Buddhist Sociological Theory of Basic Human Needs for Developing New Models of Social Work Practice

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This analysis of Buddhist Five Precepts shows the potentiality of developing a Buddhist psychological theory of personality, a sociological theory of social relations and an Anthropological theory of culture and adaptation to environment. The central research problem is that the social values on which the five precepts are based, have been agreed upon to solve lethal struggle over meeting basic human needs and this value consensus has been conducive to the origin and development of three interdependent components of personality, society and culture. Documentary sources relevant to this research problem were referred to and analyzed. As the exploration reveals, the five precepts; abstinence from (1) Killing (2), stealing (3) sexual misconduct (4) lying and (5) use of intoxicants, have been based on five great social values such as the acceptance of, and respect for the (1) survival of others (2) possession of material resources required for the survival (3) peaceful means of involving in the reproductive process for the survival of one species (4) trustworthiness required to survive as social beings and (5) the behavior of being a healthy, conscious and vigilant person respectively. These five social values address five basic human needs such as (1) safety of life, (2) material needs of life (3) survival of one species (4) survival as a social being and the (5) equilibrium of the functioning of body and mind. Further, it is concluded that the structured order of the five precepts reflects the scientific understanding of basic human needs in Buddhism. It is contended that a profound understanding of those needs and social values provides the theoretical base for developing new models of social work and welfare to deal with problems of modern society.

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