

Buddhist Teachings For Personal And Professional Development

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Introduction

The contemporary higher education system distinctively focuses on the employability of graduates because after their graduation they continue to develop their life span through professionalism. Activities in the world of work are not bounded to professionalism it's interrelated with personal life development also. This exigency of higher education is directed at the professional and personal development of the student through their entire tertiary education process (Laverick, 2016). To fulfill this need the modern higher education system utilizes the concepts and theories of guidance psychology, career counseling, coaching, and mentoring. However recent research shows western approaches related to professional and personal development are inadequate to generate result-based development in graduates (Malm, 2009). Therefore modern educationists, psychologists, and policymakers are examining an advanced result-based philosophy for the graduates' to their personal and professional development (PPD). Eastern philosophy mainly discusses metaphysical concepts and slighter discusses the life development of individuals. Nevertheless, Buddhist philosophy mainly focuses on achieving the ultimate spiritual achievement of *Nibbāna*. Although apart from that Buddha has discussed things that related to the success of secular living (Hettiarachchi, 1991). Literature related to the personal and professional development of higher education highlights utilizing concepts related to psychology and coaching for success. However, those concepts are narrow to cope with situations and the development of soft skills (Pavlina, 2008). Inadequate to highlight the theoretical and practical utility of total personality development through personal and professional development. Anyhow teachings of Buddhism can fulfill the above gap both in the theoretical and practical aspects. Because the teachings of Buddhism focus on the development of total personality both in secular and spiritual approaches. Cultivating those teachings of Buddhism helps higher education graduates to develop their personal and professional success throughout their life span. The promotion of Buddhist teaching on personal and professional development to

the higher education system will help graduates to gain a result-based practice in PPD in their future endeavors. Therefore, this study was expected to explore whether the teachings of Buddha could be theoretically and practically applicable to the personal and professional development of a student. The research objectives of the study were to examine the utility of Buddhist teachings for personal and professional development and to develop a conceptual model for personal and professional development based on Buddhist teachings.

Methodology

This study is qualitative. Data was gathered through primary and secondary sources. Theravada canonical texts, their commentaries, and sub-commentaries are also utilized as Primary sources. Secondary sources are research articles, books, and other materials related to guidance psychology and Buddhism. Data was analyzed through the content analysis method.

Findings/Results and Discussion

Suttas in the Sutta-piṭaka outline many theories and concepts related to personal and professional development. Under the title of personal development, the teaching of *Sigālovāda* sutta (DN 31) highlights the importance of building a moral/ethical foundation for the success of personal development through avoiding unethical behaviors. And; also AN 10.74 suggests focusing on secular and spiritual success in personal development. Vyagghapajja sutta (AN 8.54) highlights values for personal success in four aspects. Those are the bliss of vigor (*Uṭṭhāna sampadā*), the bliss of protection (*āraṅkha sampadā*), good friends (*Kalyāṇa mitta*), and balanced life (*Samajīvikatā*). *Rāsiya* sutta (SN 42.12) also mentioned the importance of care on own self and others in personal development. Furthermore, *Sigālovāda* sutta conveys teachings related to positive social relationships, duties, wealth management philosophy, cultivating calmness (*sīla*) intelligence (*paññā*), and courage (*uṭṭāna viriya*) for success. *Parābhava* (AN 7.31) and *Vasala* suttas (Snp 1.7) describe many unethical and risky behavior that need to avoid in personal living, Vyagghapajja sutta also highlights risky behavior which affects the destruction of wealth and suggests being calm and generous, and intelligent to the success of personal development. *Grimānanda* sutta (AN 10.60) describes many teachings related to preventing and curing disease and this teaching helps to develop of health and wellbeing promotion of every individual in their success of personal development. Finally, the *Aṇana* sutta (AN 4.62) describes the importance of achieving life satisfaction in four levels. Those are enjoying economic security or sufficient wealth acquired by the righteous (*atthi sukha*); the second is spending that wealth liberally on himself, his family, his friends and relatives, and on meritorious deeds (*bhogo sukha*); the third to be free from debts (*anavajja sukha*) the fourth satisfaction is to live a faultless, and

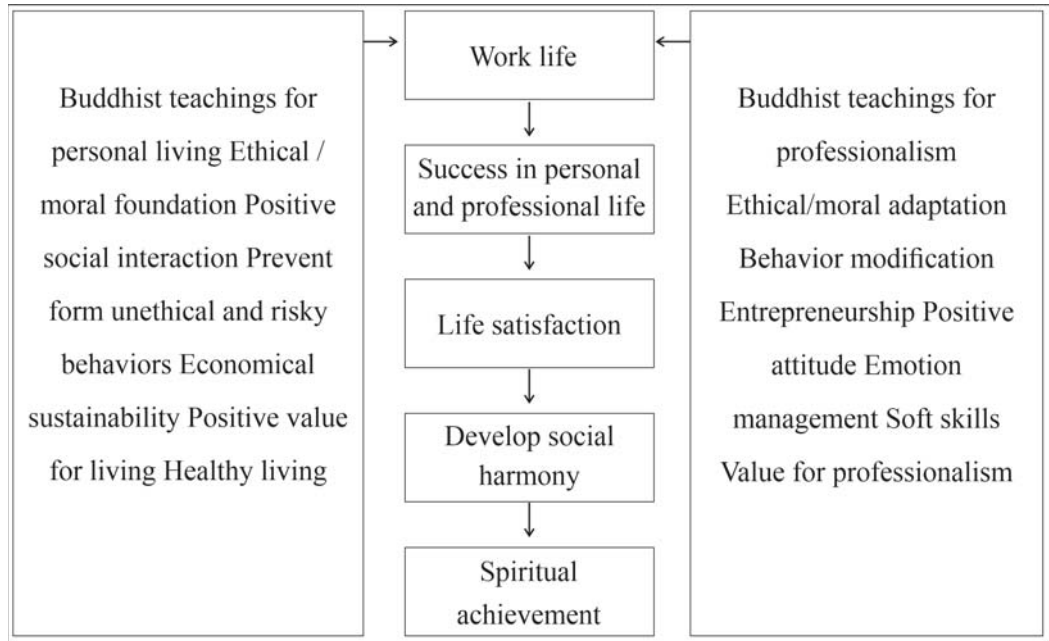
a pure life without committing evil in thought, word or deed (*anavajja sukha*). However, Buddhist teaching emphasizes utilizing the above teachings for the success and development of the personal life and points up spiritual achievement need to be the ultimate achievement of personal development. The title of the professional development teachings of Buddhism highlights the importance of cultivating an ethical (*sīla*) foundation for success in professionalism. *Pattakamma sutta* (AN 4.61) emphasizes adopting four qualities for the success of professional development. Those are the accomplishment of faith (*saddhā sampadā*), the accomplishment of virtue (*sīla sampadā*), the accomplishment of charity (*cāga sampadā*), and the accomplishment of wisdom (*paññā sampadā*). *Dūteiya sutta* (AN 8.16) highlights eight soft skills for professionalism those are listening, influencer, learning, resistance, and analytical, cognitive, ethical, and active calmness. The *Kusītārambhavatthu sutta* (AN 8.80) describes behavior modification and energizing for professionalism. This sutta states avoid eight types of laziness and engages in work with high esteem and introduces eight techniques (*ārambha vatthu*) to energize behavior for empowerment. *Accayika sutta* (AN 3.92) also points out that success depends on only effort and that effort needs be a spiritual effort. Buddha suggests cultivating three types of spiritual effort those are higher morality, higher concentration, and higher wisdom. *Vañijja sutta* (AN 5.177) highlights entrepreneurship for professional development and suggests that the process needs to be compassionate towards all living beings and state avoid the five-way of wealth earning in professionalism. *Pañcabhogadiya sutta* (AN 5.41) points out five productive ways of wealth consumption those steps are righteous earning to enjoyment and comfort of own self, for the protection and wellbeing of parents, family, and friends and the final step is protection and consumption. *Mangala sutta* (SnP 2.4) also mentioned thirty-eight higher blessings in life and those teaching can adapt to the KSA development in professionalism. The premier feature of professional development is a positive attitude and emotional management. *Metta sutta* (SnP 1.8) emphasizes the development of that element through the enhancement of *mettā*. This sutta discusses cultivating fifteen moral qualities such as being non-deceptive (*uju*), sincere (*suju*), easy to correct (*suvaco*), gentle (*mudu*), and without arrogance (*anatimāni*). Teachings of the *Metta sutta* cultivate a positive attitude and emotion in person's total personality. Therefore Buddhist teachings can be utilized for the professional development of individuals.

Conclusion

According to the below, conceptual model teachings of Buddhism emphasize many practical theories related to personal and professional development. Western philosopher describes PPD as an individual process nevertheless Buddhism explains PPD as an integrative process. Buddhism suggests that PPD needs to have an ethical/moral foundati

on and promote the cultivation of morality concentration and wisdom for success in personal and professional living. Thus the teaching of Buddhism explains PPD beyond the modern theories and encourages an individual to the achievement of the ultimate goal of spiritualism and total personality development.

Figure 01: Buddhist theory of personal and professional development



Source: Developed by the author

Keywords: Buddhist teachings, Personal, Professional, Development, Personality

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