

WALKING TOWARDS FREEDOM: THE MODEL AND CONTEMPLATIVE WISDOM PRACTICING PROCESS IN ACCORDANCE WITH DHUTANGAVATTA

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Abstract

A study on “Walking towards freedom: The model and contemplative wisdom practicing process in accordance with Dhutangavatta” objectivized three aims, i.e. 1) to investigate religious hiking-based for mental training; 2) to analyze religious hiking-based journey to freedom and 3) to develop a model of monkhood mindful journey in practicing religious hiking. This research was a Mixed Methods Research of a qualitative research and action research focusing on the targeted group of 15 interviewees on sites through conducting in-depth interviews and the focus groups of the related persons including participant observation over the activities to develop a model and a process of the religious hiking-based for mental training involving 1) a knowledge set e.g. the 13 religious-hiking methods, history and principles and 2) the religious-hiking activity sets on mental training for 10 days with pre-post evaluations. The results revealed that: Under the pre-post evaluation of 15 involvers met 2 differences, i.e. 1) before evaluating all activities participants partially understood the religious hiking-based mental practice process and the activities using dharma practice process for them needed additional studies which demanded additional development; and 2) with all these post-activities, most participants better understood the religious-hiking-based mental practices, activities of processing dharma practices, and emphasizing knowledge-given which most participants better understood.

Keywords: Walking towards freedom, Contemplative wisdom practicing, Dhutaṅgavatta

Introduction

Buddhism accepts that interested thing or what should be received certainly exists and that is misery-zero-a state of all detachments from ourself or what is ourself: detachment of even life, honor, fame or anything which are attached by others or if in short, it is salvation (emancipation, liberation: *Vimutti*). What is *vimutti*, then? It is the liberation from domination or what the mind is liberated (Phra Dhammakosacaraya, BE. 2549: 66). The important mental state thus become the foundation – liberation or monks call “*vimutti*.” This state is entailed from wisdom (*Paññā*). Meaning, upon seeing the truth and physically known, the mind is liberated from evil (*Kilesa*) dominion. Their Venerables likely describe to access this state that the mind having refined *paññā* is likely liberated from “all *Āsava* (mental intoxication or defilement)” or upon realizing this, the mind is liberated even from *Kāmāsava* (canker of sense-desire), even from *Bhavāsava* (canker of becoming) and *Avijjāsava* (canker of ignorance). Another aspect of attribute on liberation from *kilesa* dominion is not being enslaved, seduced or provoked by emotion like what Their Venerables call “Emotion founds *Rāga* (lust) or *Lobha* (greed), *Dosa* (hatred) and *Moha* (delusion) because if the mind is free from *Rāga* (lust) or *Lobha* (greed), *Dosa* (hatred) and *Moha* (delusion). In addition, there are their after-effects which are free from the sense of terror, flinch, vociferousness, and trembling (Phra Dhammapitaka, BE. 2538:244). Human beings are therefore a very important factor in the development of things. The development of human life will help learn about oneself and what one wants from life to lead the life in the right and appropriate direction. The principle of life development thus means the development of goodness, and good deeds to accumulate the merits of various virtues to perfectly flourish, to progress in life as well as the challenge of earning for living. At the same time, it is also training the person's physical, verbal and mental life to be more prompt. It especially emphasizes the relationship with the social environment, namely the well coexistence among human beings in favorable conditions, which will help human grow and live in a well-being, happy, helping to succeed and achieve the highest potential of humanity (Jiraporn Chivatham, 2021 : Online). Walking to freedom based on moderate practices and *Vipassanākammatṭhāna* exist for the *Buddhapaṇisā* to adopt for practices beneficial to daily life spending and the supreme utility

within oneself. This is to well solve the cause of the problem at the primary level because humanity in every era certainly meet many unending problems. Buddhism thus teaches addressing both internal and external problems all together including social and individual mind. That is externally, it needs to morals to treat physical and verbal problems whereas internally, involving the mind and wisdom, it needs the principle of mediation (*Vipassanākammatthāna*) for practices in order to detach and alleviate lobha, moha, dosa and selfishness and so on. Also, it enables to defeat the akusala and sinful mind which leads to punishment through respective courses of dharma. Reasons are humanbeings meet such problems in every era as all humanbeings are selfish, absent in mercy, jealous, happiness-centered, disgusting miseries (Phra Brahmagunabhorn, 2014:305-308). Knowing one's own mind leading to wisdom means reaching the highest truth or perhaps it is said to access truth, goodness, and beauty by explaining that truth, goodness, beauty refer to truth with goodness, and beauty. Goodness has truth, and beauty, and beauty has goodness. The truth as in each other links to be as one. When one accesses one thing, one also accesses other things at the same time (Prawes Wasi, 2007: 13-14). It places an emphasis on self-exploratory awareness (emotions, feelings, thoughts, beliefs, perspectives on life and the world) through learning by direct experience. Valuing the Thoughtfully Mindful Learning and open-minded perception with purpose, for example, causing fundamental changes in thinking and creating a new consciousness about self and society. It results in a conscious and intelligent livelihood creating love and compassion for each other including coexisting in society with peace and happiness. When the mind owns wisdom to determine knowing the mind. That is, clearly and completely seeing the inner mind, then the mind will naturally abandon the dharma state or inferiority symptoms to the mind with cultivated wisdom (Siri-anya, 2006: 182).

A journey to Buddhist freedom that is a pilgrimage (*Dhutaṅgavatta*/ascetic practices). It is considered an appropriate course of action for practitioners or virtuous sons who renounce the world without mourning in body and life with vigorously vowing assiduity to achieve the ultimate goal in Buddhism Therefore, they rigidly practice holding a pilgrimage. It is an ascetic self-practice according to the principles of any *Dhutaṅgavattara*, or possibly many ascetic practical points at the same time. With rigid practices of *Dhutaṅgavatta*, it is a way to lead oneself to the highest goal without difficulty. At least it will make the practitioners to acquire five *Dhutadhamma*, namely

modesty (Appicchatā), solitude (Santutṭhītā), refinement (Sallekhatā), seclusion (Pavivekatā), and the seers of the bhavanā benefits (Itmatthitā) (Somdej Phra Buddhācāraya, 1990: 122). Therefore, the Dhutaṅgavatta as the journey to freedom, it is the practice of monks in Buddhism. There are 13 observances, known as Dhutaṅgavatta 13 according to the teachings of the Lord Buddha. Those who practice can choose to voluntarily do any of them and it is not necessary to complete all observances and for as long as one wants because the practice depends on the charisma, patience and persistence, such as the observance of Araññikaṅga (in the forest) and Sosanika (in the cemetery). It is also a guideline that facilitates the practitioners of solitude to be free from turbulence but to aim for the Dharma practices to refine the inner defilements of each person. It is a supportive tool to promote, to support, to keep the precepts, and to refine the mind. This is an educational system that trains and develops oneself with intelligence (Paññā) regarded as the Buddhism propagation. This Buddhist-based principles journey to freedom with the Dhutaṅgavatta 13 is the prime focus for the researcher with regards to the Dhutaṅgavatta 13-based Cittapaññā observances, the Dhutaṅgavattara 13 - based walks to freedom and to develop the model of the Dhutaṅgavatta 13 - based Cittapaññā training.

The researcher as the Abbot in charge of Wat Buddhobhavanā, Tambol Bang Khu Rat, Amphoe Bang Bua Thong, Nonthaburi Province. This Wat trains Cittapaññābhuddho observances, observing the Satipaṭṭhāna 4-based Vipassanā Kammaṭṭhāna, training Kasinī0-based Vipassanā and Dhutaṅga observances and 3-times a year organizing Dhutaṅgavatta. The first round is around February. The second round is around before the Buddhist Lent. And the third round is post Buddhist Lent. The researcher will investigate the process of the Dhutaṅgavatta 13-based Cittapaññā training in Wat Buddhobhavanā, Tambol Bang Khu Rat, Amphoe Bang Bua Thong, Nonthaburi Province; to analyze the model and the process of the Dhutaṅgavatta 13-based walks into freedom for the better and better efficiency.

Research Objectives

1. Investigate the Dhutaṅgavatta 13 - based Cittapaññā training.
2. Analyze the Dhutaṅgavatta 13-based walks to freedom.
3. Develop a model of the Dhutaṅgavattara 13-based Cittapaññā training.

Literature Reviews

The Dhutaṅgavatta practice of His Lord Buddha with disciples was to comfort the present living and for the supportive benefit of the gods and humans including the consecutive new born generations to acquire good examples in practices. Laities and acetic persons underachieved the path (Magga) and nirvana undertaking the Dhutaṅgavatta practices purposively aimed to be vested with Dhamma bolstering the Dhutaṅgavatta practitioners. They were modesty (Appicchatā), solitude (Santutṭhītā), refinement (Sallekhatā), seclusion (Pavivekatā), and the seers of the bhavanā benefits (Itmatthitā). These 5 Dhamma were curative and promotive growth to modest practices, i.e. Sīla, Samadhi and Paññā until achieving Dhamma, i.e. Maggapala and Nirvana (Mahamakut Buddhist University, 2000: 19-20). The importance of the Dhutaṅgavatta practice recalled the aspect of detachments for physical comfort but instead to rejoice in mental comfort, as in the following sutra. In the Gaṇakamoggallāna sutra, the sequence of steps in the Buddhist dhamma practice was as follows: repose of sīla, repose of organs, continual assiduity practices, owning consciousness, living in seclusion, meditation to be free from mental hindrances and the realization of nirvana (MN. (Thai Version) 14/75–76/78-81).

The Dhutaṅgavatta practice supported and promoted detachment, renunciation, pleasure in gain, worship, and praise due to the four means by detaching the pleasure and enjoyment of the group association and detaching pleasures from sleep, and non- assiduity but the happiness that came from Nekkhamma, happiness from Viveka, and happiness from peacefulness, because of the realization of Dhamma (AN. (Thai Version) 22/42/494–496) and had merits resulting in the merits of Dhutaṅgavattara practices for 5 things as follows:

1. The Dhutaṅgavattara practice would make the practitioners persons with bright skin arisen from taking one meal (SN. (Thai Version) 15/10/10.)

2. Being moral man, restraining oneself in the Phra Pātimokkha fully equipped with Ācāra and Gocara. One commonly saw danger even in the slightest penalty, Samādānasikkha, living in all Sikkhabata, being Bahussut (scholar) etc., being virtuous with Ditṭhi (view), the Vower of assiduity, being vigorous and steady industriousness, never being preoccupied in

Kusaladhamma, an obtainer of the 4 Jhānas (absorptions) much in the mind which presently devised happiness by wishes led without difficulty, without distress, being explicit, Cetovimutti (liberation by concentration), Paññāvimutti (liberation by wisdom), free from Āsava (mental intoxication/canker) because Āsava was eradicated with great Paññā (wisdom) accessed at the moment (MN.(Thai Version) 22/110/187-188).

3. Being with little business, little affairs, easy to raise, being reclusive in the life Parikkhāra (requisites), having little food, consistently engaging in unselfishness to eating, to belly, having little sleep, perseverance, awakening, living was in a calm sanctuary and contemplating the mind for the cessation of suffering (MN. (Thai Version) 22/98/168).

4. In the Visuddhimagga (Holy Path); the merits of Dhutaṅgavatta practice had been mentioned the practitioners were the excellent and noble (MN. (Thai Version) 22/181/309).

5. Helping to purify Sīla with the power of Dhutaṅgavatta practice was modesty, solitude, purification of defilements and pleasure in the quiet place and the joy of prayer which would make the purified practitioners and were known as the one who sat in the Ariyavaṁsa (Ariyan lineage) in 3 ways: Cīvara-santosa (contentment as regards to monkhood robes being possessed and donated), Piṇḍapāta-santosa (contentment as regards to alms-food being possessed and given), and Senāsana-santosa (contentment as regards to lodging being possessed and donated). These resulted in Ariyavaṁsa No.4: Pahānabhāvanā-rāmatā (delight in the abandonment of akusala and the growth of kusala or delight of prayers (Phra Buddhaghosathera, 2011:120-121).

Research Methodology

A Documentary research-the researcher determined the scope of the study through exploring the Buddhist Theravadan Scriptures encompassing the Tipitaka, the Aṭṭhakathā, and Gantha (scriptures/canon), primary sources, secondary sources, textbooks, books, articles, journals, newspapers, theses, dissertations and other research papers related to the concepts, theories and the principles of Dhutaṅgavatta practice in the Buddhist Theravadan Scriptures

which were the part of meaning, backgrounds, models and Dhamma related to various aspects. These included exploring the Dhutaṅgavattara practice – based Cittapaññā training of the expert Phra Thera on Dhutaṅgavatta practice such as Luong Pū Man Bhūritatto, Luong Pū Ja Subhaddo, Luong Pū Tul Atulo, etc., through exploring primary and secondary sources to cover every aspect.

A Qualitative Research-it was a field work complement with collecting in-depth data encompassing:

(1) The in-depth interviews were conducted with 15 key informants from purposive sampling. They were 5 High Venerable Abbots/or Assistants, 5 Venerable monk practitioners and 5 laities who taught Vipassanā-bhāvanā (insight development). Here, the principles were emphasized, which were 1) Data collected from in-depth interviews conducted with related experts about Cittapaññā training and Dhutaṅgavatta; 2) Observing interested words or making in a table reflecting the words, then observing behavior through analysis how the behavior had changed, and 3) Creating acquaintance with in the interviewers by allowing them to know various information recorded for the researcher to confidentially keep them.

Table 1: Number of key informants in the in-depth interview

Ser.N	Qualifications	Frequency (persons/monks)
1	High Venerable Abbots/ or Assistants	5
2	Venerable monk practitioners	5
3	laities who taught Vipassanā-bhāvanā	5
Total		15

(2) Conducting 15-members of a focus group complement with the key informants inclusion of 5 monkhood longevity with previous Dhutaṅgavatta experiences, 5 new monks without Dhutaṅgavatta experiences, and 5 laity practitioners who could be referral and information providers of the Walks to Freedom-clearer model and contemplative wisdom practicing process in accordance with Dhutaṅgavatta coupled with participatory observation about developing the model and the process of Dhutaṅgavatta-based Cittapaññā training through the selection of the 15 purposive sampling informants within 3 group and 5 members each, i.e. 1). 5 monkhood longevity with previous Dhutaṅgavatta experiences; 2). 5 new monks without Dhutaṅgavatta

experiences; and 5 laities of Vipassanā-bhāvanā (insight development) practitioners.

Table 2: Number of key informants in the focus group

Ser.N	Qualifications	Frequency (persons/monks)
1	monkhood longevity with previous Dhutaṅgavatta experiences	5
2	new monks without Dhutaṅgavatta experiences	5
3	Laities of Vipassanā-bhāvanā (insight development) practitioners.	5
Total		15

Bringing all data for analyses to find new knowledge in developing a model and a process of Dhutaṅgavatta-based Cittapaññā training.

(3) An Action Research – a knowledge set and activities to develop a model and a process of Dhutaṅgavatta-based Cittapaññā training, encompassing, 1). A knowledge set, e.g. background and the 13 Dhutaṅgavatta principles; and 2) the activity set for the Dhutaṅgavatta practices engulfing the Dhutaṅgavatta-based Cittapaññā training (walks on sea-beach, rail and hillside) for 10 days with the following process.

Phase 1: The researcher determined an Action Research about “Walking towards Freedom: The Model and Contemplative Wisdom Practicing Process in accordance with Dhutaṅgavatta” by organizing activities related to it with steps of organizing activities encompassing 1). Announcement to recruit monks desired to participate Dhutaṅgavatta project; 2). Creating knowledge set about Dhutaṅgavatta; 3) distributing a format to evaluate the knowledge of participants; 4) inviting the supporters of the Dhutaṅgavatta project; 5) providing guidelines and steps for the Dhutaṅgavatta participants; 6) taking action of the Dhutaṅgavatta project and 7) following –up and evaluating.

Phase 2: developing model of conscious walks of the monks involving the Dhutaṅgavatta practices through observing activity organization of participants in each day involving the developed model of conscious walks among monks in attending the 10-days Dhutaṅgavatta practices. There were tests on the analyses of pre and post activities with the 15 participants; pre and

post responses on opinions from participants developing the model of conscious walks among monks attending Dhutaṅgavatta practices.

Phase 3: Reflecting thinking and returning data, process, outcomes and impacts emphasizing the data analyses collected from documentary research, fieldwork data collection using in-depth interviews, observations, developing activities for walking towards freedom: The Model and Contemplative Wisdom Practicing Process in accordance with Dhutaṅgavatta, and focus group. All were adopted for analyses, synopsis, and discussions by focusing on traits and categorizing major phenomenon based on the research objectives. Later, the researcher presented with analytical description with verbal quotes of the key informants and presented pictures complemented the phenomenon to appropriately confirm analytical description. This was to offer descriptive presentation with pictures based on fieldwork data collections with clear syntheses in order to lead to walking towards freedom: The model and contemplative wisdom practicing process in accordance with Dhutaṅgavatta. Finally, data would be used for organizing activities and the preparation of the complete research report.

Results

Objective 1: the 4 results of the Dhutaṅgavattara 13-based Cittapaññā training were 1) practicing Dhamma had to know how to follow Dhutaṅgavatta and it needed assiduity; 2) ability of observance first demanded cognition about following Dhutaṅgavatta; 3) problems arisen were depended upon each-day situations but few Dhutaṅgavatta began; and 4) Dhutaṅgavatta brought benefits for practitioners to become patient and painstaking to achieve success at high level.

Objective 2: 4 results were found in the study of walks to freedom as of 1) the development entered the third dimension which was the ultimate level of freedom the part of the mind and none was truly ours; 2) the Dhutaṅgavatta and the dhamma practices under the principles of walking to freedom with the same target and to be free from misery, it demanded the practical principles of learning the body and learning the mind; 3) currently, either monks or laities were cognitive about the practices; and 4) emerging learning Dhamma practices.

Objective 3: the study of developing a model of conscious walks among monks undertaking Dhutaṅgavatta revealed that with the pre & post activity assessment on inclusion of 15 participants, there were 2 points, i.e. 1) before all assessments, participants partially understood the process of the Dhutaṅgavatta-based Cittapaññā training and the dhamma practitioners should additionally explore all the process which led to additional development; and 2) after all activities, majority of participants better understood the process of the Dhutaṅgavatta-based Cittapaññā training and they much understood the process of dhamma practices and the emphases on knowledge dissemination.

The process of constructing knowledge set on developing the model of conscious walks among monks who undertook Dhutaṅgavatta disclosed that 1) walking to freedom was based on the principles of the Dhutaṅgavatta-based Cittapaññā training and it was depended upon each individual in dhamma practices. 2) The dhamma practices on the Dhutaṅgavatta -based walks toward freedom or Cittapaññā training was a method allowing the training standardized with systematic practices to help eradicate Kilesa and impeding the flows of emotion. 3) Problems arisen from the Dhutaṅgavatta observance on the point of Samādāna and their causes came from those practices which were depended on the organic strength of the person. Each one might suffer with each sudden and unexpected illness or some might lack knowledge and experience, some places were cramped allowing the spread of the long-handed monkhood umbrellas were so close and difficult to monkhood practice such as Caṅkama (a circle walking for meditation), and Samādhi during the covid epidemic; and 4) The Cittapaññā practices and the Dhutaṅgavatta-based walking toward freedom were to eradicate mental Kilesa (defilements) and turning us to be the tolerant with Khanti (patience) which enabled us to endure life problems. Dhutaṅgavatta was similar to refine oneself. Details below could help construct knowledge:

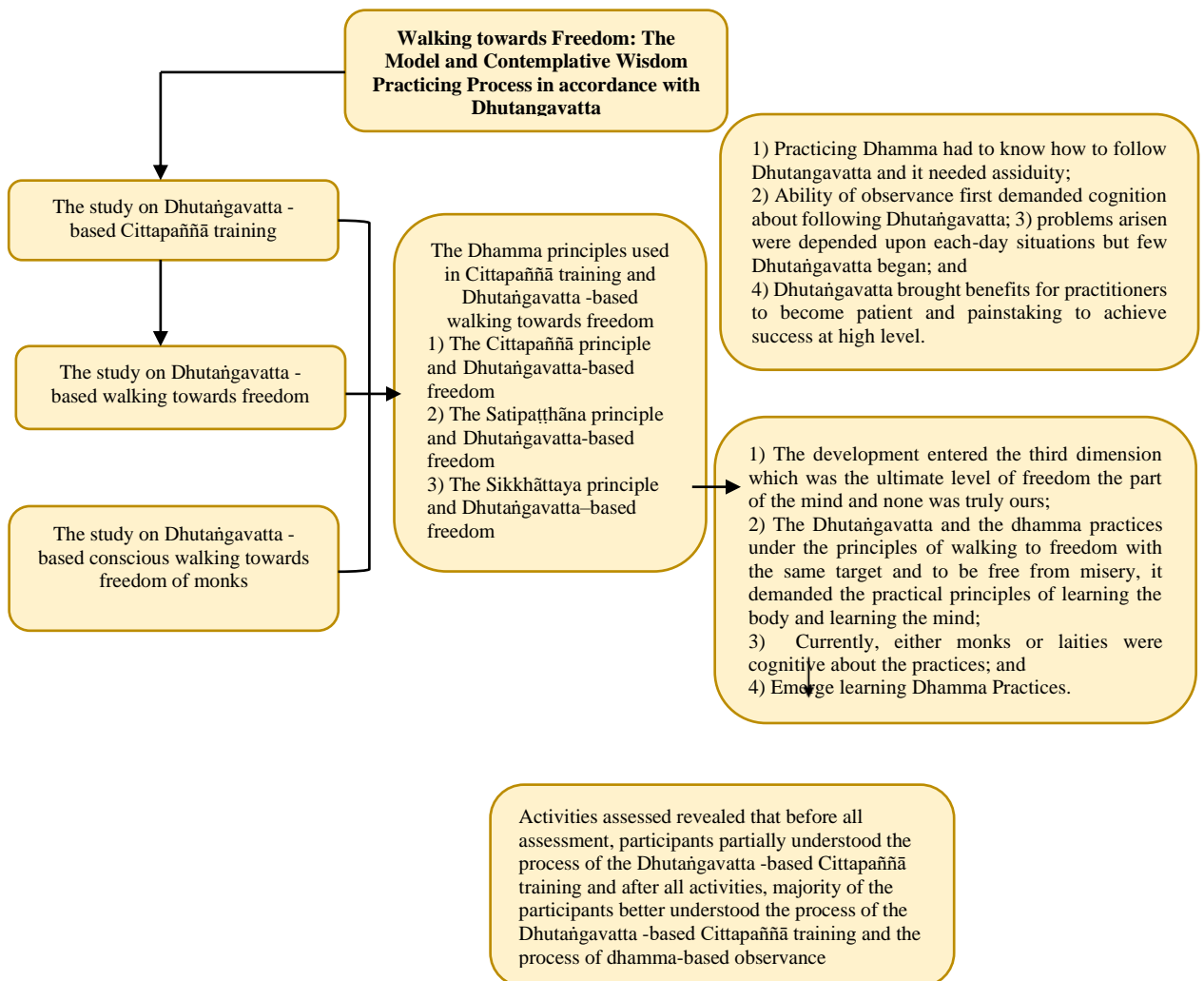


Figure 1: Knowledge in research

Discussions

A study on “Walking towards Freedom: The Model and Contemplative Wisdom Practicing Process in accordance with Dhutaṅgavatta”, the researcher would discuss according to the significant findings as follows:

1. The 4 results of the Dhutaṅgavattara 13 - based Cittapaññā training were 1) practicing Dhamma had to know how to follow Dhutaṅgavatta and it needed assiduity or patience; 2) ability of observance first demanded cognition

about following Dhutaṅgavatta; 3) problems arisen were depended upon each-day situations but few Dhutaṅgavatta began; and 4) Dhutaṅgavatta brought benefits for practitioners to become patient and painstaking to achieve success at high level. They were corresponded with the research of His Venerable Phrakhruvinaidhorn Normchai Sudhammo (2018) investigating “the Desired Dhutaṅgavatta in the Current Thai Societies”, His Venerable found that each point of Dhutaṅgavatta principle differently earned advantages but as a whole, they allowed the Dhutaṅgavatta practitioners contended the 4 means of living and satiable with dress, shelter and food, easy to care for, disregarded taste of food, became a conscious minded person, became modest and cautious of Dhutaṅgavatta points undertaken, became strong body and mind tolerant to impacts, became carefree person in life feeding, and shelter. Finally, each point was advantageous to monkhood life with good-practices in Buddhism. This was for the progress in dhamma conduct until dhamma achievement. Dhutaṅgavatta expanded to various Dhamma Schools and monks pursued the process until today without fail. Dhutaṅgavatta countered the current to return conventional practices because Great Disciples during His Lord Buddha era regardless being Phramaha Kassapathera Phra Uppasenathera, and many others who pursued the Course of His Lord Buddha attained achievement. The Dhutaṅgavatta was therefore the special rigid practices for those Venerables who routinely observed the forest life disciplines.

2. The 4 results were found in the study of walks towards freedom as of 1) the development entered the third dimension which was the ultimate level of freedom the part of the mind and none was truly ours; 2) the Dhutaṅgavatta and the dhamma practices under the principles of walking to freedom with the same target and to be free from misery, it demanded the practical principles of learning the body and learning the mind; 3) currently, either monks or laities were cognitive about the practices; and 4) emerged learning Dhamma Practices. These were corresponded with the research of His Venerable Phra Manas Kantasīlo (2013) studying and analyzing “The Mental Freedom Concept in the Theravadan Buddhism” and found that the mental freedom involved the mind freed from defilements arose from training, physical and verbal honesty, livelihood with righteousness and eliminating consumer goods, but never being enslaved by consumerism accounted for physical freedom and social freedom. Mental strength training with steadfastness, good self-control, well concentration, high willpower, a mind with calmness and brightness, happiness,

freedom, purity without any disturbance and misery. It needed improving the mind to be of higher quality and performance to the point that the mind was united and classified as mental freedom, absolute independence of *Ditthi* arisen from the training of wisdom to create knowledge and understanding of things as they really were until being liberated to have a free mind and peace and to find true peace which was classified as intellectual freedom.

3. The study of developing a model of conscious walks among monks undertaking *Dhutaṅgavatta* revealed that with the pre & post activity assessment on inclusion of 15 participants, there were 2 points, i.e. 1) before all assessments, participants partially understood the process of the *Dhutaṅgavatta*-based *Cittapaññā* training and the dhamma practitioners should additionally explore all the process which led to additional development; and 2) after all activities, majority of participants better understood the process of the *Dhutaṅgavatta*-based *Cittapaññā* training and they much understood the process of dhamma practices and the emphases on knowledge dissemination. These were corresponded with the research of Phramaha Vicharn Suvichāno (1999) investigating “The Process of Training the Buddhist Personnel of Phra Bodhiyānathera (Cha Subhaddo)” and found that variety of *Dhutaṅgavatta* supported and promoted the *Dhutaṅgavatta* monks well enabling to travel for monkhood practices because Their Venerables prioritized Dhamma over all things. Significantly, all these *Dhutaṅgavatta* practices were the scopes or guides to eradicate defilements (*Kilesa*) to lead to the Buddhist liberation accounted for the difficult practices of monks and laities. Rationally, all retaliated the mind. The *Dhutaṅgavatta* was the refinement tool and it showed that the forest monks facilitated monkhood dhamma practices. The Buddhist religious training with *Dhutaṅgavatta* was beneficial to the individual monks, companies of monks and Buddhism while enabling to rapidly achieve liberation.

Conclusions

A study on “Walking towards Freedom: The Model and Contemplative Wisdom Practicing Process in accordance with *Dhutaṅgavatta*”, the researcher recommended a policy design for the benefit of research works encompassing, 1) there should be *Dhutaṅgavatta* project emphasizing aggressive *Cittapaññā* training, meditation with problem solving for mental healthcare and personality

adjustment. 2) There should be planning to hold important Dhutaṅgavatta activities and meditation training, various course of circle meditation walks paired with self-training and being happy in living. 3) Engagement should be emphasized in information reception, opinion hearing, co-decisionmaking, and the successful action taken on Dhutaṅgavatta involvement. 4) There should be cultivation in organizing activities for the instructors of Vipassanācāraya or experts to formulate Dhamma practice personnel through activities incorporate with the temples and requesting Their Venerable Ecclesiastical Administrative monks (Phra Saṅghādhikāṛā) as key to develop Dhutaṅgavatta-based walking towards freedom.

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