

The Doctrine of Dependent Origination in Buddhist Philosophy and its Practicality

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ABSTRACT

Buddhist philosophy explains the nature of phenomenal existence and asserts that most of the human beings suffer in life both physically and mentally due to their failures on understanding interdependency of worldly phenomena and their connection to human body and mind. This study has endeavoured to explain the way most of the human beings fail to perceive co-dependent condition of phenomena and they go on suffering as a consequence. The data is based on secondary resources. Inferences are based on various understandings of what The Buddha taught of The Dependent Origination and cause of human suffering. The discussion proceeds with Buddha's view on the doctrine, some responses on it and the researcher's own logical inferences. The findings tell that human suffering begins when a person fails to perceive the ever-changing nature of material things and relation between external things and its effects in our body, perception, understanding, knowledge, attitudes etc. The failure deviates from reality and a person misunderstands the relation of origination and cessation of things and events. As a result, he/she continues craving, clinging or making attachment to the false reality of 'permanency of things, immortality of Self, supernatural power and so on. And the solution of this suffering is to know the reality of nature: the ways the phenomena in the universe and events in human life originate, exist and cease. To explain it further the article takes few representative findings of researches on how things we eat, wear and sit around and beyond influence and affect our body and thought.

Keywords: *Cessation, dependent origination, dharma, doctrine, enlightenment, phenomena, the wheel.*

INTRODUCTION

As we all know Buddhist philosophy (Buddha Dharma also) developed after Siddhartha Gautama, a prince of Shakya dynasty of Kapilvastu, Nepal, got Enlightened and

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became The Buddha around 2600 years ago. The Buddha etymologically means the person who knows all. Whether the Buddha knew about all things of the universe or not, he is believed to have known about the cause of human suffering and the ways the phenomena and events in the universe originate and cease. He taught his disciples about the Four Noble Truths, the Dependent Origination of the things and events and The Eight-fold Paths. He also explained how knowingness to worldly phenomena affects human psychological and physiological responses and experiences from them. The Buddha has been seen as one of the most profound scientists/philosophers of humanity rather than a spiritual figure (I claim him so, for I do not accept him as a god or a spiritual figure) particularly through the Dependent Origination doctrine which teaches us that no phenomenon, no individual form of life in the universe can exist independently of others (Smith 36). This is what this article is going to talk about and just glimpse its practical importance. The doctrine remains in the central issue of Buddhist philosophy because Sariputta, one of the main disciples of the Buddha sees it parallel to Dharma. In reference to this Nanamoli and Bodhi (1995) point out that one who sees dependent arising or origination sees the Dharma, and one who sees the Dharma sees dependent arising. And this is very important to have basic knowledge of it because it assists individuals to make life relatively peaceful and practical. Dharma equals law of nature in Buddhist philosophy. And Analayo (2020) pinpoints that “A particularly helpful discourse for appreciating the significance of dependent arising is its emphasis on “dependent arising” of phenomena (Analayo, 2020, p. 1). This paper tries to explain further what dependent arising is really is, what place it has got in Buddhist philosophy, what Dharma in Buddhism means, and why the doctrine of dependent origination does have much value to understand connection of worldly phenomena to human body and mind. In this context, this study mainly has two objectives. First, it endeavours to explain what Dependent Origination doctrine in Buddhist philosophy actually means about the existence of phenomena. Second, it intends to produce logical inferences about the validity of dependent origination in the Wheel of Life in Buddhist philosophy and has presented some research references to prove how external phenomena and knowledge about dependent origination principle do have strong practicality of directly affecting on human body and mind.

DATA AND METHODS

This study is an analysis of interrelationship and co-dependency of phenomena and its direct effects on human body and mind in the light of Dependent Origination doctrine of Buddhist philosophy. The analysis is based upon secondary data. Therefore, it has included data collected from library visits, extracted from published textbooks and other resources. Conclusion is drawn through deduction and induction logical inferences on various representative responses on the doctrine so far and connecting practical relevancy of the doctrine through some research findings about direct relation of material phenomena to human body and thought.

Findings and Discussion

As the title infers this paper is going to talk briefly about the principle of dependent origination or *pratityasamutpada*. After briefly talking about what The Buddha taught his disciples about Dharma, the paper presents the discussion and analysis in three parts: first it defines what Dependent Origination in Buddhism means; in the second part, it briefly interprets the ways The Buddha used this principle to explain arising and cessation of human suffering and how dependent origination doctrine is applied to see causal relation of foods and body condition. Then it sums up its findings in the third part.

What the Buddha thought of Dharma?

When the Buddha got Enlightened, general practice of the society in India was based on strong faith on God and other sacred forms of supernatural power. Many ritual functions and worships to such powers were based on superstitious beliefs (Hunter, 2012). Sacrifice of innocent animals to appease either gods or evil forces was common practice. Faith on life after death and other visions like of the Heaven was prevalent and deeply rooted in people. But the Buddha ignored such aspects of faith. The Buddha's teaching contrasted to the practice of the time because he did not try to define things, events and experience by separating 'the universe from the human consciousness, and the consciousness from the universe' (DeGraff, 1996, p. 21). Similarly, he didn't talk by assuming and anticipating any astrological form or super-consciousness like Brahma, which were, as the people of the time thought, responsible for directly determining human and animal fate, thoughts, causes and consequences of events as well as human experiences as most of the Dharmas of the time believed on. But to the Buddha, the Dharma is different.

Dharma does have no connection to any supernatural power beyond natural phenomena, not entirely different entity beyond nature. Bodhi (2012) in translation of the Anguttara Nikaya Suttas talks of what Buddha said of the Dharma, non-Dharma and understanding of nature. The Buddha teaches human beings that any individual who makes wrong effort on performing or accomplishing his wishes and needs is non-Dharma; right effort is the dharma. The numerous bad unwholesome qualities that originate with wrong efforts are harmful because they generate adverse conditions. The numerous unwholesome qualities from the development of right efforts become right condition and they are ultimately beneficial. Therefore, The Buddha explored the right view of understanding the world from which one feels the ways one does. Therefore, dharma of human being, according to the Buddha is the right views a person makes in association between the consciousness and the universe. Furthermore, he teaches how all phenomena are associated to each other and exists in inter-relationship. In other words, The Buddha presented the view of co-dependence of parts and whole and its right understanding. This is Dharma or right view of the law of nature.

I

The Dependent Origination:

In general, the basic principle of dependent origination in Buddhism concerns the fundamental structure of nature, to understand the origination and cessation of elements and conditions of their interrelatedness. In particular, The Buddha often used dependent origination principle to explain co-dependency of phenomena and mental process in responding to the things and events in order to make his disciples understand the cause and karma (effect) relationship of worldly experiences and suffering (dukkha). To describe Dukkha The Buddha did not talk much of it philosophically rather he presented the concept to explain a causal relationship between consequences and actions or event in worldly experiences of people in everyday life and natural phenomena. The doctrine is also called 'Conditioned Arising' (Pali: *paticca-samuppada*) which has continued to attract attention in Buddhist studies for several good reasons, most importantly because it occupies a central place in the Buddhist doctrinal structure though it presents some formidable problems of interpretation (Bucknell, 1999). The Oxford Dictionary of World Religions states: "A key concept in Buddhism...states that all physical and mental manifestations which constitute individual appearances are interdependent and

they condition or affect one another, in a constant process of arising and ceasing.” This definition also indicates that dependent origination is condition of interdependent in existence of living and non-living beings.

Gethin (1998) refers to the Buddhist Texts -The Tripitaka-and says, “this existing, that exists; this arising, that arises; this not existing, that does not exist; this ceasing, that ceases’ (MajjhimaNikaya iii. 63; SamyuttaNikaya v. 387). This is very succinct formula of origination, existence and extinction of things in which the secret of the universe lies in the nature of causality—the way one thing leads to another. Interrelationship between and among the objects and conditions of their existence is naturally a continuous process - the process of changeability. Williams (2002) states: “In the *MahaanhasankhayaSutta* the Buddha stresses that things originate in dependence upon causal conditioning, and this emphasis on causality describes the central feature of Buddhist ontology” (Williams, 2002, p. 64). All elements of Samsara exist in some sense or another relative to their causes. About the dependent origination the Buddha in *MajjhimaNikaya* says that elements in nature exists in co-dependency. It is said, “When this exists, that comes to be; with the arising of this, that arises. When this does not exist, that does not come to be; With the cessation of this, that ceases (Bhikkhu, 2000, p.517). It clearly states that relation between cause and effect is inseparable and consequence of the cause is inevitable.

Let us take two examples. The Buddha often used to explain the nature of dependent origination and make his disciples understand the doctrine better. He talked of the existence of an oil lamp and burning wick with flame. The Buddha referred that the flame in an oil lamp illuminate, it is of course dependent upon the oil and the wick. When the oil and the wick are present, the flame in an oil lamp burns. If either of these is absent, the flame will cease to burn (The Buddha didn’t say anything about the oxygen, perhaps he did not know about the need of it to burn fire). The Buddha also talked about the existence of a sapling for its origination, existence and extinction. Dependent upon the seed, earth, water, air and sunlight, and sky (space) the sprout arises and grows. It is not dependent upon one element but many. Absence of any element in the condition causes the cessation of the plant. This is the interdependent of origination, existence and cessation of things. Similar condition is inhuman experience in action and responses to phenomena around and beyond us.

Dependent origination and human experience:

Our experiences in everyday life- our thoughts, speech and actions, according the Buddha, are directly related to a causal relationship of worldly phenomena. This is the principle of causality - the law of cause and effect, of action and consequence – The principle of Dependent Origination or Pratityasamudtpada. Etymologically pratitya means ‘having dependent’ and samutpada means ‘arising or originating’ (Hopkin, 1973). Something arising on the condition of a preceding cause is what it literally means. Dependent origination is considered as foundation principle of Buddhist logic. The fourteenth Lama (1990) says the fundamental precept of Buddhism is the law of dependent origination. It teaches that cause and effect co-arise, and one cause may not enough to bring an effect and a cause must simultaneously become an effect and there can be connection of other cause and effect relation. Hanh (1999) says this is the basic state for the idea that there is no first and only cause, something that does not itself need a condition. He further explains in verse form:

‘this is, because that is,

this is not, because that is not,

this ceases to be, because that ceases to be’ (Hanh, 1999, p. 122).

Any effect from this principle can be the consequence of multiple causes and condition, even if some or none of them are apparent to our observation. In this reference, Gethin (1998) says “...the Theravada tradition records...as a fundamental axiom the principle that a single cause does not give rise to either a single result or several results; nor do several causes give rise to just one result; but rather several causes give rise to several results” (Gethin, 1998, p.141). The Dalai Lama states: “...the meaning of pratityasamutpada is that which arises in dependence upon conditions, in reliance upon conditions, through the force of conditions. On a subtle level, it is explained as the main reason why phenomena are empty of inherent existence. When we get into the depth of the law of existence in nature then we can realize that phenomena in the world have no permanency of existence but in the flux of changeability, in constant origination in one form and cessation, and again origination in another form.

The basic doctrine of Four Noble Truths of The Buddha, particularly the second one is also founded on this principle, which says occurrence of something has cause/s. In this sense the principle of dependent origination views the universe in the flux of action and reactions, formations and transformations of worldly phenomena and our experiences with them. In simple words, any effect or consequence at present did have

its cause in the past and the present karma naturally is/becomes the cause of karma in future.

Dependent origination thus postulated a co-evolutionary interrelated world, based on co-dependency, indynamic cause and effect conditions, rather than fixed order “of existence as assumed by most thinkers and philosophers of the time” (Hunter, 2012, p. 8). The cycling is ever running, and all happenings, either in forms of human individual or social events or in the appearance of material objects, do originate as continuous phenomena from previous conditioning. “There is a perpetual flow of natural forces incessantly interacting and changing. There is not emptiness as meaning relies upon relatedness which is the root of all meaning” (Bowlby, 1980, p. 249). This means, things are related to each other and meanings we perceive or give to the events have direct causal connection, even if they seem to be, in our observations, indirectly connected or unconnected.

To be precise, all things, mental and physical, arise and exist due to the presence of certain conditions, and cease once their conditions get removed. The doctrine thus compliments the teaching that no permanent, independent Self can be found. Since ‘event A’ let’s say, is the causal conditioning of ‘B’ and ‘B’ for ‘C’ and in the same way ‘event Z’ becomes the causal conditioning of ‘A’. The process of action and reaction moves on the rounding, like of cycle, but not on a sequential linear process (Hunter, 2012, p. 9). Therefore, *Pratityasamutpada* or dependent origination in the Buddhist belief is the cycle of causality. And the cycle is on the conditions of co-dependence. The notion of chance depends upon preconditions. But nothing is out of the chain of relation in the phenomena. Nothing can exist apart from the causes and conditions inter connectivity of things creates conditions. But those causes and conditions are also dependent on other causes and conditions aroused by another interrelated things. This not only about phenomena but also with human psychology and suffering with external things. In this reference Bodhi (2000) says:

Dependent origination offers a new perspective which rises above the extremes. The teaching shows individual existence to be constituted by a current of conditioned phenomena which is devoid of a metaphysical self, yet which continues from life to life as long as the causes that sustain it remain efficacious” (Bodhi, 2000, p.522).

This clearly states that nothing in the world exists without existence of others,

everything depends upon pre-determinants that are not sequential or required to arise in any particular order. Nothing in the universe can exist in isolation because the existence of things is in the chain of interdependent and each depends upon numerous determinants which are that are ed. Even human mind and its connection to external things are closely associated. In this reference Nanamoli and Bodhi (1995) says “The bodily and mental factors are transitory phenomena, constantly arising and passing away, processes creating the appearance of selfhood through their causal continuity and interdependent functioning” (Nanamoli and Bodhi 1995, p. 28). Since things occur in flux from conditioning to conditioning, identifying the origin is not possible. The root cause of one is the consequence from others and therefore reality of the cause often leads us to delusion that deviates us from the true perception of the nature of the dependent origination. Let’s elaborate how The Buddha knew the principle of dependent origination on human psyche, how it is in cause and karma relatedness, and how it makes one deviate from the true nature of truth and becomes in the cycle of suffering.

II

Dependent Origination on the Cycle of Birth:

Traditionally, the principle of dependent origination is mostly explained to describe and interpret the conditional arising of rebirth in *Samsara*, and the resultant *dukkha* (Harvey, 1990, p. 50). In simple terms this doctrine teaches us that all material states we see and mental states we experience at present are resulted from other pre-existing states and now the present states generate further conditions and arise from them other dependents state along with the cessation of the former ones. The Nalanda Translation Committee states that Pratitya-samutpada is the technical name for the Buddha’s teaching on cause and effect, in which he demonstrated how all situations arise through the coming together of various factors. In the Hinayana, it refers in particular to the twelve nidanas, or links in the chain of samsaric becoming. Bhikkhu Buddhadasa’s book *Patīccasamuppāda: Practical Dependent Origination*, explains that the twelve nidanas or the cause and action components in the Buddhist wheel of life are related to the causal chain of human psyche in reaction to the worldly phenomena. The concept of Birth and Death components refer not to physical birth and death, but to the birth and death of our self-concept, the emergence of the ego.

The Buddha used the teaching of *patīccasamuppāda* or dependent origination

essentially and primarily to explain how suffering human beings (both mental and physical) arises, and how to free ourselves from suffering. The principle is based on the sequential flow of cause-and-effect relation, one after another without any disconnection. In the cycle of dependent origination there are twelve components: they are ignorance (Abidhaya), mental formation/ activities (Samskara), consciousness (Bighyana), name and form (Namarupa), the six senses (Sadayatana), contact (Esparsha), feeling (Vedana), craving (Tanaha), clinging/ attachment (Upadana), becoming/ action (Bhava), birth (Jati), and old age and death (Jaramaran) (See appendix I). Generally, these components are defined in sequential order, over a period of three life times: the past, the present and the future. Ignorance and mental formation belong to the past; consciousness, name and form, the six senses, contact, feeling, craving, clinging and becoming belong to this life and the last two components – oldness and death belong to the future. The first two components are considered responsible for the origination of the present life with its psycho-physical personality, and similarly the middle eight components which drive us to perform our actions at present in accordance of our personality, which in turn, become responsible to the karma / consequence we face in the future life. My focus here is not on the traditional ways of interpretation, by dividing them into the periods of three lifetimes which, in my understanding, is contrary to the Buddha's teaching, but on the cyclical interpretation in which the twelve components are responsible for our suffering in present life because their relation resembles to human thought processes. This kind of interpretation is forwarded by Buddhadasa (1992) in his book *Paticcasamuppada: Practical Dependent Origination*. He does not link them in the three life times: past, present and future but with a thinking and cognition system of human mind at present life. According to Buddhadasa dependent arising is a phenomenon that lasts an instant; it is impermanent. Therefore, Birth and Death must be explained as phenomena within the process of dependent arising in everyday life of ordinary people. Birth is the consequence of the loss of Right Mindfulness because the loss generates greed, anger etc and their vexation boosts up and gets reflected as ego. It is considered as 'birth'.

Hirakawa (1990), in his book *A History of Indian Buddhism: From Shakyamuni to Early Mahayana*, refers *The Abhidharmakosa* which, according to Hirakawa, has presented three implications of the dependent origination. They are instantaneous which means all 12 links are present in the same instant; they are in chain of interdependence

and causal relationship of dharmas or phenomenal events arising at different times, and one after in series in relationship of the twelve links arising and ceasing continuously but in moments and moments (Hirakawa, 1990, p. 178). Therefore, it is in the continuous process unless and until a person with his disinterested Karma and detachment to things leads Nirvana.

In the following paragraph the paper is going to discuss about the dependent origination through two ways. First it briefly explains how The Buddha observed the twelve links on the cognition process of human being, in continuous series of moments, can keep oneself in or free from the chain of Dukkha. Then it endeavours to show interdependence and causal relationship of dharmas or phenomenal events by illustrating some research findings about effects of food on physical and mental functions, similar to the causal relationship of the twelve links in the process of arising and ceasing.

II- A

The cycle of our thought process starts from ignorance (*Abidhya*). Ignorance of the truth refers to the illusion of things from their actuality, from reality. For example, a child who has first seen fire touches it being unknown that it is hot. It is a kind of delusion from nominal realities. There are so many things in the nature and our social as well as in belief systems and behaviour that keep us in limitation from perceiving the truth. Illusionary and false impressions get ingrained in our mind in such a way that a person remains in complex state of being unable to distinguish actual nature of things and its illusion. The process goes in many cases unknowingly and ignorance to the reality of things leads a person's thinking process into the second component- 'Mental formation' (*Sanskara*). Continuous actions and experiences of worldly phenomena through a certain framework of doing and perceiving phenomena and events develops our mind-set in such a condition that we have a tendency to see and get what we want so see and possess. To be aware of such desire of reception and perception is the third component- the consciousness (*Bighyana*). This conscious mentality now makes its focus on making relation between the body and objects through our five senses which actually activate our body. The relation between the body and external objects are established by our physical being including sight, tactile feeling smells etc. It is our ability to recognize objects and ideas, mental labelling and acts, and basic consciousness (Hunter, 2012, p. 14). In other words it is the stage of the connection between mind and matter- it is called

the Name and Form (*Namarupa*), the fourth link of dependent origination. As soon as the link between objects and body through the senses takes place, the senses transmit the characteristics of the things to the mind. The interlink between the five senses along with their coordination to the sixth sense is the six-sense spheres (*Shadayatana*), the fifth component. Information to the conscience through the senses performs judgement on the basis of contact with phenomena, and experience with them engraves in the mind as *sanskara* and provides a mental impression- the contact or *sparshas*, the sixth sphere. As a result, we receive meaning or attain perception accordance with our *sanskara*, and this is called feeling (*vedana*)- the seventh component. The feeling intensifies volitional impulses which concentrate on the need and expectation we have had and this leads to acceptance and rejection of the objects or events on the basis of our conditioning. When things of our likes are before us then our mind shows strong and constant wish and attempt to get them. This kind of mentality is craving (*Tenaha*), the eighth component. Consequently, we have got the habit and mentality of seeing things and events in a biased attitude with light of our own viewpoints of objects and people. Our actions are more related to our impulses rather than the actual reality (Wallin, 2007, p. 31). In course of time such experiences develop tendency to be mentally attached or detached to things accordance with the value systems we have been familiarized with and accustomed to. Sensuality, concept of me and mine, fear of death and other desires of attaining things of one's likes ultimately leads to attachment/ clinging (*Upadana*), the ninth component of the wheel of dependent origination. In this stage we have been in such conditions of life, both physically and mentally, which influences patterns of behavior, character and aspirations for certain sets of actions. We are almost fixed in our mind and action. Up to now a person may have possibility to change himself or herself if reflection upon the ways he or she is so far indoctrinated is properly done. He or she can realize the state of delusion and rebirth (means getting into the path of truth) with all kinds of new possibilities (Erikson, 1968). This stage is becoming (*Bhava*), the tenth component of the wheel. This becoming is the complete stage of ignorance, and it is very difficult for a person to have change in this level because everything he/ she has got so far has been indoctrinated from the very wrong path of ignorance. Wisdom has got obliterated due to already occupied set beliefs in the mind from ignorance. Consequently, the stray journey has come to such a place or distance of the of journey that he or she can't return but continue the journey- that is going ahead in the same path of ignorance which is

called the Birth or *Jati*- the eleventh component. Birth here refers to the 'birth of the moment' rather than a physical birth of a new life (Hunter, 2012, p. 16). The last one is the decay or death (Jaramaran), which does not refer the physical death but a person's complete failure of knowing the truth, or reality of things. It is the stage in which a person's ability to know the real is dead. As a result, a person is now in the cycle of suffering throughout his life time, unable to come out of attachment, from aspirations of false things until the physical death. It is due to ignorance we cherish, the illusions of the existence of permanence of things and of the soul which is according to Buddhism false attitude, and this is called delusion. It is the main reason of suffering in life. It is because of ignorance we crave for existence and for non-existence. Similarly, it is ignorance that makes us cling to pleasures of the senses, to pleasant experiences, to idea of an independent, permanent self. Bucknell (1999) quoting Pali, Sanskrit and Chinese texts about 'The doctrine of Conditioned Arising' shows the chain relation of the twelve *niddana* in the following ways:

- Conditioned by ignorance (*avijja-paccaya*) are activities (*sankhara*).
- Conditioned by activities is consciousness (*vinnana*).
- Conditioned by consciousness is name-and-form (*nama-rupa*).
- Conditioned by name-and-form is the six-fold sense-base (*saldyatana*).
- Conditioned by the six-fold sense-base is contact (*phassa*).
- Conditioned by contact is feeling (*yedana*).
- Conditioned by feeling is craving (*tanha*).
- Conditioned by craving is clinging (*upadana*).
- Conditioned by clinging is becoming (*bhava*).
- Conditioned by becoming is birth (*jati*).
- Conditioned by birth are aging-and-death (*jara-marana*), grief, lamentation, pain, sorrow, and despair.

Thus, is the arising of this entire mass of suffering (Bucknell, 1999, p. 311-312).

This cyclical interpretation does not distribute of the twelve components into three lifetimes; the past, present and future. Rather, it divides them into three groups, and these are defilements (*Klesha*), actions (*Karma*), and sufferings (*Duhkha*). Ignorance, craving and clinging belong to the group of defilements. Mental formation and becoming belong to the group of actions. The remaining seven- consciousness, name and form, the six senses, contact, feeling, birth, and old age and death belong to

the group of sufferings.

To summarize, our ignorance to the actual nature of things and our failure to perceive them as they are cause defilements. The defilement makes our mind impure. The mental impurities result in actions, and actions(now of the past, but not of the previous life) have resulted in the formulation of habit-energy at present and so will the present habits be the wishes of the future in form of rebirth- not of another life but of other moments of this life in future - which can be called rebirth. In other words, they result in consciousness, in name and form, in the six senses, in contact between the six senses and the objects of the six senses, in feeling which is born until our old age and death, and thus captivating us in the predicament of suffering and suffering.

II- B

As we have mentioned above, the dependent origination principle says that an effect/s events does have various interrelated conditions to cause it/them. Let's see how human body as an organ is biophysically and psychologically interlinked in functioning of the body system. Smeltzer et al. (2011) say that each human body has its own "mechanisms for adjusting internal conditions and they promote the normal body state of each organism and its survival. Those mechanisms are compensatory in nature and work to restore balance in the body" (Smeltzer et al., 2011, p. 79). From our ontological information and experience, each living being is a living system and each of us as an organism gets information internally (within body) and externally (from the environment). In winter we often face common cold, in summer we suffer from sweating and dehydration. The world environment is changed on the basis of the sun heat and position of other planets and stars. The rainfall in the spring and summer brings new energy and liveliness in the nature and so many creatures get plenty of food resources during these seasons. Consequently, most of the plants, animals and insects get energy for mating and transferring genes. This cycle of seasons is dependent on the solar system and the earth's revolving the sun and the whole solar system is dependent on the universe's functioning, much of which seem beyond our conversation and perception. Nevertheless, Buddhist philosophy takes it as process of material world or elements, not the function or performance accordance with the will, conscience and consciousness of any supernatural power.

Smeltzer et al. (2011) claim that our body needs "steady state (balance within between and among internal state of organisms by physiological and biochemical

process) “within the internal and environment, each exchanging information and matter” (Smeltzer et al., 2011, p. 79). When a change in the system of an organ or mechanisms of the body as a whole occurs, it creates a response in the system. The new perceived negative impact in the body environment (steady system) becomes a challenge, which in medical terms becomes a stress (it does not mean here psychological). When a person or the internal system of an organism cannot cope with or make adaptation/adjustment to the new challenge than problems in the body start increasing. The causes of challenge in adaptation for steady state of the body may related to many factors and their effects even up to cellular tissue and organ levels (Smeltzer et al., 2011, p.80). A stressor (internal or external agent causing stress in the body) can have effect on physiologic, emotional, cognitive or behaviour changes in an individual. According to Smeltzer et al. (2011), stressors exist in many forms and categories. They may be described as physical (cold, heat, chemical agents) Physiological (pain, fatigue) and psychological (fear of losing job/falling etc.) So, let's see few examples from our day-to-day experience, understanding and scientific research-based findings in order to understand how dependent origination doctrine of the Buddha have scientific grounds on explanation of origination and cessation of worldly phenomena. According to the Buddha failure to understanding the doctrine is cause of human suffering.

Smeltzer et al. (2011) further explains that when a stressor gets into cognition of a person, he/she consciously or unconsciously reacts to manage the situation. As a result, the person behaviour, speech, responses become somehow different from usual state. It brings changes or effects on various organs, nerves and cells as well as in thinking. Physiological and psychological signs and systems such as restlessness, fatigue, depression, loss of interest, hyperacidity, and difficulty in sleeping, inflammation, perspiration, headache, pain, fever, and change in appetite are some of the changed signs and symptoms. Five stress agents such as physical agents i.e., heat; chemical agents i.e., toxic elements, glucose, hydrochloric acid etc; infectious agents i.e., viruses, bacteria, fungi etc.; disordered immune responses i.e. only one kidney, disordered in adjustment and become either hypoactive or hyperactive; genetic disorders: genetic defects in keeping body in steady state and causing stressors in internal adaptation are responsible to bring changes in our body, mind and behaviour. In narrating the experiences of sea travellers of ancient and mediaeval periods from China, Greek and other nations, Huppert et al. (2017) point out what the experienced travellers and medicine practitioners reported of

how the sea travellers were affected by both external environment and the food they ate:

While the Greeks primarily focused on the external world as the source of triggers, the Chinese, in accordance with their medical theory, basically emphasized internal imbalances or deficits of vital substances in the body. The external world, however, was also influential as the source of pathogens that could upset the body's harmonious balance. The search for the causes of symptoms like dizziness, height intolerance, or motion sickness took place in ancient China within the prevailing view of the body. In the case of dizziness, the external pathogen was primarily the wind, which was generally associated with movement. It was assumed that the wind could penetrate a weakened body and induce symptoms and cause illness. This was then reflected in the body by disordered movements and sudden appearances. The wind was described as an especially aggressive force that gets everything moving (tumbling and falling) and can lead to chaotic conditions in the world and to illness in the human body. It is also instrumental in promoting the entry of other factors such as heat, moisture, and cold. Its connection with the liver, which was considered to play an important role in the storage of blood, could play havoc with the body. Blood is basically a material, and if there is a deficit of blood, the more mutable features of Qi cannot connect with it, thus leading to symptoms of an internal wind, which expresses itself in dizziness, tics, and twitches (Huppert et al. 2017, p. 54).

To survive, all living beings have to have food. The only source of food is the mother earth- that means whether we extract our food from plants or animal in any form is from nature because both primary and secondary sources of food are dependent on the complex system of nature. And every food is composed of various chemical substances. Yadav et al. (2015) writes:

Food is a complex mixture of chemical substances which fulfil nutritive roles such as protein, fat, carbohydrate, vitamins and minerals. In addition, food also contains other substances such as flavours, colours, food additives, artificial and natural contaminants and other products of plant and animal metabolism. Many of these substances have their own intrinsic toxicity (Yadav et al., 2015, p. 21).

The intrinsic toxicity plays vital role in making positive and negative effects on health. McCann and Ames (2005) on doing a research on food consumption patterns and its relation to brain functioning find that brain networks are associated with the control of feeding and that makes association in processing in cognition and emotion. Thompson and Wrangham (2008) research on 'Diet and reproductive function in wild female at Kibale National Park', Uganda shows a diet that is rich in omega-3 fatty acids showed support on cognitive processes in humans and animals. Diets with high saturated fat reduced molecular substrates that support cognitive processing and increasing the risk of neurological dysfunction in both humans and animals. Freeman et al. (2006) on their research article on 'Omega-3 fatty acids: evidence basis for treatment and future research in psychiatry: A consensus' report that food with omega-3 fatty acids can play active role in curing disorder in a person.

It is estimated that more than two million sailors died of scurvy from 15th to 17th centuries. During voyage of three months or so on everybody on the ship would be living on preserved foods. Huppert et al. (2017) pointed that in preserved food of the time for a long time did have less or no vitamins, so a variety of nutritional diseases would be likely: lack of vitamin B1 would cause beriberi; no vitamin B3 would cause pellagra; and vitamin C, of course, scurvy. When people knew that the scurvy is just the result of lack of vitamin C or lack of fresh fruit and vegetables during the long voyage in the sea, the travellers supplied the consumption of fresh vegetables or source of vitamin C during sea travelling, the death rate from the disease got significantly decreased (Huppert et al., 2017, p. 1-13). But that diagnosis eluded doctors and explorers for centuries. So, lack of scientific knowledge on something is itself a problem and when people know the facts about a problem it is solved.

Gibbons (2007) through his research in paleontological evidence suggests that there is a direct relationship between access to food and brain size. Human and animal survival ability and age depends mostly on the nutritional types in their food. Larger brains in humanoids are associated with the development of cooking skills, access to food, energy savings and upright walking and running.

Von Ruestenet al. (2013) in their eight year long research based on 'the European Prospective Investigation into Cancer and Nutrition (EPIC)-Potsdam study, with 23,531 participants, found 'higher intakes of whole-grain bread, raw vegetables, coffee and cakes and cookies were found to be significantly associated with a lower risk of

chronic diseases. Conversely, higher intakes of low-fat dairy, butter, red meat and sauce were associated with higher risks of chronic diseases' (Von Ruesten et al., 2013, p. 418).

Biswas (2006) from an experimental study finds that development of chronic stress on human people depends upon specific physical (DehaPrakriti) and mental (Manas Prakriti) constitution. Vata-pitta Prakriti (DehaPrakriti) Raja Prakriti (Manas Prakriti) are more susceptible to stress situation. Antioxidants such as *Shatavari* *asparagus racemosus*, and *GuduchiTinosporacordifolia* could be useful in the treatment of chronic stress. and practice of yoga has a significant antistress power (Biswas, 2006, p. 202). The plant *Jussiaearepens* belonging to *Onagraceae* family, is a well-known for having antidiabetic, anti-inflammatory, hepatoprotective, antibacterial agents. In Papua, New Guinea, the leaves and stems of the plant are used as contraceptive in preventing pregnancy (Biswas, 2006, p. 181). Can we imagine of any supernatural power behind such affect besides food? No.

Bandyopadhyay (1981) finds that head and chest circumference of preschool and school children from economically backward families was below Indian standard and clinical findings revealed the presence of vitamin A, B and D deficiency as well as anaemia among the children. *Salmonella Typhi*, a facultative intracellular bacterium is responsible for instigating Typhoid, causes significant mortality and morbidity in the developing world. Major reason behind it is more unhygienic condition of living and every day's food consumption patterns without proper management of cleanliness, which mostly facilitates the invasion of *Salmonella*.

The case with covid -19 is also unprecedented and horrible. Dong et al. (2020) show that covid -19 pandemics pose a threat to mental health with 16–18% of participants showing symptoms of anxiety and depression. Xiong et al. (2020) show that the Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic has led to unprecedented hazards to mental health globally. The effects on psychological outcomes of the general population and its associated risk factors are found relatively high rates. The symptoms of anxiety are found (6.33% to 50.9%), depression (14.6% to 48.3%), post-traumatic stress disorder (7% to 53.8%), psychological distress (34.43% to 38%), and stress (8.1% to 81.9%) are reported in the general population during the COVID-19 pandemic in China, Spain, Italy, Iran, the US, Turkey, Nepal, and Denmark (Xiong et al., 2020, p. 56-62).

All the above researches are relevant but only few representative ones to indicate

very close affinity between our body, mind and external world from which we all human beings get sources of making the body and mind either strong or weak. The better we know what things we need to consume and how we get physically and mentally affected by the intake, the better we can manage ourselves. The relation of worldly phenomena or interdependency of living beings and non-living ones is the main determinate of our body and mind.

CONCLUSION

According to Buddhist philosophy a person's perception continually ebbs and flows. The process depends on the type of emotions one feels. Its management in daily life is related to the strength of the person's intelligence, knowledge and understanding. It is his ability on management that makes a person either happy or sad, excited or hesitant about people, objects and events around them. The perception is both conscious and partly sub-conscious. It is the process of responses to the stressors from outside and results inside body. The process is also partially of the internal mechanisms as we have been suggested by some of the scientific research findings above.

Buddhist philosophy accepts that desire inculcate in our mind because our body and mind itself is composed of five great phenomena/ PanchhaMahatwatwa (earth, sky, fire, air, water). Seeking shelter and food, clothing and medical care, love and sex, career and comfort, etc. are not against the law of nature. The Dependent Origination is mainly concerned to define and explain the nature phenomenal interdependent, origination and cessation of events and nature of our psychology or the way it perceives the phenomena, with continual conscious process. When a person in this process fails to perceive the ever-changing nature of material things due to illusions and deviates from the reality then he or she misunderstands the relation of origination and cessation of things and event on the one hand, and shows craving, clinging or attachment to the false reality of cause-and-effect relationship, 'permanent Self' and 'supernatural power' on the other. This kind of delusion of reality is the only cause of all suffering. And what is the solution of this suffering is to know the reality of nature. And the right way to move ahead on the path of truth or be safe from suffering is to understand 'The Four Noble Truths' and practise of the 'Eightfold Path' the Buddha has given mankind. The main reason of explaining the nature of the ways the phenomena exist; and events, either in nature or in human society take place, is to help human beings understand the true

nature of happening and make them understand how they can lessen themselves from the suffering. I would like to end this article with what the Buddha precisely said in the SammaditthiSutta of *MajhimaNikaya* about cause of human suffering and the only way to be free from it:

And what is the origin of suffering? It is craving, which brings renewal of being, is accompanied by delight and lust, and delights in this and that; that is, craving for sensual pleasures, craving for being, and craving for non-being. This is called the origin of suffering.

And what is the cessation of suffering? It is the remainder-less fading away and ceasing, the giving up, relinquishing, letting go, and rejecting of that same craving. This is called the cessation of suffering (Nanamoli and Bodhi, 1995, p. 135).

And a wise man who has understood the doctrine of Dependent Origination understands how to be ever happy as The Buddha, as mentioned in the Sangathavaga of Samyuttanikaya, said thus:

Truly, the wise do not pretend,

For they have understood the way of the world.

By final knowledge the wise are quenched:

They have crossed over attachment to the world (Nanamoli and Bodhi, 1995, p 112).

To sum up, Buddhist philosophy is mainly concerned to define and explain the nature of phenomenal existence and explains that most of the human beings suffer in life both physically and mentally due to their failures on understanding interdependency of worldly phenomena and their connection to human body and mind. When a person fails to perceive the phenomena on co-dependent condition, suffering starts because the illusionary perception deceives on understanding the true nature of things and events. The false perception makes him or her crave for or make attachment to the false reality of 'permanency of things. And the solution of this suffering is to know the reality of nature: the ways the phenomena in the universe and events in human life originate, exist temporarily and cease.

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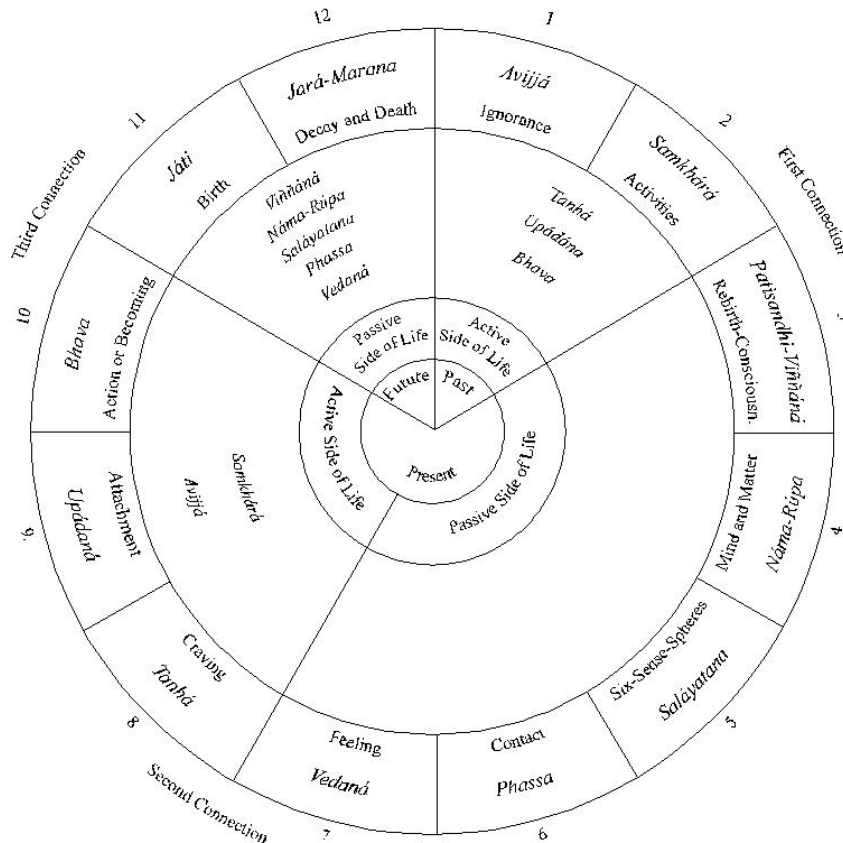
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APPENDIX-I

The Wheel of Life



Source: encyclopediaofbuddhism.org/wiki/Pratityasamutpada