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A Study of Buddha's Teachings on Ethnicity and Social Harmony

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Abstract

In today's world, various conflicts are taking place between nations, religions, and ethnic groups. It adversely affects the survival of society, and today the world has become one nation. The Buddha saw that people can live together freely as individuals, equal in principle, and therefore responsible for each other. The Buddha explains that every member of the human family, man, and woman alike, has an equal right to liberty. He recognized that each of us is just a human being like everyone else. The Buddha has given this example in his own monasteries. The monks who belonged to different castes were given the opportunity to spend time together in the same

monastery, which included holding meetings all together, irrespective of ethnicity, caste, or religion, walking together in the Pindapāṭha, and holding Dhamma discussions together in the one Dhamma hall. The objective of this study is to identify Buddha's teaching on social and ethnic harmony throughout the Buddhist scriptures (Pāli Canon). Special attention will be paid to the doctrine preached by the Buddha which can be applied to build mutual understanding, relationships, and peace. The study method in this study using historical texts (Sutta Pitaka) content analysis and is carried out using the library survey methodology.

Keywords: *Buddha's teaching, Conflict resolution, Ethnic and social harmony and Sutta Pitaka*

1. Introduction

Buddhism has long been celebrated as a religion of peace and non-violence. In today's world, various conflicts are taking place between nations, religions, and ethnicities. It adversely affects the survival of society, and today the world has become one nation. The Buddha saw that people can live together freely as individuals, equal in principle, and therefore responsible for each other. The social aspect of Buddhism is based on the pursuit of social justice based on non-violence. Buddhism is a faith that was founded by Siddhartha Gautama ("the Buddha") more

than 2,500 years ago in India. About 470 million followers and scholars consider Buddhism as one of the major world religions. "Buddhism is sometimes presented as a religion interested in personal salvation only, without any considerations for the welfare of the society in general." This opinion was promoted, among others, by German sociologist, philosopher, and political economist Max Weber. Thus, in his book "The Religion of India" he writes in relation to Buddhist ideal of liberation: Salvation is an absolutely personal performance of the self-reliant individual. No one and particularly no social community can help him. The specific asocial character of genuine mysticism is here carried to its maximum (Weber, 1958: 213). Obviously, this is a gross misrepresentation of the facts, since there are number of texts in the Pāli Canon¹ (*Tripitaka*) which clearly negate this claim. The image of socially withdrawn character of Buddhism created by Weber was taken for granted by later sociologists, due to either the inability to read the original texts or lack of proper understanding of Buddhism in practice. The Prof. P. Gñānārāma said: The teaching of the Buddha evolved into a religion with followers of different mental capacities even during the lifetime of the Buddha. All were admonished to realize the truth themselves. However, social and political dimensions found in many parts of the Pāli canon bear evidence to the fact that early Buddhism held social service in high esteem, (Gñānārāma, 2012:4). This is a great answer to the idea that there is no encouragement of social welfare in Buddhism. Therefore, Buddhism has the opportunity to speak about social and ethnic harmony.

In order to study the correct teachings of the Buddha, one must examine the *Sutta Pitaka*. The *Sutta Pitaka* is one of the *Pitakas* of the *Tipitaka* (Pāli) or (*Sanskrit*) *Tripitaka* (Pāli Canon). Buddhist texts (*Tipitaka*) are part of the Buddhist tradition. The first Buddhist texts were initially passed on orally by Buddhist monastics, but were later written down and composed as manuscripts in various Indo-Aryan languages such as *Pāli*, Sanskrit etc, and compiled into various Buddhist canons. These were later translated into other languages such as Sinhala, English etc. Buddhist historical texts are one of the most important sources for the students who study Buddhism. In addition Pure Buddhism exists in those materials. From the past

¹ The Pāli Canon is the standard collection of scriptures [(Religious texts are texts related to a religious tradition. They differ from literary texts by being a compilation or discussion of beliefs, mythologies, ritual practices, commandments or laws, ethical conduct, spiritual aspirations, and for creating or fostering a religious community. The relative authority of religious texts develops over time and is derived from the ratification, enforcement, and its use across generations. Some religious texts are accepted or categorized as canonical, some non-canonical, and others extracanonical, semi-canonical, deutero-canonical, pre-canonical or post-canonical)] in the Theravada Buddhist tradition, as preserved in the Pāli language.

to the present, those texts have been preserved in a way that does not harm the core values of the texts. “The claim of this *Theravāda* school of Buddhism is to have preserved the original teaching of the Buddha, and these are good grounds for at least considering that the doctrine as found in the *Pali* scriptures comes as close as we can get to what the Buddha actually taught. In any case the *pāli Tipitaka* is the only canon of an early school that is preserved completely (Walshe, 1995:19). The canon is traditionally known as the *Tipitaka* ("three baskets"). The three *Pitakas* are as follows, *Sutta Pitaka*, *Vinaya Pitaka* and *Abhidhama Pitaka*. Out of these, the *Sutta Pitaka* has been selected for this study.

Definition of ethnic harmony social harmony is a complicated concept to analyses: a literature search across various academic disciplines indicated that it is rarely explicitly defined. It tends to have broad implications; one well-cited article uses the term in conjunction with community cohesion, inter-group empathy and mutual respect and peaceful coexistence. No academic papers were found which defined or discussed social harmony in Sri Lanka directly. The term social harmony cannot be defined in single way. Definitions vary from one another. It is necessary to look at the etymological meaning of the term “social harmony” for explicating the term. The word is combined with two words social and harmony. The word “social” comes from the French root word ‘social’ or the Latin word ‘socialism/socius.’ It means “friend” the word relating to society which is concerned with the mutual relations of Human beings. The second word is ‘harmony’. It comes originally from the Greek root, “*harmonia*”, in French “*harmonie*”- which means “Joining concord”. Thus ‘harmony’- means a combination of simultaneously sounded musical notes to produce chords and chord progressions. Social harmony can be simply defined as “a society friendly or cordial or human being living together with other societies on the friendly or cordial manner” (Oxford Dictionary, p.937). Further, social harmony is defined as “Social harmony is about maintaining the level of equilibrium in economic terms in civil society. Social harmony is multi-tiered: it encompasses harmony between all ethnic groups and cultures (between the dominant culture and subculture and cultures of different social classes): harmony in the sense of respect for a country or a culture; harmony between different religion; and harmony between man and nature (Craig, 2013:3). According to Horowitz “ethnic conflict is at the center of politics. Ethnic divisions pose challenges to the cohesion of states and sometimes to peaceful relations among states. Ethnic conflict strains the bonds that sustain civility and is often at the root of violence that results in looting, death, homelessness, and the flight of large numbers of people” (Horowitz, 1985:12). The term ethnic harmony can be defined as a condition where different ethnic communities could co-exist peacefully. When it comes to a country ethnic harmony is related to development without which

the overall development of a country might not be achieved, (Somananda, 2015:4). Thus, this shows that social harmony is the peace among ethnic, caste, and religions and that it has an impact on the development of a country. The Buddha explains that every member of the human family, man, and woman alike, has an equal right to liberty. He recognized that each of us is just a human being like everyone else. The Buddha has given this example in his own monasteries. The monks who belong to different castes were given the opportunity to spend time together in the same monastery, and it includes holding meetings all together irrespective of ethnicity, caste, or religion, walking together in the *Pindapatha*², and holding Dhamma discussions together in the one Dhamma hall. This shows that the Buddha practically contributed to the building of harmony among ethnic, rich and poor, and castes.

2. Research Problem

The wave of globalization has been connecting all the countries of the world into a single community to an unprecedented extent, which implies that the human society in its true sense is taking shape. In the face of globalization, there have been various conflicts, violence, and animosities among different ethnic groups and religions based on the economy. The social economic, political, and cultural factors have been identified as the main factors influencing this situation. Powerful countries in various ways try to keep poor countries under their control. These can be concerned as major barriers to bring out peace in the world. As a result, precious human lives, as well as socio-cultural value systems, are being destroyed and suspicion and animosity are spreading among nations. Meantime the significance of peace and harmony is being recognized by more and more far-sighted people for the following reasons: Peace and harmony can bring peaceful and stable order to society, and they are necessary conditions for the survival and development of mankind. A world deprived of peace and harmony certainly will fall apart and return to the jungle era in which the strong prey on the weak. Peace and harmony are enjoyed and possessed jointly by mankind, which is a base for the full realization of the creativity potential of individuals, the sustainable development of the economy and culture of nations, and a true security for the long lasting prosperity of the human society. In such a situation, Buddhist teaching on conflict and conflict resolution can be utilized in a more effective way in order to reduce the aforementioned states. The

² In Pāli- pindapātikāṅga, the practice of going for alms is one of the thirteen ascetic purification- exercises.

research problem of this paper is based on how Buddhist teaching can be utilized to build social and ethnic harmony for the above purpose.

3. Methodology

This paper is based on a study of literature analyzing both primary and secondary sources (data). The primary data is the Buddhist teaching (sutta) scripts and original texts, mainly Sutta Pitaka (a part of the Pāli Canon, Tripitaka), while the secondary sources are academic articles written in this field, used at the detailed and logical explanation of sources referred to, and their relevance for the study, and issues remaining for further clarification. Through careful analysis of facts and information provided in these texts, the research focused on identifying how the Buddhist teachings could be utilized for conflict resolution and social and ethnic harmony.

4. Discussion

4.1 Reasons for arising conflict

Before attempting to resolve any conflict it is always important to determine exactly what the cause is. Understanding what triggers can be utilized for conflict resolution make easier to reach conflicts and avoid conflicts at the very beginning. The Buddha rejected war and valued peace, and introduced love (compassion) and kindness instead of violence. War and peace have been the fundamental concern of modern man; for war aggression, conflict, and confrontation prevailing all over the world because of politics, culture, religion, and race. They are detrimental to both the material and spiritual welfare of humanity. It has been pointed out that due to the arms race; the very survival of man is at stake. Buddhism aims at creating a peaceful society in the sense of the attainment of inner peace and finding the way to peace. It has also the strongest tradition of non-violence and peace in world history. And also Buddhism aims at creating a world where Compassion and Loving-Kindness are the driving forces. Buddhism conquers hatred by kindness and evil by goodness where enmity, jealousy, ill-will, and greed are absent. For Buddhism, the most effective and forceful reason for conflicts is unwholesome psychological traits like greediness, acquisition, unlimited power-hunger, hatefulness, and ignorance. The Buddha describes peace and the consequences of war. There is no victory or defeat in war. The group that wins the war is happy and the other group who loses is unhappy. Those who are unhappy often live with hatred and anger with the other group. There is no victory in that. In the *Pathamasangāma Sutta*, Buddha has shown results of war,

- (1) Victory breeds enmity
- (2) The defeated one sleeps badly
- (3) The peaceful one sleeps at ease, having abandoned victory and defeat.³

This also shows that war causes mental anguish and no one can be happy about it. The one who wins (the victor) hates the one who loses (the defeated) and the one who loses hates the one who wins. Accordingly, neither can be mentally happy. The conflicts and wars that occur in society are observed in Buddhism as an unavoidable part of samsāric misery. The Buddha speaks of unrest in the form of quarrels (*kalahā*), disputes (*viggahā*), and contentions (*vivāda*) which occur at different levels of social interaction. The *Madhupiṇḍika Sutta* begins with the sensory process and identifies *papañca* (mental proliferation) as the most noteworthy psychological cause for social conflicts. As the discourse highlights that the Buddha and his disciples have higher moral practices. They never harm to others and never plunder or steal others. Once the Buddha was in *Kapilavatthu*, the home town of the Buddha and then he went for alms-rounds (*Piṇḍapāta*) and sat under a tree and started to rest. At that time a *Sākyan* named *Dandapāṇi* also came to that park in the morning for exercise. He went where the Buddha sat and worshiped and asked one question from the Buddha. What is the contemplative's doctrine? What does he proclaim?⁴

The nature of doctrine, friend, where one does not keep quarreling with anyone in the world with its Devas, Maras, and Brahmas such a doctrine is taught⁵. Then the Buddha explains the two concepts which need to practice to live the aforesaid of life. These concepts are extremely vital to protect peace in society. The Conflicts and wars arise in human mind due to lack of the following characteristics as Buddhism maintains. The two concepts are:

- i. Departing from the sensual pleasures (*kāmehivisaṃyuttaṃ*)
- ii. Eliminating craving (*vītataṇhaṃ*)

According to the causes of the present and previous wars of the world we can see craving and sensual desire of the people are that the basic causes for war and

³ SN-1. *Pathamasangāma Sutta*. p.154

⁴ (*Kim vādī samaṇo, kimakkhāyī'ti?*)

⁵ (na kinaci loke viggaiha tiṭṭhati)

conflicts. The Buddha explains the person who endowed with controlled senses and eliminated craving, he does not tend to quarrel or harm to others or abuse others, or steal or despoil other's wealth. Once the Buddha points out that there is no end to human wants and desire⁶and people are slaves of the craving. It is difficult to give up.⁷ As the *Madhupiṇḍika Sutta* runs, the following seven kinds of psychological tendencies cause to conflicts.

- i. *Kāmarāga* - the latent tendency to sensual pleasure
- ii. *Paṭigha* - the latent tendency to aversion
- iii. *Diṭṭhi* - the latent tendency to speculative opinion
- iv. *Vicikiccā* - the latent tendency to speculative doubt
- v. *Māna* - the latent tendency to conceit and pride
- vi. *Bhavarāga* - the latent tendency to craving to continue existence
- vii. *Avijjā* - the latent tendency to ignorance

These seven kinds of tendencies lead to taking up rods and bladed weapons, to arguments, quarrels, disputes, and accusations, divisive tale-bearing and false speech. When people eliminate these tendencies through cultivating their minds properly, gradually they can stop taking up rods and bladed weapons, stop arguments, quarrels, disputes, and accusations, divisive tale-bearing and false speech. *The Sutta* further clarifies that the people normally experience the world in two ways, either by attraction and repulsion. They try to have ownership of attractive things and create quarrels and conflicts to take those things. On the other hand they try to put away their dislikes. They are repulsed by dislikes. These also generate the conflicts. Buddhism mainly focuses on the causes of conflict. It does not suggest temporary solutions for conflicts.

The *Mahādukkhakkhandha Sutta* draws attention how conflicts take place due to sensuality (*kamabhōgi*). The Buddha speaks of conflicts in the form of quarrels (*kalaha*), disputes (*viggaha*), and contentions (*vivāda*) at different levels of social interaction. They occur between nations or states as large-scale wars when one head of state dispute with another (*rājānopi rājūhi vivādenti*). They also occur between religious, ethnic groups within the same nation. They occur between members of the same family too. The root cause for conflict is sensuality. The

⁶ *kāmesu loke na hi atthi titti* - *The Majjhimanikāya* -2, *The Raṭṭhapāla Sutta*. p.420

⁷ *Ibid.*

Mahādukkhakkhandha Sutta draws attention how conflicts take place due to sensuality.

“Again, *Bhikku-s*, kings dispute with kings, warriors with warriors, Brahmins with Brahmins, householders with householders, mother disputes with the son, the son with the mother, the father with the son, the son with the father, brother with brother, brother with sister, sister with brother, friend with friend. They dispute, quarrel, and approach each other with hands, clods, sticks, weapons, and even face death or come to deadly unpleasantness. This is the danger of sensuality here, and now, the mass of unpleasantness owing to sensuality”⁸

The Buddha also focused on issues that could lead to arguments and quarrels. There are ten reasons that cause increasing arguments, quarrels, contention, and disputes as listed in the following tables. 1. In the *Vivāda Sutta*⁹

Table 1: Ten reasons for increasing arguments, quarrels, & disputes

Bhikkhus explain non-Dhamma as non-Dhamma	Others say “Dhamma as Dhamma”
They explain non discipline as non-discipline	Others say “discipline as discipline”
They explain what has not been stated and uttered by the <i>Tathāgata</i> as not having been stated and uttered by him	Others say “what has been stated and uttered by the <i>Tathāgata</i> as having been stated and uttered by him.”
They explain what has not been practiced by the <i>Tathāgata</i> as not having been practiced by him	Others say “what has been practiced by the <i>Tathāgata</i> as having been practiced by him.”
They explain what has not been prescribed by the <i>Tathāgata</i> as not having been prescribed by him	Others say “what has been prescribed by the <i>Tathāgata</i> as having been prescribed by him.”

Source: (NDB. *Vivāda Sutta* P.1391-1392)

The distortion of the Buddha's doctrine, the distortion of discipline, and the redefinition of the doctrine were the causes of disputes. Some *Bhikkhus* said, this is non-Dhamma as non- Dhamma, but some other groups said that Dhamma as

⁸ MN-1. Mahādukkhakkhandha Sutta, P.200

⁹ AN-6. Vivāda Sutta P. 138

Dhamma. The *Vepacitti Sutta*¹⁰ describes that acting tolerantly on such a conflict situation is a quality of an individual personality. If individuals do not act wisely on such situations conflicts will be going on. The *Paṭhamasaṅgāma Sutta*¹¹ says that victory generates the maturing of hatred; the defeated lies in sorrow. One who is at peace lies at ease having abandoned both victory and defeat. The Buddha points out the nature of defeating and winning of wars in the *Dutiyasaṅgāma Sutta*. He says that a person may plunder as he pleases, but when others too plunder the plunderer will be plundered. The fool thinks it is his turn until his evil has not matured, but when his evil has matured he comes to distress. The killer encounters a killer in turn. The victor in turn encounters a vanquisher. The abuser encounters an abusing; one who acts with anger encounters one who retorts with anger. Thus with changing tides the plunderer becomes the victim of plunder.¹²

4.2 Buddhist strategies for conflict resolution

Buddhism aims at creating a peaceful society in the sense of the attainment of inner peace and finding the way to peace. Hence, it teaches that human beings are endowed with the ability to resist hatred and violence and to work with others to advance the horizons of peace. Further, the Buddha emphasized the need for a peaceful social environment. It has been pointed out that a conflict-free society contributes to the survival of the human being. In addition, it is a feature of the Buddha's teaching that thoughts in the mind of a person which contributes to conflicts and the person can be changed by changing those thoughts. Respect is one main strategy to resolve conflict. In the *Bhandana Sutta* Buddha has shown ten principles of cordiality that create affection and respect. It is listed in Table 2 below,

Table 2 Ten principles for an affection and respect

Ten principles of cordiality that creates affection and respect
(1) Virtuous behaviors
(2) (He) has learned much
(3) (He) has good friends
(4) (He) is easy to correct

¹⁰ SN- I. Vepacittisutta, pp. 222, 223

¹¹ SN-1. Paṭhamasaṅgāma Sutta, pp. 154,156

¹² SN- I. Dutiyasaṅgāma Sutta P. 157

- (5) (He) is skillful
- (6) (He) loves the Dhamma
- (7) (He) has aroused energy for abandoning unwholesome qualities
- (8) (He) is content with any kind of robe, alms food, lodging, and medicines
- (9) (He) is mindful, possessing supreme mind-fullness
- (10) (He) is wise

Source: (AN-6.p.160-162, NDB.p.1399-1401)

It is clear that a person's qualities (Virtuous behaviors) influence the development of respect and affection. Not only one's behavior but also good friendships, love to the Dhamma, and perfection of skills, learned much are important factors. The main problem with conflict resolution is that it does not respect the views of the other party. The *Sāriputtasīhanāda Sutta*¹³ has explained that how the Buddha resolved the conflict? According to this Sutta, there is a story of Venerable *Sāriputtha* at the end of the *wassāna* program, he went to the Buddha and took permission from the Buddha before leaving the temple. Then, while going to live in another place, another monk complained to the Buddha. What it means is, "When Venerable *Sāriputtha* left, he fell on my body and left without apologizing." The Buddha recalled Venerable *Sāriputtha* The two held together and discussed the issues. Venerable *Sāriputtha* speaks in detail. In the end, the other monk confessed to the Buddha that he had lied. The Buddha warned. The Buddha asked Venerable *Sāriputtha* to forgive him. Venerable *Sāriputtha* apologizes. The misunderstanding is a major factor influencing many conflicts in society. Disagreements eventually lead to a confrontation. This situation is going from the so-called family institution to the social organizations. Reluctance to respect the opinions of another person, personality traits, social status, economic and political power is all factors that contribute to this. Also, the story of this principle shows us some important points in problem solving. At the same time, it is clear that the right leadership is important in resolving conflicts as well.

The Buddha pointed out that the way to build harmony between ethnic is to tolerate the opinions of others, respect the nationality and religion of others. The Buddha also pointed out that patience is the main way to solve conflicts. It has been well proved in the *Punnovāda Sutta* in the dialogue between the Venerable Punna Bhikku and the Buddha. How to Practice patience? Details are described in the table 3.

¹³ AN-5. *Sāriputtasīhanāda Sutta* p.402

Table 3: Dialogue with Punna Bhikkhu:
Patience is the main way to solve conflicts.

Questions asked by Buddha	Punna Bhikkhu's Answers
The people of <i>Sunāparanta</i> are fierce and rough. If they abuse and threaten you, what will you think then?	If the people threaten me, then I shall think: "These people are kind, truly kind as they did not give me a blow with the fist"
"But, Punna, if the people of <i>Sunāparanta</i> do give you a blow with the fist, what will you think then?"	If the people do give me a blow with the fist, then I shall think: "These people are kind as they did not give me a blow with a clod"
"But, Punna, if the people of <i>Sunāparanta</i> do give you a blow with a clod, what will you think then?"	If the people do give me a blow with a clod, then I shall think: "These people are kind as they did not give me a blow with a stick"
"But, Punna, if the people of <i>Sunāparanta</i> do give you a blow with a stick, what will you think then?"	If the people do give me a blow with a stick, then I shall think: "These people are kind as they did not give me a blow with a knife"
"But, Punna, if the people of <i>Sunāparanta</i> do give you a blow with a knife, what will you think then?"	If the people do give me a blow with a knife, then I shall think: These people are kind, truly kind as they have not taken my life with a sharp knife"
"But, Punna, if the people of <i>Sunāparanta</i> do take your life with a sharp knife, what will you think then?"	If the people do take my life with a sharp knife, then I shall think thus: There have been disciples of the Blessed One who, being humiliated and disgusted by the body and by life, sought to have their lives deprived by the knife. But I have had my life deprived by the knife without seeking for it

Source: (MLDB., *Punnovāda Sutta p. 1118*)

The Buddha expressed his admiration for the patience of the Venerable Punna Bhikkhu. The Buddha said; "*Good, good, Punna! Possessing such self-control and peacefulness, you will be able to dwell in the Sunāparanta country. Now, Punna, it*

is time to do as you think fit.”¹⁴ The misunderstanding is a major factor influencing many conflicts in society. Disagreements eventually lead to a confrontation. This situation is going from the so-called family institution to the social organizations. Reluctance to respect the opinions of another person, personality traits, social status, economic and political power is all factors that contribute to this.

In the *Kakacūpama Sutta*, the Buddha describes how we should behave when others blame us. If someone blames us and if we blame him again, there is a conflict. Therefore, the Buddha has explained the steps required to avoid a conflict. The Buddha states that if there is conflicts while you are at home, you should remember (meditate) as follows. “My mind will be unaffected, I shall utter no evil words, I shall abide compassionate for his welfare, with a mind of loving-kindness, without inner hate,” and also, if anyone blows with his hand, with a clod, with a stick, or with a knife in your presence. We have to remember as “my mind will be unaffected, shall abide compassionate for his welfare, with a mind of loving-kindness, without inner hate. Buddha said;

*“If anyone should give you a blow with his hand, with a clod, with a stick, or with a knife, you should abandon any desires and any thoughts based on the household life. And herein you should train thus: My mind will be unaffected, and I shall utter no evil words; I shall abide compassionate for his welfare, with a mind of loving-kindness, without inner hate. That is how you should train, Phagguna”*¹⁵

According to *Kosambiya Sutta*, there was a conflict of opinion among the *kosambi Bhikkhus* over a minor issue. As a result, the monks were divided into two groups and blamed each other. Here, the Buddha preached the following six points for the development of love and virtue among the monks, explaining the consequences of violence to both groups. They are (1) Good acts of the Body, (2) Avoided mistakes in the Word, (3) Avoided mistakes in the mind, (4) Sharing what he gets in his bowl, (5) Good Discipline, (6) By becoming similar to the virtuous.¹⁶ In the *Ambalatthikārāhulowāda Sutta*, the Buddha states that one should research the effects of an action before committing it. The Buddha said “Investigate the situation

¹⁴ MN-3., Punnovāda Sutta p. 548

¹⁵ MN-1., *Kakacūpama Sutta* P. 312

¹⁶ MN-1., *Kosambiya Sutta* Pp. 752-455

before you action” (1) Action with the body should be done after repeated reflection, (2) Action by speech should be done after repeated reflection, and (3) Action by mind should be done after repeated reflection.¹⁷ *Rahula Bhikkhu* was instructed by the Buddha to inquire into the outcome of an action before committing it.

5. Conclusion

In the above analysis, it is clear that the Buddha focused on social and ethnic harmony and has provided encouraging teachings on harmony. Buddhism always speaks of peaceful and harmonious ways which are essential for the whole world including both human society and his environment. According to the details given of the Buddhist perspective of social harmony, we can summarize the following resolutions: Disgusting of violence, Affirmation of friendship, in accords with negotiations, respecting diversity, true understanding of humanity, bad results of using weapons, evaluation of morality, and proper reflection. Buddhism aims at creating a society that is free from violence in any form; where calm and peace prevail apart from conquest and defeat; where there is no persecution of innocent; where hatred is conquered by kindness, and evil by goodness; where enmity, jealousy, ill will and greed do not infect peoples’ minds; where compassion, peace and harmony thrive.

Abbreviations

AN - Aṅguttaranikāya

DN - Dīghanikāya

MN - Majjhimanikāya

SN - Saṃyuttanikāya

Sn – Suttanipāta

NDB – The Numerical Discourse of the Buddha

MIDB – The Middle Length Discourse of the Buddha

¹⁷ MN-2., *Ambalatthikārāhulowāda Sutta*, p.132

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