meditation apps, online courses, and educational games, in child-centered education in the context of Buddhism and analyzing the potential benefits and drawbacks.

7.2.6 Examine the intersection of gender and Buddhist education for children and adolescents by exploring gender-specific aspects of Buddhist education and how gender stereotypes and biases may affect boys' and girls' education differently. It also analyzes how Buddhist teachings about gender and sexuality are transmitted to children and the impact they have on their identity and self-concept.

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