Buddhist standpoint on the Environmental Psychology and its relation on Environmental conservation

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Environmental psychology is a modern field of psychological study which has been specially designed to examine the interrelationship between human and environment. The field of Study is explained as, “Environmental psychology is a field of study that examines the interrelationship between environments and human affect, cognition and behavior” (Gifford 2007).

In this paper the attention is focused on the examination of Environmental psychological features include in the Buddhist teachings. Even though still there is no such a field as Buddhist environmental psychology, through this research some important landmarks are expected to blurb for the future studies.

In analyzing the Buddhist teachings on this context, in the Rāmaṇeyyakasutta of the Saṃyuttanikāya, clearly explains two fundamentals on this subject as Bhūmirāmaṇeyyaka (beauty of environment) and Manussarāmaṇeyyaka (Beauty of human). Here the Buddha clearly preaches that, Beauty of environment rely on the beauty of human. As the beauty of human it explains how human behavior becomes a serious factor in enjoying the environment beauty. This explains that environmental conservation methods should be introduced through a mental transformation of human.

In this research all such factors are expected to discuss comparatively with the modern environmental psychology. Suttantapiṭaka of the Pāli canon is referred along with relevant commentaries in examining the Buddhist Standpoints and theories of environmental psychology are discussed quoting Environmental psychology by Gifford, Paradox of environmental psychology by D. Stokols, and Hand book of Environmental Psychology by D. Stokols and L. Altman, where it necessary.

Keywords :- Environmental Psychology, Buddhism, Suttantapiṭaka, Saṃyuttanikāya, Pāli canon, Stokols, Gifford.

Buddhist Response to Environmental Degradation with Reference to bijagāmabhūtagāma in the Buddhist Canon

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The terms bijagāma (seeds to be grown) and bhūtagāma (grown seeds) are very significant as those fundamentally talk on the environment. They reflect upon a kind of philosophical teaching and are explained from the perspective of environment in the Canon. The places where the term bijagāmabhūtagāma occurs in the Tipiṭaka include as a single form not separate one. The term altogether also means that it is an interdependent idea. In this study, five of those ‘bijagāmabhūtagāma’ references in the Canon are referred to. All those references can be divided into two categories. One, is the reference that is based on environmental ethics attached to the way of life of saints: The Brahmajāla-sutta (D 1.5) explains one of eminent practices of a recluse to refrain from violating ‘bijagāmabhūtagāma’, a practice of the Tathāgata that came to be praised in contemporary India, Pācittiya XI (Vin IV .35) which emphasizes destruction of vegetable growth as an offence of expiation for the saṅgha, and Chabbisodhana-sutta (M III.34) denotes that this is one of the qualities of an Arahant that is not to harm the Environment on his way to Nibbāna. Two, is the teachings related to the natural environment. The Bīja-sutta (S V.46) the success of monkhood is based on morality (sīla). The Bīja-sutta (S III.54) illustrates a firm connection of the five groups of plants (pañcabījajātāni) with kamma-viññāṇa (the growth of consciousness) as they are interdependent on each other. All these references reveal the significance of the environment and provide an answer to the environmental crises with reference to the Canon. The methodology of the study is based on references to the Canon, and some commentaries are used as necessary. The tentative conclusion points to the appreciation of earth-friendly ways of life and solution for modern environmental crises based on ethics found in Buddhist teachings.

Keywords: Bijagāmabhūtagāma, Five groups of plants, Pācittiya XI, Kamma-viññāṇa, Buddhist Environmental Ethics

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