

Buddhism Moral Courage Approach on Fear, Ethical Conduct and Karma

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Abstract

The essay aims to explore the significant essential of Buddhism Moral Courage specifically in three terms of fear, ethical conduct and karma. This paper delves into the profound insights that Buddhism offers on the interconnected themes of fear, ethical conduct, and karma, with a specific focus on the transformative power of moral courage used critical analysis. Drawing from Buddhist teachings, scriptures, and philosophical perspectives, this study aims to illuminate the relevance and significance of moral courage in navigating the complexities of fear, ethical decision-making, and the law of karma. The first section examines fear in Buddhism as a universal human experience, exploring its psychological implications and its hindrance to ethical behavior. The paper then introduces the concept of moral courage, defined as the fearless ability to act ethically despite facing fear, uncertainty, or potential consequences. Emphasizing the teachings of impermanence, non-self, and the Four Noble Truths, the study illustrates how moral courage is instrumental in addressing and overcoming fear. The second section ethical conduct and the paramitas delves into the essential role of ethical conduct (sila) in Buddhism, emphasizing the Five Precepts and the significance of mindfulness in upholding moral principles. It demonstrates how moral courage intertwines with ethical conduct, empowering individuals to act with integrity, compassion, and wisdom in both mundane and challenging circumstances. Furthermore, the third section scopes on the Law of Karm, the paper explores the intricate relationship between moral courage and the law of karma. It discusses the concept of intentional actions (karma) and their impact on one's present experiences and future outcomes. The study reveals how moral courage motivates individuals to take responsibility for their actions and embrace the consequences, fostering a virtuous cycle of positive karma and ethical living. this study highlights the significance of moral courage in Buddhism's moral framework, providing a unique perspective on fear, ethical conduct, and karma.

Keywords: Buddhism; Moral Courage; Fear; Ethical; Conduct; Karma

Introduction

Buddhist moral courage is a concept rooted in the teachings of Buddhism, emphasizing the ability to overcome fear and act ethically and compassionately despite facing challenges

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and potential negative consequences. Provide an overview of the significance of fear and moral courage in Buddhism. Introduce the concept of moral courage as the ability to act ethically despite facing fear. Moral courage in Buddhism is the ability to act ethically and fearlessly, guided by wisdom, compassion, and the understanding of impermanence and non-attachment. It involves standing firm in upholding virtuous principles and overcoming fear to make choices that benefit both oneself and others on the path to enlightenment and liberation.

Encouraging Ethical Leadership in societies often face challenges due to a lack of ethical leadership (Thepa, et al, 2022). By promoting and nurturing moral courage among leader, whether in politics, business, or other fields, society can benefit from decision-makers such who prioritize the greater good over personal interests. Many social issues stem from inequalities, discrimination, and injustice. The cultivating moral courage in individuals are encouraged to confront and challenge oppressive systems. Buddhism's emphasis on compassion and non-harming provides a strong foundation for advocating for social justice and standing up against discrimination and marginalization (Gilbert & Huxter, 2023). Societal issues are often exacerbated by polarized views and lack of empathetic communication. The promoting moral courage can engage in compassionate dialogue, actively listening to different perspectives without fear of being wrong (Gilbert, 2020). This approach fosters understanding, cooperation, and the potential for finding common ground and solutions.

Applying Buddhist moral courage to societal issues involves encouraging ethical leadership (Vu & Tran, 2021; Sutamchai, 2021), addressing injustices, overcoming fear of change, promoting environmental stewardship, nurturing compassionate dialogue, combating corruption, building empathy and tolerance, and supporting vulnerable groups. Buddhism teaches kindness and care for the vulnerable and disadvantaged. By fostering moral courage, individuals can actively support and protect those who are marginalized, advocating for social welfare and inclusivity. Based on embracing these principles in individuals and society can work towards a more compassionate, just, and harmonious world.

The First Section: Fear in Buddhism

In Buddhism, moral courage is often referred to as "Virya" (Sanskrit) or "Viriya" (Pali) (Xu, 2018), which translates to "effort," "energy," or "heroic perseverance." (Wang, 2023). It is one of the key qualities emphasized in the cultivation of virtuous behavior and ethical conduct. Moral courage involves the willingness to stand up for what is right, even in the face of adversity, discomfort, or fear. Explore the different types of fear, including fear of failure, fear of rejection, and fear of being wrong. Examine the root causes of fear, such as attachment, aversion, and ignorance. Fear is a common human emotion that can arise in various circumstances, often hindering individuals from acting in accordance with their values and principles (Anālayo, 2022). Moral courage involves recognizing and acknowledging fear without allowing it to dictate one's actions. Instead, individuals act with determination, resolve, and fearlessness, guided by their commitment to ethical behavior. One of the core teachings in Buddhism is the concept of impermanence (Anicca) (Nikaya, et al, 1995), which highlights the ever-changing nature of existence. Understanding impermanence helps individuals realize that fear, like all mental states, is impermanent and subject to change. This realization allows them to confront fear with equanimity and make ethical decisions based on wisdom.

This courage is closely tied to the practice of mindfulness, compassion, and understanding the nature of fear itself. Let's explore how Buddhist moral courage helps individuals overcome various fears:

Fear of Failure: In Buddhism, the concept of impermanence is central. Understanding that everything is constantly changing and that failure is a natural part of life allows one to approach challenges with a more open mind. Buddhist moral courage encourages individuals to embrace failures as learning opportunities rather than sources of shame (Engel, et al, 2021). By letting go of the attachment to success or failure, one can act with integrity and take the right course of action without being paralyzed by the fear of failing.

Fear of Ostracism: The fear of being rejected or excluded by others can be powerful and prevent people from expressing their authentic selves or standing up for what they believe in. Buddhist moral courage involves developing compassion and empathy, recognizing the interconnectedness of all beings. This understanding helps in breaking down the barriers that create a sense of separateness. By acknowledging our shared humanity, individuals can act with integrity and fearlessly express their values, even if they face social ostracism or disapproval.

Fear of Being Wrong: Accepting that nobody is infallible and that making mistakes is a part of being human is a fundamental teaching in Buddhism. It encourages humility and openness to learning from others. Buddhist moral courage helps individuals confront the fear of being wrong by cultivating a growth mindset and a willingness to adapt their views when confronted with new information or insights. This courage enables them to engage in constructive discussions and learn from their errors, leading to personal growth and wisdom.

Fear of Change: Society often resists change due to fear of the unknown or fear of failure. Buddhist moral courage can help individuals and communities embrace change with a sense of openness and adaptability. Recognizing impermanence and non-attachment can alleviate the fear associated with change, allowing society to evolve in a more positive direction.

In general, the study of Engel, et al. (2021) conducted to the theory regarding business owners coping with failure anxiety, gives fresh insights into resilience in the face of venture challenges, and has practical consequences for entrepreneurs who frequently face failure fear. According to their answering the theoretical question of what allows entrepreneurs to effectively cope with venture obstacles while minimizing the stressful and unpleasant aspects of experiencing entrepreneurial fear of failure. Cacciotti et al. (2016) that empirical research involving fear of failure is a common and unavoidable aspect of the entrepreneurial journey. This anxiety can both encourage and impede good entrepreneurial performance. Moral courage is closely tied to the idea of non-attachment (Anatta) to the fruits of one's actions (Oh, 2022). Rather than being fixated on the potential outcomes or consequences of their ethical choices, individuals act from a place of inner integrity and virtue, without seeking personal gain or avoiding discomfort. Mindfulness (Sati) is a key practice in Buddhism, encouraging individuals to be present in the moment and observe their thoughts and emotions with clarity and non-judgment (Thupten, 2019). By cultivating mindfulness, individuals can recognize the arising of fear and its effects on their behavior, allowing them to respond with moral courage and ethical action. Buddhist teachings often highlight the stories of bodhisattvas, enlightened beings who embody moral courage in their actions to benefit others. These role models serve as inspiration for practitioners to develop their own moral courage and follow the path of ethical conduct.

Compassion and Fearlessness keys of Karuna is another crucial aspect of moral courage in Buddhism (Alamo Santos, 2021). The cultivation of compassion for oneself and others provides the strength and motivation to act ethically and fearlessly. Compassion helps break

down the barriers of self-concern and fosters a sense of responsibility toward the well-being of all beings. Buddhism teaches kindness and care for the vulnerable and disadvantaged. By fostering moral courage, individuals can actively support and protect those who are marginalized, advocating for social welfare and inclusivity. In engagement with Buddhism, the qualities of compassion and fearlessness hold significant importance and are central to the practice of the Dharma (Buddhist teachings). These virtues can be understood and applied in various ways to enhance one's understanding and practice of Buddhism (King, 2022).

Compassion (Karuna) is at the heart of Buddhism, as it aligns with the fundamental teaching of alleviating suffering for oneself and others. Engaged Buddhism emphasizes the active and practical application of compassion in the world. This includes empathetic concern for the welfare of all beings, especially those who are marginalized, oppressed, or facing hardship. Engaged Buddhists critique the application of compassion by encouraging socially engaged actions, such as advocating for social justice, promoting environmental stewardship, and providing aid to those in need. By cultivating compassion, individuals are inspired to take positive action to address societal and environmental challenges. Fearlessness (Abhaya) in Buddhism does not imply the absence of fear but rather the capacity to confront and transform fear (Fisher & Kumar, 2021). Engaged Buddhists critique fearlessness as the willingness to challenge oppressive systems, social injustices, and unethical practices. Fearlessness empowers individuals to speak out against injustice, even when facing resistance or threats. By embodying fearlessness, engaged practitioners promote change and transformation within society while upholding the principles of non-violence and compassion.

Explore how compassion and fearlessness are critiqued for application in engaged application in social activism under the context of engaged Buddhism, compassion and fearlessness serve as guiding principles in social activism (Dickman, 2022). Instead of passively accepting the status quo, engaged Buddhists critique complacency and apathy, encouraging active involvement in addressing societal issues. By combining compassion with fearlessness, practitioners can effectively engage in social action while maintaining ethical integrity and promoting non-harming. Buddhism cultivation of empathy engaged Buddhists emphasize the cultivation of empathy, which is closely related to compassion (Zalta, 2022). Through empathetic understanding, individuals can better grasp the experiences and suffering of others. This understanding informs compassionate responses and drives transformative actions to address the root causes of suffering in the world. Encouraging non-attachment to outcomes engaged Buddhists actively work towards positive change, they also critique attachment to specific outcomes. Recognizing the impermanent nature of the world, they emphasize the importance of practicing with a non-attached mind. This approach allows practitioners to continue their compassionate efforts without being disheartened by potential setbacks or limited results. Compassion and fearlessness in engaged Buddhism extend to embracing diversity and inclusivity (Das, 2023). Engaged practitioners critique discrimination, prejudice, and exclusionary attitudes. They strive to create inclusive spaces and advocate for the rights and dignity of all individuals, regardless of race, gender, ethnicity, or other social identifiers.

The critique of applying compassion and fearlessness in engaged Buddhism revolves around actively embodying these virtues in compassionate action and fearlessly challenging oppressive systems. Engaged Buddhists recognize the interconnectedness of all beings and engage in transformative practices to alleviate suffering and promote justice, peace, and environmental harmony. Through the integration of compassion, fearlessness, empathy, and non-attachment, engaged practitioners create positive impacts within society while upholding the core principles of Buddhist ethics and wisdom.

The Second Section: Ethical Conduct and the Paramitas

Buddhism places great importance on ethical conduct (Sila) as a fundamental aspect of the spiritual path. Sila comprises the Five Precepts (for lay practitioners) or the Eight Precepts (for monastics and serious lay practitioners), which serve as guidelines for ethical living (Lee, 2022). Moral courage is an essential component of upholding these precepts, even in challenging situations. Ethical conduct, known as "Sila" in Buddhism, forms the foundation of the spiritual path. Sila refers to living in a way that is morally upright, abstaining from harmful actions, and cultivating positive qualities (Roy, 2022). The Five Precepts are the basic guidelines for ethical conduct in Buddhism. They include refraining from killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, false speech, and intoxicants. Adhering to these precepts promotes harmlessness, honesty, and moral integrity in one's actions. (Barua & Barua, 2019). For monastics, ethical conduct is especially important as it directly impacts their spiritual progress. Monastic rules, known as Vinaya, provide detailed guidance on ethical behavior and maintaining harmony within the monastic community (Prakash, 2020). The Paramitas in Theravada Buddhism, on the other hand, are a set of ten virtuous qualities as the path of an enlightened being committed to liberating all sentient beings. These Paramitas or Ten Perfections in a slightly different manner, also known as the "Ten Parami" are central to the development of moral courage and are essential for one's progress towards enlightenment (Raksat, 2019). Let's explore the connection between moral courage and the cultivation of Paramitas. The Ten Paramis in Theravada Buddhism are virtues or qualities that practitioners develop to progress on the path towards enlightenment (Bodhi) and ultimately attain liberation (Nirvana). These Paramis are:

Dana Parami: Generosity – The practice of giving selflessly and without attachment, helping others and cultivating a generous spirit.

Sila Parami: Virtue – Upholding ethical conduct and observing the Five Precepts or higher moral precepts to refrain from harmful actions.

Nekkhamma Parami: Renunciation – Letting go of attachment to worldly desires and cultivating contentment with a simple and detached lifestyle.

Panna Parami: Wisdom – Developing insight and understanding of the nature of reality, impermanence, and non-self (Anicca, Dukkha, Anatta).

Viriya Parami: Effort – Making persistent and diligent efforts in the practice of meditation and the development of wholesome qualities.

Khanti Parami: Patience – Cultivating patience and forbearance in the face of difficulties and challenges, both internally and externally.

Sacca Parami: Truthfulness – Honesty and commitment to truthfulness in speech and actions.

Adhitthana Parami: Determination – Having unwavering resolve and determination to progress on the path to enlightenment.

Metta Parami: Loving-Kindness – Cultivating boundless love and compassion for all beings, wishing for their well-being and happiness.

Upekkha Parami: Equanimity – Developing balanced and non-reactive equanimity towards the ups and downs of life and the experiences of pleasure and pain.

Ethical conduct (Sila) is a foundational and integral part of the Noble Eightfold Path in Buddhism. The Noble Eightfold Path is a core teaching of the Buddha and serves as a comprehensive guide for leading a moral and enlightened life (Tonni, 2021: p. 23). Sila is the second aspect of the path and encompasses the principles of right speech, right action, and right livelihood. Let's explore the critical in-depth topic of Sila within the context of the Noble Eightfold Path. The Role of Sila in the Path to Liberation is considered essential for spiritual progress and liberation in Buddhism. According to the Noble Eightfold Path aims to eradicate suffering (dukkha) and lead to enlightenment (nibbana/nirvana) (Bodhi, 1984: p. 63). Sila provides the necessary foundation for cultivating a peaceful and disciplined mind, preparing practitioners for deeper meditation and insight practices (Khetjoi, 2021). Right Speech (Samma Vaca) involves refraining from lying, divisive speech, harsh speech, and idle chatter. It encourages truthful, harmonious, and compassionate communication. Practicing right speech helps individuals develop skillful communication, foster trust, and maintain harmony in relationships. Right Action (Samma Kammanta) entails refraining from killing, stealing, and sexual misconduct. It promotes non-harming, integrity, and respect for others' boundaries. Right Action aligns with the principle of ahimsa (non-violence) and forms the ethical foundation for living a responsible and compassionate life. Right Livelihood (Samma Ajiva) involves earning a living in ways that are honest, ethical, and do not harm others. It encourages individuals to avoid professions that involve exploiting or causing suffering to sentient beings. Right Livelihood ensures that one's occupation is aligned with the principles of Sila and contributes positively to society. Sila and Moral development plays a pivotal role in moral development. By cultivating Sila, individuals develop a heightened sense of conscience, integrity, and personal responsibility. Ethical behavior becomes a natural expression of their commitment to leading a virtuous and wholesome life. Sila as the Basis for meditation as practice of Sila lays the groundwork for successful meditation.

A mind burdened with remorse from unethical actions is unlikely to attain deep concentration and insight. On the other hand, a mind that is at peace due to ethical living is more receptive to meditation practices and the cultivation of wisdom. Sila promotes harmonious coexistence within communities and society. When individuals uphold ethical conduct, conflicts are minimized, and trust is established. Ethical living fosters a sense of collective responsibility and care for the well-being of others. Challenges in practicing Sila is crucial, it can be challenging to maintain consistently, especially in a complex and interconnected world. Various ethical dilemmas may arise, requiring careful discernment and balancing of competing interests. The Buddha's teachings on ethical conduct provide guidance for navigating such complexities. The Interplay of Sila, Samadhi, and Panna is intrinsically connected to mental discipline (Samadhi) and wisdom (Panna) (Drury, 2022). A virtuous life supports the development of concentration and insight, and in turn, Samadhi and Panna strengthen ethical conduct. The three aspects of the path reinforce and complement each other. While the Five Precepts provide a foundational ethical framework, Sila goes beyond mere rule-following. It involves cultivating a compassionate and selfless attitude in all actions, extending ethical considerations beyond the scope of specific precepts.

In Theravada Buddhism, practitioners aspire to develop and perfect these Ten Paramis throughout their journey on the path. By cultivating these virtues, individuals purify their minds and gradually overcome defilements, ultimately leading to the cessation of suffering and the realization of Nibbana (Nirvana). It's essential to recognize that while the Ten Paramis in Theravada Buddhism share some similarities with the Ten Paramitas of Mahayana Buddhism, *Res Militaris*, vol.13, n°3, March Spring 2023

there are also distinct interpretations and practices within each tradition. The connection between moral courage and the cultivation of these virtuous qualities (Paramitas) is pivotal in developing a strong ethical foundation on the Buddhist path, leading to the liberation of oneself and others from suffering. Cultivating contentment (Santutthi) is essential in ethical conduct. Being satisfied with what one has and not harboring excessive desires reduces the inclination towards harmful actions driven by greed or jealousy (Acharya Buddharakkhita, 1996: Dhp. 118). Ethical conduct includes using speech that is truthful, beneficial, and non-harmful. Practicing right speech involves avoiding lies, divisive speech, harsh words, and idle chatter. By speaking mindfully and compassionately, individuals foster trust and understanding in their interactions with others. (Thanissara Bhikkhu, 1997: MN. 58). Cultivate Loving-Kindness (Metta) emphasis that Loving-kindness is an integral part of ethical conduct, as it encourages individuals to treat others with kindness and compassion. By developing metta, individuals foster harmonious relationships and contribute to the well-being of all beings. (The Amaravati Sangha, 2004: SN. 143-152). Remember that ethical conduct (Sila) is an integral part of the Noble Eightfold Path, the Buddha's prescription for the cessation of suffering and the path to enlightenment. By practicing ethical conduct, individuals not only create harmony within themselves and society but also pave the way towards spiritual growth and liberation.

Ethical Conduct (Sila) and the Ten Perfections (Paramis) in Theravada Buddhism from an objective standpoint critical analysis beyond the Ethical Conduct (Sila) in Theravada Buddhism as critics might argue that focusing solely on ethical conduct might lead to a rigid adherence to rules without developing a deeper understanding of the underlying intentions and motivations. Overemphasis on external observance of precepts might not necessarily lead to genuine ethical development or moral maturity. Moreover, some may argue that an excessive preoccupation with Sila alone could lead to self-righteousness or moral superiority, where individuals judge others based solely on their external behavior rather than empathetically understanding their inner struggles and challenges. While ethical conduct is vital, some critics might also argue that an exclusive focus on Sila could overshadow the importance of meditation and wisdom (Samadhi and Panna), which are equally essential aspects of the Noble Eightfold Path leading to enlightenment.

The Ten Perfections (Paramis) in Theravada Buddhism had critics might argue that the pursuit of perfection might inadvertently fuel perfectionism, leading to feelings of inadequacy or guilt when one perceives themselves falling short of these ideals. This could create unnecessary stress and hinder one's spiritual growth. Furthermore, some critics might point out that the notion of "perfection" can be subjective and culturally influenced. What may be considered "perfect" in one culture might differ in another, leading to potential cultural biases in the understanding and practice of the Paramis. There might also be concerns that striving to cultivate all ten Paramis at once could be overwhelming, and practitioners might struggle to find a balanced and gradual approach to their development. Critics could also argue that excessive focus on the Paramis might lead to spiritual materialism, where individuals pursue these qualities to enhance their self-image or gain praise and admiration from others, rather than genuinely cultivating them for altruistic purposes. It is important to note that critiques should not be seen as diminishing the significance of Ethical Conduct (Sila) and the Ten Perfections (Paramis) in Theravada Buddhism (Marma & Kariyawasam, 2020: pp. 50-55). Instead, these critiques can serve as reminders to approach these practices with mindfulness, self-awareness, and a balanced understanding of the broader teachings of the Buddha. Ultimately, in Theravada Buddhism, Sila and Paramis are meant to complement and support each other, leading to the development of wisdom and compassion, and the realization of liberation from suffering (Nirvana). Practitioners are encouraged to approach these practices

with sincerity, humility, and a recognition of their imperfections, understanding that the path towards spiritual growth is a gradual and transformative journey.

The Third Section: The Law of Karma

The Law of Karma is a fundamental concept in Buddhism, and understanding its implications can profoundly impact one's actions and life choices. Ethical conduct in Buddhism is closely connected to the law of karma, which states that actions have consequences. By understanding the law of karma, individuals are motivated to act ethically, knowing that virtuous actions lead to positive outcomes for oneself and others (Thanissaro, 1997: AN 5.57). The Law of Karma emphasizes that intentions behind actions are crucial. Be mindful of your intentions before engaging in any action, ensuring they are driven by compassion, wisdom, and the desire to bring about positive outcomes for yourself and others. (Thanissaro, 1997: AN 6.63) Virtuous Actions or knowing that positive actions lead to positive results, strive to cultivate virtuous qualities such as generosity, kindness, and honesty. Choose actions that contribute to the well-being of all beings and avoid actions that harm yourself or others such as happening in the Dhammapada verse 117 as "If someone does anything bad, he should not do it again and again. Let him not find pleasure there, for the accumulation of evil is unpleasant." (Acharya Buddharakkhita, 1996: Dho. 117). Should a person commit evil, understand the ripple effect of Karma operates like a ripple effect, with actions and their consequences reverberating beyond the immediate moment. Consider the potential consequences of your actions on yourself and others, both in the short term and long term. (Thanissaro, 1997: AN 5.57) The Law of Karma teaches that individuals are responsible for their own actions and their subsequent outcomes. Avoid blaming external factors for your circumstances and instead take ownership of your actions and the choices you make. (Thanissaro, 1997: AN 6.63) Negative actions, such as causing harm to others, generate negative karma. Strive to avoid actions that lead to suffering for yourself and others, recognizing that harm to others ultimately leads to harm for oneself. (Acharya Buddharakkhita, 1996: Dhp. 124) Sometimes, the Law of Karma may not produce immediate results. Be patient and accepting of the unfolding of karmic consequences, trusting in the principle of cause and effect. (Thanissaro, 1997: AN 6.63) Holding onto grudges and resentment perpetuates negative karma. Practice forgiveness and compassion towards others, freeing yourself from the burden of negative emotions. (Thanissaro, 1997: AN 5.161) The words you speak can create positive or negative karma. Practice right speech, speaking truthfully, kindly, and constructively, to foster harmonious relationships and positive outcomes. (Thanissaro, 1997: MN. 58) The Law of Karma is not about fatalism but rather a call to action and responsibility. By being mindful of your intentions and actions, you have the power to shape your life and create positive conditions for your spiritual growth and well-being.

Anguttara Nikaya in Upajjhatthana Sutta: Subjects for Contemplation (Thanissaro, 1997: AN 5.57) is a significant discourse in the Pali Canon, where the Buddha discusses the workings of karma, specifically how one's actions lead to particular outcomes and experiences in the present life and beyond. The discourse emphasizes the principle of cause and effect, explaining that actions are not isolated events but are interconnected with their consequences.

Cause and Effect: The Law of Karma is based on the principle of cause and effect, where intentional actions (karma) produce results (vipaka). The Buddha illustrates how actions rooted in greed, hatred, and delusion lead to unwholesome consequences, while actions rooted in generosity, kindness, and wisdom lead to wholesome outcomes. "Karma and Its Implications in Buddhist Thought" This research report delves into various Buddhist scriptures, including

Anguttara Nikaya, to analyze the concept of karma and its implications on human life. It explores the ethical dimensions of karma and how understanding karma affects decision-making and behavior.

The Power of Intention: Anguttara Nikaya highlights that the intentions behind actions are crucial in determining their karmic potency. Positive or negative intentions influence the ethical quality of actions and the subsequent results they generate. "Karma and Rebirth in Buddhist" (Keown, D., 2013: 32) is a chapter included Buddhism: A very short introduction. This source examines the relationship between karma and the belief in rebirth, drawing insights from the teachings found in Anguttara Nikaya. It explores how the concept of karma supports the continuity of consciousness across multiple lifetimes (Taher & Nurtaz, (2023).

Multiple Lifetimes: The discourse also explores the continuity of karma across lifetimes. Actions committed in previous lives can bear fruit in the present life, and current actions shape future existences. This cyclical nature of karma underscores the concept of rebirth in Buddhism. Sheth & Parvatiyar (2022) research report focuses on the significance of intention in generating karma, drawing upon the aligning Dharma, karma (actions) and eudaimonia (well-being). It analyzes how the quality of intentions influences the moral outcomes of actions. Buddha emphasizes that each individual is responsible for their own karma. One cannot transfer the consequences of their actions to others or external factors. This teaching encourages personal accountability and empowers individuals to make positive changes in their lives. The study explores the concept of karma as presented and its implications on individual responsibility. It investigates how understanding karma motivates individuals to take charge of their actions and strive for positive change.

Non-Fatalistic Approach: The Law of Karma in Anguttara Nikaya underscores that karma is not a deterministic force, and individuals have the potential to change the course of their lives through skillful actions and cultivating wholesome qualities. Karma theory, determinism, fatalism and freedom of will by Silvestre (2017) discussed the non-fatalistic perspective of karma as taught several aspects of Buddhism. It examines how the teaching on karma empowers individuals to break free from deterministic views and take charge of their spiritual development.

By integrating the teachings from Anguttara Nikaya (PTS AN III, pp. 69-70) and incorporating insights from research reports, your discussion on the Law of Karma in Buddhism can be enriched, providing a deeper understanding of this fundamental principle in Buddhist thought. There are two essential aspects that hold significant meaning:

"People who are born, age, and die are examples of ordinary people are repulsed by people who suffer as a result of what they are subjected to. And, living as they do, I would be repulsed if I was repulsed by sentient beings subject to these things. I transcended all intoxication with health, youth, and life as one who regards renunciation as rest as long as I maintained this attitude — knowing the Dhamma without accouterments." (Thanissaro, 1997: AN 5.57)

Recognition of universal suffering is the disciple of the noble ones contemplates the universality of suffering, acknowledging that they are not the only one subject to illness, death, and the impermanence of all that is dear and appealing to them. This realization points to the First Noble Truth in Buddhism, which asserts that suffering (dukkha) is an inherent part of human existence. And understanding the Law of Karma: The disciple recognizes the law of karma, understanding that all beings are the owners of their actions, heirs to their actions, and

are influenced by their actions. They comprehend that their present and future experiences are conditioned by their past actions, and they take responsibility for the consequences of their deeds.

Analysis and critique of moral courage and the Law of Karma from a general standpoint, are specific on critique of moral courage as potential for misguided actions. While moral courage is essential for standing up for one's beliefs and principles, it can also be misapplied in situations where one's convictions are misguided or based on incomplete information. It's crucial for individuals to carefully examine their motivations and ensure that their actions are rooted in genuine ethical considerations. Cultural and contextual factors in perception of moral courage can vary across cultures and contexts (Trevathan, 2023). What may be considered courageous in one culture might not be viewed the same way in another. Additionally, certain actions might be seen as courageous in one context but unethical in another. Understanding the cultural nuances and contexts is essential when evaluating moral courage. **Potential for Conflict:** Moral courage can lead to conflict with others who hold different beliefs or values. While standing up for ethical principles is commendable, it's crucial to find ways to engage in constructive dialogue and seek common ground, rather than exacerbating divisions. **Balancing Risks and Benefits:** Moral courage often involves taking risks, and there may be situations where the potential negative consequences outweigh the benefits of standing up for a particular cause.

A critical assessment of the potential impact of one's actions on oneself and others is necessary to avoid unnecessary harm. Misinterpretation and fatalism in view of the Law of Karma can be misinterpreted as promoting a fatalistic worldview, where individuals believe that all experiences are predetermined by past actions, leading to a lack of personal responsibility such an understanding may hinder proactive efforts to improve one's circumstances and make positive changes. Overemphasis on Past Actions is an excessive focus on past karma might lead to neglecting the present moment and the potential for creating positive karma through intentional actions. While past actions have consequences, it's essential to recognize the power of present choices in shaping the future. The Problem of unexplained suffering involves the Law of Karma raises questions about why some individuals seem to suffer unjustly or experience unexplained hardships (Carpenter, 2021). The complexity of karma and its workings might not provide satisfying answers to the question of the origin of all suffering. Lack of Direct Verifiability base on the Law of Karma operates on a non-observable level, making it difficult to directly verify its workings. This lack of empirical evidence may lead some to question its validity or view it as a speculative concept. It's important to acknowledge that both moral courage and the Law of Karma are significant aspects of Buddhist philosophy and practice (Vu & Burton, 20212), and they have been valuable in shaping ethical behavior and promoting the understanding of cause and effect. Critiques are essential to explore and refine these concepts, allowing practitioners to navigate their beliefs and actions with greater wisdom and compassion.

Imagine a dedicated practitioner in Buddhism, deeply reflecting on the teachings of the Buddha. This individual contemplates the nature of suffering and the impermanence of life. They recognize that their experiences of illness, death, and separation from loved ones are shared by all beings. This realization fosters empathy and compassion, breaking down the barriers of self-centeredness. Moreover, this practitioner gains a profound understanding of the law of karma. They realize that every action they take, whether virtuous or unwholesome, shapes their destiny. This recognition instills a sense of accountability, leading them to be mindful of their intentions and actions. As the practitioner continues to reflect on these teachings, they find inspiration to walk the path of liberation. They cultivate wholesome

Res Militaris, vol.13, n°3, March Spring 2023

qualities and follow the Noble Eightfold Path with dedication and perseverance. By cultivating moral integrity, mental clarity, and wisdom, they gradually overcome the fetters that bind them to suffering and attain liberation from the cycle of birth and death (samsara).

Conclusion

Moral courage in Buddhism is the ability to act ethically and fearlessly, guided by wisdom, compassion, and the understanding of impermanence and non-attachment. It involves standing firm in upholding virtuous principles and overcoming fear to make choices that benefit both oneself and others on the path to enlightenment and liberation. Buddhist moral courage involves cultivating mindfulness, compassion, and a deep understanding of the impermanence of life. By doing so, individuals can overcome the fear of failure, fear of ostracism, and fear of being wrong. This courageous approach to life allows them to act ethically, with integrity, and to make positive contributions to the world, even in the face of challenges and uncertainties. The passage emphasizes the transformative power of understanding the universality of suffering and the law of karma. By recognizing that suffering is a shared human experience and that their actions have far-reaching consequences, the practitioner gains the motivation to walk the path of liberation and cultivate wholesome qualities. Ultimately, as the practitioner cultivates the factors of the path and lives in alignment with the teachings, they liberate themselves from the fetters that bind them to suffering. This passage underscores the transformative potential of self-awareness, empathy, and ethical conduct in the journey towards enlightenment and liberation in Buddhism. By embracing moral courage, individuals can transcend fear-based limitations, cultivate virtuous qualities, and create positive karmic imprints that lead to personal well-being and the welfare of all sentient beings. The research underscores the timeless relevance of moral courage in navigating life's challenges and illuminates its profound role in the transformative journey towards enlightenment and liberation.

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