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The Pedagogical Approach of the Buddha: Analyzing the Buddha's Teaching Methods Based on Sutta Pitaka

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Abstract: Teaching methods are very important elements of learning process, ensuring students not only receive the knowledge but also become attractive and engaged in the learning process. Teaching methods are designed to help the students to understand the teachings easily according to their capacities. This research aims to examine the teaching methods had been adopted by the Buddha as the great spiritual teacher in the world. This research is qualitative research methodology carried out with library approach. The data of the research is mainly based on primary sources which include the *Sutta Pitaka* and its commentaries, and secondary sources which include the journals, articles, or books written by scholars. Having critically examined the data, this research discovers that the Buddha had used several methods of teaching according to the characters and the capacity of the students. The Buddha examined the audiences' capacities and their characters before giving the sermon and decide to deliver the teachings by the methods they can understand easily. Looking at the discourses in the Sutta Pitaka, it can be understood that the Buddha had used several methods of teaching such as student-centered method, lecture method, discussion method, narrative method, parable method, gradual method and psychotherapy method.

Keyword: Buddha, Education, Pedagogy, Teaching Method, Sutta Pitaka

INTRODUCTION

Teaching method is one of very important elements of the good education. The successful education relies not only on the students' abilities, but also on the teaching methods employed by the teachers. The effective teaching methods are crucial for facilitating learning and ensuring the students achieve their potential. Teaching methods means the strategies or the techniques that the teachers use to achieve the goal of teaching. Teaching methods are not just about delivering the content of the lecture, but also about engaging students in the learning process and fostering a supportive learning environment. Teaching methods can include lecture method, question and answer method, demonstration method, field trip method, assignment method, problem solving method, discussion method, simulation method, experimental method, discovery-inquiry method and project or unit method, quantum teaching, and so on (Sudirman, 1987: 113). Teaching methods are generally designed to help the students to

understand the teaching easily according to their capacities. These methods also help to make the students become attractive and feel engaged in learning process.

A good teacher is a teacher who knows his students' abilities and has teaching methods to teach according to their abilities. The Buddha was the greatest spiritual teacher in the world (Story, 1976: 3). Throughout the history, the Buddha was considered as one of the most influential teachers in the world. His teachings have profoundly influenced religious and philosophical thought across Asia and have made significant impact on the world. His teachings are not only appreciated by the followers itself, but also highly appreciated by scholars and philosophers. The Buddha holds the main position among those who knew education science and education psychology (Piyarathana, 2017: 157).

The Buddha is described as the teacher of both humans and gods (*satthā devamanussānaṃ*) (M. II. 226). The Buddha became insuperable teacher in the world since he could preach Dhamma to the people in a proper way. The Buddha's teachings and wisdom are unparalleled and cannot be surpassed by others. In term of education, he taught the people in different means according to the capability of the audiences. The Buddha employed different teaching methods for the sake of the audiences understanding. From the *Sutta Pitaka* and its commentaries, it can be seen that the Buddha had used several methods of teaching and various types of methodology in delivering the discourse. It is commonly expressed in the scripture with the passage "*bhagavatā anekapariyāyena dhammo pakāsito*" (D. I. 85). This passage often occurs together with the appreciation from the audiences after realizing the teaching delivered by the Buddha. The Buddha knew with his supreme power the various types of people with their capabilities in understanding his preaching. Therefore, the Buddha had to use several methods of teaching when educating the people. This paper will explore the various innovative teaching methods employed by the Buddha in teaching the people of diverse characters according to *Sutta Pitaka* and its commentaries.

METHOD

This research is carried out with qualitative research methodology with library approach. Library research is understood as a series of activities relating to methods of collecting data, reading, taking notes and processing research materials (Zed, 2003: 3). Library research is classified as qualitative research, but in the context of library research, data is taken from exploration of library materials which are studied holistically, then analyzed based on a particular framework of thought or theory/philosophical paradigm that underlies it, then uses a certain approach in accordance with the research objectives achieved (Hamzah, 2019: 25). This research methodology can be divided into three following steps, namely data collection, analysis and synthesis, and conclusion. Data collection is the step of methods to collect data or information used in the research. This research is carried out by collecting data from primary sources and secondary sources. The Pali Canon, especially *Sutta Piṭaka* and their commentaries, are considered as the primary sources. The secondary sources include relevant articles, journals, and books written by temporary scholars. Analysis and synthesis are the steps of analyzing the data used in the research. In this step, the collected data are analyzed, taking the useful point for the research. The researcher analyzed and systematized the data to discover the teaching methods employed by the Buddha. Conclusion is the discovery explanation in brief. In this step, the researcher identifies the conclusion of the discussion on teaching methods employed by the Buddha.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Buddha as the Great Teacher

In the history of humankind, the Buddha was one of the great teachers who made significant effort to spread his teaching to many people. He was a young religious leader who attained the enlightenment in age of 35, followed with many followers from all social classes.

Throughout 45 years the Buddha dedicated himself in teaching both for humans and deities, sleeping only one hour each night. In the morning session the Buddha looked at the universe with his supernatural power to find the suitable person to listen his teaching. In the afternoon, the monks would come to ask questions and receive teachings. In the evening session, the followers would visit the Buddha to listen and seek clarification on their doubts. At night, deities would visit the Buddha to learn from him. Therefore, all the days in his life the Buddha spent his time dedicating on teachings and practice. He is attributed as the great influential teacher for the world. The Buddha is a teacher of both humans and gods (*satthā devamanussānaṃ*) (M. II. 226).

The Buddha was ever best teacher in the world since he was not only clever in terms of knowledge, but he also had excellent behavior. The Buddha is attributed as *Vijjācaraṇa Sampanno* for his accomplishment of perfect knowledge and accomplishment of perfect practice of morality. Therefore, he is not only a good speaker, but also the best role model. The Buddha acts as he speaks, and he speaks as he acts (*yathāvādī tathākārī, yathākārī tathāvādī*) (A. II. 24). He is also attributed as "an excellent tamer of who should be tamed (*anuttaro purisadammasārathi*) which highlights his ability to guide the beings to achieve moral and spiritual development (M. I. 344). Many humans and gods satisfied with the Buddha's way of teachings and decided to be the followers of the Buddha. Even many of the audiences attained spiritual attainments after listening to his teachings. The passage "*Attamanā te bhikkhū bhagavato bhāsitaṃ abhinandunti*" shows how audiences happy and pleased after listening to his sermon (D. I. 46). The Buddha is also called as "the supreme among orators (*vadataṃ pavaro*)." It is said that the Buddha also possessed a deep and sweet voice that heightened his incomparable word power. It is evident with the qualities "*Brahmaswara*" (having a voice similar to that of brahma) and "*karavikabhāni*" (speaking with clear and melodious voice as that of the Indian cuckoo), among the thirty-two signs of a great person. Just as described in the *Brahmāyu Sutta* of *Majjhima Nikāya*, there are eight characteristics of the Buddha's voice, namely: clarity (*vissaṭṭho*), mellifluous (*mañju*), easily understandable (*viññeyyo*), pleasant to hear (*savanīyo*), harmonious (*avisārī*), unbroken word (*bindu*), profound (*gambhīro*), resonant or echoing (*ninnādī*) (M. II. 140). These characteristics makes the Buddha become the greatest orator in giving advice to people. He is the best motivator, inspirator and mentor in the world. The Buddha was expert in teaching the audiences in various methods. Therefore, the teaching delivered by the Buddha becomes well-explained (*svākkhāto*), clear (*uttāno*), open minded explained (*vivaṭo pakāsito*), and free from patchwork (*chinnapilotiko*) (M. I. 141).

Teaching Methods Adopted by the Buddha

If *Sutta Pitaka* and its commentaries are examined, it is understood that the Buddha had used several methods of teachings according to the capacity of the audiences. The Buddha had adopted student-centered method, lecture method, discussion method, narrative method, parable method, gradual method and psychotherapy method. The methods of teaching adopted by the Buddha can be explained in following explanation:

Student-Centered Method

Student centered method refers to method of teaching approach where the focus is on the students' learning rather than the teachers' teaching. By this method, the students are to be the active participants in their learning process. The teachers act as the facilitator or guide. The Buddha also had used this method in some occasions. In this learning process, the Buddha behaves as *Akkhātāro* and *Maggakkhāyī* as the teacher who shows the path (Medhacitto, 2022: 87). The Buddha advised his disciples "You should strive yourself, the Tathāgatā shows the way. Those who meditating entered upon this path, will be released from the bond of Mara" (*Tumhehi kiccamātappaṃ, akkhātāro Tathāgatā; Paṭipannā pamokkhanti, jhāyino*

mārabandhanā) (Dhp. 276). In the student-centered approach, it is necessary to create environment for students to study without restrictions (Swamy, 2020: 37).

The concept of prioritizing the student is reflected in the term "*ehipassika*," found in the verse on the virtues of the Dhamma. This term signifies the freedom granted to individuals to come and examine the teachings for themselves before choosing to accept or reject them (Piyarathana, 2019: 150). The concept of student-centered method is presented as in *Kālāma Sutta* (A. I. 190). The quality of the Buddha's teaching is "*paccattaṃ veditabbo*" (A. I. 148) which means the truth should be understood by the person himself. Purification or the final liberation is something can be given by anyone. Purity and impurity depend on oneself. None can purify others (*Attanā va kataṃ pāpaṃ, attanā saṃkilissati; Attanā akataṃ pāpaṃ, attanāva visujjhati*) (Dhp. 166.). The Buddha taught the teachings to show the path of liberation, but the students should practice on that path themselves.

Lecture Method

The lecture method is one of the oldest dan traditional methods of teaching used by the teachers in teaching the group of students, primarily through verbal communication. The lecture method of teaching is the method commonly used by religious teacher in delivering the teachings. The Buddha also often used this method to deliver his teachings to his disciples. This method is called in Buddhist term as *Dhammadesana* or preaching the teaching. This traditional method is also used until today, adopted by Buddhist monks to deliver the Dhamma sermon to Buddhist followers. The Buddha also mentioned that the activity of listening to Dhamma sermon (*dhammassavana*) as one of highest blessing (*kālena dhammassavanaṃ etaṃ maṅgalamuttamaṃ*) (Sn. 268). The Buddha also mentioned the following benefits of listening to Dhamma sermon such as 1) one hears what one has not heard before (*assutaṃ suṇāti*), 2) one clarifies what has been heard before (*sutaṃ pariyodāpeti*), 3) one gets rid of doubt (*kaṅkhaṃ vitarati*), 4) one's views are made straight (*diṭṭhiṃ ujuṃ karoti*), 4) one's mind grows serene (*cittamassa pasīdati*) (A. III. 248).

The Buddha used the lecture method in preaching the Dhamma to the audiences. When preaching his teaching, the Buddha declares it (*ācikkhati*), teaches it (*deseti*), describes it (*paññāpeti*), sets it forth (*paṭṭhapeti*), reveals it (*vivarati*), classifies it (*vibhajati*) and makes it clear (*uttānīkaroti*) (S. II. 25). In the commentaries, these ways of preaching are further explained. In the *Paṭisambhidāmagga Aṭṭhakathā,* it is explained that what is called declaring is expounding (*ācikkhatīti katheti*), teaching is showing (*desetīti dasseti*), describing is making known (*paññāpetīti jānāpeti*), setting forth is establishing in the surface of knowledge (*paṭṭhapetīti ñāṇamukhe ṭhapeti*), revealing is having uncovered and show it (*vivaratīti vivaritvā dasseti*), classifying means showing by means of analysis (*vibhajatīti vibhāgato dasseti*) and making clear is making commonly known (*uttānīkarotīti pākaṭaṃ karoti*) (PS.A. I. 244).

The Buddha teaches his teaching in well-planned manners. He preaches it lovely at the beginning, middle, and at the end (*so dhammaṃ deseti ādikalyāṇaṃ majjhekalyāṇaṃ pariyosānakalyāṇaṃ*) including the meaning and the word (*sātthaṃ sabyañjanaṃ*) (M. I. 179). This passage has been explained and interpreted in various means in the commentaries according to different contexts. In the *Dīgha Nikāya Aṭṭhakathā,* it is explained that whether much or little preaching, it was preached in the good way, lovely, and faultless (*Tañca kho appaṃ vā bahuṃ vā desento ādikalyāṇādippakārameva deseti. Ādimhipi, kalyāṇaṃ bhaddakaṃ anavajjameva katvā deseti, majjhepi, pariyosānepi, kalyāṇaṃ bhaddakaṃ anavajjameva katvā desetīti vuttaṃ hoti*) (D.A. I. 175). In *Nettippakaraṇa*, it is explained that the Buddha preached the Dhamma, explaining with the words (*bhagavā akkharehi saṅkāseti*), illustrating with the sentences (*padehi pakāseti*), revealing with the letters (*byañjanehi vivarati*), classifying with the grounds (*ākārehi vibhajati*), making clear with the grammatical analysis (*niruttīhi uttānīkaroti*), describing with the descriptive expositions (*niddesehi*

paññapeti) (Netti. 9). The passage "*sātthaṃ sabyañjanaṃ*" is also explained. Here, *Attha* is six folds of sentences, namely: *saṅkāsanā* (explanation), *pakāsanā* (illustration), *vivaraṇā* (revelation), *vibhajanā* (classification), *uttānīkammaṃ* (making clear), *paññatti* (making known). *Byañjana* is six folds of sentences, namely: *akkharaṃ* (word), *padaṃ* (sentence), *byañjanaṃ* (letter), *ākāro* (ground), *nirutti* (grammatical analysis), *niddeso* (descriptive exposition) (Netti. 9).

According to the commentary (D.A. I. 50), the Buddha delivered the sermon with following methods: 1) *Attajjhāsayo*: Lesson chosen based on his own wish. In this method, the Buddha delivered the topic of sermon based on his own intention without an invitation or request of others. For examples *Ākaṅkheyya Sutta*, *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta, Ariyavaṃsa Sutta*, etc. 2) *Parajjhāsayo*: Lesson based on the need of audiences. In this method, the Buddha delivered the sermon as request or invitation of others. For examples *Cuḷarāhulovāda Sutta, Mahārāhulovāda Sutta, Dhātuvibhaṅga Sutta,* etc. 3) *Pucchāvasiko*: Lesson based on questions asked by others. In this method, the Buddha delivered the sermon as the way of answering the questions raised by the people. For examples *Sakkapañha Sutta, Cūḷavedalla Sutta, Mahāvedalla Sutta, Sāmaññaphala Sutta*, etc. 4) *Aṭṭhuppattiko*: Lesson based on the incident. In this method, the Buddha delivered the sermon taking some stories or incidents originated from monks, nuns, laymen, laywomen in the society. For examples *Dhammadāyāda Sutta, Cūḷasīhanāda Sutta, Candūpama Sutta, Puttamaṃsūpama Sutta,* etc.

In many discourses can be found the process of teaching the Buddha had used in delivering the Dhamma, namely *Sandassetvā*: presenting the concepts that are going to teach students whether abstracted or combined facts; *Samādapetvā*: letting others understand or giving hints; *Samuttejetvā*: persuading the audiences to study further and creating enthusiasm; *Sampahaṅsetvā*: finishing the lecture in a way that they are happy with understanding of the teaching (A. IV. 188). Thus, it is clear that a lecture initiated by the Buddha is both successful and highly beneficial for the students. Even today, a lecture conducted in this structured manner is unlikely to be deemed unsuccessful (Piyarathana, 2019: 155). In the *Saccavibhaṅga Sutta*, the Buddha explains the teaching in following steps (M. III. 248): 1) *Ācikkhanā*: Summarizing briefly, using specific terms or names that need to be addressed in a lecture; 2) *Desanā*: Planning involves providing a clear explanation and thoroughly clarifying the meaning of the Pāli text; 3) *Paññāpanā*: Facilitating identification and organization, while ensuring understanding. This approach involves teaching by taking into account the student's psychological and intellectual capacity, and clearly revealing the meaning; 4) *Paṭṭhapanā*: Focusing on the specific topic, providing a clear and accurate explanation, and emphasizing the meaning; 5) *Vivaraṇā*: Clarifying by providing reasons and uncovering hidden aspects; 6) *Vibhajanā*: Breaking down into smaller parts and explaining their meanings; and 7) *Uttānīkammaṃ*: Presenting in a straightforward manner without going into deep detail, and explaining in a way that ensures the listener understands the content of the lecture.

Discussion Method

The discussion method is a method of teaching that prioritizes student involvement and interaction to exchange the ideas and opinions among students and teacher. This method encourages students to actively engage in the dialogue, exchange ideas and collaborative learning. The Buddha sometimes also used this method in his teaching. In Buddhist term, this method is called *dhammasākacchā*. In the *Maṅgala Sutta*, the Buddha also mentions that the activity of Dhamma discussion is one of highest blessing (*kālena dhammasākacchā etaṃ maṅgalamuttamaṃ*) (Sn. 269). The Buddha used the discussion method of teaching to make clear disciples' understanding. The process of learning will be interesting because there is an interactive learning. The Buddha and the disciples will discuss a certain topic with exchange ideas each other. The discussion method is very useful to encourage the students to improve

their critical thinking and communication skills. The Buddha also said that the intelligence of a person can be seen through discussion (*sākacchāya, bhikkhave, paññā veditabbā*) (A. II. 187).

Throughout the discourses, it can be found that there are two ways of discussion, such as 1) Peer Discussion Among Same-aged Individual which involves discussion among individual in the same age group such as among students who are doing the same subject; and 2) Irregular Discussion which involves discussion among students and teacher or discussion with other student who are doing different subjects (Piyarathana, 2019: 158).

Ariyapariyesana *Sutta* relates the story on monks who had Dhamma discussion each other among the monks just before the Buddha came to the hall (M. I. 161). It was appreciated by the Buddha and there the Buddha advised them that when the disciples gather together, they should do these two things, namely engaging in Dhamma discussion (*dhammī vā kathā*) or being noble silent (*ariyo vā tuṇhībhāvo*). The process of learning in this method requires questions and answers. The Buddha as the teacher will answer the questions raised by the students according to the types of question. The *Pañhavyākaraṇa Sutta* mentions about the four types of questions, such as: 1) The questions that should be answered categorically (*ekaṃsa*), 2) The questions that should be answered with an analytical answer (*vibhajja*), 3) The questions that should be answered with a counter-question (*paṭipucchā*) and 4) The questions that should be put aside (*ṭhapanīya*) (A. I. 197).

Narrative Method

Narrative method is a teaching approach that uses storytelling to convey the lesson, concept or idea. The teacher uses a story to convey the idea and make the learning more engaging, memorable and meaningful. Through narrative method, the students can connect emotionally with the content, since most students like to remember the story than the abstract facts. The Buddha also had used this narrative method of teaching. In many discourses, can be found that the Buddha begin with giving story before teaching the main topic discussion. The Buddha would share his own experiences to advise and encourage the students to listen and practice his teaching. *Dhammapada Aṭṭhakathā* and *Jātaka Aṭṭhakathā* can give many examples how the Buddha related the story before he discussed to the main teaching. The story on Cakkhupala Thera is the first story in the *Dhammapada Aṭṭhakathā.* The Buddha related the story on Cakkhupala Thera who was an arahant, but a blind. In a past life, he had been a physician who deliberately blinded a woman as revenge when she lied about her eyesight to avoid becoming his slave. This evil deed caused him to lose his eyesight in subsequent lives. The Buddha concluded with a verse, emphasizing that all actions are led by the mind, and if one acts with an evil mind, suffering will follow, just as a wheel follows the hoofprint of an ox pulling a cart (Dhp.A. I. 3).

Kevaddha Sutta of *Dīgha Nikāya* is one of examples where the Buddha used this narrative method of teaching. This discourse reports the Buddha relates a story to Kevaddha on the journey of a monk who wants to know the answer of his questions. In order to get the answers to his questions, the monk went to the deva worlds and asked the gods, even he also reached the Brahma world, and in the end, he was advised to ask the Buddha to get the right answers (D. I. 215). *Ariyapariyesana Sutta* also shows the Buddha used this method of teaching. The Buddha related the story of his journey in search of enlightenment started when he was being a Bodhisatta (M. I. 160).

Parable Method

As mentioned in the *Aṅguttara Nikāya*, the Buddha preached two kinds of preaching, namely direct meaning (*nitattha*) and indirect meaning (*neyyatha*) (A. I. 59). He also employed the method of parables (*upamā*) to convey the teachings to different people. The Buddha used the parable method to teach the important lesson in a way that the disciples easy to understand. The use of parables demonstrates his skillfulness in teaching. Parables serves as an effective

method to illustrate the abstract concept and principles in a way that is relatable, memorable, and easily understood by the audiences with different characters. The Buddha used parables (*upamā*) to convey the meaning (*atthassa viññāpanāya*) (M. I. 118). The simile is also used for purpose of elucidating the meaning (*atthasandassanī*) (J. 33). As a teaching method, it can be seen that the, Buddha's use of simile depends on three factors, namely: 1) Giving the meaning of the topic, 2) Composing them according to the mind of the listener, 3) Using them in suitable occasions (Piyarathana. 2019: 157).

In many occasions, the Buddha used the similes and parables to make the audiences clear. Simile is used to convey the meaning (*upamā kho me ayaṃ katā atthassa viññāpanāya*). The Buddha understood that some wise people will understand what is said by means of simile (*upamāya midhekacce viññū purisā bhāsitassa atthaṃ ājānanti*) (D. II. 324). *Alagaddūpama Sutta* is one of examples for this method. In this discourse, the Buddha explained his teaching using two similes, namely the simile of water snake and the simile of the raft (M. I. 130).

Gradual Method

Gradual method of teaching means the technique of teaching used by the teacher to make the students understand the lesson in gradual process according to the capacity of the students. This method is also called as Step Method. This method is well known for its impact to the modern Western education. Prof. B.F. Skinner is considered as the founder of this method (Piyarathana, 2019: 163). This method allows students to develop their knowledge and skill progressively, beginning with simple concepts and slowly advancing to more complex ones. This method is very effective for students to study the lesson according to their capacity without being forced by the teachers. The Buddha understood that different people have different capacity of understanding. Therefore, the Buddha also used this gradual method of teaching to teach the people in different character and capacity.

In the *Ugghaṭitaññū Sutta*, the Buddha classified that there are four types of persons according their ability of understanding, namely: 1) A person who understands something quickly (*ugghaṭitaññū puggalo*), 2) A person who can understand something after saying something and guiding through it. (*vipañcitaññū puggalo*), 3) A person who understands something by questioning and discussing again and again (*neyyo puggalo*), and 4) A person who is unable to understand something though taught in any way (*padaparamo puggalo*) (A. II. 135). Dealing with these four types of person, the Buddha focuses to those who are able to understand his teaching. As mentioned in the *Nettippakarana*, three kind of methods are adopted, namely: (1) exposing is in the beginning (*ugghaṭanā ādi*), (2) expanding is in the middle (*vipañcanā majjhe*) and (3) explaining is at the end (*vitthāraṇā pariyosānaṃ*) (Netti. 9).

Understanding the capability of the audiences, the Buddha used the method of gradual instruction. The Buddha leads them step by step for the sake of their understanding. As mentioned in the *Pahārāda Sutta*, the characteristics of the Buddha's teaching is gradual learning, gradual training, gradual improvement and gradual development. In this discourse, the Buddha state that "Just as the ocean gradually deepens, inclining smoothly without any sudden drop, so too in this teaching and training, the path to enlightenment is achieved through gradual training, steady progress, and consistent practice, rather than all at once" (*Seyyathāpi, pahārāda, mahāsamuddo anupubbaninno anupubbapoṇo anupubbapabbhāro, na āyatakeneva papāto; evamevaṃ kho, pahārāda, imasmiṃ dhammavinaye anupubbasikkhā anupubbakiriyā anupubbapaṭipadā, na āyatakeneva aññāpaṭivedho*) (A. IV. 200).

In many discourses the Buddha applied gradual instruction (*ānupubbi-kathā*), guiding the newcomers from first principles through progressively more advanced teachings. The Buddha taught the new audiences on giving (*dānakathaṃ*), morality (*sīlakathaṃ*), heaven (*saggakathaṃ*). Then the Buddha proclaimed on the danger, vanity and disadvantage of sensual

pleasure (*kāmānaṃ ādīnavaṃ okāraṃ saṃkilesaṃ*). Then the Buddha talked on the advantage of renunciation (*nekkhamme ānisaṃsaṃ*) (D. I. 110).

If it is seen in the light of *Visuddhimagga*, the meditation instruction is given according to personal character. There six characters and how they should practice. It is explained that the llustful one (*rāgacaritā*) selects the ten unpleasant objects (*asubhās*) and mindfulness with regard to the body; the hateful one (*dosacaritā*) selects the four sublime abodes (*brahmavihāras*) and four *vaṇṇakasinās*; the deluded one (*mohacaritā*) selects the mindfulness on in and out breathing (*ānāpānasati*); the faithful one (*saddhācaritā*) selects the six kinds of recollection (*anussati*) (recollection of the buddha, doctrine, his noble disciples, of morality, liberality, heavenly beings; and the intellectual one (*buddhicaritā*) selects the recollection of death (*maraṇānussati*, recollection of the peace of nibbāna (*upasamānussati*) analysis of the four elements (*catudhātuvavatthāna*). This shows that the Buddha had used different method of teaching according to the capacity of the students.

Psychotherapy Method

The Buddha also adopted the psychotherapy method to teach the disciples. In this case, the Buddha is not only as a teacher, but also as a psychotherapist to heal the mental illness of the disciples. As mentioned in the *Itivuttaka*, the Buddha referred himself as an unsurpassed physician (*bhisakko anuttaro*) and surgeon (*sallakato anuttaro*) (It. 101). In the *Theragatha*, the Buddha is recognized as the great compassion teacher (*mahākāruṇiko satthā*) and the doctor for world (*sabbalokatikicchako*) (Thag. 72). The Buddha's surgery is to pull out the stakes and spikes that are there in the minds of human beings. The way used by the Buddha to help himself as well as others to get rid from suffering is by teaching Four Noble Truths. The structure of Four Noble Truths given by the Buddha corresponds with the structure given by medical science such as disease, diagnosis, cure, and treatment. In the *Visuddhimagga*, Bhikkhu Buddhaghosa Thera states that the truth of suffering is like a disease, the truth of origin is like the cause of the disease, the truth of cessation is like the cure of disease, and the truth of the path is like the medicine.

As a teacher, the Buddha used the psychotherapy method to treat the mental problems of his disciples and the followers. The Buddha used to involve in resolving more complicated psychological issues. When the disciples committed a transgression and asking for pardon, the Buddha says "since you see your transgression as a transgression and make amends for it in accordance with the Dhamma, we pardon you for it." The Buddha understood that the transgression cause remorse and sorrow, therefore in order to remove the remorse, the Buddha used psychotherapy approach to resolve the mental problems. The same method is applied when the Buddha resolve the mental problems of King Ajatasattu who killed his father (D. I. 50).

As reported in th *Tissa Sutta*, Venerable Tissa was in mental problems, the Buddha investigated the psychological issue and treat him to remove the mental problems. Ven. Tissa said that, "My body is dragged. I've lost my bearings. Things aren't clear to me. My mind keeps being overwhelmed by sloth and torpor. I lead the holy life dissatisfied. I have uncertainty about the teachings." The Buddha said to him, "Rejoice, Tissa! Rejoice! I am here to exhort you, I am here to aid you, I am here to Instruct you!" It is interesting, in this statement, the Buddha used three words which are considered as method of psychotherapy applied by the Buddha, namely: *ahamovādena* (I am here to exhort you), *ahamanuggahena* (I am here aid you), and *ahamanusāsanīyāti* (I am here to instruct you) (S. III. 108).

The story on Kisāgotamī can be the best example for the psychotherapy method applied by the Buddha. Kisāgotamī was overwhelmed by grief because her beloved son suddenly felt ill and died. She went to the Buddha, holding her son's body, and begged him to bring her son back to life. The Buddha advised her to find a mustard seed from a household where no one has ever died. As she visited each house and could not find it, she realized that death was

universal experience and no one can escape from this reality. This understanding helped her to accept the loss of her son and he understood the truth of impermanence. After listening to the Buddha's teaching, she could attain the first stage of the saint and was ordained, finally attained an Arahantship (Dhp.A. II. 273).

The story on Paṭācārā shows that the Buddha adopted this psychotherapy method to overcome her sorrow and receive the Buddha's teaching. Paṭācārā became mad because she lost her beloved family. Her beloved husband, two children, and her parents died in a short time. Being mad with grief, she wandered aimlessly until she finally encountered the Buddha. The Buddha was able to make her calm and accept the reality, which finally she decided to be a nun and attain final liberation (Dhp.A. II. 266).

CONCLUSION

Teaching method is one of the important aspects of achieving educational success because teaching method will create the process of learning more attractive and suitable for the students according to their capacities. The Buddha understood the divergent characters of the people and their capabilities in understanding the teaching. Therefore, the Buddha adopted several methods of teaching to make the audiences easier to understand the teaching. The types of teaching given by the Buddha is taught with accordance to the listeners' characters. The Buddha examined the audiences' capacities and their characters before giving the sermon and decide to deliver the teachings by the methods they can understand easily. The Buddha had used several methods of teaching such as student-centered method, lecture method, discussion method, narrative method, parable method, gradual method and psychotherapy method. Each teaching method has its own weakness and advantages. The Buddha had used them in a proper way and it made him become successful teacher in the world. The Buddha was the great teacher in the world, since he had very vast knowledge and was able to deliver them in proper way. Many of his disciples and followers had realized the wisdom through his teachings.

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