

## Upādāna and Its Influence on Bhava

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### ABSTRACT

Regarding the multiplicity of consequences, kamma is widely stressed more as a significant role where the diverse lives of beings are conducted in saṃsāra with reference to Mahākammavibhaṅga Sutta (M III 203). Although there are several research on kamma and rebirth, less attention has been touched on how upādāna plays an influential role more than kamma in which living-beings are differentiated, and saṃsāra is prolonged. As a cause and effect relationship, upādāna and kamma, according to Paṭiccasamuppāda, are a connection between twelve links. It is discovered that dependent on upādāna there arises bhava such as “upādānapaccayā bhavo” (S II 2). Ordinary people with various clinging or attachment to animate and inanimate objects in daily life, generate a range of actions that result in diverse future existence. Since their particular attachments are diverse, so are their actions and the effects they experience in saṃsāra. Hence, the fact is that the variety of resultant life, which is said to be diverse for beings in circle of existence, springs from the clinging of the individuals. This article reveals how upādāna is more influential than kamma in the differentiation of living beings and prolongation of saṃsāra. The current work is an attempt mainly based on Paṭiccasamuppāda.

**Key words:** Upādāna, Bhava, Influence.

### INTRODUCTION

In this world, we are born in accordance with our previous kamma, which consists of either wholesome or unwholesome actions. As a relationship of cause and effect, we believe that this life is not the ultimate existence and there is continued existence after death.

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In relation to different life existences, it is evident that kamma is emphasized more as a significant role, where the diversity of life of beings is conducted in saṃsāra with reference to Mahākammavibhaṅga Sutta (M III 203). Obviously, this Sutta explains that short and long ageing, ugliness and beauty, wealth and poverty, etc. in this life are the result of one’s past actions (kamma). Regarding this, in the Nibbedhika Sutta, the Buddha proclaimed: ‘I declare, O Bhikkhus, that cetanā (volition) is kamma’ (cetanāhaṃ bhikkhve kammaṃ vadāmi) (A III 415). This statement asserts that volitional actions, which are carried out by the body, the speech and the mind are kamma. Accordingly, cetanā or kamma is the significant cause of actions that produce results. But on the other hand, it is obvious that the Buddha, while attaining enlightenment, stated himself that ‘I found the builder of the house (gahakaraka diṭṭhosi) to have wandered through countless births in saṃsāra.’ Here builder is metaphorically illustrated as taṇhā or upādāna (craving as prior craving), and the house is also khandhā (aggregates) or bhava according to the Dhammapada Commentary (DhpA 127). Furthermore, it is mentioned in the Dhammacakkhapavattana Sutta that five aggregates of clinging themselves are sufferings (pañcupādānakkhandhā dukkhā) (S V 421). In this connection, it is understood that the relation of upādāna and aggregates (bhava) is fundamental to the human experience of suffering and to countless births in the round of existence. Further, according to Rohitassa Sutta, in this fathom-body, there is existence (loka) and in contrast, there is non-existence (lokaniroda). It is reliable to say that becoming (bhava) and non- becoming (bhavaniroda) are contingent upon clinging (upādāna) and non-clinging (anupādāna).

Accordingly, it can be identified that both kamma and taṇhā or upādāna are necessary conditions for results. However, as a cause-and-effect relationship, upādāna and kamma, according to Paṭṭicasamuppāda, are a connection among twelve links. When kamma, which is the cause of consequences is traced, there is found that dependent on upādāna there arises bhava such as “upādānapaccayābhavo.” In the Dhammasaṅgani, upādāna is defined by enumerating its four categories such as (1) sensuous clinging (kāmuṇāpādāna), (2) clinging to views (ditṭhupādāna), (3) clinging to mere rules and ritual (sīlabbatupādāna), and (4) clinging to the personality-belief (attavādūpādāna), These four are a crucial cause for generating bhava as two-fold: (1) kammabhava, which are the formation of merit (puññābhisaṅkhāra), the formation of demerit (apuññābhisaṅkhāra) and the formation of the imperturbable (āneñjābhisaṅkhāra) (Vibh 137). In fact, all kamma that lead to results are called kammabhava (Vism 571). On the other hand, upapattibhava is mentioned thus: “kammābhiniḃattā khandhā” aggregates (khandhā) which are produced by kamma are stated as upapattibhava (Vism 571). Those four kinds of upādāna above as a condition influence this two-fold bhava.

As long as the sentient beings are concerned with bhava in saṃsāra, upādāna has a significant impact on being's actions and results. As a matter of fact, the variety of life of living beings are diverse because of kamma motivated by clinging. In daily life, the ordinary person commit diverse good or bad actions through their own upādāna. For instance, one craves for being deva life, another a monk's life and another a presidential life, etc. Thus, ordinary people through their attachment to animate and inanimate in day-to-day life conduct a variety of either good or deeds to be caused for future existence and also have the potential to be carried out where they firmly grasp through clinging even at the death moment. Due to the fact that their individual attachments vary, so do their actions and the results in round of existence. Indeed, the variety of resultant life, which is diverse for beings in circle of existence is based on clinging.

Although there are several studies regarding kamma and rebirth, less emphasis has been paid on how upādāna influences living-being differentiation and prolongs saṃsāra more than kamma. Therefore, the current work will be an attempt on this point mainly based on Paṭṭicasamuppāda.

## 2. MATERIAL AND METHODS

This is a textual study on upādāna and its influence on bhava. The investigative article explores the concept of upādāna and bhava: two-fold as kammabhava and upapattibhava mainly based on Paṭṭicasamuppāda. In conducting the study, analytical methods are used to investigate the influence of upādāna on two-fold bhava by examining passages from Pāli canonical texts and their relevant commentaries.

## 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The term “upādāna” etymologically is derived from the root, *y' dā* with the prefixes ‘upa’ and ‘ā’ suffix ‘ādāna’ (upa+ā+dāna), or (upa+ādāna) to grasp, to cling (upādiyati). Literally, Venerable Buddhaghosa defines this term as “upādiyati upādānaṃ” it clings; thus, it is clinging. (Vism 527). Upādāna is typically translated as attachment, clinging, grasping, and so forth. However, there are some variations in the opinions of scholars. Malalasekera (2007) defines upādāna as ‘taking up,’ ‘grasping,’ ‘clinging,’ and ‘holding on,’ as well as ‘that which is held to,’ in the sense of its ‘base,’ ‘sub-strata,’ ‘supply,’ or ‘fuel.’ It is a mental clinging, and has its intense nature of clinging. It is said that mental grasping is opposed to physical grasping with the hands (Ñāṇananda (2015). According to Analayo (2010), it is a symbol of the mind's tendency to hold or grasp. In this context, exegesis defines the nature of upādāna with a simile. Thus, upādāna grasps the object tenaciously just like a snake that grasps a frog in the tenacious way (Abhvi-tīkā219).

Upādāna is the ninth of twelve factors in Dependent Origination (Paṭiccasamuppāda). It is conditioned by craving (taṇhā) and causes clinging (upādāna): “taṇhāpaccayā upādānaṃ” (S II 2). In the Visuddhimagga, it is said that clinging is firm grasping and it is firmness of craving, which is referred to ‘subsequent craving’ (uttarataṇhā) caused by ‘previous craving’ (purimataṇhā) as decisive-support condition (upanissayapaccaya) (Vism 569). Furthermore, it manifests upādāna as an intensified degree of craving in this way; craving is the aspiring to an object that one has not yet reached, like a thief’s stretching out his hand in the dark; clinging is the grasping of an object that one has reached, like the thief’s grasping his objective (Vism 569; Ñānamoli 2010, 591). On the account of dependent on craving, there arises clinging – “taṇhāpaccayā upādānaṃ,” upādāna can be classified into four types; (1) sensuous clinging (kāmapādāna), (2) clinging to views (diṭṭhupādāna), (3) clinging to mere rules and ritual (sīlabbatupādāna), and (4) clinging to the personality-belief (attavādupādāna) (M I 51). These four can be regarded as two phenomena of taṇhā and diṭṭhi. While kāmapādāna refers to taṇhā or lobha cetasika; diṭṭhupādāna, sīlabbatupādāna, and attavādupādāna are all included under diṭṭhi. Since diṭṭhi refers to wrong views, upādāna is ultimately both taṇhā and diṭṭhi. These two have the sense of strong clinging to something and refusing to let go it. It is referred to as upādāna because it is hard to let go.

We need to analysis the classification of four kinds of upādāna as mentioned above. Among them, kāmapādāna is clinging to sensual pleasure as the object of craving encompassed all six sense objects in the sense sphere. Craving and clinging differ in terms of the intensity or degree of strong desire. Craving demands sensual pleasure to satisfy needs, whereas clinging consistently attaches sensual pleasure to maintain and intensify the reaction. Kāmapādāna is the clinging that generates a strong desire to acquire, which is difficult to abandon, long-lasting, and intensifies with time; regards living or inanimate objects such as a wife, children, relatives, friends, and house gold, silver, fields, and land. For instance, once a tree emerges from the seed, it is quite frail. It can be removed from the current location. After many years, that plant grows into a giant tree with foliage that covers a large area, large and small roots that reach very deep and spread over a large area, that cannot be swayed by an elephant, cannot be easily destroyed, and cannot be readily removed from its current location. Similarly, a weak desire for some object will also emerge. Sometimes it vanishes automatically, like a plant that dies before becoming a great tree. It becomes simple to eliminate if attempted. If the craving for the object develops stale through continuous re-emergence without fading in the beginning, it will grow like a plant and eventually become a powerful craving that does not die easily and is exceedingly tough to eliminate. This intense craving is known as sensual clinging (Chandawimala 2014, 69).

Diṭṭhupādāna means clinging to the wrong view, which rejects future life and kamma. According to the Brahmajāla Sutta of the Dīgha Nikāya, various religious people cling to sixty-two kinds of wrong views during the Buddha’s time in India. Clinging to such wrong views is diṭṭhupādāna. Dhammasaṅgani defines thus: Tattha katamaṃ diṭṭhupādānaṃ? Natthi dinnam, natthi yiṭṭham, natthi hutam ... phalam vipāko ... diṭṭhupādānaṃ (Dhs 212). There is no benefit from doing dāna, making a sacrifice or giving gifts, making a sacrifice or worshiping, etc. The clinging to such wrong views related to “dasavatthuka micchādiṭṭhi,” are called diṭṭhupādāna. According to commentary, diṭṭhi encompasses all wrong views with the exception of sīlabbatupādāna and attavādupādāna (SA II 14). The practice of ascetics and brahmins adhered to the sīla and vata rules and vows about emancipation is sīlabbatupādāna (Dhs 1222). In other words, it is liable to say that except for Right Paths leading to Magga, Phala, or Nibbāna, all the practice of the wrong path belong to sīlabbatupādāna (the clinging to rules and ritual) (A IV 459; Dhs 197). Lastly, attavādupādāna refers to various notions concerning selfness. Indeed, these three kinds of clinging are associated with wrong views. These views will not be held by individuals who have no attachment to the five aggregates. But they occur in

personality-belief result from craving. As was said above, those four kinds of upādāna are the cause of kamma and rebirth.

### Upādāna as the Role of Mental Influence

As a causal relationship in Buddhist teachings, states of mind influence our experiences and activities in daily life. In line with Dhammapada, it can be seen that psychological orientation of human experiences, which emphasizes the influence of what factors exist in the mind by two sides of good or bad – all mental phenomena have mind as their forerunner; they have mind as their chief; they are mind-made. If one speaks or acts with an evil mind and, ‘dukkha’ follows him just as the wheel follows the hoof-print of the ox that draws the cart. All mental phenomena have mind as their forerunner; they have mind as their chief; they are mind-made. If one speaks or acts with a pure mind, happiness (sukha) follows him like a shadow that never leaves him (Daw Mya Tin 2003, 1, 2). Interestingly, the ordinary person mostly falls into the bad side of the above two passages. In the Taṇhā Sutta (S I 39), it mentions that;

“The world is led around by craving; By craving it is dragged here and there.

Craving is the one thing that has All under its control” (Bodhi 2000, 131).

Accordingly, it is apparent that the mind is capable of leading to everything. Even mind (citta) itself is naturally brilliant. However, its original quality is altered by other mental states. When the citta associates with unwholesome thoughts, it becomes impure, and when it associates with good, wholesome thoughts, it becomes pure. The mind frequently turns to unwholesome thoughts when it is not controlled. It is associated with defilements (kilesā) as its guests (A I 10). The first relation of beings and existence is led to by an uninstructed mind affected by avijjā and taṇhā among ten defilements. In the Dutiyagaddulabaddha Sutta, it is stated that this saṃsāra is without a discoverable beginning. A starting point is not discerned from beings who wander blindly and are bound by ignorance and craving (S III 152).

The Buddha illustrated how sentient beings are attached by their attachment in the Dutiya gaddulabaddha Sutta (S III 152), it states as follows;

Suppose, bhikkhus, a dog tied up on a leash was bound to a strong post or pillar. If it walks, it walks close to that post or pillar. If it stands, it stands close to that post or pillar. If it sits down, it sits down close to that post or pillar. If it lies down, it lies down close to that post or pillar (Bodhi 2000, 958).

In this way, the uninstructed worldlings grasp the five aggregates thus: ‘This is mine, this I am, this is my self’. When they are walking, standing, sitting down and lying down, they walk, stand, sit down and lie close to those five aggregates subject to clinging’ (S III 152). Thus, ordinary beings in the world are constantly bound with attachment as a rope. Having been bound with rope, they cannot move at will and are not at liberty. They are tethered wherever they go. Wherever they go, they must return to the stake where the tether’s end is tied. In the same way, fetter (saṃyojana) or attachment (upādāna) are liable to bind the animate beings to the vicious round of suffering. The beings bound with the tether of saṃyojana or clinging are incapable of being liberated from circle of existence.

According to Karunadasa (2015), the five aggregates are not what Buddhism refers to as individuals in its saṃsāric dimension; rather, it is the five aggregates when they are grabbed, appropriated, and clung to. Thus, what we refer to as individual existence can be reduced to a process of grabbing that is causally conditioned. Further, he explains the nature of the attachment to mental culture with a simile thus;

The sense-organs or the sense-objects are not in themselves an obstacle to mental culture. If two oxen, one white and the other black – so runs the illustration – are tied by a yoke, it is not correct to say that the black ox is a bond for the white ox, or that the white ox is a bond for the black ox. It is the yoke that constitutes the bond, that which unites them both. In the same way, what constitutes



an obstacle to mental culture is neither a sense-organ nor a sense-object, but craving or attachment. This situation is true of the relation between the whole cognitive apparatus on the one hand, and the external sense-objects on the other (Karunadasa 2015, 94).

Hence, the internal sense-organs or external sense-objects are nothing but mental firm-clinging by craving and hatred. Constantly, living beings perform good or bad actions through mental grasping the animate and inanimate objects, associated with ignorance. They are entirely bounded in saṃsāra, and they encounter suffering. Indeed, individual existence and liberation is based on the process of clinging (upādāna) and non-clinging (anupādāna). Aside from individuals who have gained arahantship by completely getting rid of upādāna, the ordinary people are engaged with kammic actions motivated by upādāna in day-to-day life.

### **Kamma and Its Relation to Upādāna**

In Buddhism, kamma is believed to play an influential role for results of all living beings. Kamma is directly related to upādāna. In fact, kamma is identical to cetanā. The Buddha said that “Monks, I say that volition is karma; having motivated an action by body, speech, mind” (A II 415). According to Paṭiccasamuppāda, however, upādāna is mentioned as the preceding cause for generating kamma and rebirth (kammabhava and upapattibhava). Kammabhava is cetanā, which is moral (puññābhisaṅkhāra), immoral (apuññābhisaṅkhāra) and imperturbable or unshakable formation (āneñjābhisaṅkhāra), which will produce rebirth. Here, unwholesome and wholesome cetanā are kammabhava. In this regard, akusala cetanā includes all volitions in the twelve types of immoral consciousness; kusala cetanā includes all volitions in the eight types of moral consciousness; and āneñja cetanā includes all volitions in the five types of moral rūpajhāna consciousness and the four types of moral arūpajhāna consciousness. All these 29 wholesome or unwholesome volition (cetanā) are kamma.

The twenty-nine wholesome or unwholesome kamma mentioned above are cetanā caused by upādāna. According to this, upādāna can be seen as the cause leading to generating kamma. But, on the other hand, cetanā (intention) is one of the mental factors, which always acts as a leader in which good or bad mind-process arises, and which is one of seven cetasikā associated with all mind (sabbacittasādhāraṇa citta) according to the Abhidhamma. When good or bad mind arises, upādāna. It is apparent that kamma and upādāna are different as a causal relation of cause and effect. cetanā as a leader always drives them. For instance, if the root of evil such as lobha, dosa and moha or the root of good such as alobha, adosa and amoha arises, cetanā is morally neutral due to being connected with the good side or bad side, while upādāna itself is unwholesome citta. However, upādāna drives both generating good or bad kamma according to Paṭiccasamuppāda. Mahāsi (2020) also says that upādāna is no little affair. It is the source of both good and evil activities.

Moreover, there appears to be different between cetanā and mental attachment (upādāna), despite the fact that they both generate kamma. As previously indicated, upādāna itself is directly a mental action (manokamma). It produces unwholesome kamma by taking place automatically and has no premeditation (Jayasooriya 2006, 48). Meanwhile, he suggests that;

Cetanā or upādāna both mean the process of karmic energy generation where cetanā involves premeditation and upādāna does not (Jayasooriya 2006, 48).

Unlike cetanā, which is connected with both the positive and negative sides of mental energy, upādāna is only related with the negative side. According to Paṭiccasamuppāda, kamma as a factor is conditioned by upādāna. It is apparent that kamma and upādāna are different as a causal relation of cause and effect.

Upādāna is more dominant than cetanā or kamma where saṃsāra is prolonged. Nandamālā explains that;

Without the support from taṇhā or upādāna, kamma cannot take place by itself. It is like the seed which cannot grow up by itself to become a tree. A seed can grow into a tree only with the support of the soil and water. In the same way, kamma cannot give any result if it is not supported by taṇhā and upādāna (Nandamala 2019, 20).

Accordingly, it can be concluded that arahants who have completely eradicated upādāna will cease to exist, as their actions without upādāna will not result in rebirth. Although cetanā leads in this circumstance to the emergence of a moral mind process, such a mind process originating in an Arahant will not lead to the next existence. Therefore, cetanā is irrelevant when kammic energy is generated if it is not linked to upādāna. The only way to eliminate kamma is to eradicate the defilements (kilesā) that are the cause of kamma. Even the actions of the Arahant are not kamma that will create effects. It is only the citta function (kiriya-citta). Geethi Karunaratne (2019) suggests that supramundane path consciousnesses (maggacitta) in morality should not be classified as kamma since they tend to eliminate ignorance (avijjā) and craving (taṇhā), the two main sources of kamma. Since upādāna or taṇhā coupled with avijjā are the most common factors for generating kamma, they are regarded as the source of prolonged saṃsāra. In fact, kamma has no effect if these underlying factors are totally abolished. According to the Taṇhakkhaya Sutta (S V 87), when craving is abandoned, kamma is also abandoned. The abandonment of kamma resulted in the abandonment of suffering.

### **The Domain of Upādāna in Daily Life**

Upādāna is the dominant cause in daily activities or willed actions in which ordinary living beings are constantly engaged from dawn to dusk. Through attachment, ordinary people commit good or bad actions in different fields. It is said that worldlings are crazy - “ummattoko viya hi puthujjano” (Vism 573). In the view of noble ones, ordinary living beings are crazy. In daily life, they conduct good or bad actions by grasping the animate and inanimate interfered by “vipallāsa” (perversion). There are three kinds of perversion (vipallāsa) to wit: 1. saññā-vipallāsa (perversion of perception); 2. citta-vipallāsa (perversion of consciousness); 3. diṭṭhi-vipallāsa (perversion of views) (Nyanatiloka 1980). Interfered by them, ordinary beings erroneously perceive things in the world in these ways; impermanence as permanence (anicce niccanti vipallāsaṃ); impurity as purity (asubhe subhanti vipallāsaṃ); ill as good (dukkhe sukhanti vipallāsaṃ) and no-soul as soul (anattani attāti vipallāsaṃ) (VibhA 36). With such perversions, one clings to objects in these ways of “this is mine, this I am, this is my self” (etaṃ mama, esohamasami, eso me attā) (S III 152). With attachment, people think they themselves own the animate and inanimate objects and assume that these are my eyes, body, house, car, family and so forth. By assuming this way, they grasp the object with attachment. This is the grasping of craving (taṇhagaha). Always having thought in terms of ‘I,’ ‘mine’ and ‘myself’ and having a comparison of their quality with the others, they cling to the object with conceit (mānagaha). They constantly cling firmly to themselves as a permanent entity. After death, my soul will take on another body. This is grasping of views (diṭṭhigaha). In the Gaddulabadda Sutta (S III 152), the example is given thus; an artist or a painter, using dye or lac or turmeric or indigo or crimson, would draw the figure of a man or a woman complete in all its features on a well-polished plank or wall or canvas. In this sense, the uninstructed worldling, through their numerous attachments to attractive things, produces actions that are either good or bad. In the Mahākaccanabaddaka Sutta (M III 197), it is also stated that one builds up hope for the future by imagining, ‘My sight may be like this in the future, and forms may be like this,’ thereby desiring to gain what has not yet been obtained. Due to his desire for this, one takes pleasure in the sight and form of the future. When he takes pleasure in that, one is gaining optimism for the future. Through such holding to the desire and aspiration for a better next life, a person’s virtuous deed is referred to be kammabhava, which is a cause of the next life.

### **The Impact of Upādāna on Manifoldness of life**

Why are people or beings diverse in various planes? What prolongs the cycle of existence? It is the obvious question in Buddhism. When that idea comes up to us, kamma is frequently assumed that it plays a vital role in being superior and inferior in relation to living beings and their destiny. Regarding this question, Cūlakammavibhaṅga Sutta (M III 202), states that kamma makes beings distant (kammaṃ satte vibhajati)

(M III 203) about the situation of the inequality between human-beings to the question raised by Brahmin Subha, Todeyya's son. Thus, it is action that distinguishes beings as inferior and superior because beings are owners of their actions (kammassakā), heirs of their actions (kammadāyāda); they originate from their actions

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As mentioned above, behind the fact that kamma makes living beings differentiated according to Cūlakammavibhaṅga Sutta, the inspired causes are lobha, dosa and moha, which motivate various actions to produce inferior and superior living beings. Moreover, in the Duttiya Gaddulabaddha Sutta, the Buddha says that;

Bhikkhus, I do not see any other order of living beings so diversified as those in the animal realm. Even those beings in the animal realm have been diversified by the mind, yet the mind is even more diverse than those beings in the animal realm. So, mind defiled makes diverse for inferior and superior.

Therefore, bhikkhus, one should often reflect upon one's own mind thus: For a long time, this mind has been defiled by lust, hatred, and delusion. Through the defilements of the mind beings are defiled; with the cleansing of the mind beings are purified (Bodhi 2000, 958).

Hence, since defiled minds in living beings are different, various kamma generated by those defiled minds will differ results in saṃsāra.

Every result is dependently related to their causes, according to Paṭiccasamuppāda. Since the superior and inferior effects of living beings depend on kamma, when kamma is traced behind, there is a motivational

force, which is intensive mental clinging (upādāna) as a condition for kamma and rebirth (upādānapaccayābhavo). Upādāna is the leading causes of generating kamma. Through various clinging to things or living-beings, mundane beings perform a variety of actions different from each other, and that kamma will differ each individual's lives in the stage of the superior and inferior. In addition, beings are born in different planes according to their past kamma. When the past kamma is traced, behind it there were some conditions that caused actions. In the past life, avijjā, taṇhā and upādāna were the causes for conducting kamma. Without knowing the truth due to being blind by avijjā, and clinging to things craved by taṇhā, people commit actions in different ways that they cling to or desire to be. So, they came to be different due to past kamma. Likewise, in this very life, even if people perform together dāna, sīla and bhāvanā at the same time, some long for a life of women or men while some have a desire to be brahmā, deva or to be a rich person or a president, etc. Through the difference of each individual's various desires or attachments to various objects, their actions will be liable to be different and the resultant life will also be manifold in next existence.

Furthermore, another important point is that defilements play a greater significant role than kamma. All living beings are cultivating wholesome and unwholesome kamma. By doing so, viññāna arisen is called "kammaviññāna" (S II 66-7). Kammaviññāna produced by the mind is different because of taṇhā or thoughts associated with avijjā and upādāna. The commentary says that kamma leads to a plane (yonī), the cause of a plane is because of citta (SA II 229). Moreover, the exegesis explains that kamma occurs due to various minds (citta) led by taṇhā (S-tikā II 235). According to the Cetanā Sutta, Duttiya Cetanā Sutta and Tatiya Cetanā Sutta (S II 66-7), it is mentioned that the cause of kamma or kammaviññāna is that one intends (ceteti), plans (kappeti) and has latent tendency (anusaya). But, among them, if one who abandons the former two, still has tendency, one has to be reborn again. In the same Suttas above, the Buddha addressed the following:

If, bhikkhus, one does not intend, and one does not plan, but one still has a tendency towards something, this becomes a basis for the maintenance of consciousness. When there is a basis, there is a support for the establishing of consciousness ... Such is the origin of this whole mass of suffering.

But, bhikkhus, when one does not intend, and one does not plan, and one does not have a tendency towards anything, no basis exists for the maintenance of consciousness. When there is no basis, there is no support for the establishing of consciousness ... When there is no production of future renewed existence ... Such is the cessation of this whole mass of suffering (Bodhi 2000, 576).

According to this, anusaya (latent tendency) is latent in an ordinary person. They are unwholesome mental states. According to the Abhidhamma, taṇhā and diṭṭhi among ten defilements (kilesa), in other words, which refer to upādāna. According to the Commentary, to be consciousness of kamma, latent tendency (anusaya) is the cause (SA II 71). Indeed, only the Arahant has destroyed anusaya and will not be reborn again. In other words, because an Arahant has eradicated kilesavaṭṭa (round of defilement) as the cause of kammavaṭṭa (round of kamma), that conditions vipākavaṭṭa (round of result), his all kamma has expired consequentially without producing any results.

More significantly, even to escape suffering and saṃsāra, it is impossible to destroy kamma but, kilesa. As a cause and effect, kamma is the result conditioned by kilesa. In the Paṭhamasañcetanika Sutta, the Buddha explained, 'I do not speak of the making an end to suffering without experiencing the volitional kamma that has been done and accumulated' (A V 292). That means one is not able to put an end to suffering simply by avoiding the experience of kammic result, but one can put an end to suffering through removing the underlying causes of suffering such as avijjā, taṇhā, upādāna. Kilesas or defilements have to be abandoned.



By abandoning lobha, dosa and moha, new kamma will not occur anymore. According to Karunadasa (2015), these fires are the three fundamental causes (lobha, dosa, and moha) of moral ill, from which all unwholesome mental dispositions and defilements originate. When they are eradicated, all other impurities cease to exist and cannot grow further. In the *Taṇhakkhaya Sutta*, it is stated that with the abandoning of craving, kamma is abandoned. With the abandoning of kamma, suffering is abandoned (S V 87). According to *Paṭiccasamuppāda*, in “*avijjāpaccayā saṅkhārā*,” one has to abandon *avijjā*, which is the cause of *saṅkhārā*. On the other hand, in “*upādānapaccayā bhavo*” one has to abandon *upādāna*, which is the cause of kamma. With the abandoning of *avijjā* and *upādāna*, kamma or *saṅkhārā* will cease. Thus, with the cessation of *kilesa*, kamma is ceased (*kilesanirodhā kammanirodho*).

### **Influence of Upādāna at the Final Moment of Life**

All ordinary living beings, who are born in this world are subject to death. After death, except for Arahants there is re-existence (*punabbhava*) as long as one has not totally eliminated attachment or clinging accompanying *avijjā*. *Taṇhā* or *upādāna* is the most influential cause at the final death moment of life, which drives one to the next life where attachment takes place. There arise *javana citta*s (impulse consciousness) influenced by craving and ignorance, which are wholesome impulses or unwholesome impulses. These two are working at the death moment accompanying attachment and ignorance. If wholesome impulses occur to one, he has the potential to be born in good realms but if unwholesome impulses occur to one, he will be led to bad realms.

According to the *Abhidhammatthasaṅgaha*, at the death moment, the working of mind influenced by *taṇhā* and *upādāna* may be wholesome or unwholesome based on taking three kinds of signs; *kamma*, *kammanimitta* and *gatinimitta*. According to circumstances, those three arise through any of the six (sense doors). The *Abhidhamma* commentary says that *kamma* and *kammanimitta* not only in the past life occur to one at the death moment, but also in the long past over countless worlds (*VibhA* 156). Among these three objects, before death, objects of *kamma* appear to one, for instance, if one had completed good deeds, objects as a reflection in a dream or an illusionary vision appear. Furthermore, the signs of *kamma* arise thus; if one has done unwholesome actions such as killing, the object of *kamma*; sticks, arrows, swords and other weapons, etc. related to bad actions committed in the past. In the same way, if there were other unwholesome actions, supportive things with regard to that bad action come up. In the opposite of it, if one had performed good actions such as *dāna*, *sīla* and *bhāvanā*, the objects of *kamma* as robes, alms-bowls, monastery, Buddha images, meditation centers, etc., and other things in relation of donation, taking precepts and taking meditation will be received by himself. In addition, the objects of a sign of destiny (*gatinimitta*) are where one is going to be reborn such as *deva*, celestial realms or beautiful gardens. On the other hand, if one is going to be reborn in hell realms or *peta* realms (hungry ghosts), he will see hell, black dogs, hellfire, hell-pot, terrific demons, forests and mountains, etc. Indeed, these objects of a sign indicate one's destiny.

The *Abhidhammatthasaṅgaha* states that thereafter, attending to that object thus presented, the stream of consciousness—in accordance with the *kamma* that is to be matured, whether pure or corrupted, and in conformity with the state into which one is to be reborn—continually flows, inclining mainly towards that state. Or that rebirth-productive *kamma* presents itself as a sense door in the way of renewing (*Bodhi* 2000).

Accordingly, the above objects presented to wholesome or unwholesome *javana citta*s at the death moment are grasped by attachment accompanying ignorance. In the *Mahāvedalla Sutta* it is said that hindered by ignorance and fettered by craving, ordinary living beings will take rebirth into a new state of existence in three kinds of realms – sensual, material and immaterial realm (*M I* 294). *Jayasuriya* also says that;

The forces that operate at this moment are: ignorance (avijjā), craving (taṇhā), and formations (saṅkhāra). Ignorance blinds the individual to the disadvantages of the consequences of that action; craving inclines him to the new life; and formations throw him forward to it (Jayasuriya 2016, 218).

In this regard, when the person at the death moment will grasp the particular objects, whether good or bad because he is encountering suffering at death. Avijjā conceals that object. Taṇhā motivates him to crave the new existence awaiting him even though they are the very miserable plane of existence and then upādāna clings to it. Thus, due to the concealment of avijjā to the sufferings of life, the attachment to a new life and upādāna clings to it, kamma performs its function to bring a new being in particular realms where one clings to at last death consciousness.

In accordance with the law of kamma, it is generally said that if one does good kamma, he will be reborn in the good realm; if one does bad kamma, he will be reborn in the bad realm. It is liable to be more general. But, if one attaches to somewhere, he will be reborn in that place. Here, at the death moment, one clings to the sign of destiny (gatinimatta). After death, he is born in that place he clung to before death. It means that he is driven to the next life by upādāna. In this regard, a simile can be seen in the Janavasabha Sutta (D II 200). Thus, the King Bimbisāra in Rājagaha, worshipped the Buddha and fulfilled good deeds and virtues. Then he became a stream winner (sotāpanna). One day, he passed away due to suffering from imprisonment. After death, he was reborn in the realm of the Four Great Kings (catumahārāja) named as “Janavasabha,” one of the retainers of the King Vessavaṇa. Here the significant fact is that even though he was a stream winner in his previous life, he became a servant in the lowest deva plane. In the Commentary (DA II 638), it is said that because he was reborn in that realm for seven lifetimes, his strong craving for this realm (nikantiyā balavatāya ettho nibbatto) led him to this realm. Here, it is remarkable that craving for existence (bhavataṇhā) at the death moment determined his rebirth even though he has good kamma to be reborn in good realm. Therefore, living beings who cling to their place or house and the animate and inanimate things related to them have more potential to be reborn where they cling to.

According to the above story in the Janavasabha Sutta, the important fact is that upādāna leads one even if he has good kamma. Moreover, in the Tissa Thera story of the Dhammapada (Dhp Vol. II. 218-220), a monk named Tissa, who had taken meditation for over fifty years had a set of robes offered by his sister. He kept it near him, wanting to wear that robe in the morning. Unfortunately, he passed away during the night due to a sickness. But, his mind was clinging to the robes. After death, he was reborn as a louse in the lines of the robes. According to this story, it can be identified how upādāna more than wholesome kamma influences one's destiny at the death moment. Even though he had been practicing meditation for over fifty years, he became a louse in the lines of robes he clung to.

Indeed, to be reborn in the good realm, generally objects can be changed cultivating good kamma at the death moment. There are pleasurable objects or terrific objects occurring to one near death. He encounters those objects concerning his destination and is liable to be reborn by clinging to them. At the death moment, kammic conditions create good or bad objects that indicate one's destiny. These conditions are namely: (i) weighty kamma (garuka); (ii) death-proximate kamma (āsanna); (iii) habitual kamma (āciṇṇa); and (iv) reserve kamma (kaṭattā).

These four take place for the effect of kamma in order. Among these, the first kamma is more powerful and it cannot be replaced by another three kamma in which generating the next rebirth is determined. It can be divided into two kinds, unwholesome and wholesome. Unwholesome kamma are actions; such as parricide (pitughātaka), matricide (mātughātaka), the murder of an Arahant (arahantaghātaka), the wounding of a

Buddha (lohituppādaka), and maliciously creating a schism in the Saṅgha (saṅghabhedaka), which are called “pañcānantariyakamma.” Also, wrong views which deny the basis regarding morality such as “ahetukaditṭhi” (the view of the uncausedness of existence) “akiriyaditṭhi” (view of the inefficacy of action) and “natthikaditṭhi” (the view of nihilism). The one who had committed these evil weighty kamma will see bad objects unchangeable near death and grasping such objects, he will be reborn in hell. On the other hand, good weighty kamma of wholesome kamma such as the attainment of mundane jhanic kamma and magga and phala except for the Arahant, that takes place as good objects at the death moment led to a good superior realm. Therefore, if one has this weighty kamma, good or bad objects cannot be changed by the support of other kamma. Through clinging to such objects of destination, one will be reborn there.

If one had not committed the weighty kamma mentioned above, bad objects that indicate one’s destination can be changed by death-proximate kamma (āsaṅṅa). This death-proximate kamma is a mental kamma that one does at the death moment. Regarding this, there is a narrative in the Commentary of the Aṅguttara Nikāya (AA II 17), that emphasizes transforming undesirable objects. In this tale, Soṇa’s father had spent his entire life as a hunter. However, in his later years, he became a monk. Nearing death, having violent visions and being pursued by frightening dogs. He said, “Please assist me; several dogs are following me!” The Venerable Soṇa was aware that his nimitta was negative and that he would be reborn in hell. Therefore, he carried his dying father to the pagoda and presented him with flowers and candles. Then he instructed his father to honour the Buddha, and his father complied. After then, his father’s dream consisted of gorgeous women approaching him. His rebirth after death went to the divine realm. Janakābhivamsa (1997) states that at the point of death, one must receive either wholesome or unwholesome impulses (javana citta) since these impulses bring one to a good or bad destination based on their wholesome or unwholesome javana citta, which arise till the final breath. Therefore, to arise the final wholesome thought, the objects are to be changed with the support of producing kamma at the death moment.

In the other hand, for Arahants, although there was the kamma in the past, the potentiality of those kamma to produce a next existence come to an end. Since taṇhā and avijjā are destroyed in the present life, the kamma is incapable of functioning. Like a crab that has its legs broken is incapable of creeping along, likewise, in spite of the presence of kamma, those kamma are incapable of producing results. It is unable to bring about a next existence. The circle of existence has been terminated, because the three factors that bring about existence, taṇhā, avijjā, and kamma are no more. Although volition is present whenever there is bodily, verbal or mental action, in the case of Arahants, that volition is not accompanied by craving and it completely disappears without leaving any trace and without transforming it into kamma. Nevertheless, the Arahant is the one who has destroyed the germ of existence and their desires no longer grow (te khīṇabījā avirūḥichandā) (Sn 41). Therefore, since upādāna is totally eliminated by Arahants, there is not kamma and rebirth. (upadananirodo bhavanirodo).

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Although kamma is emphasised more as a significant role that leads to the diversity of life in saṃsāra, this article reveals that when tracing kamma, the cause of results, it is discovered that upādāna plays a more influential role than kamma in distinguishing living beings and prolonging saṃsāra. This upādāna influences the actions of sentient beings so long as they are engaged in saṃsāra. In reality, clinging-motivated kamma contributes to the diversity of resultant life. Ordinary people, through their attachment to animate and inanimate objects in daily life, have the potential to cause future existence by performing any action that he firmly grasps through clinging close to his death. Because individuals’ clinging or attachment are various,

their actions and saṃsāra consequences are also variable. Individual attachment is the source of a multifaceted life for beings in sasric existence, according to this investigation. Therefore, the cause for bhava is upādāna. Understanding upādāna and its effect on bhava will help in the pursuit of the methods of eradication of upādāna in order to attain liberation from life-existence.

#### ABBREVIATIONS

|           |                             |
|-----------|-----------------------------|
| A         | Aṅguttara-nikāya            |
| AA        | Aṅguttara-nikāya Aṭṭhakathā |
| Abhv-tīkā | Abhidhammatthavibhāvinītikā |
| D         | Dīgha-nikaya                |
| DA        | Dīgha-nikaya Aṭṭhakathā     |
| Dhp       | Dhammapada                  |
| DhpA      | Dhammapada Aṭṭhakathā       |
| Dhs       | Dhammasaṅgaṇī               |
| DhsA      | Dhammasaṅgaṇī Aṭṭhakathā    |
| M         | Majjhima-nikāya             |
| MA        | Majjhima-nikāya Aṭṭhakathā  |
| S         | Saṃyutta-nikāya             |
| SA        | Saṃyutta-nikāya Aṭṭhakathā  |
| Sn        | Suttanipāta                 |
| S-tīkā    | Saṃyutta-nikāyaṭīkā         |
| Vibh      | Vibhaṅga                    |
| VibhA     | Vibhaṅga Aṭṭhakathā         |
| Vism      | Visuddhimagga               |

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