
Proposing a Peacebuilding Model for Multicultural Couples through Buddhist Peaceful Means in Contemporary Myanmar

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Abstract

This study proposes a Buddhist peacebuilding model for multicultural couples in contemporary Myanmar. It aims to: (1) investigate the concepts, problem situations, and impacts of multicultural couples and peacebuilding in contemporary Myanmar; (2) examine Buddhist peaceful means relevant to peacebuilding among multicultural couples; and (3) propose a peacebuilding model for multicultural couples based on Buddhist peaceful means. The study employed a qualitative documentary research method. Data were collected from primary sources, including the Pāli Canon, commentaries, and Buddhist texts, together with secondary sources such as academic books, journal articles, legal documents, research studies, and reports related to multicultural marriage, interfaith relationships, Myanmar society, and Buddhist peacebuilding. The collected data were analyzed and synthesized to develop a conceptual model for preventing and resolving conflicts among multicultural couples.

The findings reveal that multicultural couples in Myanmar commonly face challenges related to coerced religious conversion, identity loss, cultural misunderstanding, legal complexity, family pressure, and social prejudice. These challenges may affect marital harmony, family relationships, children's identity formation, and wider social cohesion. The study further finds that Buddhist peaceful means provide an ethical and relational foundation for addressing these problems. Key principles include the Five Precepts, shared responsibility, non-violence, non-anger, non-conceit, open-mindedness, open communication, mutual respect, and acceptance.

These findings lead the study to propose the PR-Based Peacebuilding Model, consisting of two interrelated strategies: Prevention and Reconciliation. The prevention strategy emphasizes ethical conduct, mutual responsibility, non-violence, and non-anger as short-term approaches to prevent conflict escalation. The reconciliation strategy emphasizes non-conceit, open-mindedness, open communication, mutual respect, and acceptance as long-term approaches to restoring trust and harmony. The study contributes to Buddhist peace studies by offering a culturally grounded framework for strengthening peaceful coexistence among multicultural couples in Myanmar and similar pluralistic societies.

Keywords: Peacebuilding; Multicultural Couples; Buddhist Peaceful Means; Prevention and Reconciliation; Interfaith Marriage

Introduction

Marriage is a fundamental social relationship through which individuals form families, construct shared identities, and participate in wider community life. In many societies, marriage is not only a private relationship between two individuals but also a social institution shaped by religion, culture, ethnicity, law, family expectations, and communal values. When partners share similar cultural and religious backgrounds, the negotiation of marital life may be relatively less complex. However, multicultural couples often encounter additional challenges because they must manage differences in religious beliefs, ethnic identities, cultural practices, family obligations, and social recognition. These challenges can affect communication, trust, children's identity formation, family harmony, and wider social cohesion.

Myanmar provides an important context for studying multicultural couples because of its ethnic, religious, and cultural diversity. The country is commonly described as having more than 135 ethnic groups and several major religious traditions, including Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, and indigenous belief systems (Minority Rights Group, n.d.; Department of Population, Ministry of Labor, Immigration and Population, 2016). Although this diversity can enrich social life, it can also create tension when marriage occurs across religious, ethnic, or cultural boundaries. Previous studies and reports indicate that multicultural couples in Myanmar may face challenges related to religious conversion, ethnic identity loss, cultural misunderstandings, family resistance, legal complexities, and community prejudice (Su Myat Mon, n.d.; Nyein Su Wai Kyaw Soe, 2017; Fishbein, 2019).

In interfaith and interethnic marriages, religious identity and cultural belonging often become sensitive issues. One partner may be expected to convert, follow the religious practices of the other partner's family, or raise children according to a particular religious or ethnic identity. Such expectations may create pressure, emotional conflict, and a sense of identity loss. In addition, differences in ritual practice, dietary customs, inheritance expectations, gender roles, and family law may intensify misunderstanding between couples and their extended families (Aye Kyaw, 2000; Ye Mon, 2019). Therefore, peacebuilding among multicultural couples requires more than affection or personal

commitment. It requires ethical principles, mutual understanding, respectful communication, and practical methods for preventing and resolving conflict.

Buddhist teachings offer valuable resources for addressing these challenges. Buddhism generally regards marriage as a social and personal responsibility rather than a compulsory religious sacrament. It emphasizes ethical conduct, non-harm, patience, compassion, truthfulness, mutual respect, and wise communication as foundations for harmonious relationships. Buddhist narratives, such as those related to Visākhā, Uttarā Upāsikā, and Nandiya, also illustrate the challenges of religious difference within family life and the importance of patience, wisdom, and mutual respect (Burlingame, 1921). Furthermore, Buddhist peaceful means such as the Five Precepts, shared responsibility, non-violence, non-anger, non-conceit, open-mindedness, right speech, respect, and acceptance can provide a practical framework for fostering peace in multicultural marriages.

Although several studies discuss mixed marriages, interfaith relationships, and family law in Myanmar, limited research has systematically developed a Buddhist peacebuilding model for multicultural couples. To address this gap, this study investigates the problem situations and impacts of multicultural couples in contemporary Myanmar, examines Buddhist peaceful means relevant to marital peacebuilding, and proposes a PR-Based Peacebuilding Model consisting of two interrelated strategies: Prevention and Reconciliation. The model aims to offer a Buddhist ethical and relational framework to help multicultural couples prevent conflict, reconcile differences, and cultivate peaceful coexistence within the family and society.

Research Objectives

1. To investigate the concepts, problem situations, and impacts of multicultural couples and peacebuilding in contemporary Myanmar.
2. To study the concepts and principles of Buddhist peaceful means for peacebuilding in multicultural couples.
3. To propose a peacebuilding model for multicultural couples through Buddhist peaceful means in contemporary Myanmar.

Literature Review

The literature relevant to this study was reviewed under three interrelated themes: multicultural couples and marriage challenges in Myanmar, Buddhist

perspectives on marriage and family life, and Buddhist peaceful means for peacebuilding. Together, these studies provide the social context, conceptual foundation, and ethical principles for developing a Buddhist peacebuilding model for multicultural couples in contemporary Myanmar.

Myanmar is characterized by ethnic, cultural, and religious diversity. The country is commonly described as having more than 135 ethnic groups and several major religious traditions, including Buddhism, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, and indigenous beliefs (Minority Rights Group, n.d.; Department of Population, Ministry of Labor, Immigration and Population, 2016). This diversity enriches social life but may also create challenges when individuals from different ethnic, cultural, or religious backgrounds enter marriage. Historical studies of marriage and gender in Burma show that intermarriage across ethnic, religious, and racial boundaries has long been shaped by colonial modernity, social hierarchy, and changing ideas of identity. Ikeya (2011a) explains that religion, race, and intermarriage were closely connected in colonial Burma, particularly regarding foreign men and Burmese women. Ikeya (2011b) further shows how women, colonialism, and modernity shaped social expectations in Burmese society.

Previous studies and reports indicate that multicultural marriages in Myanmar often involve coerced religious conversion, identity loss, cultural misunderstanding, family resistance, social prejudice, and legal complexity (San Hla Tin & Aung Myat Thu, n.d.; Su Myat Mon, n.d.; Nyein Su Wai Kyaw Soe, 2017). Su Myat Mon (n.d.) notes that many ethnic communities emphasize the preservation of cultural and religious identity through endogamous marriage, while Nyein Su Wai Kyaw Soe (2017) illustrates the practical and emotional difficulties that can arise in marriage across ethnic or religious lines. Fishbein (2019) also highlights the social sensitivity surrounding Buddhist, Christian, and Muslim relationships in Myanmar.

Buddhist perspectives on marriage emphasize ethical conduct, mutual responsibility, respect, patience, and harmonious family life rather than marriage as a compulsory religious sacrament. Dhammika (n.d.) explains that Buddhist teachings on marriage focus on affection, companionship, moral responsibility, and mutual care. The Sigālovāda Sutta, translated by Walshe (1995), presents reciprocal duties between husband and wife, including respect, faithfulness, household responsibility, and mutual support. Buddhist narratives concerning figures such as Visākhā and Uttarā Upāsikā also show that religious difference

within family life can create misunderstanding and pressure, yet such difficulties may be addressed through patience, wisdom, humility, and moral conduct (Burlingame, 1921).

Buddhist peaceful means provide an ethical framework for preventing and resolving conflict. At the preventive level, the Five Precepts support trust, safety, fidelity, honesty, and emotional stability in married life (Bhikkhu Bodhi, 2016). In Buddhist terminology, *sīla* refers to moral discipline or ethical conduct, which supports peaceful behavior and self-restraint (Digital Pali Dictionary, n.d.-a). At the level of reconciliation, Buddhist peaceful means emphasize humility, open-mindedness, right speech, mutual respect, and acceptance. The term *suvācā* refers to being easy to speak to, teachable, or open to advice, which is important for restoring understanding among multicultural couples (Digital Pali Dictionary, n.d.-b). Right speech encourages truthful, gentle, beneficial, and timely communication, which helps resolve disagreement without further harm (Bhikkhu Bodhi, 1994; Bhikkhu Bodhi, 2016). These principles are synthesized in this study into the PR-Based Peacebuilding Model, consisting of two interrelated strategies: Prevention and Reconciliation.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of this study was grounded in the understanding that conflicts among multicultural couples in Myanmar arise from the interaction of cultural, religious, social, legal, and family-related factors. At the same time, Buddhist peaceful means provide ethical and relational resources that can help couples prevent conflict, manage disagreement, and restore harmony. The framework, therefore, connects the social context of multicultural couples with Buddhist peacebuilding principles, documentary research procedures, and the development of a practical model.

As shown in *Figure 1*, the study begins with the context and problems of multicultural couples in contemporary Myanmar. These problems are examined through theoretical resources, including peacebuilding concepts, Buddhist peaceful means, and Buddhist perspectives on marriage and family. The research process consists of documentary data collection, content analysis, synthesis, and interpretation. The output of this process is the PR-Based Peacebuilding Model, which contains two interrelated strategies: Prevention and Reconciliation. The intended outcome is enhanced marital harmony, mutual understanding, respect and acceptance, conflict prevention, reconciliation, and broader social harmony.

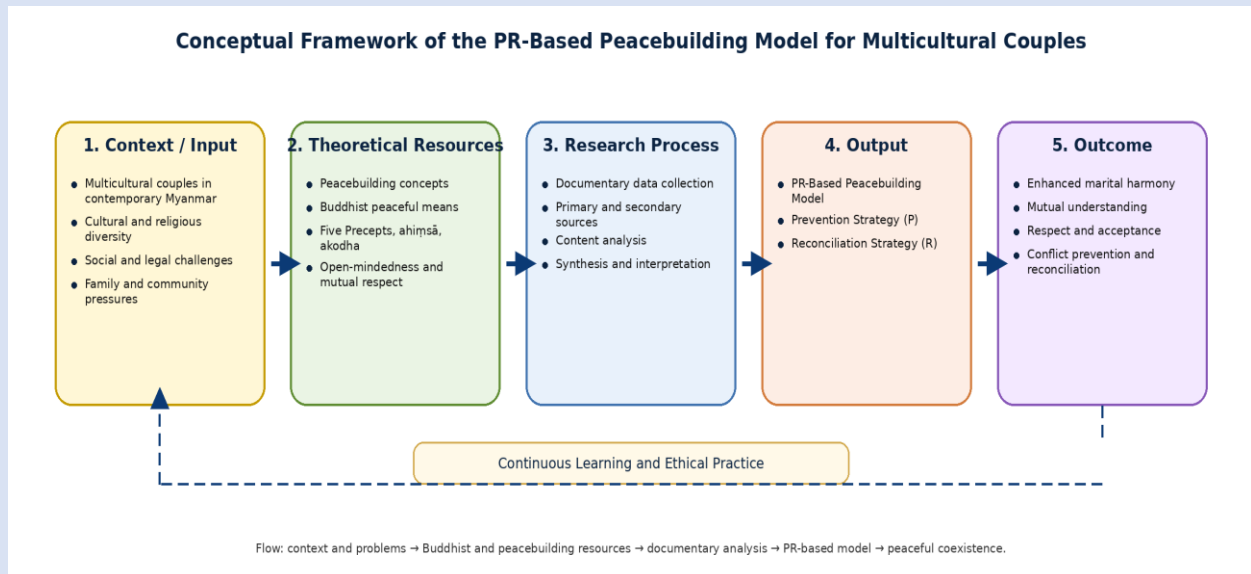


Figure 1. Conceptual framework of the PR-Based Peacebuilding Model for multicultural couples.

Research Methodology

The researcher divides the research methodology into the following sections for simplicity of comprehension: the research methodology used here is documentary and is divided into five sections.

1. Data Collection: Data will be collected from the Pali Tipitaka, commentary, sub-commentary, academic journals, documents, books, and research works, which are available both in English and Myanmar.
2. Analysis and Synthesis: The collected data will be thoroughly analyzed and synthesized systematically to offer a fuller and better understanding of the theme of the research.
3. Outline construction: outlining the entire work of the collected materials.
4. Conclusion and Suggestion: The research will provide a comprehensive conclusion, and any interesting points or unclear cases will be suggested for future research.

The study was limited to documentary analysis and did not include field interviews or quantitative data collection. Therefore, the proposed model should be understood as a conceptual and theoretical contribution that may be further tested and developed through future empirical research.

Research Results

Objective 1: Concepts, Problem Situations, and Impacts of Multicultural Couples and Peacebuilding in Contemporary Myanmar

The findings revealed that multicultural couples in contemporary Myanmar exist within a complex social environment shaped by ethnic diversity, religious plurality, family expectations, customary practices, and legal structures. Myanmar's diverse ethnic and religious landscape creates possibilities for intercultural and interfaith marriage, yet such unions often involve social pressures related to religious identity, cultural belonging, family acceptance, and community recognition. Historical studies indicate that intermarriage in Burma has long been shaped by changing relationships among religion, race, gender, colonial modernity, and social hierarchy (Ikeya, 2011a, 2011b). These historical patterns help contextualize contemporary concerns about mixed marriage, identity preservation, and social recognition.

The study found that multicultural couples in Myanmar commonly face five major challenges: religious conversion pressure, identity loss, cultural misunderstanding, legal complexity, and family or social prejudice. Religious conversion was identified as one of the most sensitive issues because marriage across religious boundaries may involve expectations regarding conversion, ritual recognition, inheritance, divorce, and the religious upbringing of children (Aye Kyaw, 2000; Ye Mon, 2019). Although Buddhist traditions generally do not require religious conversion as a condition for marriage, some religious, social, or legal contexts may create pressure for one partner to adopt or conceal a particular religious identity. Such pressure can generate emotional conflict, dissatisfaction, distrust, and tension between spouses and extended families.

Cultural identity loss was also identified as a significant concern, especially among ethnic minority communities. Previous studies show that many ethnic communities in Myanmar encourage endogamous marriage to preserve cultural heritage, religious continuity, and communal belonging (Su Myat Mon, n.d.; Nyein Su Wai Kyaw Soe, 2017). This concern is particularly visible when women are expected to adopt the culture, religion, or identity of their husbands after marriage. Reports on Buddhist women's rights and marriage in Myanmar also suggest that religious and legal concerns surrounding marriage may become especially sensitive when gender, religion, and family law intersect (San Hla Tin & Aung Myat Thu, n.d.).

The findings further showed that cultural misunderstanding can arise from differences in religious practice, food rules, festivals, ritual expectations, gender roles, child-rearing practices, and family obligations. When couples lack open communication and mutual respect, these differences may become sources of resentment and conflict. Fishbein (2019) illustrates that Buddhist, Christian, and Muslim relationships in Myanmar may face social sensitivity and community pressure, even when couples themselves attempt to maintain harmony. Therefore, the impacts of multicultural marriage challenges are not limited to the couple alone. They may affect family relationships, children's identity formation, intergenerational harmony, and wider social cohesion.

Objective 2: Concepts and Principles of Buddhist Peaceful Means for Peacebuilding in Multicultural Couples

The findings showed that Buddhist peaceful means provide a practical ethical framework for preventing and resolving conflict among multicultural couples. From a Buddhist perspective, peace does not arise from one single cause but from multiple supportive conditions, including ethical conduct, self-restraint, mutual responsibility, compassion, patience, wisdom, and right communication. This view is consistent with Buddhist teachings that emphasize interdependence, ethical causality, and the cultivation of wholesome conditions for harmony (Bhikkhu Bodhi, 2016).

At the preventive level, the Five Precepts serve as the moral foundation for peaceful family life. These precepts encourage individuals to refrain from killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, false speech, and intoxicants. In marital life, they can be understood as ethical guidelines for protecting trust, loyalty, truthfulness, emotional safety, and responsible conduct. Bhikkhu Bodhi (2016) emphasizes the social and communal importance of Buddhist ethical discipline, while the Digital Pali Dictionary (n.d.-a) defines *sīla* as moral discipline or ethical conduct. In the context of multicultural couples, *sīla* supports peaceful behavior by discouraging actions that may lead to violence, betrayal, deception, or carelessness.

Shared responsibility is another key Buddhist principle for marital harmony. The *Sigālovāda Sutta* presents reciprocal duties between husband and wife, including respect, faithfulness, household responsibility, and mutual support (Walshe, 1995). These duties are significant because they move the marital relationship away from domination and toward partnership. For multicultural couples, shared responsibility helps both partners recognize that

peace in marriage depends on mutual contribution, not on the sacrifice or submission of one side.

The findings also identified non-violence and non-anger as central preventive principles. Non-violence, expressed through *ahiṃsā* or *avihiṃsā*, discourages physical, verbal, emotional, and psychological harm. Non-anger, or *akodha*, encourages emotional regulation, patience, and mindful response. These principles are especially important for multicultural couples because conflicts may arise from religious differences, cultural practices, family pressure, or social prejudice. If anger is met with anger, conflict may intensify; however, if disagreement is met with restraint, compassion, and wise communication, conflict can be reduced before it becomes destructive (Bhikkhu Bodhi, 1994; Ekman et al., 2005).

At the level of reconciliation, the study identified non-conceit, open-mindedness, open communication, mutual respect, and acceptance as essential Buddhist peaceful means. Non-conceit, or *anatimāna*, helps partners reduce ego-centered attachment to superiority, rigid identity, and the need to dominate the other partner's beliefs or practices. Buddhist narratives, such as those concerning Visākhā and Uttarā, demonstrate that patience, humility, and moral conduct can help transform religious differences into opportunities for understanding rather than conflict (Burlingame, 1921).

Open-mindedness is closely related to the Buddhist quality of *suvācā*, which refers to being easy to speak to, teachable, or open to advice (Digital Pali Dictionary, n.d.-b). This quality enables partners to listen without immediate rejection and to receive different perspectives without defensiveness. Open communication is also connected with right speech, which emphasizes communication that is truthful, gentle, beneficial, timely, and conducive to harmony (Bhikkhu Bodhi, 1994, 2016). These principles are particularly relevant when couples discuss sensitive issues such as religious practice, children's identity, family obligations, and cultural customs. Mutual respect and acceptance further support reconciliation by creating a relational space in which differences can coexist without coercion. This approach is consistent with restorative peacebuilding, which emphasizes repairing relationships rather than merely assigning blame (Pichler, 2013). The Edicts of King Asoka also reinforce the value of religious tolerance and respect among diverse traditions (Dhammika, 1993).

Buddhist canonical sources further strengthen the principles of prevention and reconciliation in the PR-Based Peacebuilding Model. Regarding the prevention of conflict, the Dhammapada teaches the abandonment of anger and pride and emphasizes overcoming anger through non-anger (Dhp 221, 223; Buddharakkhita, 1985). This supports the preventive principles of non-anger and emotional restraint among multicultural couples. In relation to reconciliation, the Subhāsita Sutta emphasizes speech that is well-spoken, harmless, truthful, and beneficial, making it directly relevant to open communication and right speech in marital conflict resolution (Snp 3.3; Bodhi, 2017). The Aṅguttara Nikāya also presents skillful dialogue as an important condition for meaningful discussion and discernment (AN 3.67; Bodhi, 2012). Furthermore, the Saṅgaha Sutta identifies generosity, kind speech, beneficial conduct, and impartiality as four bases for sustaining harmonious relationships (AN 4.32; Bodhi, 2012). These canonical teachings support the reconciliation principles of open-mindedness, open communication, mutual respect, and acceptance.

Objective 3: The PR-Based Peacebuilding Model for Multicultural Couples through Buddhist Peaceful Means

Based on the findings from the first and second objectives, the study proposed the PR-Based Peacebuilding Model for multicultural couples in contemporary Myanmar. The model consists of two interrelated strategies: Prevention and Reconciliation. These two strategies are complementary rather than separate. Prevention addresses the conditions that reduce conflict before it becomes serious, while Reconciliation addresses the process of restoring trust, understanding, and harmony after conflict has occurred.

The Prevention strategy consists of four components: moral foundation, mutual responsibility, non-violence, and non-anger. The moral foundation is grounded in the Five Precepts, which guide partners to avoid harmful actions and cultivate trust. Mutual responsibility encourages both partners to share duties, respect each other's roles, and support family well-being. Non-violence prevents physical, verbal, emotional, and psychological harm, while non-anger helps partners regulate emotions before disagreement becomes destructive. Together, these components create safety, trust, and stability in multicultural relationships.

The Reconciliation strategy consists of five components: non-conceit, open-mindedness, open communication, mutual respect, and acceptance. Non-conceit reduces ego-driven conflict and the tendency to impose one's identity on

the other. Open-mindedness allows partners to understand religious and cultural differences without prejudice. Open communication provides a constructive channel for discussing sensitive matters honestly and respectfully. Mutual respect recognizes the dignity, beliefs, traditions, and identity of each partner, while acceptance creates space for religious, ethnic, and cultural differences to coexist peacefully. These principles are consistent with studies emphasizing cultural adaptation, mutual understanding, and respect in interfaith relationships (Wong et al., 2024).

The findings show that Prevention and Reconciliation are closely connected. For example, the precept against harming others supports non-violence and non-anger; the precept against sexual misconduct supports faithfulness and shared responsibility; and the precept against false speech supports open communication and trust. In this way, the PR-Based Peacebuilding Model integrates Buddhist ethical principles with practical relational strategies. The model contributes to Buddhist peace studies by showing that peacebuilding is not limited to political or community-level conflict resolution but can begin within the intimate sphere of marriage and family. When multicultural couples cultivate ethical conduct, emotional restraint, open communication, mutual respect, and acceptance, they can transform difference into a basis for mutual learning, compassion, and peaceful coexistence.

Discussion

The findings of this study show that multicultural couples in contemporary Myanmar face complex challenges arising from religious diversity, ethnic identity, cultural expectations, family pressure, and legal conditions. These challenges are not merely private marital issues but are connected to wider social structures and communal attitudes. Religious conversion pressure, identity loss, cultural misunderstanding, and social prejudice may create tension within couples, between extended families, and within local communities. This finding is consistent with previous studies indicating that mixed marriages in Myanmar often involve concerns over religious identity, ethnic continuity, family acceptance, and social recognition (Su Myat Mon, n.d.; Nyein Su Wai Kyaw Soe, 2017; Fishbein, 2019).

The study also confirms that peacebuilding among multicultural couples should not be limited to legal protection or social tolerance alone. Although legal and social frameworks are important, sustainable marital peace also requires

ethical conduct, emotional restraint, mutual respect, and open communication. In this regard, Buddhist peaceful means offer a practical ethical framework for addressing conflicts within intimate relationships. The Five Precepts provide a moral foundation that supports trust, loyalty, truthfulness, self-restraint, and non-harm. These principles are relevant to multicultural couples because they help prevent behaviors that can damage marital stability, such as deception, violence, disrespect, and irresponsible conduct (Bhikkhu Bodhi, 2016).

Another significant finding is that Buddhist peaceful means operate at two interrelated levels: prevention and reconciliation. The prevention level emphasizes moral conduct, mutual responsibility, non-violence, and non-anger. These principles help couples prevent conflict before it becomes destructive. For example, non-violence reduces physical, verbal, and emotional harm, while non-anger encourages emotional regulation and patience. In multicultural relationships, disagreements may arise from religious rituals, dietary practices, family expectations, or children's identity formation. If such differences are handled with anger or coercion, conflict may intensify. However, when partners practice restraint, compassion, and mindful communication, conflict can be reduced before it becomes a serious relational crisis.

The reconciliation level is equally important because conflict cannot always be prevented. Multicultural couples may still experience disagreement even when they attempt to live ethically. Therefore, the principles of non-conceit, open-mindedness, open communication, mutual respect, and acceptance are essential for restoring harmony. Non-conceit helps partners reduce attachment to superiority and rigid identity. Open-mindedness allows them to listen to each other's beliefs and cultural practices without immediate judgment. Open communication supports truthful, respectful, and constructive dialogue. Mutual respect and acceptance create a relational space in which different identities can coexist without domination. These principles are consistent with the Buddhist emphasis on humility, right speech, and relational harmony (Bhikkhu Bodhi, 1994; Walshe, 1995).

The PR-Based Peacebuilding Model proposed in this study contributes to Buddhist peace studies by applying Buddhist peaceful means to the specific context of multicultural couples. The model shows that peacebuilding is not only a matter of political negotiation, institutional policy, or community mediation. It can also begin within the family, where religious, ethnic, and cultural differences are negotiated in everyday life. When couples learn to prevent conflict through

ethical conduct and reconcile conflict through communication and acceptance, the household becomes a practical site of peacebuilding. This is especially relevant in Myanmar, where family relationships are closely connected to religious identity, cultural belonging, and community harmony.

The model also contributes to practical peacebuilding by offering a framework that couples, religious leaders, family counselors, educators, and community mediators can use. Its twofold structure is simple yet meaningful: prevention addresses the conditions that reduce conflict, while reconciliation addresses the processes needed to restore harmony after conflict. This structure makes the model applicable not only to Buddhist couples but also to interfaith and interethnic couples who seek ethical and relational guidance for peaceful coexistence.

However, the study has some limitations. Since it used a documentary research method, the findings are based on textual analysis, previous studies, legal documents, reports, and secondary sources rather than direct field interviews with multicultural couples. Therefore, the proposed model should be understood as a conceptual and theoretical contribution rather than an empirically tested intervention. Future studies should include interviews, case studies, or surveys with multicultural couples in Myanmar to examine how Buddhist peaceful means are actually practiced in daily marital life. Comparative studies involving other religious traditions and legal perspectives would also strengthen the model's broader applicability. Despite these limitations, the study provides a useful Buddhist ethical framework for understanding and addressing the challenges of multicultural couples in Myanmar and other pluralistic societies.

Knowledge from Research

The knowledge generated from this study is the PR-Based Peacebuilding Model for Multicultural Couples. This model explains how Buddhist peaceful means can be applied to prevent conflict and restore harmony among couples from different religious, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds in contemporary Myanmar. The model is grounded in the understanding that conflict among multicultural couples often arises from religious conversion pressure, identity loss, cultural misunderstanding, family expectations, legal complexity, and social prejudice. Therefore, peacebuilding in multicultural marriage requires both ethical prevention and relational reconciliation.

The PR-Based Peacebuilding Model consists of two interrelated strategies: Prevention and Reconciliation.

The first strategy is Prevention. Prevention refers to the ethical and practical measures that help couples reduce the possibility of conflict before it becomes serious. It consists of four main components:

1. *Moral Foundation* – The Five Precepts provide an ethical basis for trust, loyalty, truthfulness, self-restraint, and non-harm in marital life.
2. *Mutual Responsibility* – Both partners share duties, respect each other's roles, and support family well-being without domination or neglect.
3. *Non-Violence* – Couples avoid physical, verbal, emotional, and psychological harm, thereby creating safety and trust within the relationship.
4. *Non-Anger* – Partners cultivate patience, emotional regulation, and mindful response in order to prevent disagreement from turning into destructive conflict.

The second strategy is Reconciliation. Reconciliation is the process of restoring trust, understanding, and harmony after conflict. It consists of five main components:

1. *Non-Conceit* – Partners reduce pride, superiority, and attachment to rigid identity, allowing humility and understanding to emerge.
2. *Open-Mindedness* – Partners listen to each other's religious beliefs, cultural practices, and family expectations without prejudice.
3. *Open Communication* – Couples discuss sensitive issues honestly and respectfully, especially matters related to religion, culture, children's identity, and family obligations.
4. *Mutual Respect* – Each partner recognizes the dignity, beliefs, traditions, and identity of the other.
5. *Acceptance* – Couples create space for religious, ethnic, and cultural differences to coexist peacefully within family life.

Together, Prevention and Reconciliation form a practical Buddhist peacebuilding framework. Prevention helps couples avoid conflict escalation through ethical conduct, shared responsibility, non-violence, and non-anger. Reconciliation helps couples restore harmony through humility, openness, communication, respect, and acceptance. The model demonstrates that peacebuilding begins not only in society but also within the intimate space of marriage and family. When multicultural couples practice Buddhist peaceful means in daily life, they can transform differences into opportunities for mutual learning, compassion, and peaceful coexistence.

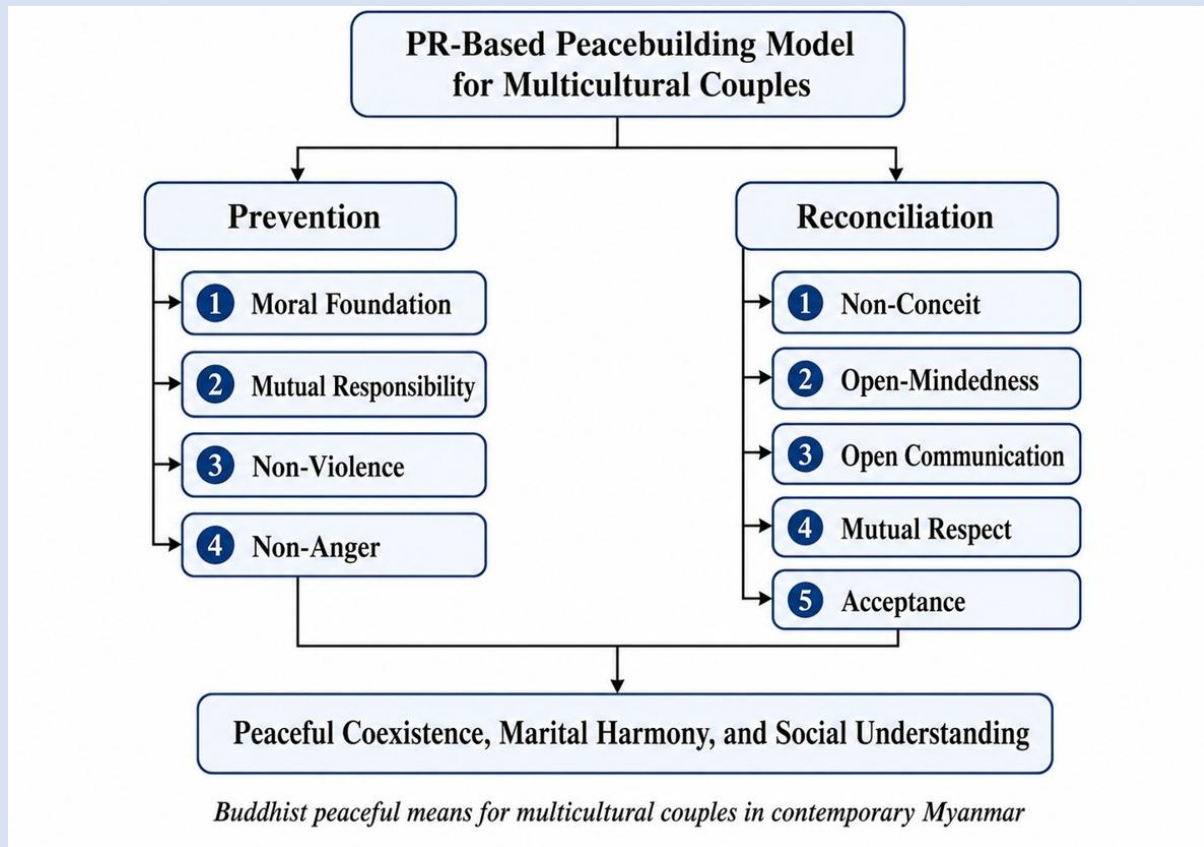


Figure 2. The PR-Based Peacebuilding Model for Multicultural Couples.

Conclusion

This study proposed a PR-Based Peacebuilding Model for multicultural couples in contemporary Myanmar that uses Buddhist peaceful means. The findings revealed that multicultural couples often face complex challenges arising from religious conversion pressure, ethnic and cultural identity loss, family expectations, legal complexity, cultural misunderstanding, and social prejudice. These problems may affect not only the couple but also their extended families, children's identity formation, and wider social harmony.

The study found that Buddhist peaceful means provide a practical ethical framework for addressing these challenges. At the preventive level, the Five Precepts, shared responsibility, non-violence, and non-anger help couples build trust, reduce harmful behavior, and prevent conflict from escalating. At the reconciliation level, non-conceit, open-mindedness, open communication, mutual respect, and acceptance help couples restore understanding and harmony after conflict has occurred. These principles show that peacebuilding in marriage requires both moral discipline and relational wisdom.

The proposed PR-Based Peacebuilding Model consists of two interrelated strategies: Prevention and Reconciliation. Prevention offers short-term and ongoing ethical practices to reduce conflict, while Reconciliation provides long-term methods to restore trust, respect, and peaceful coexistence. The model contributes to Buddhist peace studies by applying Buddhist ethical principles to the intimate sphere of marriage and family life. It also offers practical guidance for multicultural couples, Buddhist counselors, religious leaders, family educators, community mediators, and policymakers working in pluralistic societies.

However, this study was based on documentary research. Future studies should include interviews, surveys, or case studies with multicultural couples in Myanmar to examine how Buddhist peaceful means are practiced in real-life marital situations. Comparative studies involving other religious and legal perspectives are also recommended to strengthen the model's practical applicability.

Suggestion

This study provides a Buddhist peacebuilding framework for multicultural couples in Myanmar. However, further research is recommended to strengthen its practical and empirical foundation.

1. Future studies should include interviews, surveys, or case studies with multicultural couples in Myanmar. Direct experiences from couples would help examine how Buddhist peaceful means are applied in real-life marital situations and how effectively they support conflict prevention and reconciliation.

2. Future research should compare Buddhist peaceful means with peacebuilding approaches from other religious traditions in Myanmar. Such comparative studies would broaden understanding of interfaith marriage, reconciliation, and peaceful coexistence in a pluralistic society.

3. Future studies should examine the legal and policy dimensions of multicultural marriage in Myanmar. This would clarify how marriage laws, religious regulations, and social institutions either support or hinder peaceful family life.

Overall, future research should integrate empirical data, interfaith perspectives, practical counseling or mediation approaches, and legal considerations to enhance the applicability of the PR-Based Peacebuilding Model.

Abbreviations of Pali texts

Aṅguttara Nikāya	AN
Dhammapada	Dhp
Sutta Nipāta	Snp

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