

An Analytical Study Of ĀhārajaRūpa In Theravāda Abhidhamma

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Abstract

Āhāraja rūpa is a type of material phenomena formed when the internal nutriment combines with the external nutriment. Many scholars have studied about āhāraja rūpa as part of a chapter in Abhidhamma but there are few specialized studies about it. This research analyzed the concept and practice of āhāra (food, nutrition) in Buddhism for the cultivation of physical and material development. The textual analysis was made to identify āhāraja rūpas that occur in the intakes of nutriments and outline the repulsive nature of nutriments. The data were collected from Abhidhamma Piṭaka. The finding indicated the contemplation of repulsiveness for reducing kilesā can help people keep a healthy mind and body. It is hoped that this research will contribute to reduction of craving for food and attachment to nutriment thereby facilitating insight meditation.

Key words: Āhāraja rūpa, nutriments, repulsiveness, insight meditation

1. Introduction

All living beings subsist on nutriment. Beings without nourishment food are unable to live. Thus, āhāra is necessary for every animate being. To be healthy, one should consume appropriate food and in spite of proper āhāra, know its moderation in eating meals (M I 335) so that one can live a long life with good health. In the Theragāthā verses 983, Sāriputta Thera suggests thus: “Cattāro pañca ālope abhunjitwā udakaṃ pive. alam phāsuvihārāya pahitattassa khikkhuno.” Leaving four or five mouthfuls of food yet uneaten for drinking water contributes to health and happiness. The Buddha also encouraged His disciples to consume āhāra a single session a day as He did to be healthy. Hence, reducing eating āhāra is helpful for good digestion and physical health. The Buddha expounded his teachings for 45 years. His teachings can be divided into Three Baskets, called Tipitaka; the Suttanta, the Vinaya and the Abhidhamma. Abhidhamma, the Pāli term, is used for the profound dhamma. The text in which the profound dhamma is explained is also called “Abhidhamma”. The commentary gives the definition of “Abhidhamma” as “a treatise in which the dhamma is explained in more detail and in an analytical way than Suttanta.” There are two types of dhamma: Paññatti and Paramattha. Paññatti comprises names and things. Paramattha is the ultimate reality. The dhamma of ultimate reality is that they never change their characteristics or nature. It is real forever. The ultimate reality is abstract truth, paramatthasacca. Using the abstract truth, the Buddha expounded the wisdom of realization and emancipation or liberation. The ultimate reality can be divided into four according to its own characteristics, namely (i) Citta or consciousness (ii) Cetasika or mental factor (iii) Rūpa or material phenomena and (iv) Nibbāna or the state of freedom from attachment. In the chapter on matter of Abhidhammattha Saṅgaha, there are 28 types of rūpa. The Pāli word for matter, rūpa, is explained by derivation from the verb rūppatti, which means “to be deformed, disturbed, knocked about, oppressed, or broken”. The commentators maintain that “matter is so called

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because it undergoes and imposes alteration owing to adverse physical conditions such as cold and heat, and so on.” The Buddha himself, in explanation of the term “matter” or “material form” declares “And why monks, do you say material form (rūpa)? It is deformed (ruppati), therefore, it is called material form. Deformed by what? Deformed by cold, by heat, by hunger, by thirst, by flies, mosquitoes, wind, sunburn and creeping things.” (S.22: 79/iii, 86). The material nutriment is the nutritive essence of matter. It can be called the essential element of the aggregate of matter that is divided into the internal nutritive essence and the external nutritive essence. The external nutritive essence have to support the aggregate of matter continuously from the second or third week after the formation of the material groups because without the supply of the external nutritive essence, the tender internal nutritive essence would be consumed and the aggregate of matter would be destroyed by the strong internal heat. Depending on the nutrient factors of food, the mental and material aggregates, or the mental and material entity undergo death and dissolution twice a day. This should be observed, this is only a brief exposition.¹ The Buddha expounded a story to see the repulsive nature of nutriment with a discourse of a son’s flesh. Once, a family of husband, wife and a son travelled in a desert. After travelling a number of days, they ran out of their ration. They decided to eat their son’s flesh as their ration to continue their life. While eating the son’s flesh, they minded that this food of their son’s flesh, being loathsome for nine reasons, was not eaten by them for pleasure and enjoyment, nor for comeliness sake and for the body’s embellishment, but solely to enable them to cross the desert. The nine reasons of its loathsomeness are its being flesh of the same, that is, human species; the flesh of a relative, their own son; the flesh of a beloved son; (4) its being tender, raw, tasteless, unsalted, unsmoked. When partaking of their son’s flesh, so loathsome for those nine reason, they did not eat it with gusto and full of greed for it, but are it in a detached way, without lust and desire.² The Buddha rejects taṇhā (attachment). He denounced any factor leading to bhava (existence), which is the origin of cycle of birth and rebirth (samudaya saccā). Āhāra is the cause for life. It is delicious, pleasing in view and therefore eaten a lot. Thus, living beings attach on food. Actually, according to the Buddha’s Abhidhamma, it is one of the 28 types of element. It is just dhamma in Buddhist view. It is the cause of dukkha, called taṇhā. Sentient beings do not see the true dhamma because of ‘atta’, ‘self’, ‘I’, ‘my’ or ‘mine’. Venerable Ledi Sayadaw mentions about nutrition in his book, “A Manual of Nutriment”, as an essential factor to support the matter aggregates. He gave an example of nutrition with a lotus which being placed in water is fresh. He also proposes a method to analyze the three signs: impermanence, suffering and non-self on the material groups depending on the nutrient factors of food which then leads to the insight knowledge. Ashin Tiloka Bhante mentioned the medication nutrition which can prevent the old age, sickness and the way to change the appearance in his book, “The Compendium of Dipani”. Many other scholars have studied about āhāra; material as well as mental. There are few studies with an exclusive focus on the material nutriment. Therefore, this study will present only material nutriment, how it affects the other.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical background

Abhidhamma is unique in Buddhism. It is one of the Tipiṭaka Pāli texts which explain dhammas in detail and in an analytical way. Regarding the explanation of dhammas, it does so in more detail than Suttanta. That is why the text is called Abhidhamma. The Buddha is the author of Abhidhamma. In Theravāda Buddhist circle, it is widely accepted that Abhidhamma was taught to the deities. There was a controversy about the authorship. It has been said that Abhidhamma is not the teaching of the Buddha. Venerable Buddhaghosa, a new commentator, advocates that Abhidhamma is the Buddha's teaching. In Theravāda Buddhist circle, it is widely accepted that Abhidhamma was taught to the deity. In the seventh year after His enlightenment, the Buddha went to the world of the deity and taught Abhidhamma for three months. During those days the Buddha came down to this world for the purpose of having meals every morning as a human.

He preached Venerable Ashin Thāriputtā, one of his disciples, in brief again. Venerable Ashin Thāriputtā learnt and brought Abhidhamma to the human world. And then he taught his Bhikkhu pupils the doctrine. In this way, Abhidhamma was introduced to our world. It is so called Abhidhamma because of deeper meaning of Pāli than Suttanta and Vinaya. The Buddha mainly expounded the five components in Abhidhamma in various views, that is, consciousness or citta, mental factor or cetasika, matter or rūpa, Nibbāna and the concept or paññatti. The first four are called ultimate things or paramatthadhammas. It means that they cannot be changed by any condition.

Rūpa or materiality means physical phenomenon or matter or corporeality. Corporeality is subject to change. There are two kinds of corporeality:

- (1) The four primary elements or bhūtarūpa and
- (2) Dependent corporeality or upādārūpa.

2.2 Classification of āhāra in Abhidhamma

There are 28 types of rūpa in Abhidhamma. They are not found separately in nature. They are produced by the four causes in the form of tiny material groups called rūpakalāpa or "elementary groups of matter". All rūpa have origins in the four great elements of solid or earth element (pathavī), fluid or water element (āpo), heat or fire element (tejo), and motion or air element (vāyo). However, they all arise together in the smallest unit of matter, a suddhāṭṭhaka. Four more rūpa; colour (vaṇṇa), smell (gandha), taste (rasa), and the nutriment (ojā), derived from the great elements are in a suddhāṭṭhaka making it an octad.

Āhāra or nutrition in English is the nutritious essence contained in food. Nutriment of food means the powerful quality that chiefly nourishes and sustains the material and mental aggregates concerned. There are four kinds of nutriment: (1) Kabaḷikārāhāra, food or nutrition; (2) Phassāhāra, contact with sense object such as view, sound, and so on, phassacetassika; (3) Manosañcetanāhāra, volitional activity, cetanācetasika; and (4) Viññāṇāhāra, birth-linking consciousness. Kabaḷikārāhāra is solid food; the food taken by sentient beings, physical nutriment. The mental nutriment (ojā) is the nutritive essence of

matter. In Dhammasaṅgaṇī, material nutriment is defined by enumerating some types of solid material food. In the Pāli commentary, this is a definition by way of embodiment (Vatthuvaseṇa) of the material nutriment. In Dhammasaṅgaṇī itself, material nutriment is subsumed under the heading, dhammāyatana, the sphere of the objects of mind. This means that it cannot be known by any of sense-faculties other than the mind.²

The Pāli expression for edible food is kabaḷikārāhāra. It literally means “food made into a ball” or “morsel-made food” (kabaḷam karīyatīti kabaḷikāro). Āhāra - Āhārīyatītiāhāro: it is called nutrition as it leads into the mouth to chew and swallow.³ Ojālakkaḥaṇoāhāro – nutriment of food is the characteristics of nutritive essence (ojā), that is, the nutritional substance contained in gross edible food such as sweet, sour, salty, acrid, spicy and bitter. It has function of sustaining the physical body. It is manifested as fortifying of the body. Its proximate cause is gross edible food, which is the base of nutritive essence.⁴

According to Paṭṭhāna Pāli, material nutriment is the most significant cause of rūpa kaya (material groups) as material nutriment can support the material groups for a long period (for example, 10 years and so on). Material nutriment is the nutritive essence found in edible food, which is a conditioning state for this physical body. When food is ingested, its nutritive essence produce new matter born of nutriment and it also reinforces the material groups born of all four causes, keeping them strong and fresh so that they can continue to arise to succession. The internal nutriment contained in the material groups born of all four causes also serves as a condition by reinforcing the internal material phenomena coexisting with it in its own group and the material phenomena in the other groups situated in the body.⁵

Shwe U Daung (1966) said that Nutrition is the most important thing. Having right nutrition and freeing waste in the body can resist the change of seasons and the infections. If one has a good bowel movement, he cannot get headache. When eating unhealthy food together, although it is digested, dirt still clings to the intestinal wall. Thus, prolong accumulation of impurities can lead to impotence and degeneration. If there are ten people who suffer from malnutrition, there are only five people who suffer from other diseases.

According to Shwe U Daung, indigestion can shorten life by causing many illnesses such as asthma, abdominal pain. Digestion is the cure for disease. It causes longevity. Pācaka tejo or stomach fire has been present since birth. Eating fast, swallowing food without chewing or eating a full stomach can cause indigestion and disease.

Khan Buu Sayadaw (1968) stated that eating junk food, not eating on time, and eating too late can also cause illness. Meats such as beef, chicken, mutton; food made by sugar such as halawa, toast, sunflower sugar; food made by rice; fruits such as banana, cucumber, watermelon, green egg are hard to digest. They can lead to constipation, clogged blood vessels and changing lymphatic system. The same is true of fried food. Softening with water is easier to digest than roasting over a fire. Vegetable are digestible and strengthened the

²DhammasaṅgaṇīPāli.

³*Dictionary of Buddhist Terms*, Ministry of Religious Affairs, 2017.

⁴Bodhi, Bhikkhu. *A comprehensive manual of Abhidhama*.

⁵Bodhi, Bhikkhu. *A comprehensive manual of Abhidhama*.

body. The ripe fruits are the most digestible and the most strengthened. Although chili, pepper and ginger are digestible, they can cause heat and damage to the stomach, cause gonorrhoea, loss of vision, loss of teeth, colour changing of hairs, loss of hearing, headache and so on. Coffee and tea which are too hot can damage the stomach.

The author also said that nutriments rich in earth element (pathavī) are indigestible, cause hardness, go down air and circulation system and produce strength. Sweet foods are only earth element. Sweet taste of fruits is mostly due to pathavī and āpo. Nutriments rich in water element (āpo) are watery and fatty. They are sweet and wet and cause pleasant feeling. Those rich in air element (vāyo) are dry, light, pure and easily digestible. Fire element (tejo) rich nutriments cause heat, brightness of skin and decomposition. Space element (ākāsa) rich nutriments are also light and easily digestible. There are over smell (gandharūpa) in pathavī, over taste (rasa rūpa) in āpo, over colour (rūparūpa) in tejo and over sound (saddarūpa) in ākāsa. Nutriments rich in tejo and vāyo go up air and circulation system. Those rich in pathavī and āpo go down air and circulation system.

Repulsiveness or loathsomeness in food is one of the types of kammaṭṭhāna meditation which is a perception that looks disgusting in food (Saṅghaha). The edible is the sense of this meditation. There are 10 steps of taking this meditation. This meditation can be practice only in human realm. Meditation on repulsiveness or loathsomeness in food is ultimate reality or ultimate sense and therefore it cannot reach to the deep appanā bhāvanā. It is suitable only for those who are intellectual temperament because it is the sense of deep wisdom. By seeking and consumption of the nutriment factors of food, one can make efforts for their livelihood should also contemplate and reflect upon this allegory. Obedient, in accordance with this allegory, is possible only after the attainment of the path of Non-returning and the completion of the profound knowledge regarding the nutriment factors of food.⁶

Venerable Ledi Sayadaw explained the process of material changes because of swallowing āhāra with an example of lotus in water. When a lotus is put into the water, then fresh material qualities arise and old material qualities vanish. After swallowing food, one should try to see the continuous appearances of new material group as tiny bubbles. Everyone will have noticed how people become tired, fatigued and depressed when their stomachs are empty. One can slow see how sentient beings become energetic and refreshed as soon as they have eaten. This is the exposition of analytical knowledge of impermanence.⁷

2.3 Related researches

Kesten (2001), though a nutritionist, understood the ancient wisdom about food, including the Buddha's thought which has been undervalued and often even ignored in the field of nutrition. She has provided some new insights regarding nutrition by explaining how the inherent properties of food relate to a state of well-being: spiritually, emotionally, socially and physically. In her book, *The Healing Secrets of Food*, her concept is a holistic approach concerned with both the physical dimension of nutrition and the spiritual, emotional and

⁶AbhidhammaṭṭhaVibhāviniṬīkā.

⁷LediSayardaw. ĀhāraDīpanī.

social dimensions of what and how human beings eat. Her approach is very similar to that of Buddhism as she arrived at this concept by marrying the ancient food wisdom of major world religions and cultural traditions and the wisdom of modern science of nutrition.

Hunger is the greatest illness (Jighacchā paramā rogā). The Buddha, therefore, rightly says, “Monks, in giving a meal, a giver gives five things to the receiver. What five? He gives longevity, beauty, comfort, strength and power of understanding.” (AN III)⁸. While it is admitted that edible food is the main prerequisite for existence, it is also acknowledged as a principal source of temptation, as an object through which the sense of the taste develops into craving. Hence on numerous occasions, the Buddha advocated temperance with regard to food, although never to the extent of self-mortification.⁹ Although food is the main prerequisite for survival, good health and long life, if it is over-eaten it paves the way for temptation, craving, disease, ugliness and untimely death. Modern medical research has also confirmed that to eat and drink too much over-burdens the digestion, impedes the efficiency of the body and predisposes it to breakdown and diseases.

Nyanaponika Thera in his article entitled “The Four Nutriment of Life” has analyzed the four concepts of āhāra, namely kabaḷikārāhāra, phassāhāra, manosañcetanāhāra and viññānāhāra and also provides a full translation of the Puttamaṃsūpama sutta (S II 98). His observation neglects to investigate the āhāra as causality and āhāra meditation which merits a more in-depth investigation. The observation made by this study will help examine āhāra as causality and meditation of repulsiveness to fulfill the gap the existing knowledge.

3. Research Methodology

The purpose of research is to analyze the concept and practice of āhāra (food, nutrition) in Buddhism for the cultivation of physical and material development. This research aims to study āhāraja rūpa in relation to the aspects of repulsiveness in order to reduce kilesā in the attainment of Nibbāna (1) by identifying āhāraja rūpa that occur in the intakes of nutriment, (2) by outlining the repulsive nature of nutriment and (3) by recommending useful ways, based on Abhidhamma, in the contemplation of repulsiveness for reducing kilesā.

In this research, the principle method of investigation used is textual study. The approach is based on descriptive study by analyzing the data from the Buddhist scriptures and the books of famous Sayardaws. The sources will also be taken from the books of the senior Buddhism researchers and traditional and modern medical research.

Data collection and data analysis

Firstly, the first objective is to identify āhāraja rūpa that occur in the intakes of nutriment. According to the Suttanta method of explanation, edible food as nutriment sustains the physical body. According to the Abhidhamma method, edible food sustains the material phenomena of four fold origination in the body whereas edible food, as matter, is intermediate. Everything has an ability to produce an effect. This ability is even in a small

⁸E.hardy, P.T.S., (London, 1958), p. 42.

⁹SamyuttaNikāya, Ed. M. Leon Feer, P.T.S., (London, 1960), pt. I, p. 172.

flower. This ability is called nutritive essence. Every living being is still alive by consuming this ability. They live by eating vegetables, fruits, grains, fats and so on. There are vitamins, mineral, carbohydrates and fats in those. They are called nutritive essence in Pāḷi. The nutritive essence can be in everything as a dependent matter depending on the four great elements or mahā bhūta. That nutritive essence may produce therapeutic effects or side effects to living beings.

“Ojāsankhātoāhāroāhārasamuṭṭhānarūpaṃ
ajjhoharaṇakālīṭhānappattovasamuṭṭhāpeti.”

“Nutriment, known as nutritive essence, on reaching its stage of presence, produces material phenomenon originating from nutriment at the time it is swallowing.”

The internal nutritive essence, supported by the external produces material phenomenon at the moment of presence starting from the time it is swallowed. The nutritive essence that has reached presence in the material groups originating from nutriment produces a further pure octad, and the nutritive essence in that octad originates still a further octad. Thus the occurrence of octads links up ten or twelve times. The nutriment taken by a pregnant mother, pervading the body of the embryo, originates materiality in the child. Even nutriment smeared on the body is said to originate materiality. The nutritive essence in the internal group born of the other three causes also originates several occurrences of pure octads in succession. The nutriment taken on one day can support the body for as long as several days. The triple qualities of lightness, malleability and wieldiness arise from favourable climate conditions, a buoyant state of mind, and wholesome nutriment, while unfavourable climate, depressed states of mind, and unwholesome nutriment cause heaviness, rigidity, and unwieldiness in the physical body.

“Suddhāṭṭhakamlaḥutādi-ekādasakañcātidveāhārasamuṭṭhānakalāpa”

According to Paṭṭhāna, nutriment condition is a condition where a conditioning state relates to the conditioned states by maintaining them in existence and supporting their growth and development. This is compared to a ‘prop’, which supports an old house and prevents it from collapsing. Thus, the essential function of nutriment is supporting or reinforcing (upatthambhana). Āhāra is to be understood in the sense of ‘holding up strongly’, which means ‘causing to exist firmly’. That is to say a conditioning thing nourishes its related or conditioned things so as to enable them to endure long, to develop, to flourish and to thrive by means of support. Though the causal relation of food processes a producing power (janaka), the power of support (upatthambhana) is predominant here.

There are two kinds of food (āhāra): material and mental. Material food can produce and support only (internal) material qualities while immaterial or mental food can produce and support not only the mental states but some material qualities as well. Material nutriment is the nutritive essence found in external edible food, which is a conditioning state for this physical body. When food is ingested, its nutritive essence produces new matter born of nutriment, and it also reinforces the material groups born of all four causes, keeping them strong and fresh so that they can continue to arise in succession. The internal nutriment contained in the material groups born of four causes also serves as a condition by reinforcing the internal material phenomena coexisting with it in its own group and the material phenomena in the other groups situated in the body. Thus the material food is twofold –

‘external food’, which is nutritive essence contained in the edible food outside and ‘internal food’, which is nutritive essence containing in the material qualities born of all four causes, existing within the body.

For the second objective which is to outline the repulsive nature of nutriment, the word “perception” (saññā) is used for the dhamma with the characteristics of perceiving (sañjānana), as in the case of ‘perception of visible objects’, ‘perception of sound’, and so on; and it is used for serenity, as in the passage, ‘Perception of the bloated and perception of visible objects, have these one meaning or different meanings?’ (Cf III. 111) Here, however, it should be understood as the preliminary work for serenity; for it is the apprehending of the repulsive aspect in nutriment that is intended here by, ‘perception of repulsiveness in nutriment’. (Vism-mhṭ 334-335) The physical nutriment (kabaḷikārāhāra) nourishes the materiality of the octads that has nutritive essence as eight. When there is physical nutriment, there is attachment which brings peril. Therefore it can be illustrated the physical nutriment as the child’s flesh.

One who wants to develop that perception of repulsiveness in nutriment should learn the meditation subject and see that he has no uncertainty about even a single word of what he has learnt. Then he should go into solitary retreat and review repulsiveness in ten aspects in physical nutriment classified as what is eaten, drunk, chewed and tasted, that is to say, as to going, seeking, using, secretion, receptacle, what is uncooked (undigested), what is cooked (digested), fruit, outflow and smearing. As he reviews repulsiveness in this way in ten aspects and strikes at it with thought and applied thought, physical nutriment becomes evident to him in its repulsive aspect. He cultivates that sign again and again, develops and repeatedly practices it. As he does so, the hindrances are suppressed, and his mind is concentrated in access concentration, but without reaching absorption because of profundity of physical nutriment as a state with an individual essence. But perception is evident here in the apprehension of the repulsive aspect, which is why this meditation subject goes by the name of “perception of repulsiveness in nutriment”.¹⁰

Finally, the last objective is as follow. “Sabbesattāhāraṭṭhitikā”. All living beings live depending on nutrition. Food is one of the major needs of humans as well as of other beings. There is a saying, “We are what we eat”. “Jigajjhāparamārogā”, hunger is the worst illness. The Buddha held the view that the consumption of food is essential to eliminate the pain caused by hunger. According to Lim Hyeon-Sook, Hwang Sang-Ju and Park Sung Bae, people often tend to emphasize the importance of food for physical nourishment. The Buddhist tradition emphasizes food and offers guidelines for its cultivation and use. Buddhism teaches that our true ability to see nature is distorted by ignorance, which is caused by the cycle of death and rebirth. All suffering stems from this cycle. Therefore, ahimsa, the compassionate treatment of animals is essential to ending all suffering and ignorance. Buddhism focuses on the inherent integrity of foods and emphasizes ageless, invisible and meaningful nourishment for spiritual, emotional and social happiness. These concepts encompass the insights of Buddhist nutrition. The ancient Buddhists must have made each

¹⁰BhikkhuÑānamoli, *The Path of Purification*, the perception of the repulsiveness in nutriment.

moment of eating a meaningful experience and made time to create a conscious connection to the mystery of life inherent in both food and existence.

Eating must have been a celebration of life. The five moral precepts serve as basic guidelines for how to live with and think about food. The impermanence of food is a reflection on all life. Food provides a connection with the life energy inherent in the universe. Broader meditative awareness and repulsiveness of food enables the experience of its powerful effects. In Buddhism, the essence of life is described as “Dhamma” which is the teaching of the Buddha, universal truth, and the balanced way of nature. At the very moment of eating we can experience a merging with ultimate reality. Thus, it could be said that “Dhamma” is eating and eating is “Dhamma”.

“Kabaḷikāre bhikkhave āhāre pariññāte pañca kāmagaṇiko rāgopariññāto hoti, pañca kāmagaṇike rage pariññāte (ariyasāvaka) natthi taṃ saṃyojanaṃ, yena saṃyojanena saṃyutto ariyasāvako puna imaṃ lokam āgaccheyya.”

The one who has consummate knowledge of the nutriment factors of food conquers sensual lust by the same knowledge that leads him to the realm of Brahma setting him free from conception in the sixteen existences of the plane of desire. The consummate knowledge of the nutriment factors of food leads him, step by step in serial order, to direct knowledge (ñātapariññā), analytical knowledge (tīraṇapariññā), and dispelling knowledge (pahānapariññā), which means that he is the conqueror of those factors. Of these: -

1. Direct knowledge (ñāta pariññā), is accurate discernment.
2. Analytical knowledge (tīraṇa pariññā), is the discernment of the three characteristics of impermanence (anicca), suffering (dukkha) and non-self (anatta)
3. Dispelling knowledge (pahāna pariññā), is the final conquest whereby the craving for the nutriment factors of food comes to an end.

4. Findings and discussion

Finding on the concept of āhāra and discussion about meditation on repulsiveness of nature of nutrition will be explained in this section.

Under the first objective that is to identify āhāraja rūpa that occur in the intakes of nutriments, all nutritious matters are made up of the eight essential matters. Out of these, pathavī, tejo, āpo and vāyo are the main factors affecting on the internal material clusters (ajjhata rūpa kalāpa). According to Shwe U Daung and Khan Buu Sayardaw, proper nutriment should be taken for the proper healthy body. Abnormal digestion can lead to the shortening of life. As the āhāra is the cause for life, it is essential for the existence of living being. But it is only for the practice to the attainment of liberation. Therefore, the meditator should consume āhāra but not attach on it.

The second objective is to outline the repulsive nature of nutriment. Food is put in the mouth. The jaws function as a pestle. The teeth function as a mortar and so on. We have to contemplate on this when we eat. The main purpose of eating is to ingest nutrition and of one is eating improperly, indigestion can result which can in turn lead to discomfort and some

forms of disease. Eating is a repulsive process: chewing, mixing with spittle, transporting food down along the gastronomic canal, digestion in the stomach, absorbing nutrition and excreting waste products in the liver, gallbladder, spleen and small intestines, becoming faeces in the large intestines and rectum. It is repulsive when the waste materials are discharged and it is also extremely disgusting when half-digested materials are regurgitated from the stomach through the mouth.

While āhāra is being taken, it should mind the ten steps as mentioned in previous chapter. By doing so, it is disgusting to eat as it is hard to find in the rain or under the sun. When eaten, it is mixed with mucus in the mouth and is disgusting like a dog's gut. When swallowed, it mixes with saliva, blood and bile. When it reaches the stomach, the stomach is not cleansed, and thus it is as disgusting as the food in a dog food. In the stomach, it is destroyed by the digestive insects and the shape and the smell change disgusting. When it is well ground, it becomes a disgusting stool and urine. Actually, nutriment is not pleasant. It can cause various diseases. It is not enjoyable because it leaks from the nine dvāras. Even when it comes to the mouth, it should think about nutrition as follows: it depresses the mind, it distresses the mind, it causes sloth (thina) and torpor (middha), it causes remorse (kukkucca), it causes various ailments and fatigue, it kills life, it destroys the practice of Brahma Vihāra and it leads to the evil actions. Therefore, āhāra is disgusting. It should be consumed only for the balance of iriyapattha. It should be practiced like this while eating. By doing so, the meditator can attain the preliminary sign or learning sign (paṭikamma nimitta).

According to the Abhidhammattha Saṅgaha, there are two kinds of signs. When we memorized the disk containing food and when with our eyes closed, we can see the disk with food, then we are said to have got the first sign, the learning sign (paṭikamma nimitta). Later on we concentrate on that sign again and again so that it becomes very refined. At that time we are said to have got the second sign, the counterpart sign. Therefore the counterpart sign is much more refined than the learning sign. But there is no sign here. The sign here just means the object of meditation. The object of meditation here is nutriment. Although we call it "physical nutriment", actually it is the nutritive essence in the food. Nutritive essence in the food is paramattha, ultimate reality. It is one of the 28 material properties. But the aspect of repulsiveness is concept. Through contemplating on the aspect of repulsiveness, we take the real thing as object. That real thing is called sabhāva dhamma: dhamma that has individual essence. Dhammas that have individual essence are by nature difficult to understand, by nature profound. Since in this meditation the object is profound, there can be no jhāna. Samādhi reaches only the access stage. Thus we cannot get jhāna by practicing this kind of meditation. That is because the object belongs to the dhammas which have individual essence, or in other words the object belongs to paramattha, ultimate reality. Therefore, it is difficult to see. It is profound. The meditation cannot reach absorption. It can only reach the level of access.

Under the explanation of the third objective which is to recommend useful ways, based on Abhidhamma, in the contemplation of repulsiveness for reducing kilesā, in the nutriment edible food, desire is the danger. Having desire for the nutriment edible food, people, taking up various crafts for the sake of food, undergo many hardships. Like enduring cold, and so

on. Others, having become monks in this dispensation, seeking food in a way wrong for a monk, engage themselves in a physician's work, and so on and thereby incur blame in this very life; and hereafter they become hungry monk-ghosts as described in the *Lakkhaṇa Saṃyutta*: "with his robe burning and ablaze." For these reasons, it should be understood that desire is an element of danger in edible food.

People, as far as they give any thought to the humdrum act of eating, have taken very different attitudes towards food. However, all edible foods are delicious to eat; they are disgusting since they have been chewed in the mouth until they are excreted from the body. Thus, it should be considered as eating in order to live without craving for food. There are five contemplations while eating, according to the Buddha's instructions. These five contemplations are stated by Taylor and Francis in "International Journal of Buddhist Thought and Culture", February 2009, vol-12.

1. Firstly, reflect on why we eat. Understand that the food provided is a necessity and a healing agent for the body, mind and soul. Thus, food is only received and eaten for the purpose of realizing the Path for Enlightenment, that is, another means to reach enlightenment.
2. Secondly, consider where food comes from. Imagine the place where the food originated and the amount of work that was necessary to grow, transport, prepare and cook it, and then bring it to the table. Thus, we should reflect upon whether we deserve the food or not.
3. Thirdly, reflect on when we are eating. Since food is only to be received in order to practice the Path as a remedy to support the body, we have to sense how hungry we are in terms of the soul as well as the body. Buddhists who are alert to this contemplation eat meals only in the morning.

Buddhism recognizes that fact that wholesome edible food is essential for a healthy life. Indeed health is considered the greatest wealth (*ārogya parama lābha*). The relationship of mind and body is amply illustrated by the *Mettānisamsa Sutta* in *Aṅguttara Nikāya*. In general, it is widely accepted that a well-planned vegetarian diet is nutritionally sound and beneficial for the prevention and treatment of chronic diseases. The term "preventive diet" has been used recently to emphasize the possibility of avoiding food-related diseases. There are two major reasons that people adopt a vegetarian diet similar to the Buddhist view; the first is concern for animals and the second is to promote health. It speaks of the beneficial results experienced by a person who practices meditation on loving kindness.

There is a still deeper meaning attached to the concept of nutriment or *āhāra* in Buddhism. Food or sustenance (*āhāra*) is frequently synonymous with causal condition, as is clearly indicated by the following statement: from the arising of food is the arising of the body; from the ceasing of food is the ceasing of the body; and the way leading to the ceasing of the body is the Noble Eightfold Path (*Āhāra samudayo rūpa samudayo, āhāra nirodho rūpa nirodho. Ayam eva ariyo aṭṭhaṅgiko maggo rūpaniroghagāmini paṭipadā*). Hence, sustenance of the body has been substituted for the usual conflict of existence (*dukkha*), its origin (*samudaya*),

its cessation (nirodha) and the path (magga). This deep meaning attached to food in Buddhism is amply illustrated in the following verse:

“Yam kiñci dukkhaṃ samghoti sabbam taṃ āhārapaccayā
 Āhāraṇaṃ nirodhena natthi dukkhassa sambhavo”
 “All ill that comes is caused by sustenance,
 By ending sustenance there comes no ill”

It has been said by the Buddha, all things which are conditioned by the four conditioning elements are subject to decay. In spite of this warning, most people long for fresh existence, with the result that they become subject to land-slides and suffer agony; sometimes they are drowned in water, suffering agony; sometimes they are caught in storms and suffer agony; sometimes they get burnt by fire and suffer agony. All these agonies are the result of one’s own wish for fresh existence. We must face up to the consequences of our desire. We wish for it and get what we wished for, if we had not wished for fresh existence, we would not get it.

However, by simply saying that we do not want a fresh existence, our wish will not be fulfilled. We must acquire the necessary knowledge for which we need to meditate in the Vipassanā practice. When we have acquired this necessary knowledge, we will no more wish for a fresh existence; if we do not wish for it, fresh existence will not be forthcoming. If no fresh existence arises, we are freed from all sorts of suffering, we attain Nibbāna.

Conclusion

The aim of the research is to analyze the concept and practice of āhāra (food, nutrition) in Buddhism for the cultivation of physical and material development. Analytical study from the Buddhist Scripture and precious studies was used in this research. All the living beings in the world cannot grow apart from nutriment. But over-nutrition as well as under-nutrition can lead to the unusual reactions on the four great elements (mahābhūta) in the internal body (ijjhatta) and then affect the other material clusters. The Buddha advised while consuming edible food not for amusement or for enjoyment or for the sake of physical beauty and attractiveness, but only for the sake of crossing the desert of suffering. The āhārajarūpa we receive in the intake of food are impermanent, full of suffering and non-self. There is no ‘I’, ‘my’ or ‘mine’ in this body. Thus, it need to be mindful that taking nutriment is not to feel the sensual pleasure but just to stand the body healthily for the attainment of Enlightenment. This study outlined the repulsive nature of nutriment, the suffering beings experience as they earn a living for food, the process of eating and digestion in which the delicious, beautifully prepared food changes into putrid, smelly and repulsive mess. And this study also outlines the ways of contemplating repulsiveness to see the Four Noble Truths on nutrition and attainment of the Nibbāna.