

Integrating *Sīla*, *Samādhi*, and *Paññā* into Teacher Education: A Review of Buddhist Approaches to Ethical and Reflective Teacher Development

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Abstract

The review looks at the Buddhist training model of three-fold training (*sīla*, *samādhi* and *paññā*) to inform teacher development, focusing on ethical and reflective teacher development, in contemporary teacher education. The goal is that it is possible to create a conceptual synthesis that connects Buddhist moral discipline with contemplative awareness and wisdom and oriented inquiry with existing discussions related to teacher professionalism, reflective practice, teacher identity and teacher care in the classroom. The study used a literature review design type: Integrative Literature Review. Buddhist studies, educational philosophy, teacher education, professional ethics, reflective practice and mindfulness based teacher development were the sources selected. The review suggests that *sīla* can be used to enhance teacher education by focusing on teachers' ethics as disciplined actions, restraining actions, responsible actions, speaking actions, and relational care. The practical aspects of attention and emotional control, being in the classroom, and attending to reflective calmness are provided by *Samādhi*. *Paññā* aids in developing more profound professional judgment in the understanding of impermanence, interdependence, intention and consequences. The paper proposes an integrated pedagogical approach to the formation of an ethical teacher which is not restricted to the three dimensions mentioned above as separate moral lessons or meditation exercises but is seen in the context of a unified pedagogical system. The review suggests that Buddhist approaches have the potential to contribute to value based teacher education with cultural sensitivity, non-sectarian and professional accountability. It also offers a basis for future empirical testing in teacher education programmes.

Keywords: Buddhist education, teacher ethics, reflective practice, *sīla*, *samādhi*, *paññā*

I. INTRODUCTION

Teacher education is expected to be of good form to equip teachers with their subject knowledge, classroom management skills, assessment skills, professional collaboration skills and improvement skills. But the more fundamental goal of teacher training is to create individuals who can exercise moral judgment, emotional stability and professional judgment. The teacher comes into class not just to teach, but to be a moral being and influence both relationships and speech, attention and discipline, and care. Thus, "teaching" has been continually associated with the issues of "ethics," "character," and "reflective inquiry" in educational thought. To engage in reflective thought, says Dewey, one must engage in disciplined inquiry and not routine action. Later Schön (1983) explained professional practice as a space where uncertainty and change are

working into practitioners' thinking. Teaching is a combination of knowledge, judgment and responsibility in the process of making learning possible (Shulman). These thoughts indicate that teaching is more complex than simply a matter of teaching methods and assessment.

The ethical ideals and formation of teachers in actual practice still suffer from a problem. Today, the gap between the ethical ideals and the formation of teachers is still a problem. Professional ethics, classroom management, child psychology and reflective journals are often incorporated in a variety of programmes, but they can be distinct from each other. Ethics can be taught as rules, reflection can be accomplished by assignment writing and mindfulness can be considered a stress reduction activity. Such separation is a hindrance to forming a unified teacher identity. The threefold training of *sīla*, *saṃādhi* and *paññā* provided by the Buddhist educational thought may be a way to deal with this problem. In the early Buddhist perspective, moral control, mental training and wisdom are complementary aspects of human development (Bodhi (Noble Eightfold Path) and not independent fields of study. The present paper is a review of the way this integrated framework can support teacher education with particular reference to ensuring ethical practices and reflective teacher education.

The topic matters for three reasons. First, teachers face growing demands from students, parents, institutions, technology, assessment systems and social change. These pressures may weaken patience, empathy and reflective decision making. Teacher research well being links emotional competence with stress management, teacher student relationships and classroom climate (Jennings and Greenberg). Second, professional ethics extends beyond formal rules. Teachers make daily decisions about fairness, speech, discipline, confidentiality, inclusion and authority. Teacher professionalism therefore rests on moral trust and responsibility (Sokkett). Third, although reflective practice is widely valued, it can become a routine written exercise. Loughran argues that effective reflection requires disciplined attention to experience and its meaning. Buddhist approaches may deepen it by joining intention, awareness, compassion and insight.

The Buddhist three-fold training is particularly pertinent as it does not start with merely theoretical training. It starts with the development of behaviour. *Sīla* is known as moral control which involves refraining from harming others, speaking with care and respecting others. *Samādhi* is the quality of being collected, or cultivated in the mind, and is a steadying of the attentive mind and a decrease in reaction. *Paññā* is wisdom; the wisdom that perceives the conditions, consequences, impermanence and lack of fixed, ego-centered views. These dimensions create a process of human development wherein behaviour helps to focus attention, attention helps to gain insight, and insight helps to change behaviour (Gethin). The model of the teacher given by the author in the context of teacher education is a teacher who not only knows the code of conduct, but also has habits of speech, presence, inquiry and wise response.

Teachers need to understand and contemplate the importance of Buddhist thought in teacher education. This paper is not to say that teacher education should be made into religious education or that the Buddhist concepts should be substituted with the professional standards accepted. Instead, it sees the Buddhist approaches as a resource to be drawn on for the philosophies, ethics and contemplations of teacher development which can be non sectarian. It is particularly important to take this approach in plural educational environments in which students and lecturers might have different religious beliefs or none at all. The goal is to discover principles that can be used in education, are culturally sensitive, and are professionally accountable. It takes careful interpretation since the terms of the Buddhist tradition are not to be simply deemed

"good" tags for practices that already exist. Their significance is based on a systematic description of behaviour, mind and wisdom (Harvey).

The main guiding question for this review is: What are the possibilities of embedding *sīla*, *samādhi* and *paññā* in teacher education to facilitate ethical and reflective teacher development? Three Supporting Questions are used. Firstly, what do the 3 dimensions carry with them of ethical and educational meanings in the literature of Buddhism? Second, what are the implications of these meanings in relation to the theories that are currently in place which address teacher professionalism, reflective practice, teacher identity and teacher well-being? Thirdly, what is the conceptual model for teacher education curriculum, practicum, mentoring and assessment? The questions in this paper orient the paper toward an integrative review and not an empirical investigation. It aims to combine works of literature that are usually read in isolation.

There is a good basis of literature on which such a review can be built. Ethics, meditation, psychology and knowledge have been studied in detail in the context of Buddhist studies (Rahula, Keown, Jayatilleke and de Silva). Reflection and the nature of teacher knowledge, the moral professional and moral identity, and teacher identity in the process of developing teacher knowledge are important aspects of teacher education that have been captured in the literature (Dewey, Schön, Shulman, Korthagen). Studies on mindfulness and teacher well being have provided some additional research studies supporting the use of attention training as a way to decrease teacher stress and enhance relationships in the classroom (Roeser et al., Flook et al.). But there is a definite gap. The vast majority of mindfulness literature is oriented towards reducing stress, and much of the ethics literature is oriented towards codes and values. Few studies combine all three elements of moral discipline, contemplative attention and wisdom inquiry in an overall framework of teacher formation. This review aims to fill that void and offers a three dimensional view of teacher ethical and reflective development from a Buddhist perspective.

The novelty of the paper is that it attempts to make the Buddhist threefold training a coherent model for the formation of a professional, in dialogue with teacher education. This contribution is not a new doctrine, but rather is a systematic interpretation. *Sīla* is mentioned in the context of professional ethics and responsibility in relationships. *Samādhi* is referred to as the attention of reflection and emotional stability. *Paññā* is mentioned as being very important: wisdom and good judgment. The review then explores the implications of these three dimensions for developing curriculum, for supervision during the practicum experience, for reflective writing, for mentoring, and for the institution's culture. With this approach, the paper brings together the Buddhist educational resources with current issues of teacher stress, teachers' behaviour, and reflective practice.

II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK AND REVIEW METHODOLOGY

The Threefold Training as a Framework for Teacher Formation

The Buddhist threefold training provides the theoretical foundation for this review. In classical Buddhist thought, *sīla*, *samādhi* and *paññā* describe connected forms of development through conduct, mental cultivation and understanding. The Noble Eightfold Path is commonly organised under ethics, concentration and wisdom, presenting a practical structure of transformation

(Bodhi, The Noble Eightfold Path). Rahula likewise describes Buddhist practice as a disciplined unity of ethics, meditation and knowledge rather than a separation of belief from action. For teacher education, this framework supports the formation of the whole person and relates professional conduct to attentive awareness and sound judgment.

Sīla is the ethical base of teaching. It is about avoiding bad actions, speaking the truth and wisely, showing respect to others and being responsible for the effects of one's actions in the Buddhist tradition. Since the nature of Buddhist ethics is deeply intertwined with character and intention and human flourishing, and not external laws (Keown), this must be taken into consideration. Buddhist ethics is also about actions, motivations and the alleviation of suffering, as is also demonstrated by Harvey (Harvey). The idea of ethics as a lived discipline when teaching teachers means that ethical issues need to be explicitly taught as a lived subject. Teachers must explore what they say to students, the power they wield, how they handle anger and how they deal fairly in everyday situations in the classroom. Rather, the proper conduct of a teacher is the starting point for ethical teacher development.

The development of attention, stability and balance of mind is known as samādhi. It's not a step away from learning. In the workplace situation it means being present, attuned to their reactions, listening to them and not jumping into action from impulsive anger and fear. Gunaratana presents the understanding of what mindfulness is: a clear awareness of present experience, and Analayo illustrates that mindfulness practice is the careful observation of the body, feelings, mind and phenomena (Gunaratana, Analayo). This awareness is important for teachers in their profession. A teacher who can detect irritation before it becomes an impudent expression will more likely maintain the trust of his/her class. If a teacher is paying attention to each student, he/she will be more aware of any confusion, fear, exclusion or misunderstanding. Samādhi, then, helps to foster reflectivity which is the desired outcome of teacher education.

Paññā means the knowledge, wisdom, insight. Wisdom in Buddhism is the understanding of the conditional nature of all experience, the impermanence of all circumstances, and the results of craving, aversion and ignorance. Both Jayatilleke and Kalupahana see early Buddhist thought as a legitimate theory of knowledge, but the latter is more concerned with the practical aspects of experience, causality and freedom from misconceptions. In teacher training, the term paññā means 'professional wisdom'. It aids teachers to transcend automatic judgment and the limited self protection. A difficult learner is not a learner who cannot be helped or is a problem; it is a child or an adult who has been formed by conditions. A lesson failure in this instance is not just a loss but an opportunity to review what has gone wrong, the context and possible other solutions. Through wisdom, the understanding of teachers is thus changed in their perception of the difficulty of the job.

It is at the heart of the interaction between sīla, samādhi and paññā. If it is not accompanied by thought, it can be a matter of doing what's right. Unethical attention can turn into an individual skill without impacting relationships. If wisdom is not accompanied by discipline, it might be merely theoretical and not have any impact on behaviour. Buddhist philosophy does not make these divisions, requiring that actions, mind and knowledge must all develop (Gethin). This incorporation could be useful to teacher education. Professional ethics, reflective practice and pedagogical judgment must not be offered as separate courses. They should be integrated into a series of learning activities that include the following: teacher candidates watch behaviour, consider the intention, develop attention, discuss the consequences, and adjust their behaviour.

Teacher Education, Reflection, and Moral Professionalism

The second theoretical field that we will discuss is teacher education. Even though Dewey's discussion of reflection is not particularly extensive, he wrote that reflection is "active, persistent, and careful consideration of beliefs and consequences" (Dewey), and this idea has continued to be important. Reflection is thus more than just an opinion. Needs proof, openness, patience and willingness to put ideas to the test. Schön went further by demonstrating that professionals frequently use "action" thinking, particularly when there are conflicts with existing rules in a complex situation (Schön). This sort of practice is clearly evident in teaching. Lessons take place in "real-time". There are a variety of responses from students. The teacher has to make interpretations, adjustments and actions. A Buddhist perspective of samādhi and paññā can enhance this reflection by developing concentration before any action, and wisdom after the action.

Shulman's account of teacher knowledge is also relevant. He argued that pedagogical content knowledge enables teachers to transform subject matter into forms that learners can understand. This reminds us that ethical and reflective development cannot be separated from subject teaching. Clarity, preparation, fairness and sensitivity to learners are moral features of good pedagogy. Korthagen's holistic approach similarly asks teacher educators to consider the teacher as a person, including identity, purpose, beliefs and personal qualities. The threefold training offers a structured language of conduct, attention and insight that can complement this holistic account.

The moral aspect of teacher professionalism is also involved. Teaching is a calling, a responsibility towards students and society, Hansen says. There is more to teaching than technique; it is the teacher, his or her identity and integrity, that give rise to good teaching, notes Palmer. Professionalism in teaching is based on moral commitments since teachers are given the responsibility for the growth of persons (Sokkett). The arguments used are in favour of the use of sīla as a professional concept. Codes are important in teacher development and necessary in ethical development, but codes are not sufficient in teacher development. It should develop and teach the virtues of honesty, self-denial, loving-kindness, fairness, modesty and responsibility in everyday actions. This is enhanced by a Buddhist perspective which highlights intention and the impact of actions and words.

There has been an attack on reflective teacher education, too. Reflective assignments can be 'scripted' if students write what the supervisors want to hear, instead of reflecting on what they are seeing. Context, social conditions, and the outcomes of classroom action are a part of reflective teaching, as defined by Zeichner and Liston. Also, reflective teacher education has a variety of traditions – technical, moral, deliberative and critical – as shown by Valli. Paññā can expand this conversation by provoking candidates to get more in tune with the causes and conditions. It challenges them to explore being defensive, blaming and having preconceived notions about learners. It also asks them to relate the events of the individual classes to the larger patterns of inequality, culture and institutional use.

A third field of support comes from recent research in the field of mindfulness in education. Jennings and Greenberg (2008) suggest that teachers' social and emotional competence impacts

their classroom relationships, management and learning climate. In field trials mindfulness training was correlated with decreased teacher stress and teacher burnout (Roeser et al.). A mindfulness based programme for teachers (Flook et al.) resulted in teacher improvements with regard to stress, burnout and teaching efficacy. The results of these studies confirm that attention training is of importance for practice. But it cannot be overemphasised that there is more than one aspect of mindfulness. Without ethics and wisdom, it can be a shortcut to performance. In the threefold training, attention is held to moral responsibility and insight.

Integrative Review Methodology

This study used an integrative literature review because the question required theoretical, conceptual and empirical literature to be examined together rather than statistically pooling comparable interventions. Following Torraco, Snyder, Tranfield et al. and Booth et al., the review used a transparent sequence of searching, screening, critical reading and thematic synthesis. Searches were completed between February and May 2026 in Scopus, ERIC, JSTOR, Google Scholar and the publisher databases of major Buddhist studies and education journals. Reference lists of eligible sources were also searched to identify influential books and earlier foundational works.

Search strings combined Buddhist and teacher education terms using Boolean operators. Core combinations included ("sīla" OR "Buddhist ethics" OR "right speech") AND ("teacher education" OR "teacher professionalism"); ("samādhi" OR mindfulness OR contemplative practice) AND (teacher OR teaching OR "reflective practice"); and ("paññā" OR wisdom OR conditionality) AND ("professional judgment" OR pedagogy). Searches were limited to English language scholarly works available up to May 2026. No opening publication date was imposed because the review required primary Buddhist interpretations and established works on reflective practice, while recent empirical studies were included where they directly addressed teacher mindfulness, well being or classroom relationships.

Titles and abstracts were screened first, followed by full text assessment. Sources were included when they addressed at least one element of the threefold training, Buddhist ethics or psychology, reflective teacher education, moral professionalism, teacher identity, teacher well being, or the design of an integrated conceptual model. Eligible material comprised peer reviewed articles, scholarly books from academic presses and reports from recognised international organisations. Commercial mindfulness manuals, devotional writing, works concerned only with Buddhist history, and sources lacking a clear connection to education or professional formation were excluded. Duplicate records and repeated editions were removed. The final corpus contained the 38 works cited in this review.

A structured extraction sheet recorded each source's purpose, tradition or conceptual standpoint, educational setting, principal claims, evidence type, limitations and relevance to sīla, samādhi or paññā. Analysis proceeded in four stages. First, Buddhist concepts were coded under ethical restraint, intention, right speech, mindfulness, collectedness, compassion, conditionality, impermanence and wisdom. Second, teacher education sources were coded under professional ethics, reflection, identity, classroom care, emotional competence and professional judgment. Third, convergences, tensions and omissions were compared across the two bodies of literature. Fourth, the themes were integrated into a model linking sīla with professional conduct, samādhi with reflective presence and paññā with practical wisdom. This interpretive synthesis also tested whether educational adaptations retained ethical depth, respected pluralism and avoided reducing

Buddhist training to a technique. Quality was considered in relation to each source type rather than through one uniform score. Empirical studies were examined for design, participants, measures and conclusions. Conceptual works were assessed for argument, use of sources, consistency and relevance to the review question. Foundational books were retained when they had importance in Buddhist studies or teacher education, although their setting was noted during interpretation. Search decisions, inclusion reasons and thematic notes were kept in the extraction sheet to support an audit trail. Because the review joined fields with different vocabularies and evidence traditions, synthesis depended on reasoned comparison rather than claims of direct equivalence. Contradictory positions and limits were recorded instead of being forced into the proposed model. This procedure strengthened transparency while remaining appropriate to a careful integrative philosophical review process.

This is a conceptual review and as such has limitations. It does not test the proposed method with teacher candidates. It does not conclude whether it has effects on the outcomes of the classrooms in terms of Buddhism. It also does not say that the threefold training is interpreted in the same manner by all the Buddhist traditions. The paper is largely dependent on the early Buddhist and Theravada sources since the words *sīla*, *samādhi* and *paññā* are of key importance and are relevant to the context of education in South Asia. Future studies can investigate the understanding of such a framework by teacher candidates, the possibility of adapting the framework in plural classrooms and whether it has positive effects on ethical reasoning, reflective writing, relationships in the classroom and teachers' well being.

III. DISCUSSION

A central issue in this synthesis is the difference between the threefold framework and mindfulness only professional development. Secular mindfulness programmes can provide useful skills for stress regulation and attention, yet institutional versions are sometimes detached from questions of motive, conduct, power and consequence. When *samādhi* is treated chiefly as a means of personal calm, resilience or productivity, a teacher may become more focused without becoming fairer, kinder or more critical of harmful practice. The Buddhist model does not reject secular adaptation, and it does not require sectarian belief. It challenges the isolation of attention from ethical restraint and wisdom. *Sīla* asks how attention serves dignity and reduces harm. *Paññā* asks whether a response recognises context, interdependence, bias and consequence. Thus, the proposed framework is non sectarian in delivery but philosophically integrated in structure. Its educational value lies in the mutual correction of conduct, attention and judgment rather than in presenting meditation as a self contained professional skill.

The first important finding of the review is that teaching *sīla* can enhance the effectiveness of teacher education by moving away from abstract teaching to the practice of the discipline. Ethical codes, legal requirements, child protection policies and institutional procedures are often introduced as part of many teacher education courses. These are required, but will not completely determine the teacher's daily actions. Even if a teacher knows a code, he or she can be abusive towards a weak learner, show favouritism, shame a weak student, ignore a quiet student or exercise authority for personal pride. There is a focus on the development of habits as *Sīla* guides. It questions the teacher about how he or she behaves when tired, frustrated, criticised, and/or under pressure. In this way, it is a way of life; it's something that we have to practice every day.

The practice of ethics starts with a realisation that in Buddhist philosophy, actions have consequences for both self and others. This is especially helpful for teacher training in the context of the morals of intention. Teachers' actions may seem correct on the surface, but are motivated by irritation, vanity, fear, and/or indifference. On the other hand, the ethically correct corrective action might be challenging when exercised with care, fairness and responsibility. The Buddhist ethics account that Harvey gives is an understanding that action and intention go hand in hand (Harvey). Reflective cases are one way that teacher education can utilise this principle. Questions may include what candidates would do, why they would do it, the mental state in which they would do it and the consequences for the student and classroom community as a result of doing it.

There is one of the strongest links between *sīla* and teaching right speech. The profession of teaching is a speech intensive one. Words are used by teachers to explain, question, correct, praise, warn, advise and evaluate. They can bring dignity to their speech or can create fear. In the Buddha's teaching ethical speaking is emphasised as being truthful, beneficial, timely and gentle (Bodhi, In the Buddha's Words). This may be interpreted as a teacher education of teacher's professional speech discipline. Candidates will be able to consider how their language might unfairly label students, how feedback might be specific and respectful, how it can be used to ensure the dignity of the learner is maintained, and how the use of humour in the classroom can be harmful to vulnerable learners. It is not a matter of choice that one should be speech aware. It is an integral part of safe and humane education!

Sīla is also a supporter of the ethical utilisation of authority. Institutional power is in the hands of teachers. They are in charge of time, attention, assessment, discipline and participation opportunities. Buddhist ethics teaches against actions based on greed, hatred and ignorance (delusion), which can manifest in the classroom in the form of favouritism, anger, prejudice and rash judgments (Keown). As such, teacher education needs to have a guided reflection on the concept of power. Candidates must be asked what they do to share their attention, how they relate with students from the marginalised community and how they deal with student disobedience without embarrassing them. This relates to Buddhist ethics and democratic and inclusive education. The discipline of *sīla* prompts teachers to be responsible for their authority, instead of dominating it.

The sense of ethical worthiness of *sīla* is also encountered in a variety of contexts outside of the classroom. Teachers collaborate with fellow teachers, parents, administrators, and the community. Ethical behaviour is defined as confidentiality, being honest when assessing, respecting colleagues and being responsible in communicating with families. The emphasis on trust as a teaching basis can also be seen in the professional ethics literature (Sokkett). Buddhist ethics introduces a practical aspect of restraint. Not all frustrations are to be verbalised! Not all of the judgments are supposed to be communicated. All institutional conflicts are not the same and should not be individualised. This restriction is not passive. It's about their ability to avert harm and be responsible. This can be developed in teacher education via role plays, case studies, peer discussion and mentoring during the practicum.

The use of *sīla* can be added at the curriculum level, such as providing moral case analysis, observing speakers' professional conduct, auditing speakers' speech performances, community service, and reflective journals on moral issues. It should also be manifested in the teachers' educators. Candidates immediately detect the teacher educators' practice on this. When a programme teaches respect and the only way to achieve it is through fear, teaches fairness but

instead of asking questions of candidates, teaches obedience, and teaches compassion but doesn't teach struggling candidates, the implicit teaching undermines the explicit teaching. It is here that the importance of Palmer's understanding of teaching as arising from identity and integrity is applicable. A Buddhist approach would argue that, to be a Buddhist, one's approach toward ethics in teacher training education should be manifested within the institution and not just verbalised during lectures.

Samādhi as Reflective Presence and Emotional Steadiness

The second key result is that samādhi can enhance reflective teacher learning by fostering attention before, during and after learning. Reflection is frequently used as a form of writing that is used after lessons and/or instruction. Such reflection is of course helpful, but there must also be awareness in action in teaching. The importance of Schön's account of reflection in action is that it acknowledges that reflection is a part of professional practice, and thus that professionals must notice what is happening in the process of practice. The ability is developed and supported by Samādhi. A teacher who can pay more consistent attention can observe instances of confusion, instances of getting 'irritated', too quick a pace and a quieter student requiring some assistance.

For teachers samādhi is particularly relevant in the context of stress. As with all classrooms, the classroom is an emotionally challenging place. Noise, time pressure, administrative requirements, differences in needs, disrespect or conflict pose challenges to teachers. Teachers may become stressed and tend to focus on a few issues and respond in an almost defensive manner. There is some research into teaching mindful attention that indicates stress reduction and burnout of teachers (Roeser et al.; Flook et al.). Similarly, an awareness- and resilience based programme can enhance classroom learning environments (Jennings et al.). The results do not necessarily indicate that Buddhist training can be reproduced in a teacher education program, but the findings are in favour of the general conclusion that attention and emotional regulation are among the capacities that should be nurtured within teacher education.

However, samādhi is not just relaxation; it is Buddhism's way of thinking. It is comprised of collectedness, sustained attention and mental concentration. Gunaratana says that mindfulness is being able to see what is happening without getting caught in it. In the context of teacher education this implies that it is possible to train teacher candidates to slow down their response. There is a moment of consciousness that prevents dangerous speech. It can make the teacher aware of student behaviour and how he or she responds emotionally to student behaviour. This is of great value. It can help discipline be considered rather than punitive. It also allows the teacher time to select a response that will not compromise the dignity and/or the order of the classroom.

Samādhi can enhance reflective writing in being more truthful and precise. Reflections written by many teacher candidates provide a summary of the events without addressing the teacher candidates' mental states. Buddhist inspired reflection might include asking candidates to observe any tension, feelings, thoughts, intentions and assumptions that they may have during the teaching. The practice of samadhi, according to Analayo's research on satipatthana, entails the process of paying attention to the body, feelings, mind and phenomena. These categories could be modified in the realm of teacher education to the following reflective prompts: How did I feel when the lesson didn't go as I had planned? Which line of thought did I have when one of my students made a statement? Was it care, concern, anger or pride I had? What were some of

the circumstances surrounding it? Reflection can go beyond description to self understanding when the following questions are used.

Another way of samādhi being manifested in education is in the presence of students in the classroom. Pupils are able to tell if a teacher is concentrating or distracted. A gifted teacher attunes him/herself to the student and responds in an appropriate manner. Hanh and Weare introduce mindfulness in the context of education as a tool to develop the presence, compassion and stability of teachers and learners. Similarly, mindful education has been discussed not just in terms of attending to the inner life of students, but of teachers as well (Rechtschaffen). When you are present, in a Buddhist context, it is not a style of performance. It's a moral type of focus. In caring for pupils, attentiveness to pupils is the respect for pupils as persons. Sīla is nurtured by thus samādhi.

A responsible use of samādhi in a diverse classroom must be modest, voluntary and educationally explained. Teacher educators may begin a seminar with one minute of quiet settling, while allowing candidates to breathe normally, sit silently, pray inwardly, or simply review the lesson goal. A mindful listening exercise can be framed as attending without interruption, followed by a neutral observation of tone, emotion and assumptions. Candidates who prefer not to undertake inward attention practice should be offered an equivalent written observation task. No chanting, refuge formula, image, ritual posture or claim about religious truth is required. Buddhist terms may be introduced historically and compared with similar resources from Hindu, Christian, Islamic, humanist and indigenous ethical traditions. Assessment should concern professional attention and reflection, never participation in a spiritual exercise. This approach protects freedom of conscience while retaining the educational question raised by samādhi: whether a teacher can notice experience clearly enough to respond with steadiness and care (Ergas).

Paññā as Wisdom, Critical Insight, and Professional Judgment

The third major finding is that paññā can be a valuable resource for teacher education, where it can be used to enrich the process of reflection and wisdom. Getting in touch with that isn't enough; it takes reflection to get insight. A teacher can contemplate and meditate on a problem a myriad of times and still hold the same assumptions. In order to see more clearly, Panjñā needs more Panjñā. In Buddhist philosophy wisdom involves being knowledgeable of the following: conditionality, impermanence, suffering and not clinging to any set views (Gethin). This can be the capability to look at classroom events, in professional education, in terms of causes, contexts, relations and consequences. It enables teachers not to take the easy route of pointing fingers and blaming. Wise teacher would pose the question of what influences a learner's behaviour, what is lacking in the support and what might be different in teaching to make a difference?

Paññā is very similar to professional judgment. Shulman's description of teacher knowledge reveals that teachers have to read between the lines when it comes to subject matter, learners, curriculum and context. In uncertain situations, a reflective practitioner also makes judgments as does Schön (Schön). Ethical elements to such judgment are added by Buddhist wisdom. It is questioned whether a decision will cause less harm, whether it is based on compassion, whether it is based on the self and whether it acknowledges the transformation of persons. A student who fails today is not a failure. A Class that is being bad is not forever and a day an enemy. It's not a teacher's weakness that is a permanent state. This knowledge helps one to be patient and hopeful.

The notion of impermanence is directly relevant to the field of education, as it is in Buddhism. Often teachers are put under a strain because they assume they are in a permanent state. The practicum lesson can be challenging and result in a feeling of incompetence. Students who act out frequently and seriously enough may be characterised as a "disruptive student" and be labelled as such. People often end up in an ongoing narrative of grievance as a result of an office dispute with another worker. With Paññā teachers can observe changes in the classroom. Here, it is helpful to look at the work of de Silva on Buddhist psychology, which demonstrates the effect of perception, emotions and mental habits on experience (de Silva). This insight could be taken into account during teacher education to observe the impact that their interpretations have on their professional feelings.

Another form of paññā is being interdependent. There are a multitude of conditions leading to teaching outcomes, such as curriculum, language, prior learning, family background, peer relations, institutional culture, assessment pressure, teacher preparation, and classroom climate. Such a programme of teacher education for wisdom would involve the candidates in a process of analysis of this network of conditions. This helps to avoid the sinful lethargy and condemnation. It isn't a substitute for the teacher's responsibility; it is the smartest kind of responsibility. This point (Zeichner and Liston) is extremely relevant to the concern with social context that was noted by Zeichner and Liston. Reflection should not be one sided, teacher opinion only. It should also take into account the factors of culture, power, inequality, policy and the factors that impact students' learning.

It is also important to have some self-knowledge to practice Paññā. Teachers carry assumptions with them on the matter of intelligence, discipline, language, gender, class, various disabilities, religion and family background. Some presumptions are passed down from their own education. Some are supported by institutional practices. These suppositions need to be questioned to acquire wisdom. Korthagen's comprehensive teacher education looks into the depths of teacher identities, beliefs and mission. With a Buddhist approach, candidates are encouraged to view attachment with self image. Candidates, for instance, might wish to look competent and hide confusion, so as not to look incompetent. One might wish to be in control and thus ask questions. Another may see himself as caring and thus shun the need for correction. Paññā is an aid to revealing these patterns.

The approach to developing paññā at the curriculum level can be through reflecting on the questions raised through inquiry, using critical incident analysis, engaging in dialogue with theory, and deliberate consideration of the consequences of teaching. There are four questions that candidates can use to analyse an incident in the classroom, What happened? What were the circumstances, causes or factors that made it possible? What was my intention/what were my reactions in my response? What better comeback can there be the next time? This inquiry is a combination of Deweyan reflection and insight (Dewey) from the Buddhist perspective. It's also not moralistic when it comes to the superficial moralising. It isn't intended to make accusations against the teacher candidate, but to develop a clearer seeing. If one can see clearly, a teacher can make good decisions when in the heat of the moment.

An Integrated Model for Teacher Education

The review recommends sīla, samādhi, and paññā to be used as a cycle for the formation of teachers. How can I act to minimise harm and promote dignity in my teaching? Samādhi poses: How to concentrate and stabilise attention to act sagaciously? What is the greater knowledge,

understanding and wisdom that allows me to make my professional judgment? The following are some questions that could be applied in any teacher education course. These apply to the fields of educational foundations, educational psychology, curriculum studies, practicum, assessment, classroom management and professional ethics. They are strong at being able to connect conduct, awareness and understanding.

In coursework, the model can be taught through case analysis rather than religious instruction. Candidates may examine an anonymised classroom incident and complete three linked tasks. Under *sīla*, they identify possible harm, duties, power relations and forms of respectful speech. Under *samādhi*, they record what the teacher noticed, overlooked and felt before responding. Under *paññā*, they analyse causes, assumptions, consequences and alternative actions. A multi faith seminar can then compare this reading with professional codes and ethical resources offered by participants, without asking anyone to accept Buddhist doctrine. Role plays may rehearse fair correction, mindful listening and parent communication. Candidates may also choose a secular label such as conduct, attention and discernment in portfolio work. These strategies preserve the framework's structure while making participation academically open and professionally relevant.

The same cycle can guide practicum observation and supervision. Alongside subject knowledge and lesson organisation, a supervisor may record whether the candidate uses respectful language, distributes attention fairly, notices learner confusion, regulates an impulsive response and revises a judgment when evidence changes. In the post lesson conference, the candidate first describes observable conduct under *sīla*, then identifies attention and emotion under *samādhi*, and finally examines causes, assumptions, consequences and alternatives under *paññā*. Evidence should come from lesson notes, learner responses and a specific incident rather than from claims about personal virtue. The conference therefore becomes a disciplined inquiry into practice instead of a general list of strengths and weaknesses.

There must be mentoring. Teacher candidates may feel that they are less than good if weaknesses in terms of ethics and emotions are mentioned. It needs to be presented in a non-judgemental manner, from a Buddhist perspective. It should be both honest and compassionate and there should be some concrete advice. The mentor should demonstrate good speech; that is, he should be truthful, timely and respectful. The mentor needs to practice *samādhi*, to pay attention and not react negatively to the candidate's afflictions. The mentor should help the candidate to observe conditions and possibilities and model *paññā* (wisdom). For teacher education to be seen as a relational practice in view of its purpose is not a new idea, as Loughran suggests.

Assessment must avoid claims about a candidate's spiritual state. A practical portfolio can contain four items: an annotated lesson observation, a critical incident analysis, feedback from a mentor or peer, and a revised action plan showing change across two teaching occasions. A four level rubric may rate only observable professional evidence. For *sīla*, indicators include respectful and non humiliating speech, fair allocation of attention, confidentiality, proportionate discipline and acknowledgement of harm. For *samādhi*, indicators include sustained listening, accurate noticing of learner cues, recognition of personal emotion, a pause before a difficult response and recovery after disruption. For *paññā*, indicators include identifying several causes, questioning bias, considering learner context, tracing likely consequences and proposing realistic alternatives. Levels may be recorded as 1, limited or unsupported; 2, emerging but inconsistent; 3, competent and supported by evidence; and 4, integrated across incidents with clear improvement. Candidates should receive the rubric in advance and may attach contextual explanations. Scores should be triangulated through the portfolio, observation and mentoring

conference, with an appeal or moderation process where judgments differ. This evaluates ethical reasoning, awareness and professional growth without measuring belief, meditation depth or presumed inner wisdom.

Another essential component of institutional culture is needed. The teaching of *sīla*, *samādhi* and *paññā* can only be taught credibly when there is no carelessness or oppression in the teaching of teachers. The course includes feedback, communication, assessment and supervision. Passion, commitment and teacher working conditions – the latter of which is a key aspect – are seen as influencing the nature of the teaching experience (Day). Where teacher candidates are only competing, being afraid of others and doing things the right way, they can pass on these patterns to students in the school. Hence, the Buddhist model states that there must be self reflection done in the institutions. Teacher educators and administrators need to consider if their programme is, itself, a reflection of ethical behaviour, being present for the student, and thinking well.

Connections with Character Education and Professional Ethics

The proposed model also ties in with character education. Lickona believes that the goal of education is to foster respect, responsibility and moral character (Lickona). In this area, there are two needs for teacher education. It has to create teachers who will impact students' character and it has to help form teachers' character. *Sīla* is a contributor in terms of emphasis on behaviour. *Samādhi* helps by fostering inner stability to act in terms of values. *Paññā* helps teachers to appreciate moral situations deeply. Character education sometimes can be a list of values. The Buddhist training program provides a process for attunement, speaking, judging and acting in accordance with values.

This is also endorsed by the professional ethics literature. Sockett's foundation for morals in teaching has to do with teachers' moral responsibility for both teaching and teaching relationships. In Hansen's account of teaching as a call, the focus has been laid on the service orientation towards students and society. These opinions are in line with Buddhist ethics (non-sectarian). *Sīla* is the training, *samādhi* is the presence and *paññā* is the discernment. They can jointly contribute to a professionalism that's not a mere "compliance" nor a merely "idealistic" one. It turns into an attitude of responsible teaching.

There's a relationship to social and emotional learning, too. This is because Jennings and Greenberg state that teacher social and emotional competence has an impact on classroom outcomes. An unregulated teacher can inadvertently teach a child about values that are contrary to those the school is trying to impart. *Samādhi* can contribute to enhanced emotional competence by becoming more aware of emotions as they are occurring, instead of acting in a way that will make them problematic. *Sīla* helps us to move toward ethical emotions. *Paññā* allows the teacher to know why these patterns of emotions may occur and their impact on other people. This holistic approach does not allow emotional competence to be viewed as a means of classroom discipline only. It becomes a part of the process of the formation of ethics.

The model is applicable and relevant to inclusive education also. Placing learners in the same classroom is not enough to meet the requirements of inclusion. It needs respect, patience, different types of support and challenging assumptions. *Paññā* assists teachers in not viewing learners as labels, but rather with the understanding of context. Dignity is to be respected through speech and behaviour, says *Sīla*. *Samādhi* assists teachers to stay steadfast when it gets challenging with inclusion. This is especially true if the teacher is teaching students with

disabilities, language barriers, trauma, poverty and/or behavioural issues. The Buddhist approach works in tandem with the disciplined professional action of inclusion by adding compassion.

Difficulties & Protection in the Use of Buddhist Approaches

Implementation requires safeguards for religious freedom. Teacher education institutions include candidates from different religious, cultural and non religious backgrounds, so Buddhist concepts should be presented as examinable ethical and philosophical resources, not as truths that candidates must affirm. Course outlines should state the educational purpose, voluntary character of contemplative activities and availability of equivalent alternatives. Teacher educators should use translated texts alongside professional standards and other ethical traditions, invite critical disagreement, avoid devotional language and protect candidates from disclosing personal beliefs. In group work, participants may use the terms conduct, attentive presence and practical discernment while studying their Buddhist origins. Anonymous feedback can identify discomfort early. These measures make the framework pedagogical rather than devotional and allow its ideas to be tested without weakening academic freedom or pluralism.

A second concern is superficial or commodified use. Mindfulness and compassion can be marketed as ways to improve calm, compliance or productivity while leaving unfair workloads, institutional power and harmful conduct unexamined. Such an approach places responsibility for stress on the individual teacher and treats samādhi as an isolated performance tool. The threefold framework resists this narrowing because attention is answerable to sīla and examined through paññā. A calm response that protects an unjust practice is not sufficient, and focused performance that ignores learner dignity is not ethical development. Ergas therefore cautions that mindful attention must remain connected to formation and the purposes of education. The framework also accepts that inner qualities cannot be measured directly. Institutional evaluation should rely on respectful language, fair treatment, careful noticing, reasoned reflection, openness to feedback and demonstrated improvement rather than a judgment about spiritual attainment.

Suggestions for teacher education

The threefold model offers several implications for teacher education policy and practice. First, ethical formation should be treated as a continuing process rather than a single subject. Sīla can guide communication, assessment, discipline, planning and collaboration across a programme. Second, attention training should be connected to reflective practice. Programmes that require reflection should also help candidates notice thoughts, emotions, assumptions and classroom events carefully. Samādhi supports this capacity through attentive listening, observation and measured response.

Thirdly, the goal of teaching students to become wise should be made explicit in teacher preparation programs. Paññā assists teacher candidates to recognise conditions, non-judgment, doubt and check the ego based reactions and make wise decisions in challenging situations in the classroom. This can be facilitated by teacher education by means of critical incident analysis, learner diversity studies and discussions on fairness and power. It is also important to prepare teacher educators to use this model in a responsible manner. They must lead the discussion without preaching and be patient, giving constructive criticism, and have an attitude of "reflectively humble. This is consistent with Palmer's (2008) conception of teaching that is influenced by the process of example and relationship. This framework can also be used to enhance professional standards, which focus on ethical behaviour, reflection, inclusion and lifelong learning and development (UNESCO and International Labour Organisation).

IV. CONCLUSION

This review demonstrates the coherence of the three foci of *sīla*, *saṃādhi* and *paññā* in teacher development that is both ethical and reflective. The model links the three aspects of professional conduct, attentive awareness and practical wisdom. It is also consistent with other published accounts about teacher education, such as Dewey's and Schön's writings on the process of reflection, Shulman's work on teacher professional knowledge, and Korthagen's, Hansen's, Sockett's, and Palmer's work on teacher identity and moral professionalism. It's important because it helps teachers to learn and become technically proficient and ethical, attentive and wise professionals.

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