

Thesis Title: A Comparative Study of the Concept of Human Emotion
in Western Psychology and in the Buddhist Doctrine
Name: Suddhinand Janthagul
Degree: Master of Arts (Comparative Religion)
Thesis Supervisory Committee:
Valaiporn Bhavabhutanonda Na Mahasarakham, B.A., M.A.
Sobha Spielmann, B.Ed., M.A., Ed.D.
Somchart Cha-umthong, D.MIN.
Imtiyaz Yusuf, Ph. D.
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ABSTRACT

In this comparative study of the concept of human emotion in Western psychology and in the Buddhist doctrine, an attempt is made to present the similarities and differences between these two schools toward concept of human emotion.

This study is based on the Humanistic Approach toward the study of human emotion and James-Lange's Emotional Formation theory.

In whatever content of these two theories, Western and Buddhist, some differences and similarities are found as shown here.

DIFFERENCES

Western psychology

Buddhist doctrine

Origin of Human Emotion

Human Emotion originates from the synthesis of a certain limbic receptor and a stimulating event. These responses become arousal and behavioural reactions and then take root in the perception and forming of the emotion.

Human Emotion is based on the synthesis of the process of mental and physical factors.

Character of Human Emotion

Emotion is expressed through the external behaviour. There is no Western psychological theory mentioned about the internal root of emotion.

Emotion is expressed through both internal and external behaviours. It describes the three roots as greed, anger and delusion.

Phenomenology of Human Emotion

When an emotion arises, there are some changes in muscles, blood

The quality of one's emotion is based on the synthesis of the mind

vessels, the viscera, and the endocrine glands. Without these changes, there would be no emotion.

objects at the present moment, and then it gives rise to thoughts and feelings that influence bodily changes.

Process of Human Emotion

Its description is based on external appearances.

Its description is based on the relations between internal and effects.

Effects of Human Emotion

The subtle emotions are not described, only the coarse ones are.

Human Emotions are described from the most subtle to the most coarse ones.

SIMILARITIES

Firstly, effects of emotion basically influence one's personality and disposition. The positive emotion is good to form a good personality and disposition while the bad one always forms a bad personality and creates more bad people in societies that must not be ignored.

Secondly, the adjustment of emotion can be done through being aware of the current phenomena.

The way to reduce and prevent human social problems can be done through the proper preparation of stimulus events and the practical means in the Humanistic Approach and in the Buddhist Doctrine by the co-ordination of all related organizations for the sake of the well-being of the country and the population.

This study can be used for human development and counselling. Hopefully, it will be useful for the modern Thai society as it comprises Western and Eastern concepts of culture.

The process of this study is conducted through an interdisciplinary way between Buddhist psychology and Western psychology. That is, to adopt the techniques and means of the knowledge from the two important schools and integrate them together.

Besides, this study will be the beginning of the encouragement of the integrated study by the synthesis of Western and Eastern sciences. The practical benefit, then, will be fruitful to Thai society in particular and could, undoubtedly, be adapted for the benefit of mankind as a whole.