



Going beyond the Material-Welling: A Buddhist Perspective of Development

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Abstract

This paper aims to synthesize development issues from a Buddhist perspective by taking an analytical universe of 'well-being'. Methodologically, the paper is a review-based article that follows a systematic review process following different themes of Buddhism, development, and well-being. The major findings of the study include that the development has been contested with the rise of various issues, and its materialistic interpretation has been in crisis both theoretically as well empirically. At this outset, the Buddhist perspective seems to be a more humanistic approach to development which treats underdevelopment as the cause of development. This is the principle of dependent origination, whereby the byproducts of underdevelopment can be analyzed. The Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Paths are also replicative in the development studies for the socio-economic transformation of society. The material outlet of development doesn't contribute to the eradication of suffering and miseries from their roots, both in mental and social structure. The paper, therefore, argues that the mainstream approach of development could not sustain development because of the ill-treatment of dukkha and the non-recognition of the sukha. Happiness, pleasure, and non-self are the contributory elements that have been proposed by Buddha's teachings of Dhamma.

Key words: Buddhism, development, well-being, happiness

Introduction

Development is an integral part of political debate, economic planning, and academic discussions. It carries multiple and diverse meanings for different groups and people. What development is, or what it is not meant to be – this can be contested and even lead to violence (Kallio&Marchand, 2012). Yet, there are various philosophical questions that whether it is an abstract notion or the concrete one; something visible or invisible too; and the end or the means. 'Development' has become a notion, a reality, that influences most aspects of social, economic, political, and ecological spheres of human society and beyond that too (Geiser, 2014; Sapkota &Tharu, 2016). There are various competing claims and counterclaims regarding which kind of development is the right one, and how should it be performed. These contestations can become real and tangible, and may go beyond mere discussions. Therefore, it has been a growing concern for academia and other social science as well as natural science disciplines. A social science perspective is often leveled as development studies (Desai & Potter, 2013). From this perspective, development can be defined as a field of study of social, political, and economic history, present issues, and prospects of society and state.

Letting this context, however, there are different theological perspectives on defining development, conceiving its characteristics, and practicing the ways of development in society. Buddhist

perspective of development is emerging as a science that often contests the mainstream approach of material well-being and growth-led approach (Ng, 2020). In turn, it claims for non-material well-being, nature-centered development, ecological balance, and the no-harm principle. This paper, therefore, offers a Buddhist perspective on development taking a blending of critical-interpretative epistemological position.

Objective and Methodology of the Paper

The paper aims to analyze and synthesize key issues of development studies from a Buddhist perspective. It follows a review-based approach along with the critical review of purposively selected scientific publications. Following Lockwood et al. (2019) and Walsh and Downe (2005), a manual type of meta-analysis method for secondary sources of information have been followed and integrated with the analytical write-up in different themes delineated by various headings and sub-headings. Therefore, no primary data have been anticipated, rather the study conceived secondary sources of information.

Debates and Discussion

The Classical Understanding of Development

The meaning of development ranges from simple to complex and empirical to conceptual, theoretical, and metaphysical too. The Dictionary's meaning of development includes Growth, blossoming, progress, extension, expansion, improvement, and transformation. It is a change in a positive direction. However, critiques often contest that what is change? And what is Positive direction? Development means to earn high, to learn more; to be happy, and to be cherished. Development means a better life for everyone everywhere and at every time. It seems to be a highly valued concept; along with multiple actors, structures, and agencies (Sapkota, 2018; Sparks, 2016). The various ideas representing development, in general, have been also manifested into the different dominant paradigms, including progress, prosperity, growth, de-growth, zero growth, underdevelopment, mal-development, eco-development, and well-being (material and non-material). A general understanding is that development is doing something about the betterment of life, empowerment of the people, equity of justice, and maintaining a decent life. Yet, the conclusion is not 'possible' due to the contested happening of development realities (ontology) and diverse ways of perceptions and interpretations of it (epistemology). Development is essentially contested in terms of both discourse and practice (Geiser, 2014) and its power nexus has become complex in recent years (Sapkota, 2020).

In an earlier breakthrough of the 1970s in development thinking, Denis Goulet elaborated development as being economic and social objectives and striving for the local people. According to Goulet (1971, 2006) development has three essential components or core values: self-esteem; sustenance, and, freedom from servitude. This analysis later on become a precursor of development economics as well as human development. Todaro and Smith (2020) take development not as purely an economic phenomenon but rather multi-dimensional construction which involves reorganization and reorientation of the entire economic and social system. It would therefore require major changes in social structures, popular attitudes, and national institutions. Along with the capability approach, Sen focuses on development as a manifestation of freedom (Kjosavik, 2021; Sen, 2000). Resuming a synthesis of debates in theories and practices, Pieterse (2010) realizes that development is collective learning and action. In this context, a long back ago, the Report of the South Commission 1990) critically elaborated the idea of development in a comprehensive way. It argues that development can't be imported from anywhere nor exported elsewhere. To mention it:

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Development as a process which enables human beings to realize their potential, build self-confidence, and lead lives of dignity and fulfillment. It is a process which frees people from the fear of want and exploitation. It is a movement away from political, economic, or social oppression (South Commission, 1990, p. 10).

Emerging Notions of Development

The conventional approach to development has been criticized as being a materialistic approach that only focused on the material well-being of people and economic growth in the country. It synonymously celebrated the achievements of development as a triumph of 'modernization'. However, dependency theorists and other critical theorists contest this mainstream approach to development (Larrain, 2013; Peet, R., & Hartwick, 2015). The major sector of contestation in the idea of development came into public debates. These include growth vs development; mainstream vs alternative; global south vs global north; balanced vs unbalanced growth; material vs non-material well-being; globalization vs localization vs glocalization; green growth and ecological growth.

Along with this, the terrain of development is conceived as a diverse spectrum, which is multidimensional in nature. There has started an approach that tends to conceptualize development as a holistic approach involving multiple dimensions and facets (Pieterse, 2010; Sapkota, 2018). Development studies in recent years, therefore include different sub-disciplines or components of development in a more detailed and specific way, for example, Economic development (economics of development/development economics); Human development; Community Development; Social development (sociology of development); Regional development (geography of development); Rural development (rural studies); Urban development (urban studies); cultural development (anthropology of development); sustainable development (sustainability studies); alternative approaches of development (anti-development; post-development; ecology and environmental studies (Eco-development); gender and development; governance and development and so on.

Shifting from Material to Non-material Well-being

Well-being is related concepts are Eudaimonia, happiness, flourishing, quality of life, contentment, and meaningful life (Rao & Min, 2018). According to the welfare school of thought, there are no other values and interests of people and communities besides well-being. An overlapping use of well-being could be found in the notions of pleasure, and happiness. Yet, theories of well-being try to determine what is essential to all forms of well-being. In general, there are three theories of well-being. Hedonistic theories equate well-being with the balance of pleasure over pain. Second, desire theories hold that well-being consists of desire-satisfaction: the higher the number of satisfied desires, the higher the well-being. Third, objectivist theories state that a person's well-being depends on the objective elements that are set for any particular activity. But, the debate lies on whether the material type of well-being is sufficient for the overall development of people and society or not. Recent critiques, as well as the Buddhist perspective, maintain that non-material well-being is the ultimate end of development and the first one could not lead to the emancipation of human beings (Stevenson, & Wolfers, 2008).

Material well-being is physical, material, and objectivist/positivist in nature. It is more of a proxy measure based on assumptions about basic human needs and rights, including aspects such as income, food, health, education, and safety. It can be measured through self-report or more objective measures. However, non-material well-being is socio-psychological and subjectivist/constructivist. It is measured by asking people directly how they think and feel about their well-being and happiness. It includes the

aspects such as life satisfaction, dignities, identities, emotions (hedonic), and meanings (eudemonic). Buddhist perspective of development is more included in this perspective (Howell, & Howell, 2008; Sangasumana, 2019). Well-being is not given or granted, rather it is mindfulness along with the elimination of all kinds of evils and sufferings. Therefore, the Buddhist perspective often recommends differentiating the well-being maintained from the evils and well-being achieved without the evils. The first one leads to *dukkha* (suffering and misery), while the second one leads to the way of *sukha* (pleasure and happiness).

Position of Buddhism in Philosophical World

The Indian subcontinent is rich in philosophical and theological thinking. There are both orthodoxy (*Āstika*) as well as heterodox (*Nāstika*) schools of thought. The orthodoxy school accepts the Vedic authority as a supreme reality though the heterodox schools do not accept the supremacy of Vedas and they reject Vedas as the primary source of knowledge (Bowes, 2021; King, 2012; Sharma, 2002). The orthodox (Hindu) Schools are also called *Shad- Darśana*, and can further be categorized into two categories: atheistic (rejection of God as supreme being) as explained by *Sāṅkhya* (theory of Kapil Rishi); The *Nyāya* school (developed by Gautam Rishi); and *Vaiśeṣika* (the idea of Kanad Rishi), and other three being theistic (acceptance of God's supremacy) which include *Yoga* (propounded by Patanjali); *Pūrva-Mīmāṃsā* (developed by Jaimini Rishi); and *Vedānta* or *UttaraMīmāṃsā* (contribution of Vedbyas Rishi). On the other hand, the Heterodox (Non-Hindu) or *Nastik* School includes three types of religious thoughts in philosophy. They include *Charvaka* (*Cārvāka* or *Lokāyata* as proposed by Guru Brihaspati); Buddhist philosophy (the teachings of Siddhartha Gautama) and Jain philosophy (proposed by 24 *tirthkarsin* different times; the 24th being Mahavira in the late 6th century) (Chatterjee, & Datta, 2016).

Indeed, what we call 'Buddhism' today was known in ancient times as the '*Dhamma-Vinaya*' though Buddhism claim for a *siddha* (proven) and *suddha* (pure) transfer of knowledge (i.e. *jñāna*) from different Buddhas in many times. The word '*Dhamma*' (in Sanskrit '*Dharma*') has many meanings, and Buddha has also given its ten meaningful characteristics (Gethin, 2004). It encompasses the ultimate phenomena of which the universe is composed with *pancha-skandha* (*Pañcupādānakkhandhā*, i.e. form or *rupa*; sensations or *vedana*; perceptions or *samjña*; mental activity or *sankhara*; and consciousness or *viñjana*). It also means truth or reality and is synonymous with the teaching of the Bodhisattva Buddha. Buddhist philosophy is a non-theistic system of beliefs based on the teachings of Siddhartha Gautama. It is mainly founded on the rejection of certain orthodox Hindu philosophical concepts (Ambedkar, 2011; Cantwell, 2009).

The characteristics of the Buddhist theological approach include the philosophy of emptiness (*sunyata*), impermanency (*anitya* or *anicca*; impermanency), non-self (*anatma* or *anattā*; rejection of being the immortality of self or spirit), and the rejection of God (creator and destroyer of worldly phenomenon, i.e. *karma* and *gati*), and the theory of ***pratitya-samutpada* or *paṭiccasamuppāda*** (cause-effect). Buddhism advocates Four Noble Truths to be incepted through a Noble Eightfold Path. Buddhism often claims that reality is universally changing; the way of knowing that change is critical though which needs an assessment of *Citta* (*chitta*) and *Bhāvanā* (Murti, 2013).

Reciting of Four Noble Truths in Development

This common core of all Buddhist schools is formed by the four Noble Truths (*cattāriariyasaccāni*) and dependent origination (*paṭiccasamuppāda*). Buddhism often is expressed as four noble truths, which are fundamentally based on the nexus of three things, i.e. *dukkha* (suffering),

sukha(pleasure), and the elimination of *dukkha* along with emancipation (*muktior nibbāna*) (Aich, 2013; Gethin, 1998). The Four Noble Truths or four *Arya Satyas* are also called *catvāriāryasatyāni* in Sanskrit and *cattāriariyasaccāni* in Pali. They are treated as *the noble and fundamental* (Sanskrit *ārya*; Pāli: *ariya*) or ultimate *satya* (*Saccain* Pali) as "they are real, infallible and do not change". The four noble truths include *dukkhasatya*("suffering" in life and everywhere); *samudayasatya* (i.e. *dukkha* arises or continues with *Taṇhā*("craving, desire or attachment, thirst"); *nirodhasatya* (i.e. *dukkha* can be ended or contained by the renouncement); and *maggasatya*(i.e. Noble eightfold path is the only the path leading to the confinement of *Taṇhā* and *dukkha* by accessing full enlightenment (*nibbāna*).

In this perspective, some studies have been also done taking the Noble Truths from common welfare and developmental perspective (Fernando, 2017; Thiengkamol, 2012; Karnjanapokin, 2018). We can insert the development worldview. For example, with *sukha* and *dukkha*, there is a deep causal relation between *wikas*(development) and *awikas*(underdevelopment). They are intrinsically connected. The theory of cause and effect (in development and underdevelopment) is equally implied. The Noble Truths of Buddhism can be thus reframed in development discourse, as:

1. First, there is underdevelopment, as misery and suffering in public life. It includes dependency, poverty, inequality, and loss of dignity
2. Second, there are causes of underdevelopment (which includes mal distribution, non-participatory approach, greed, and ignorance (*Avidyā* in Sanskrit or *Avijjā* in Pali)of human activities; the tendency of accumulating properties and luxuries; and unsustainable development)
3. Third, there are ways of reducing or eliminating underdevelopment (as well-being in terms of policy, programs, and projects)
4. Fourth, the only way to reduce and eliminate underdevelopment is through nature-friendly development, an inclusive approach, and the science of *sukha* for all

These four propositions can be further elaborated with the Buddhist principle of dependent origination. It maintains that nothing is fundamentally independent. Therefore, the development is not and can't be an independent entity that could rather be connected to the other dimensions, the underdevelopment, in particular (Loy, 2003; Tobgay, 2018). When development is, the underdevelopment is. From the arising of underdevelopment, the issue of miseries, inequalities, and dependency become existent. The cessation of underdevelopment, in consequence, leads to the cessation of violence, inequality, and dependency.

Implication of Eightfold Path in Development

The Noble Eightfold Path is also called *ariyaatṭhaṅgikamaggain* Pali and *dāryāṣṭāṅgamārgain* Sanskrit. It is often described as Buddhist practices or ways of life that only could lead to liberation or *nibbāna* from the bondage of *dukkha* (Bodhi, 2010). The Eightfold Path consists of eight practices under three broad categories:

1. Morality or ethical conduct (*śīla* in Sanskrit and *sīlain* Pāli) (Right speech, right act, and right livelihood);
2. Wisdom - (*prajñā* in Sanskrit and, *paññā* in Pāli) (right view and right thought); and
3. Concentration (Sanskrit and Pāli: *Samādhi*) (right effort, right mindfulness, and right concentration).

Moreover, there is a system of *sīla*(percepts) in Buddhism. The *sīla*s are ethical conducts, disciplinary norms, and behavioral practices of a Buddhist fellow. The Five Precepts/ Commitments are generally offered for and committed mandatorily by all the Buddhist communities. These include:

Refraining from taking life, and not killing any living being; refraining from taking what is not given or not stealing from anyone; refraining from the misuse of the senses and not having too much sensual pleasure; refraining from wrong speech; and refraining from intoxicants that cloud the mind. The eightfold path and five precepts can contribute to the development, by increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of the development activities also with morals, ethics, and disciplines (Daniels, 2007). Public people, leaders, bureaucrats, workers, professionals, and all the people of societies at large could contribute in this regard: the following are the potential areas for socio-economic and psychological transformation along with the adoption of precepts and paths adhered in Buddhism.

- Corruption (not to be corrupt in either way)
- Good governance (in the respective sector of livelihood/ profession where the people involve and maintain their *samyagājīvana* or *sammāājīvai*.e. a rightful and non-harmful livelihood)
- Reduction in rape and crime
- Reduction in gender discrimination and caste/ ethnic discrimination
- Reduction in loot, deception, theft, and robbery
- Self-awakening and motivation
- Non-self-leadership (leadership for the overall well-being of people)
- Positive thinking, and well-being attitude

The Science of Sukha

Sukha is the pleasure and ultimate goal of human life. Synonymously, *sukha* can be interpreted as happiness and well-being, though there are different perspectives on them too (Singh et al., 2017). Buddhism does not take *sukha* as the antonym or opposite of *dukkha* as both are metaphysically dependent and impermanent. *Sukha* is the ultimate goal of human life, which seems to be the end of our development activities as well. Does development go beyond *sukha*? Perhaps, no. In terms of development discourse, *sukha* is the ultimate condition of development along with equity, prosperity, peace, harmony, social justice, participation, non-self-leadership, and moral values in society or the state. As of critique of this, Walsh (2013) maintains that there are many engaged Buddhists incorporating science into Buddhism without reference to traditional value structures, and many Buddhist scholars are ignoring or rejecting the ongoing development of Buddhism through scientific research. In this context, however, Walsh (2013) could not go deep into the Buddhist texts and says there is no operational definition for a Buddhist concept of happiness. Yet, critiques further maintain that the ‘*science of sukha*’ can be a doctrine that both Buddhism and modern-day scientific research can go hand and hand. This doctrine has been deeply rooted in positive psychology, happiness economics, and Buddhist ethics. The following three areas of intervention could be important to establish the nexus of development and *sukha*:

- The measures of bringing *sukha* into the life of people in our society, and integrating that *sukha* into pleasure and happiness
- Policy measures and program insertions by the state/ government ensuring the well-being of people could be achieved only through the *sukha*, pleasure, and happiness
- Potential prospects of the Buddhist idea of *sukha* in the future of development studies.

Buddhist Perspective on Dukkha and Social Transformation

Buddhism takes about the existence of *dukkha* as a reality. The material world is attached to *dukkha*, or there is *dukkhata* attached to the desires of being/ having (*bhava*) and non-being/not-having (*bi-bhava*). They are fundamentally related to the *Samsāra*, including the *Taṇhā* or *tr̥ṣṇā*; suffering from

desire, thirst, and *Avidyā*(*avijjā*) (Roy, 2022). The question may arise whether there is an equivalent *viparinama-dukkhata* for society as a whole or not. Buddhism perceives that individuals and all the things in the world are not independent, rather they exist in a dependent relationship or an interconnected nexus. Yet, development studies could perceive the idea of *dukkha* from different perspectives and disciplines. Loy (2003) theorizes the idea of ‘*social dukkha*’. Other types of *dukkha* should not be overlooked, however including at economic, political, and environmental levels too. Table 1 presents these types of *dukkha* along with their dimensions and causes.

Table 1. *Dimensions and causes of Dukkha implied in development studies*

Dimensions	Causes
Social (and cultural)	Caste/ ethnic and gender discrimination; social injustice; exclusionary practices; and socio-cultural taboos
Economic	Poverty; gap between rich and poor; inequality; mal-distribution; class differences and struggle; the rise of corporate capitalism and loss of small economics
Environmental	Pollution; loss of biodiversity; global warming, exploitation of natural resources; unsustainable development; deteriorating biosphere; and energy crisis
Political	Corruption; the rise of elites and elite-centric governance; hierarchal political participation; authoritarian regimes and dictatorship

Source: The author (2022)

Indeed, Buddhism talks about varieties of *dukkha*, and their collective manifestations, though it does not give a specific political or economic theory for analyzing or resolving such institutionalized *dukkha*. Contemporary societies are familiar with the all above types of social *dukkha*. But, a metaphysical question may arise in development studies in this regard: whether the ending of such *dukkha* is possible or not. As the paper discussed earlier, the third truth is *dukkha-nirodhasatya*, literally the ‘cessation’ of *dukkha*, the fact that our *dukkha* can come to an end with the elimination of causes of such *dukkha*. Yes, of course, it can be done at all levels of social, cultural, political, economic, and environmental. Nevertheless, Buddhism is sometimes criticized for encouraging a nonmaterialistic way of solving such problems and taking them to be purely personal or individual (McMahan, 2008). It has been challenging to contextualize the main motivation for such *dukkha* thereby understanding the roots of human ill-being and well-being. This could lead to a notion of a pleasant life, without any greed and fear. It brings us back to what Ernest Becker wrote in his classic work *Escape from Evil* (1975) about the collective consequences of death denial along with culturally trusted heroism and symbolism (Becker, 1975).

Far from providing a solution, the conventional approach to development is better understood as the problem itself. Buddhism perceives the problem of poverty, inequality, and ecological crises in different ways. It questions the root causes and their treatment, without taking more engagement on the solutions at the surface. The Buddhist solution to this problem is about the realization of the non-duality of the self (i.e. bodily world, desires, or the *Viṣaya*) with the world. It could be done along with the adoption of the trinity of *Sīla-Samādhi-Paññā*. In this context, Loy (2003) offers that:

greed must be transformed into generosity, ill will into lovingkindness, ignorance into wisdom. The sense of duality between ourselves and the world feeds our insecurity and therefore our preoccupation with power, which we seek in order to secure ourselves. The unfortunate fact that we never feel secure enough is experienced as a lack of sufficient power (p. 29).

Happiness and a New Paradigm of Development

Happiness has been interpreted in different ways in the eastern and western philosophical schools of thought (Joshnloo, 2014). In the Buddhist view, happiness is not simply sensory pleasure, derived from physical comfort. Rather, happiness is an innate state of mind which can be cultivated through spiritual practice, overcoming mental and emotional states which induce suffering (Kittiprapas, et al., 2007; Tideman, 2004). This is a path of awakening to lead the way of *nibbāna*. Conventional western sciences do not agree with this approach to happiness. Therefore, the modern economic theory (including consumerism, liberalism, and neoliberalism) and subsequent indicators (including economic growth rate, GNP, GDP, and PCI) conceive the assumption that material development is positively correlated to human well-being. They leave human happiness outside the non-material spectrum. The Buddhist principles of economic sustainability and equity approach have been now popular in Buddhist economics. It goes around the exploration of the market as an ethical place and value-based sphere of transaction of goods and services. This resembles the teachings of Buddha. Real happiness does not come from earning, consuming, or accumulating material things (Ricard, 2014). In a way, they can be achieved through illegal activities or by breaching the rules too. Therefore, the path of mental or spiritual purification is of greater importance which could contribute to non-material well-being. Such well-being is superior to that of material type of well-being or development.

Many scholars have argued that the notion of Gross National Happiness (GNH) –presents a radical paradigm shift in development studies, particularly in economics (Ash, 2007; Brooks, 2013). Moreover, GNH is also close to the ethical values of sustainable development, going beyond measuring merely material values such as production and consumption and taking the most important goal of human life, i.e. happiness (Tideman, 2004). The GNH Index is formerly initiated in Bhutan and has been ensured as a legal commitment in the constitution of Bhutan in 2008. The index consists of nine domains and four pillars along with a focus on governance, cultural awakening, socio-economic development, and environmental conservation. In this regard, Jessica (2020) argues that Bhutan's Buddhist-modernist theory of governance is a hybrid political tradition that takes a strong commitment to gross national happiness.

Buddhist perspective on Sustainable Development

According to the principle of dependent origination, Buddhism has made three types of connectivity that we encounter—between humans and nature, between human beings, and the relationship with oneself (Le Duc, 2015). Buddhism considers human beings and the environment, as not an isolated structure but rather as a dependent complex. Buddhist perspective on sustainable development has been widely studied since 2010 and in particular along with the inception of sustainable development goals (SDGs) in 2015. Prakash (1018) has portrayed that the premise of sustainable development is theoretically linked to Buddhism, while Kittiprapas (2022) proposes the idea of inner happiness in achieving this sustainability. Though empirically it is not attained as per that and is somehow being contested too. The issue of sustainable development and Buddhism has been studied in different empirical research, including Speece (2019) in Thailand, He and Wang (2022) in China, and Sas (2021) in Bhutan. Going into a historical retrospection, Kovacs (2011) places the sustainable development era after the 1980s which came along with the failure of the "unlimited growth" myth of the profit-led Western culture.

Yet, the sustainable development approach is more inclined to and influenced by modern economic and political institutions. Rather it is treated as having appropriate means of material well-being which could be earned with non-harming in economic activities, and the realization of inner freedom from kinds of bondage, slavery, and suffering. It would then create a basis of inner development along with spiritual perfection toward the collective well-being and sustainability of development outcomes at large (Prakash, 2018). In this context, Sarao (2019) seems very critical to the present-day consumerism and profit-oriented economic system that would dilute the essence of sustainability. He argues that the relationship must be established between people and nature following the principle of cooperation rather than exploitation. For this, production systems must serve the real needs of the people, not the demands of the economic system.

On the other hand, the conventional approach to sustainable development encompasses a trinity of three components (i.e. social, economic, and ecological) and their harmonic relations to each other (Tomislav, 2018). There has been a critique that these components are not sufficient enough to represent the essence of sustainability (Alberto, 2021). The political dimension has been severely urged, and a humanistic perspective of the spiritual dimension has been also suggested by Gibbons (2020) and Vogt and Weber (2019). The spiritual dimension belongs to Buddhism, a non-self ideology that encourages work not for personal profits but for the wellbeing (*sukha*) of all beings, living and non-living. This is how illustrated by the blessings of Buddha: *Bhavatusabba-maṅgalaṃ*(trans. May all be happy and there be every blessing).

Conclusions

This concludes that development issues are increasingly multidimensional, though they can't be isolated from each other. The *pratitya-samutpada* or the causality principle of Buddhism suggests that while we formulate the development projects we need to assess the different consequences of that, in turn. There is nothing without cause and effect, which also implies development. Another conclusion that this study draws is that the discourse of development should be restructured and renegotiated from a Buddhist perspective by taking an analytical universe of well-being and happiness. The spiritual dimension of sustainable development could be promoted along with the science of *sukha*. It needs to eliminate the root causes of sufferings, rather than treating the problem at the surface with outside measures.

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