

The Way to Maintain Equanimity through Cultivating the Noble Eightfold Path

Santhad Chanthathong

International Buddhist Studies College^{1,2}
Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya Thailand
e-mail: santhad_chan@mcu.ac.th.

Received 03/06/2021; Revised 05/09/2021; Accepted 22/12/2021



ABSTRACT

The research objectives were to study the concept of the noble eightfold path and the ten kinds of equanimity (*upekkhā*) in Theravada Buddhism, including their interrelation and the manner in which they support each other. Furthermore, the objective was to propose a method for maintaining equanimity through the cultivation of the noble eightfold path. Seven experts in Buddhism were selected for in-depth interviews. The research instrument for the collection of data is in the form of questionnaires, which also serve as the basis for in-depth interviews. The data were analysed using a content analysis method.

The research findings revealed that the noble eightfold path, which is specifically focused on threefold trainings (*traiśikkhā*), and the ten kinds of equanimity (*upekkhā*) are interrelated and mutually supportive in their overall structure. It can be concluded that the three principal forms of equanimity (*upekkhā*) are significantly interrelated and support the noble eightfold path. These are (1) the six-fold equanimity of an Arahant towards objects of the six senses (*Chalangupekkhā*), (2) equanimity as the last of the four divine abodes (*Brahmavihārubekkhā*), and (3) equanimity as a type of feeling (*Vedanupekkhā*). Conversely, the three principal aspects of the noble eightfold path (1) right effort, (2) right concentration, and (3) right view were found to be significantly interrelated and supportive of equanimity.

The study concludes that maintaining equanimity through the Noble Eightfold Path can be effectively summarized in three dimensions: (1) bodily equanimity achieved by avoiding wrongful actions, (2) verbal equanimity maintained by refraining from false speech, and (3) mental equanimity preserved by steering clear of incorrect thoughts. Future studies could explore the practical application of these findings in different cultural contexts and among

various Buddhist traditions. Additionally, examining how the integration of the Noble Eightfold Path and equanimity influences psychological well-being and daily life practices could provide further insights into their efficacy. Implementing longitudinal studies could also help assess the long-term impact of cultivating equanimity through the Noble Eightfold Path on overall mental health and stability.

Keywords: Noble Eightfold Path; Equanimity (Upekkhā); Sensory Objects (Chalangupekkhā); Four Divine Abodes (Brahmavihārubekkhā); Feeling Equanimity (Vedanupekkhā)

Introduction

According to the Buddhist historical background, Buddhism started in the fourth century B.C.E. with the teachings of Siddhartha Gautama (c. 790-410). Siddhartha was born as a prince into the Sakya tribe in northern India. Despite living in the midst of great luxury, he was able to observe his surroundings carefully. He noticed the universality of birth, aging, diseased, and death. After leaving home to devote himself to spiritual goals, he announced at age 35 that he had seen through this condition and attained Nibbāna.¹

In the first sermon of Buddha or the wheel of truth in motion (Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta), he announced the path led to liberation (Nibbāna). This Sutta talks about an avoiding from the two extremes: (1) the extreme of sensual indulgence (Kāmasukhallikānuyoga) and (2) the extreme of self-mortification (Attakilamathānuyoga). These two extremes would not lead the practitioners to the end of sufferings. Thereupon, he advised the five Ascetics (Pañnavaggīya) into the noble eightfold path as the only path (Ekāyano maggo) for purification of mind by follow to the threefold trainings (ā), moral conduct, concentration, and wisdom. Therefore, it is so clear that the noble eightfold path is a major of Buddha's teachings.

When look backwards to Buddhism in Thailand, basically, the Thai traditional cultures have obviously been based on the Buddhist tradition since the

¹ Irons, Edward A. *Encyclopedia of Buddhism*. Facts on File, 2008.

initial establishment of the real Thai Kingdom. In regard to this, some of them remain practiced even in the present time; meanwhile, some disappeared for many decades ago. For example, the belief in the Law of Kamma being influential from the first Thai Buddhist didactic writing entitled “Tribhumikatha” compiled by the King Lithai of Sukhothai Kingdom; and the most popular Loy Krathong Festival, etc., have been still practiced till the present time.²

However, even though Theravada Buddhism has influenced to Thai people as the way of life for long times. But some Buddhist teaching is till misinterpreted and led to miss-practice. Thereby, it is possible that Buddhism is blamed because Buddhist teachings are misinterpreted. One of them is the concept of equanimity (upekkhā) in accordant with the Most venerable Buddhadasa Bhikkhu, he has been ever summarized as follows:

The concept of equanimity (Upekkhā) in Buddhism is always misunderstood and misinterpreted in Thai society; it is one cause of wrong practicing inescapably. Actually, Dhamma categories in Buddhism should be clearly understood by Buddhists such as the right understanding of equanimity (upekkhā). Moreover, the Buddhists have to cultivate wisdom for eliminating defilements in order to achieve the purification of mind and to attain the end of sufferings, Nibbāna. It is the ultimate aim of Buddhism.³

Thereby, this research article is going to propose the concept of noble eightfold path and ten kinds of equanimity (upekkhā) as well as to analyze their interrelation and supporting together based on Buddhist experts’ view (key-informants), and propose the way to maintain equanimity through cultivating the noble eightfold path in Theravada Buddhism.

Objectives

The research objectives aimed to study the concept of noble eightfold path and ten kinds of equanimity (upekkhā) in Theravada Buddhism including their interrelation and supporting each other, specifically focused on the threefold trainings (ā) in order to propose the way to maintain equanimity through cultivating the noble eightfold path.

Research Methodology

The research methodology can be divided into the step, process, and results as shown in Table 1.

² Kuppako, Decha. “Buddhism in Thai life: Thai model for ASEAN” *Mahachula Academic Journal*. Vol. 3, No. 1 (2016): 138-158.

³ Buddhadasa Bhikkhu. *Path of Periscope*. Bangkok: Dhammasat University, 1997

Table 1: The research methodology

| Step | Process | Results |
|------------------------------|--|---|
| Literature review | To study the concept of noble eightfold path and ten kinds of equanimity (<i>upekkhā</i>) as mentioned in Tipitaka and related Buddhist literatures | Results of Literature review about the concept of noble eightfold path and ten kinds of equanimity (<i>upekkhā</i>) |
| Questionnaire | - Create questionnaires based on results of literature review - Index of Item-Objective Congruence (IOC) is checked and confirmed by three experts. | Interview forms: Semi-structured In-depth interview |
| Interview | Interview with the seven Buddhist experts | Concept of noble eightfold path and equanimity according to Interviewees |
| Content Analysis | To analyze the interrelation between noble eightfold path and ten kinds of equanimity (<i>upekkhā</i>) | Results of Content analysis |
| Confirm accuracy of the data | The results of interview are confirmed by the same interviewees and improve the data follow to their recommendations | Results of improvement the accuracy of data according to Interviewees |
| Analyze and conclude | To analyze (and synthesis) the way to maintain equanimity through cultivating the noble eightfold path | the way to maintain equanimity through cultivating the noble eightfold path |

Data collection

Collecting data from the primary sources of Tipitaka in order to explore the knowledge of the noble eightfold path and ten kinds of equanimity (*upekkhā*) as well as secondary sources of commentaries, sub-commentaries, out of the academic books journal and related Buddhist literatures. Seven Buddhist experts were purposely collected for semi-structured in-depth interview.

Data analysis

The data analysis is selected by content analysis. Two parts of content analysis are as follows: (1) to analyze the concept of both noble eightfold path and ten kinds of equanimity (*upekkhā*) based on the results of literature review; (2) to analyze interrelation together of noble eightfold path and ten kids of equanimity.

Results

Concept of Noble Eightfold Path

The Buddha was residing at the Deer Park⁴, in Isipatana, near Benares. Thereupon the Exalted One addressed the group of five Bhikkhus as follows: There are these two extremes (antā), which should be avoided by one who has renounced (pabbajitena):

1) Indulgence in sensual pleasures (Kāmasukhallikānuyoga) -this is base, vulgar, worldly, ignoble, and profitless; and,

2) Addiction to self-mortification (Attakilamathānuyoga) this is painful, ignoble and profitless. Abandoning both these extremes the Tathāgata has comprehended the Middle Path (MajjhimaPatipadā) which promotes sight (cakkhu) (V. N. Mahathera 1988) and knowledge (ñāna), and which tends to peace (vopasamāya) Subjugation of passions (sambodhāya), higher wisdom (abhiññāya), enlightenment (sombodhāya), and Nibbāna.⁵

In the end of the first sermon, his follower, namely Koṇḍañña has established in the fruition of stream-entry (Sotāpanna) and he immediately renamed by Buddha 'Annā Koṇḍañña' (Annā=understood); because he indeed understood the four noble truths in accordant by the Buddha taught. Nevertheless, the doctrine mentioned that 'the most venerable Annā Koṇḍañña attains to the threefold knowledge (Three Vijjā) and specialized in the penetration of the minds of others (Cetopariyāyāna) and became an Arahant Bhikkhu later.⁶

The briefly meaning and specific definition of the noble eightfold path are customarily separated into eight interrelated segments:

1) Right View--A correct appreciation of the possibility of things, especially the Four Noble Truths; suffering, the cause of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the way leads to cessation of suffering;

2) Right Intention--Avoiding examinations of association, despise, and damaging objective; A commitment to cultivate the right attitudes;

3) Right Speech--Abstaining from verbal bad behaviors, for instance, lying, troublesome talk, unforgiving talk, and senseless talk; speaking truthfully, avoiding slander, gossip and abusive speech;

4) Right Action--Abstaining from physical bad behaviors, for instance, executing, taking, and sexual appalling conduct. Behaving peacefully and

⁴ Ven Narada Thera. *Buddha and His Teachings, The*. Pariyatti, 2017.

⁵ Bannaraji, Banjob, and Sanu Mahatthanadull. "An Analytical Study of the Four Noble Truths in Theravāda Buddhism." *The Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Universities* 11, no. 1 (2018): 147-160.

⁶ Ibid,

harmoniously; refraining from stealing, killing and overindulgence in sensual pleasure;

5) Right Livelihood--Maintaining a key separation from trades that clearly or roundaboutly hurt others, for instance, offering slaves, weapons, animals for butcher, intoxicants, or lethal substances. Avoiding making a living in ways that cause harm, such as exploiting people or killing animals, or trading in intoxicants or weapons;

6) Right Effort--Deserting negative points of view that have recently developed, deflecting negative communicates that still cannot rise, and overseeing positive communicates that have quite recently risen. Cultivating positive states of mind; freeing oneself from evil and unwholesome states and preventing them arising in future;

7) Right Mindfulness--Attention to body, feelings, thought, and ponders (the constituents of the present world). Developing awareness of the body, sensations, feelings and states of mind; and

8) Right Concentration--Resolve, developing the mental focus necessary for this awareness.

Concept of Threefold Training (ā)

The Threefold trainings or the ā is the cornerstone doctrine of Buddhism. It is derived as- Trai+Sikkha=ā, which means three Lessons. In Anguttra Nikkya Lord Buddha utters--Well then, monk, train in these three trainings: the higher virtue, the higher mind and the higher wisdom. When you train thus you will abandon lust, hatred, and delusion. With their abandoning you will not do anything unwholesome or resort to anything evil.

It generally refers to three Higher Trainings of Buddhism, The Training which the Buddha's disciples has to undergo, namely—

- 1) Adhisīla-Sikkhā Higher Training of Morality (Sila)
- 2) Adhicitta-Sikkhā Higher Training of Concentration (Samadhi)
- 3) Adhipaññā-Sikkha Higher Training of Wisdom (Panna).⁷

According to the three educational processes: Pariyatti (Doctrinal), Patipatti (practical) and Pativēdha (Relizable), each process has all three aspects of ā. Therefore, ā can be divided into three main levels. To consider the content of education at Pariyatti level, the Buddha's lessons as collected in Tripitaka are used as learning materials for theoretical education

⁷ Chansomsak, Sant, and Brenda Vale. "The Buddhist approach to education: An alternative approach for sustainable education." *Asia Pacific Journal of Education*. Vol. 28, No. 1 (2008): 35-50.; Johnson, Ian. "The application of Buddhist principles to lifelong learning." *International Journal of Lifelong Education*. Vol. 21, No. 2 (2002): 99-114.

Sīla

It is necessary to know the meaning of Sīla as it is to the key word in understanding giving. Sīla is the rule of morality.⁸ in the teaching of the Buddha as Nyanatiloka says: “Sīla or Morality, Virtue, is a mode of mind and volition (cetanā) manifested in speech or bodily action (Kamma). It is the foundation of the whole Buddhist practice.”⁹ Moreover, Sīla plays an important role in the Buddhism as the tool for getting rid of defilements which are the cause of all suffering. Therefore, if the mind is free from defilements, it will be easy to develop the mind.¹⁰

Samādhi

In generally speaking, the word samādhi rendered as ‘concentration’. Samādhi derives from the prefixed verbal root samādhā, meaning to collect or to bring together, thus suggesting the concentration or unification of the mind. The word samādhi is almost interchangeable with the word samatha, “serenity”, though the latter comes from a different root, sam, (Skt.śam), meaning “to become calm.”¹¹ The Buddha said that

Monks, these two conditions have part in knowledge. What two? Calm and Introspection. If cultivated, what profit does calm attain? The mind is cultivated. What profit results from a cultivated mind? All lust abandoned. Monks, if introspection be cultivated, what profit does it attain? Insight is cultivated. If insight be cultivated, what profit does attain? All ignorance is abandoned.”¹²

As a consequence, samādhi still has a broader scope than jhāna, since it includes not only the Jhānas themselves but also the two preparatory degrees of concentration leading up to them. Furthermore, samādhi also covert a still different type of concentration called “momentary concentration”

⁸ Phra Brahmagunabhorn (P.A. Payutto). *Buddhadhamma: The laws of nature and their benefits to life*. Buddhaddhamma Foundation, 2017.

⁹ Nanamoli Bhikkhu and Bhadantacariya Buddhaghosa. “Visuddhimagga: The path of purification.” (2003): 950.

¹⁰ Ven. San Van Xien. “A study of the concept of perfections in Theravada Buddhism.” PhD diss., Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, 2018.

¹¹ Gunaratana, Henepola. *A critical analysis of the Jhanas in Theravada Buddhist meditation*. American University, 1980.

¹² D.Litt., Woodward F.L. and Mrs. Rhys Davids. 1995. *Gradual Sayings (Aṅguttara Nikāya)*, vol. I. Oxford: PTS

(khanikasamādhi), the mobile mental stabilization produced in the course of insight-contemplation on the passing flow of phenomena.

Paññā

The term Paññā refers to wisdom, knowledge, and understanding. It contained into three groups, namely; (1) Cintāmayapaññā: wisdom resulting from reflection; knowledge that is thought out; (2) Sutamayapaññā: wisdom resulting from study; knowledge that is learned from others; and (3) Bhāvanāmayapaññā: wisdom resulting from mental development; knowledge that is gained by development or practice.¹³

In conclusion, it is so clear that noble eightfold path can be divided to be threefold trainings or Traisikkhā as follows: (1) the right view and the right intention separated to be group of Wisdom (Paññā); (2) the right speech, the right action and the right livelihood separated to be group of Ethical Conduct (Sīla); and (3) the right effort, the right mindfulness and the right concentration are separated to be group of concentration (Samādhi) respectively.

Concept of Equanimity (Upekkhā)

In generally speaking, the term equanimity or upekkhā is defined as “hedonic neutrality or indifference,” the “zero point between joy and sorrow,” and “disinterestedness, neutral feeling, equanimity.” In Buddhism, equanimity (upekkhā) is most typically recognized as one of the brahma-vihāras.¹⁴ For meditators, equanimity is commonly known as the faculty most prominent when experiencing the fourth jhāna. As one of the brahma-vihāras, upekkhā is defined in the Visuddhimagga as “promoting the aspect of neutrality towards beings.”¹⁵

How the Definition of Upekkhā as Mentioned in the Doctrines

Basically, the term upekkhā consisted of two words; upa (prefix) means closely up or carefully and ikkha (root) means considering, seeing or looking at. The verb form is ikkhati upekkhati (careful consideration). It means looking at (evidence) by recognizing and careful consideration. The gerund form is Upekkhā (careful consideration).¹⁶

¹³ Phra Brahmagunabhorn. *Dictionary of Buddhism*. 34 ed. Bangkok: Foundation for peace education Phra Brahmagunabhorn (P.A.Payutto), 2016.

¹⁴ Murphy, Anne. “The Ten Kinds of Equanimity (Upekkhā)”. *Colombo Arts Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities*, Volume II, (Issue 2, 2017): 18-30.

¹⁵ Ibid,

¹⁶ Klangtepdarunānūsitta, Davi Dhamadhaj. *Dhātutīpikā: Pali-Thai dictionary*. Bangkok: Mahāmakut Buddhist University Printing, 1997.

In otherwhile, the term ‘upekkhā’ is always used ‘upekkhāsahagatam’, means the consciousness has accompanied by equanimity.¹⁷ Although in the Visuddhimagga, the path of purities, mentioned the term upekkhā that it looks on at (upekkhati), abandoning such interestedness as thinking “May they be free from enmity” and having recourse to neutrality, thus it is equanimity (upekkhā). Meanwhile, in Pali-Thai dictionary defines the meaning and characteristics of it as follows: (1) The natural state considered for all animals moderately without loving or hatred, and worries avoiding towards loving kindness, compassion and sympathetic joy such as the blessing words ‘may all being no fear’ and maintained the equality of mind, it is called equanimity, and (2) The closely sensation in the middle of two feelings, joy faculty and grief faculty, it is called Upekkhā.¹⁸ In addition, the briefly essentials of equanimity can summarize as follows:

- 1) Characteristics of upekkhā is equal to all beings;
- 2) The work of upekkhā is seeing all beings as equal;
- 3) Not to hate and without love in all animals is appearance duty of the person who practices the equanimity;
- 4) Seeing with wisdom that all beings have their own kamma such as, “All beings will be happy or suffering, or not deteriorating from his possessions; everything is determined by kamma”. This wisdom is the near causes of equanimity;
- 5) To avoid the hatred and without love is the integrity of the equanimity;
- 6) The appearance of ignorant equality based on the lust, is the losing of equanimity;
- 7) The ignorance is the near enemy of equanimity); and
- 8) The sensuality and hatred are the far enemy of equanimity.¹⁹

All above, it called the eight significances and basically virtues of equanimity. The previously benefit of equanimity is equality of mind while the internal and external six senses-door are contacted with. Here, the wisdom (paññā) is very requirable for monitoring and eliminating passions (kilesa) while they are contacting with. The way to cultivate wisdom is the development of mindfulness (Sati) and clear comprehension (Sampajañña). Therefore, it is so clear that; the meaning of equanimity (upekkhā) is a synonymous word of the term ‘wisdom (paññā)’. Equanimity is the state of mind that considers all beings are consistent with kamma.

¹⁷ Venerable Phrathepkittipannākuna, Kittivuddho Bikkhu. The Ultimate Realities (Consciousness, Mental formation, Materiality and Nibbhāna). 5. Bangkok: Sahadhammika Company Limited Printing, 2005.

¹⁸ Munindho, Venerable Phramaha Somphaung. Abhidhāvannā Buddhist Scripture. Bangkok: Dhammasabhā Printing, 1999.

¹⁹ Buddhaghosa. *Visuddhimagga (The Path of Purification)* (Vism I 350. Translated by Ñānamoli (Tr.). W.A.: Buddhist Publication Society, 2013.

Absolutely, the term *upekkhā* by itself can be separated into two meanings: (1) *Aññāṇupekkhā* (*Aññāṇa*+*upekkhā*) equanimity based on ignorance (*Avijjā*); and (2) *Nāṇupekkhā* equanimity based on wisdom (*Paññā*). However, the term *upekkhā* is declared in Tipitaka by Buddha and his followers as well as appeared in documentary and related Buddhist doctrines. Thereupon, the Most Venerable Buddhaghosa has concluded it from Tipitaka and separated to be ten kinds of equanimity including gave definitions in *Visuddhimagga* and explained the way to practice.

Discussions and Recommendations

Each Kind of Equanimity (*upekkhā*) Interrelates and Supports to Noble Eightfold Path

Table 2: Significantly interrelation and supporting of equanimity (*upekkhā*) towards the noble eightfold path

| Ten Kinds of Equanimity (<i>Upekkhā</i>) | Noble Eightfold Path | | | | | | | | Scores | Rankings |
|---|----------------------|---|------|---|---|---------|---|---|--------|----------|
| | Paññā | | Sīla | | | Samādhi | | | | |
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | | |
| Chalangupekkhā | 3 | 2 | | 1 | 1 | | 3 | | 187 | 1 |
| Brahmavihārupekkhā | 2 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | 129 | |
| Bojjhangupekkhā | | | | | | 3 | | | 29 | |
| Viriyupekkhā | | | | | | 1 | | | 46 | |
| Sanghārupekkhā | | | | | | | 2 | 1 | 83 | |
| Vēdanupekkhā | | | 2 | 3 | 3 | 2 | 1 | | 178 | 2 |
| Vipassanupekkhā | 1 | | | | | | | | 46 | |
| Tattramajjhātupekkhā | | | | | | | | 3 | 29 | |
| Jhānupekkhā | | 3 | | | | | | | 29 | |
| Parisuddhupekkhā | | | 3 | 2 | 2 | | | 2 | 140 | 3 |

The Noble Eightfold Path

1 = Right View

2 = Right Intention

3 = Right Speech

4 = Right Action

5 = Right Livelihood

6 = Right Effort

7 = Right Mindfulness

8 = Right Concentration

According to the table 11, it can be explained by two sides, portrait and landscape. To explain by portrait side of the Table can be considered by top three

of equanimity (Upekkhā) as interrelate and support to the noble eightfold path as follows;

Explanation by Portrait of the table

Group of Paññā

(1) The Right View

These are top three of equanimity (upekkhā) as significantly interrelate and support to the right view as follows—The 1st ranking is equanimity as a result of the development of insight (Vipassanupekkhā). The 2nd ranking is equanimity as the last of the four divine abodes (Brahmavihārubekkhā). The 3rd ranking is the six-fold equanimity of an Arahant towards objects of the six senses (Chalangupekkhā).

(2) The Right Intention

These are top three of equanimity (upekkhā) as significantly interrelate and support to the right intention as follows— The 1st ranking is equanimity as the last of the four divine abodes (Brahmavihārubekkhā). The 2nd ranking is the six-fold equanimity of an Arahant towards objects of the six senses (Chalangupekkhā). The 3rd ranking is equanimity experienced during the third Jhāna (Jhānupekkhā).

Group of Sīla

(3) The Right Speech

These are top three of equanimity (upekkhā) as significantly interrelate and support to the right speech as follows—The 1st ranking is equanimity as the last of the four divine abodes (Brahmavihārubekkhā). The 2nd ranking is equanimity as a type of feeling (Vedanupekkhā). The 3rd ranking is the purified equanimity experienced during the fourth Jhāna (Parisuddhupekkhā).

(4) The Right Action

These are top three of equanimity (upekkhā) as significantly interrelate and support to the right action as follows—The 1st ranking is the six-fold equanimity of an Arahant towards objects of the six senses (Chalangupekkhā). The 2nd ranking is the purified equanimity experienced during the fourth Jhāna (Parisuddhupekkhā). The 3rd ranking is equanimity as a type of feeling (Vedanupekkhā).

(5) The Right Livelihood

These are top three of equanimity (*upekkhā*) as significantly interrelate and support to the right livelihood as follows—The 1st ranking is the six-fold equanimity of an Arahant towards objects of the six senses (*Chalangupekkhā*). The 2nd ranking is the purified equanimity experienced during the fourth Jhāna (*Parisuddhupekkhā*). The 3rd ranking is equanimity as a type of feeling (*Vedanupekkhā*).

Group of Sīla

(6) The Right Effort

The 1st ranking is equanimity of energy in the sense of a balance between striving and laxity (*Viriyupekkhā*). The 2nd ranking is equanimity as a type of feeling (*Vedanupekkhā*). The 3rd ranking is equanimity as the last of the seven factors of awakening (*Bojjhangupekkhā*).

(7) The Right Mindfulness

The 1st ranking is equanimity as a type of feeling (*Vedanupekkhā*). The 2nd ranking is equanimity as a result of progress in meditation (*Sanghārupekkhā*). The 3rd ranking is the six-fold equanimity of an Arahant towards objects of the six senses (*Chalangupekkhā*).

(8) The Right Concentration

The 1st ranking is equanimity as a result of progress in meditation (*Sanghārupekkhā*). The 2nd ranking is the purified equanimity experienced during the fourth Jhāna (*Parisuddhupekkhā*). The 3rd ranking is equanimity in the sense of balance of mental factors (*Tatramajjhatsupekkhā*).

Explanation by Landscape of the table

The *Chalangupekkhā* interrelates and supports to noble eightfold path as follows; (Group of Paññā) it interrelates and supports to the right view in the 3rd ranking and the 2nd ranking for the right intention. (Group of Sīla) it significantly interrelates and supports to the right action and the right livelihood in the 1st ranking. And (Group of Samādhi) it interrelates and supports to the right mindfulness in the 3rd ranking.

The *Brahmavihārupekkhā* interrelates and supports to noble eightfold path as follows: (Group of Paññā) it significantly interrelates and supports to the right view in the 2nd ranking, and the right intention in the 1st ranking. Meanwhile,

(Group of Sīla) it only interrelates and supports to the right speech in the 1st ranking. The Bojjhangupekkhā only interrelates and supports to the right effort (Group of Samādhi) in the 3rd ranking.

The *Viriyupekkhā* only significantly interrelates and supports to the right effort (Group of Samādhi) in the 1st ranking. The *Sanghārupekkhā* interrelates and supports to the right mindfulness (Group of Samādhi) in the 2nd ranking. It significantly supports to the right concentration the 1st ranking. The *Vēdanupekkhā* interrelates and supports to the right speech in the 2nd ranking and the right action and the right livelihood in the 3rd ranking (Group of Sīla). Meanwhile, it significantly interrelates and supports to the right effort in the 2nd ranking and the right mindfulness in the 1st ranking (Group of Samādhi). The *Vipassanupekkhā* only significantly interrelates and supports to the right view (Group of Paññā) in the 1st ranking. The *Tatramajjhātupekkhā* only interrelates and supports to the right concentration (Group of Samādhi) in the 3rd ranking. The *Jhānupekkhā* only interrelates and supports to the right intention (Group of Paññā) in the 3rd ranking. The *Parisuddhupekkhā* interrelates and supports to right speech in the 3rd ranking (Group of Paññā). Moreover, it supports to right action and the right livelihood in the 2nd ranking (Group of Sīla). It also supports to the right concentration in the 2nd ranking (Group of Samādhi).

The Noble Eightfold Path Interrelates and Supports to Equanimity (*upekkhā*)

According to the table 3, it can be summarized by two sides of the table, portrait and landscape, if we observe follow to portrait of the table 3, we can see top three of noble eightfold path interrelates and supports to each kind of equanimity (*upekkhā*).

All of these purposely focused on the threefold trainings. Its details are as follows;

Table 3 Significantly interrelation and supporting of noble eightfold path towards equanimity (*upekkhā*)

| Noble Eightfold Path | | Ten Kinds of Equanimity (<i>Upekkhā</i>) | | | | | | | | | | Weight Scores | Ranking s |
|----------------------|---------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|------------------|--------------|
| | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | | |
| Paññā | Right View | | | 3 | 2 | | | 1 | 2 | | | 149 | |
| | Right Intention | | 1 | | | 2 | | 3 | | | | 112 | |
| Sīla | Right Speech | | 2 | | 3 | | 1 | | | | | 112 | |
| | Right Action | 3 | | | | | 3 | | | | | 58 | |
| | Right Livelihood | 1 | 3 | | | | 2 | | | | 3 | 141 | |
| Samādhi | Right Effort | | | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | | 2 | 1 | 221 | 1 |
| | Right Mindfulness | 2 | | 2 | | | | 2 | 3 | 3 | | 169 | 2 |
| | Right Concentration | | | | | 3 | | | 1 | 1 | 2 | 158 | 3 |

Explanation by portrait of the table

Among ten kinds of equanimity (*upekkhā*), each kind of them interrelates and supports to noble eightfold path respectively as follows:

(1) the *Chalangupekkhā* interrelates and supports to the right livelihood in the 1st ranking, the right mindfulness in the 2nd ranking and the right action in the 3rd ranking respectively.

(2) the *Brahmavihārupekkhā* interrelates and supports to the right intention in the 1st ranking, the right speech in the 2nd ranking and the right livelihood in the 3rd ranking respectively.

(3) the *Bojjhangupekkhā* interrelates and supports to the right effort in the 1st ranking, the right mindfulness in the 2nd ranking and the right view in the 3rd ranking.

(4) the *Viriyupekkhā* interrelates and supports to the right effort in the 1st ranking, the right view in the 2nd ranking and the right speech in the 3rd ranking respectively.

(5) the *Sanghārupekkhā* interrelates and supports to the right effort in the 1st ranking, the right intention in the 2nd ranking and the right concentration in the 3rd ranking respectively.

(6) the *Vēdanupekkhā* interrelates and supports to the right speech in the 1st ranking, the right livelihood in the 2nd ranking and the right action in the 3rd ranking respectively.

(7) the *Vipassanupekkhā* interrelates and supports to the right view in the 1st ranking, the right mindfulness in the 2nd ranking and the right intention in the 3rd ranking respectively.

(8) the *Tattramajjhatsupekkhā* interrelates and supports to the right concentration in the 1st ranking, the right view in the 2nd ranking and the right mindfulness in the 3rd ranking respectively.

(9) the *Jhānupekkhā* interrelates and supports to the right concentration in the 1st ranking, the right effort in the 2nd ranking and the right mindfulness in the 3rd ranking respectively.

10) the *Parisuddhupekkhā* interrelates and supports to the right effort in the 1st ranking, the right concentration in the 2nd ranking and the right livelihood in the 3rd ranking respectively.

Explanation by Landscape of the table

In the same way, if we observe follow to landscape of the table, the number 1, 2 and 3 meant weight scores ranking of noble eightfold path towards as significant interrelate and support to each kind of equanimity (*upekkhā*). All of these can be summarized into threefold trainings as follows:

Group of Paññā

Among all factors of noble eightfold path, the right view and the right intention are concluded into group of wisdom (*Paññā*) in group of threefold trainings (*ā*). Their interrelation and supporting to equanimity (*upekkhā*) can be summarized as follows:

The right view specifically interrelates and supports to the *Vipassanupekkhā* in the 1st ranking. It also supports to the *Viriyupekkhā* and the *Tattramajjhatsupekkhā* in the 2nd ranking and specifically interrelates and supports to the *Bojjhangupekkhā* in the 3rd ranking. The right intention specifically interrelates and supports to the *Brahmavihārupekkhā* in the 1st ranking. It also supports to the *Sanghārupekkhā* in the 2nd ranking and specifically interrelates and supports to the *Vipassanupekkhā* in the 3rd ranking.

Group of Sīla

Among all factors of noble eightfold path, the right speech, the right action and the right livelihood are concluded into group of moral conduct (*sīla*). Their interrelation and supporting to equanimity (*upekkhā*) can be summarized as follows:

The right speech specifically interrelates and supports to the Vēdanupekkhā in the 1st ranking. It also significant supports to the Brahmavihārupekkhā in the 2nd ranking and specifically interrelates and supports to the Viriyupekkhā in the 3rd ranking. The right action specifically interrelates and supports to the Chalangupekkhā and the Vēdanupekkhā in the 3th ranking. The right livelihood specifically interrelates and supports to the Chalangupekkhā in the 1st ranking. It also specific supports to the Vēdanupekkhā in the 2nd ranking and supports to the Brahmavihārupekkhā and the Parisuddhupekkhā in the 3rd ranking.

Group of Samādhi

According to the noble eightfold path, the right effort, the right mindfulness and the right concentration are concluded into group of concentration (samādhi). Their interrelation and supporting to equanimity (upekkhā) can be summarized as follows:

The right effort specifically interrelates and supports to four kinds of equanimity, Bojjhangupekkhā, Viriyupekkhā, Sanghārupekkhā and Parisuddhupekkhā the 1st ranking. Meanwhile, the right view specifically interrelates and supports to the Jhānupekkhā in the 2nd ranking.

The right mindfulness specifically interrelates and supports to the Chalangupekkhā, the Bojjhangupekkhā and the Vipassanupekkhā in the 2nd ranking. Meanwhile, it also specifically interrelates and supports to the Tattramajjhātupekkhā and the Jhānupekkhā in the 3rd ranking.

The Right Concentration specifically interrelates and supports to the Sanghārupekkhā and the Tattramajjhātupekkhā in the 1st ranking. Meanwhile, it also specifically interrelates and supports to the Jhānupekkhā in the 2nd ranking and in the 3rd of the Parisuddhupekkhā

Conclusion

To summarize, the specific characteristic of equanimity is cultivation of conscious substantiable value; in which a state of mind can maintain the equality of pleasant and unpleasant feeling, whenever the phenomena of senses-contacting has been appearing. At this time, the real equality determined by the law of kamma; because the mind has perfection in itself as well known the balances of consciousness. In briefly conclusion, the concept of noble eightfold path (specifically focused on threefold training) and concept of equanimity (upekkhā) including their interrelation and supporting each other, as mentioned by Buddhist literatures and Buddhist experts' view, can be remarkable summarized for

guideline lead to cultivating the noble eightfold path in three dimensions; (1) Bodily Action: to abstain from taking life; to abstain from taking what is not given; and to abstain from sensuous misconduct; (2) Verbal Action: to abstain from false speech, malicious speech, harsh speech, gossip and (3) Mental Action: to abstain from covetousness, ill will, wrong view. It is basically practicing for cultivating the path leading to the end of sufferings in Buddhism.

References

- Bannaruji, Banjob, and Sanu Mahatthanadull. "An Analytical Study of the Four Noble Truths in Theravāda Buddhism." *The Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Universities* 11, no. 1 (2018): 147-160.
- Buddhadasa Bhikkhu. *Path of Periscope*. Bangkok: Dhammasat University, 1997
- Buddhaghosa. *Visuddhimagga (The Path of Purification)* (Vism I 350. Translated by Ñānamoli (Tr.). W.A.: Buddhist Publication Society, 2013.
- Chansomsak, Sant, and Brenda Vale. "The Buddhist approach to education: An alternative approach for sustainable education." *Asia Pacific Journal of Education*. Vol. 28, No. 1 (2008): 35-50.
- D.Litt., Woodward F.L. and Mrs. Rhys Davids. 1995. *Gradual Sayings (Aṅguttara Nikāya)*, vol. I. Oxford: PTS
- Gunaratana, Henepola. *A critical analysis of the Jhanas in Theravada Buddhist meditation*. American University, 1980.
- Irons, Edward A. *Encyclopedia of Buddhism. Facts on File*, 2008.
- Johnson, Ian. "The application of Buddhist principles to lifelong learning." *International Journal of Lifelong Education*. Vol. 21, No. 2 (2002): 99-114
- Klangtepdarunānūsitta, Davi Dhamadhaj. *Dhātutīpikā: Pali-Thai dictionary*. Bangkok: Mahāmakut Buddhist University Printing, 1997.
- Kuppako, Decha. "*Buddhism in Thai life: Thai model for ASEAN*" *Mahachula Academic Journal*. Vol. 3, No. 1 (2016): 138-158.
- Munindho, Venerable Phramaha Somphaung. *Abhidhāvannā Buddhist Scripture*. Bangkok: Dhammasabhā Printing, 1999.
- Murphy, Anne. "The Ten Kinds of Equanimity (Upekkhā)". *ColomboArts Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities*, Volume II. (Issue 2, 2017): 18-30.
- Nanamoli Bhikkhu, and Bhadantacariya Buddhaghosa. "Visuddhimagga: The path of purification." (2003): 950.
- Phra Brahmagunabhorn (P.A. Payutto). *Buddhadhamma Expanded Volume*. Bangkok: Sahadhammik Press, 2016.

- Phra Brahmagunabhorn. *Dictionary of Buddhism*. 34 ed. Bangkok: Foundation for peace education Phra Brahmagunabhorn (P.A.Payutto), 2016.
- Ven Narada Thara. *Buddha and His Teachings*. The. Pariyatti, 2017.
- Ven. San Van Xien. “A study of the concept of perfections in Theravada Buddhism” PhD diss., Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University. 2018.
- Venerable Phratepkittipannākuna, Kittivuddho Bikkhu. *The Ultimate Realities (Consciousness, Mental formation, Materiality and Nibbhāna)*. Bangkok: Sahadhammika Company Limited Printing, 2005.