

GENDER EQUALITY IN BUDDHISM AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT TRENDS

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ABSTRACT

Gender equality (GE) has always been a debated topic for decades, when society is developing towards integration, the issue of gender equality has never cooled down. This not only affects the social status of the individual, but it is also a matter of religious concern, especially Buddhism. Research methods of synthesis, analysis, evaluation and comparison are used in the article to clarify the issues mentioned. Research results showed that individuals can attain the highest state of Nirvana regardless of one's gender to Buddhist teachings emphasized. Therefore, equal opportunities for men and women to become monks/nuns are the same. However, during the practice process from the beginning to the present stage, the position of nuns and monks is still questionable for a number of objective and subjective reasons. Hence, there are four solutions proposed to foster women's qualifications aiming to improve women's position in modern society under the Buddha's teaching, including, encouraging the belief in the Buddha's teaching; practicing precepts, concentrations, and wisdom to abstains from the defilements; fostering a well-founded belief with understanding; making full of eight dhammas to head for winning in this life.

Keywords: Buddhism, Equality, Gender equality, Social development trends, Women.

INTRODUCTION

The issue of gender equality (GE) is always mentioned by leaders, policy-makers as well as researchers in modern society. GE is one of the eight-millennium development goals (MDGs), and also one of the national sustainable development goals (SDGs). The goal of the issue is to address the disadvantage of women in society, an attitude that has been discriminated against human history. Actually, when it comes to women's status in ancient and modern Indian society, most scholars always take ambiguous views as a standard for evaluating their views. This can be seen in the commentaries condemning the traditional culture and society of India at that time as oppressing women. Over the past before the age of Buddha, the respect and protection of women are found in important ancient Indian texts - it is the Manu law, the earliest law in human society. It is also the instrument that Brahmins level used to control society. It is divided into four castes in the age of Buddha, women belonged to the lowest caste and had no voice in particular. The Law of Manu was born referring to the status of women in society, which is a mixture of sin, virtue, duty as well as the right to protection. When it comes to women in Manu, most people are impressed: "... In childhood, a female must be subject to her father, in youth to her husband, when her lord is dead to her sons; a woman must never be independent" (Art.148, Ch.5) [1]. This reminds us of the "three obediences" of women in Confucianism, women are considered as the property of men, the value is lowered "one boy means one, ten girls mean none", Original text in Chinese: 一男曰有十女曰無.

Manu law also mentioned that "It is the nature of women to seduce men in this (world); for that reason, the wise are never unguarded in (the company of) females" (Art.213, Ch.2)... "For women are able to lead astray in (this) world not only a fool, but even a learned man, and (to make) him a slave of desire and anger" (Art.214, Ch.2) [2]. Women at the age are not allowed to love freely due to a different emotion than religious love. The personality of women through the Manu has many bad points such as jealousy, hatred, suspicion, hypocrisy. Moreover, the Manu allotted to women a love of their bed, their seat and ornament, impure desires, wrath, dishonesty, malice, and bad conduct (Art.17, Ch.9) [3]. They must not touch items that are not their property, especially men's items. In other words, there is an invisible boundary in gender. However, it is mentioned how to limit those bad habits to create harmony, not to despise women in the Law. In addition, women have an important role to play for husbands and children, family and relatives. This is a sacred duty and responsibility which is not a service. The Manu believed that women want to achieve great status in this world because of the noble qualities of their husbands: "These and other females of low birth have attained eminence in this world by the respective good qualities of their husbands" (Art.24, Ch.9). It can not be denied that the linkage of husband and wife is like a river joined the ocean, like water mixed with milk to be able to reach a happy shore: "Whatever be the qualities of the man with whom a woman is united according to the law, such qualities even she assumes, like a river (united) with the ocean" (Art.22, Ch.9) [4]. This showed us that women in this period could not live a free life separate from men.

The presence of the Buddha is considered as a light, which brings light to women in particular and to human society in general. Buddhist teachings always lead to respect freedom, and equality is seen as a revolution for women. Through the biography of the Buddha, there are three aspects related to the "female" associated with him through three nuances. The first aspect is motherly love, his mother is Queen Maya, and the person who raised him as the mother is Mahaprajapati; the second aspect is the upbringing of the person who renounces the family through the image of Sujata offering a bowl of milk, and the last aspect is equality gender through the acting of female ordained by the Buddha's agreement. It is clear evidence that the Buddha's sutras also emphasize the role of wife and mother. The Buddha taught a husband to respect and love his wife through five things [6], taught children to take care of their parents. During the age of the Buddha, one day he preached to King Pasadani of Kosala, who was disappointed to hear that Queen Malika had given birth to a princess. Buddha told the king that some girls are sometimes better than boys because

that young woman is an adult, has wisdom and virtue, is respected by her parents-in-law, and gives birth to a son who is the hero of the nation's rulers [6].

Shortly, Buddhist teachings with the ultimate goal of liberation and practice of Nirvana are very practical and concerned with every aspect of women's lives. Life is a series of interrelated and opposite issues, in other words, we will certainly find a certain fairness and equality. In fact, when we say, we do, we look at, all are timeless with our personality, our view, our thinking, ours and ourselves. This is the cause of inequality, especially the distinction between men and women. Through the teachings of the Buddha and the true practitioners attained enlightenment, the spirit of GE is made vows, which has contributed to the transformation of social awareness about the status of women.

In Buddhism, women are always praised by the Buddha and respected by the Sangha, because they have extraordinary things that hardly anyone can do. Since the beginning of age, women's position has always seemed weaker than men. But this problem is only mentioned on the physical aspect. As for spirituality, it is not like that. More than 2,500 years ago, the Buddha was born and came to the world. He opened the truth of enlightenment to save all living beings from the cycle of damnation. Among them, the status of women is also concerned. The Buddha's doctrine of promoting the ability of women as well as men to attain enlightenment once shook and overthrew the prejudices of that time: "... for females from the lay life to homelessness in the teaching and training proclaimed by the Realized One; If a female is able to realize the fruits of stream-entry, once-return, non-return, and perfection once she has gone forth" [AN, Vol.4, 276].

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The thought of women's equality in Buddhism

In the history of religions, all agreed on respect for women, recognizing their important role in family life. However, not all religions support women's empowerment. In particular, Buddhism is a special religion, the teachings of Buddhism always pay attention to the role and rights of women appropriately. We learned about the teachings of the Buddha to see that he cared about women a lot, and it can be said that he understands both their thoughts and desires. Indeed, in the canon, there are many suttas that the Buddha taught about the role of mother and wife. In particular, the Buddha admitted that women can practice enlightenment, gain achievements, and attain sainthood like men. Furthermore, the establishment of the nuns at Vesāli is one of the most visible events on the issue of women's empowerment in Buddhism.

This is considered a pioneering revolution in human history, opening up opportunities for women to advance on the path of spiritual practice as well as in social life. The essence of Buddhist teachings is that regardless of gender, both men and women are capable of attaining Nirvana, achieving the highest goal of training on the path of liberation. In the Anguttara Nikāya, the Buddha mentioned that a person who completely cuts off nine dharmas would be arahantship: "...having abandoned nine things, one is capable of realizing arahantship. What nine? Lust, hatred, delusion, anger, hostility, denigration, insolence, envy, and miserliness. Having abandoned these nine things, one is capable of realizing arahantship"[7].

It can be seen that the path of practice only needs to be in the right way by developing and cultivating these seven awakening factors, a mendicant realizes the undefiled freedom of heart and freedom by wisdom in this very life. People realized it with their insight due to the ending of defilements. Those developed the awakening factors of mindfulness, investigation of principles, energy, rapture, tranquility, immersion, and equanimity, which rely on seclusion, fading away, and cessation, and ripen as letting go, which is not limited by gender. In addition, the dignity of women is highly valued in Buddhist teachings. The Buddha understood the shortcomings that women are born in this life, they need to be respected, considered it a woman's vocation, and the feudal society considered it a duty and obligation. Buddha mentioned that there are five kinds of suffering peculiar to women, which women experience but not men:

"...when young, a woman goes to live with her husband's family and is separated from her relatives. This is the first kind of suffering peculiar to women.... a woman is subject to menstruation. This is the second kind of suffering peculiar to women.... a woman becomes pregnant. This is the third kind of suffering peculiar to women.... a woman gives birth. This is the fourth kind of suffering peculiar to women.... a woman is made to serve a man. This is the fifth kind of suffering peculiar to women...."[8]

Women at a young age have to get married, go to their husband's house without relatives. They have the monthlies and even become pregnant which are difficult for a man to naturally replace. Finally, the women must bear children, and serve the man. It can be said that women are born with five sufferings compared to men, at the same time, women themselves are shown five strengths by the Buddha, including, the power of beauty, the power of wealth, the power of relatives, the power of sons, the power of virtue. If a woman possessed these five powers, she dwells confidently at home [9]. In which the power of virtue is considered the ultimate, a woman with beauty, wealth, relatives, and sons, but without the strength of virtue, she cannot conquer her man, and family life is not happy, or even society does not respect her. With the inherent qualities of women, the Buddha's teachings only teach them how to cultivate virtue aiming to become a beautiful woman both physically and internally.

Typically, the Samyutta Nikaya mentioned that a woman to preserve and not take the lives of living beings, even though small creatures such as insects come to humans, abstain from taking what is not given, from sexual misconduct, from false speech, abstain from wine, liquor, and intoxicants that cause negligence. When a woman possessed these five qualities, with the breakup of the body, after death, she is reborn in a good destination, in a heavenly realm. In addition, a woman has faith, a sense of shame, without anger and wisdom, she possessed these qualities that she will be a happy life. A woman who has nothing to fear, deserves to live a holy, pleasurable life. In addition, women need to cultivate virtue, to grow "...in faith, in virtue, in learning, in generosity, and in wisdom" which is like grasping the basics, subtleties (tree cores) and attaining the best thing about the body:

*“When she grows here in faith and virtue,
In wisdom, generosity, and learning,
The virtuous woman lay disciple
Acquires right here the essence for herself [10].*

In the Anguttara Nikāya, the Buddha taught women there are four dharmas to achieve victory in this life as an accomplishment in faith, in virtuous behavior, in generosity, and in wisdom [11]. Therefore, women have to be skillful and diligent in attending to their husband’s domestic chores, whether knitting or weaving; they will possess sound judgment about them to carry out and arrange them properly [12]. One more fact, we can see that the Buddha paid attention to women, he taught women to live based on the law of cause and effect (law of karma), their karma will make their wish fulfillment:

“...there are five situations that are easy to obtain for a woman who has done merit. What are the five? “She may wish: ‘May I be born into a suitable family!’ This is the first situation.... ‘Having been born into a suitable family ... having born sons, may I abide with my husband under my control!’ This is the fifth situation.... “These are the five situations that are easy to obtain for a woman who has done merit” [13].

A piece of evidence supporting the spirit of gender equality in Buddhism is the issues related to karma, to the law of cause and effect. Especially, good actions will lead to happiness and vice versa, whether good life or not is determined by actions regardless of gender. This showed that women and men are considered equal before the laws of karma, cause and effect. A person is impassioned with lust, depraved through hatred or bewildered through delusion, overwhelmed and infatuated by delusion, then one plans for one’s harm, for the harm of others, the harm of both; and one experiences in his mind suffering and grief. But when lust, hatred, and delusion have been abandoned, one neither plans for one’s harm, nor the harm of others, nor the harm of both; and one does not experience in one’s mind suffering and grief. In this way, Nibbāna is directly visible, immediate, inviting one to come and see, worthy of application, to be personally experienced by the wise [14]. Indeed, by giving *“...sloth, torpor, restlessness, worry, lack of faith, and negligence”* [15], *“...Conceit, inferiority-conceit, superiority-conceit, self-overrating, obstinacy, and servility”*[16], people will be capable of arahatship without gender belonged to.

The position of Buddhist women in modern society

The first nunnery congregation was established, which resonated greatly during the age of Buddha in the world. Throughout the history of the lineage, Buddhism divided into two directions to spread the North and the South. Buddhism developed in the North with the resonance of the Mahasanghikas spirit, the nuns’ congregation spread to China, Japan, Vietnam, Burma, Thailand..., especially Ceylon (Sri Lanka at the present), where The Nun Congregation was first established after the Buddha’s death, then the civil war and foreign invasion caused Buddhism in general and the Nun Congregation, in particular, to be absent, and the Great Order of Bhikkhunis was restored in Ceylon in 1998 [17].

The nunnery has increasingly grown and developed over the years. Residential facilities have been built, and schools for Buddhist education and training have also been apprenticed, typically the Taiwanese nuns with the Luminary Buddhist nunnery established in 1980, which contributed to the development of the Taiwanese nuns. In 1990, Huafan University of Humanities and Technology was founded by a nun, Bhikkhu Ni Hiu Wan, which was the first Buddhist university to be officially recognized according to national standards. The next position is the Korean nuns, where the Korean nuns have attained remarkable achievements in spreading the Buddhist Dharma in the early stages of history.

Through the Ages of 37 BC to 668 AD, Silla was independent (668-935), Goryeo (also known as Goh Ryur or Koryo, 918-1392), Joreon (also known as Joh Surn or Choson 1392 -1910) and up to the present time, Buddhism continues to be maintained and developed by each local area and region in this country. The establishment of The Women’s Development Academy is an outstanding symbol of Korean women reflecting a dedicated effort to Buddhism and society [18].

This was followed by the growth of Chinese and Tibetan nuns. With the growth of nuns from all over the world, the World Nuns Conference has been formed so far, with more than 2,000 members and friends from more than 45 countries around the world. The organization, which is called Sakyadhita, meaning *“Daughter of the Buddha”*, aims to create a lineage, support, share and learn from each other. The Sakyadhita serves as an international forum on the position of women and equality of opportunities for ordination, learning and leadership in Buddhism. The Sakyadhita has been interested in organizing and promoting the research and publication of books on the history of Buddhist women, supporting Buddhist women to be proactive and creative in all aspects of education, practice, etc. at centers of spiritual practice, members strive to create equal opportunities for women in all Buddhist traditions. For more than 20 years of operation, the Sakyadhita has formed a network of communication linkage with Buddhist women around the world. *“International Conference on Buddhist Nuns”* organized by Sakyadhita organization led by Rev. Karma Lekse Tsomo with the support of Rev. Ayya Khema and Professor Chatsumarn Kabilsigh (now Rev. Dhammananda). Overall, through 18 times of conferences, Buddhist women have made great strides both physically and mentally. The results of the conference were guidelines and useful lessons for women in general and Buddhist women in particular, who have suitable mottos to the world and religion, contributing to building a happy family, making the Dharma endures, the nation flourishes.

However, the fate of Buddhist women today have not equal in terms of social position compared to Buddhist men. Buddhist women are placed in a lower position than Buddhist men. The nun’s opinions are presented after the monks’ opinions, if there are disagreements. In all Buddhist ceremonies, Buddhist women usually sit behind the Buddhist men, even Buddhist women eat after the Buddhist men in some places. They are not allowed to hold the highest positions in any ceremonies, etc. Very few times, questions have been raised about this inequality and, a large number of people still believed that Buddhist women should be placed in a lower position than Buddhist men. In many cases, Buddhist women themselves have deep guilt that they are inferior to men. They think they cannot be in the same place as Buddhist men because they are more jealous, have shorter tongues, are

more evil, weaker, more conceited and ignorant, etc. This also makes it difficult to arouse this deep feeling in women and establish a level of confidence in them. During my research, I noticed that this concept is changing very quickly in Taiwan, especially among the younger generation. They do not hold negative views anymore. There is also a growing sense in the Buddhist community that these negative teachings and unequal rules should be abandoned. This showed that the number of supporters towards equality is trending up. I think the Dalai Lama's effort to eliminate discrimination against nuns should also be mentioned here. He said this discrimination caused harm and should be abandoned. He was in favor that reform should be done. We saw that Tibetan Buddhism has advanced in this context. Many Tibetan leaders have expressed their desire to improve the current conditions.

In Western countries, as a capitalist country, freedom is highly valued. Many people think that Buddhist men and women are equal, all are equal opportunities and rights. In Asia, however, things have not changed. The nuns here receive less education, respect, training and material support than the monks. They have little or no opportunity for advancement. In some countries, women are forbidden to enter temples or shrines. Not only that, even a monk who advocates for monastic women can be severely punished, possibly even leading to expulsion. This is a clear illustration that things have not changed. In India, low views of women existed before the time of the Buddha, and even later until now. This may be because men have been able to achieve higher positions in society related to politics that have influenced religious doctrine. According to scientists, the male hormone testosterone also plays an important role as it increases a man's desire to achieve status, and so women do, but it is lower. It is illustrated that there are stories from the age of the Buddha and later praising the nuns for their intelligence, energy, and hard-working nature. They even describe them as just as competent and efficient as their men counterparts. Not only Buddhism, it can be taken from the example of other religions such as Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism, Jainism and etc., all showed no signs of weaknesses when it comes to incorporating women into their religion. Instead, it is clear that women have played an important role in all these religions.

Solutions for enhancing the position of Buddhist women in modern society

In order to improve the position of Buddhist women in today's society, the following solutions are needed:

Firstly, women are protected, encouraged and trusted by the teachings of the Buddha. Moreover, the woman can live in harmony with the Sangha community, with the joy of the Dharma. Buddhism always supports women in self-cultivation activities and devotes themselves to society. Today, the status of women in the world in general and in Vietnam in particular has been raised to the level of men. Many women have occupied important leadership positions in the fields of politics, economy, science, society, culture, art, etc., and gained fame. And Buddhist women are also following the direction of society, which has formed many organizations, unions and associations to spread the spirit of monasticism and build community life, the gap between Buddhist women and men discrimination is shortened which affects gender equality in modern society. However, the distinction between men and women is still deeply imprinted in the subconscious of many people and groups of people. In fact, it is easy to understand, biologically, women have different physical, mental and psychological conditions than men, so in Buddhism there are also different precepts for monks and nuns. When mentioned to the nature of each gender, we can easily recognize the following firstly, men are praised as wise, while women are merciful, so the images of compassion have the figure of a woman, especially in Vietnam; Secondly, if men have will, courage, and bravery to be praised, women have already patience, moderation, tolerance and forgiveness. At the same time, if men expressed through the act of "loud voice", vivaciousness and courageousness, women on the contrary, expressed in silence; If men are praised for power and majesty, women are modesty. However, coexisting with the inherent virtues of a woman has accompanying downsides, for example, the reverse side of compassion is delusion, tenderness, sentimentality, arrogance; the back side of patience is attachment, affliction, holding a grudge in your heart; The wrong side of modesty and courtesy is shyness and dependence. Actually, the issue of promoting Buddhist education for Buddhist nuns is necessary in today's society. As illustrated, today's Buddhist nuns always improve their morality and personality, have a high spirit of learning but have a pessimistic attitude. Looking at it objectively, more Buddhist nuns come to the temple or participate in Buddhist activities in particular and community activities in general than Buddhist monks, but they are greatly influenced by the surrounding environment and their moods are easily disturbed act when encountering a negative problem. This is an opportunity for Buddhism to penetrate women's thoughts in order to exert its influence with the purpose of raising women's awareness so that they have a better outlook on life. However, building standard guidelines and beautiful images of Buddhism can "retain" women in their spiritual life.

Secondly, when it comes to women's ability to practice, we always have absolute faith in the Buddha's teachings and practice. Whether the ability of a woman to achieve fruition or not, is not influenced by external factors but comes from internal factors. In order to cross the three realms and six paths according to the Buddha's teachings, it is nothing more than mastering the Three Immortals - Precepts, Concentrations, and Wisdoms which are considered as a tripod, a chain that is tightly joined together. They help nuns in particular and all practitioners in general stand firm on the precepts, hold firmly the spear of wisdom sharpened on the rock of meditation, cut off all defilements, and advance on the path of enlightenment and liberation. A bhikkhu observes the precepts, abstains from the evil precepts, lives with the right view, abandons wrong views, puts an end to the taints, abstains from the defilements, it is called the ultimate attainment, the attainment of a pure basis, and the abiding of the basis. Thus, it can be concluded that the Buddha did not distinguish between men and women, Bhikkhus, Bhikkhunis, if anyone keeps the spirit of precepts, will achieve results. Moreover, we need to live mindfully, diligently to tame the world's mind, stay mindful of the outer and inner bodies, make our islands, rely on ourselves, take the Dharma as our island as our refuge.... have the right view of wisdom is like:

"...The inner flesh' is a term for the six interior sense fields. 'The outer hide' is a term for the six exterior sense fields. 'The connecting tendons, sinews, and ligaments' is a term for greed and relishing. 'A sharp meat cleaver' is a term for noble wisdom. And it is that noble wisdom which cuts, carves, severs, and slices the connecting corruption, fetter, and bond" [19].

...with a sharp practice method, destroy the defilements or reach abiding in the free mind of wisdom, taking wisdom as a career in daily practice. Because people with wisdom will destroy ignorance and delusion, and those who eliminate ignorance

will end afflictions and suffering. Those who stop the three poisons will be able to achieve holy results, and now live in bliss. Moreover, building the image of an exemplary Buddhist nuns is remarkable necessary. Buddhist education is an education of love and wisdom that gives people a noble moral and spiritual life with a spirit of tolerance and purity. Therefore, it is necessary to establish the image of a beautiful Buddhist nuns in the hearts of worldly people. The nature of a Buddhist nuns is expressed through a life of poverty, mutual respect and pure virtue. A monastic person is someone who leaves worldly life, removes sensual pleasures, and the attachments to material comforts of the world. Only a person who is free in spirit can comprehend the wonderful teachings of the Buddha. Practicing Precepts - Concentration - Wisdom aims towards the path of liberation, eliminating fetters and defilements.

Thirdly, women have been living in modern society to head for victory in this word succeeds, they need to ultimately practice the Buddhist teaching according to eight dhammas. The first four dhammas mentioned in sutta as: *“Possessing four other qualities, Visākhā, a woman is heading for victory in the other world and her life in the other world succeeds. What four? Here, a woman is accomplished in faith, accomplished in virtuous behavior, accomplished in generosity, and accomplished in wisdom”* [20].

Actually, in this modern society, women would like to endow with faith who have to place faith in the enlightenment of the Buddha, the faith of knower which is not indiscriminate. Women have to accomplish in virtuous behavior, it means they have to abstain from the destruction of life like liquor, wine, and intoxicants which are the basis for heedlessness. Moreover, to become a generous woman, she has to live at home with a fresh heart, openhandedness, delighting in relinquishment, devoted to charity, delighting in giving and sharing. One thing that can not be ignored is to nurture wisdom. A wise woman who possesses the wisdom that discerns arising and passing away, is noble and penetrative and leads to the destruction of suffering. The last four dhammas mentioned for married women, who should practice making full of four dhammas to achieve winning in this life, as follows:

“... possessing four qualities, a woman is heading for victory in the present world and her life in this world succeeds. What four? Here, a woman is capable at her work; she manages the domestic help; she behaves agreeably to her husband; and she safeguards his earnings” [21].

It means a married women has to cultivate skillful and diligent qualities in attending to her husband’s domestic chores, such as knitting or weaving. A woman do carry out and arrange them properly. Besides, a woman has to take care of the family, even her husband’s domestic helpers, respect her husband and husband’s family, and protect whatever legal income her husband brings home. And, ethics plays an important role in the development of religious and social ethics. The moral qualities of women in particular and people of the world in general are patriotism, diligence, frugality, integrity, public-mindedness and impartiality; Have a high sense of responsibility towards work, proper and courteous behavior, and a spirit of discipline and cooperation. In Buddhism, personal morality is essentially *“living true to yourself”*, living in the spirit of six harmony, with compassion, joy, and renunciation. Moral expression is expressed through daily rules of conduct in many aspects, responsibilities towards oneself, the community, and all living beings. All require people to have a heart filled with love and altruism.

Finally, there is a well-founded belief, that is, before a woman believes something, she needs to understand and know. The fact showed that an issue can have many different arguments and evaluations, deriving from viewpoints and perspectives as well as depending on factors of time, country, culture, tradition, knowledge, and even way to approach. Moreover, the opinion of the subject must be biased or neutral. From the very beginning in the Sangha, shortly after the Buddha’s nirvana and centuries later, women were denied their position, respect, and this view was accepted by the Buddha. The wariness and fear of women’s achievement have been insidious for centuries to this day and are still reflected in the lack of opportunities for women to fulfill their aspirations and make valuable meaningful contributions to the Sangha. Therefore, a grounded objective view will be the basic premise to evaluate and recognize a meaningful social issue. Especially in this modern society, women need to live mindfully to properly perform their roles, duties, responsibilities, and properly demonstrate their position in society as well as in religion. Aiming to build understanding for women, I believed that it is necessary to enhance community links, promote socialization of Buddhist education, and promote the positive influence of Buddhism on building social ethical standards. Buddhism needs to encourage actions that are close to the worldly people such as organizing Buddhist Dharma classes for lay people and children; organize Buddhist activity clubs such as Zen Club, Four Directions Club, Humanitarian Club, Club for Peace, Club for the Environment... The purpose of meeting, exchanging, presentations, lectures, questions and answers... guiding participants to practice practical behaviors and actions. Inspire them to be curious, learn and love about Buddhist teachings.

In short, it can be showed that Buddha had a very positive and revolutionary attitude towards women. He opened the door of immortality for the equal benefit of both men and women. This fact is considered an important event in the history of world religion. The spiritual attainments of many Arhant women have proven the Buddha’s sacred statement that a person’s worth does not depend on their gender and family background, but on their intelligence, wisdom and virtue. Buddhism is the first religion to recognize gender equality. The history of female disciples’ practice and propagation has proven that the position, role, and function of women is equal to that of men. After more than a century of fighting through conferences, resolutions, and legal documents, the issue of gender equality is only at a relatively formal level. Implementing gender equality requires correct awareness through wisdom and morality that comes from practicing according to the teachings of the Four Immeasurables, the Six Paramitas and the Ten Good Karmas. The main thing is the spirit and mind truthfully, without discrimination, not based on legal documents.

CONCLUSION

In general, the teachings of the Buddha recorded in the original text explain to his practitioners the age-old unfair conception of women, and his view of women under the light of his magic dhamma. He did not agree to discriminate against women, on the contrary, he pointed out the good points of contemporary women as good things, virtues, and personality, which deserve to be received and enjoyed by women. All in terms are really different from the images that traditional Indian society has assigned to women.

It is illustrated that the role of women in Buddhism is considered less important than that of men. There is a very small room for women in Buddhism although the Buddha mentioned not to distinguish gender when renunciation, practice and liberation. Today's women have proven themselves to be extraordinary. They deserve a bigger and more equal role than men with their hard work. They even outnumber men in many cases. We can see there are many women who are leaders of their countries. With the article, I hope that women and men are equal in general, Buddhist women and men in particular in modern society. One day the issue of inequality, inferiority and sexism will no longer be seen in Buddhism and modern society. To achieve the final goals, no one else, women in general and Buddhist women, in particular, themselves need to have a positive attitude to life, constantly strive and cultivate, and enrich their internal resources to be recognized the social status by society and Sangha.

Buddhist teachings always encourage women to constantly demand equality in society and their autonomy. It cannot be denied that people's thinking has changed in part thanks to the teachings of Buddhism. Therefore, women's autonomy and feminism activists can apply Buddhist perspectives to propaganda as a new millennium goal. And, it is more reasonable to apply Western theories to Asian society.

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