



## **Research Report**

### **A Developmental Model of Teachings on Natural Laws (*Niyāma*) in Theravāda Buddhism**

**BY**

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**International Buddhist Studies College**

**Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University**

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**Research Project Funded**

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**Research Title:** A Developmental Model of Teachings on Natural Laws (*Niyāma*) in Theravāda Buddhism

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## ABSTRACT

This qualitative research work is with three objectives, namely:  
- (1) to explore the teachings on natural laws (*niyāma*) as appeared in Tipiṭaka and Commentaries, and to explore the teachings on natural laws (*niyāma*) from modern scholars' perspectives and to propose a developmental model of teachings on natural laws (*niyāma*) in Theravāda Buddhism. Data were collected from documentary and in-depth interviews with 5 key informants. Data were analyzed using content and narrative analysis.

The findings showed that while the worldly natural laws like gravity, motion, thermodynamics, electromagnetism, etc. help explain the universality of natural phenomena in the physical world. The Abhidhamma fivefold cosmic order even gives a greater outlook on life and worldview. This article aims to illustrate how Abhidhamma views the teachings on natural laws (*niyāma*). The natural laws bind together human beings, animals, plants, and all things in the world and the universe. They also reflect the coherence of beliefs, conditions, and levels of the mundane and the supramundane in a very clear and interesting way. This article will help readers to understand the laws of nature, including the different types of those laws, from the perspective of Abhidhamma, which is unique and distinctive.

## Acknowledgment

This research was funded by the Internal Buddhist Studies College, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, organized by the Buddhist Research Institute (BRI), which enabled the successful execution of this project. I would like to formally acknowledge the contributions of those who made this research project possible. First, I am grateful to my research team members: Ven. Asst. Prof. Dr. Phramaha Nantakorn Piyabhani, and Most Ven. Prof. Dr. Brahmawatcharatheeracharn, Rector of Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, is the most esteemed teacher of mine.

Additionally, I am particularly grateful to the key informants who shared their time and insight perspectives, as their contributions were essential to the integrity of this research. This project is a collective effort, and I am deeply thankful to everyone involved for their contributions and inspiration.



Assoc. Prof. Dr. Sanu Mahatthanadull,

Head of the Research Project

June 6, 2025

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## Abbreviations

### A) Abbreviations of Scriptures

In this research paper, the researcher has referred various sources of data both primary and secondary from Pali Canon (*Tipiṭaka*), Commentaries (*Atthakathās*), Sub-commentaries (*Tīkas*), Sub Sub-commentaries (*Anutīkas*), *Pakarana Visesas*, and so on. The system of abbreviations will be systematized as follows:

The Pali Canon, using the Pali texts series edited in Roman by the Pali Text Society (PTS). Its forms are to be quoted firstly an abbreviation of the scripture, then follow by volume and page number respectively. E.g., D.I.55. refers to *Dīghanikāya* of the *Suttanta Piṭaka*, *Sīlakkhandha-vagga*, page number 55. In case of scriptures with only one book, the volume will be omitted. For instances, Thīg. 216. refers to *Therī-Gāthā Khuddakanikāya* of the *Suttanta Piṭaka*, page number 216.

A.	: Aṅguttaranikāya (5 vols.)
AA.	: Aṅguttaranikāya Aṭṭhakathā (Manorathapūraṇī)
BV.	: Buddhavaṃsa (Khuddakanikāya)
Comp.	: Compendium of Philosophy (Abhidhammatthasaṅgaha)
D.	: Dīghanikāya (3 vols.)
DA.	: Dīghanikāya Aṭṭhakathā (Sumaṅgalavilāsinī)
Dh.	: Dhammapada (Khuddakanikāya)
It.	: Itivuttaka (Khuddakanikāya)
J.	: Jātaka
JA.	: Jātaka Aṭṭhavaṇṇanā Jataka
Kh.	: Khuddakapāṭha (Khuddakanikāya).
KvuA.	: Kathāvatthu Aṭṭhakathā (Paramatthadīpanī or Pañcapakaraṇa Atthakathā)
M.	: Majjhimanikāya (3 vols.)

Mvu.	: Mahāvastu
Nd <sup>2</sup> .	: Cullaniddesa (Khuddakanikāya)
Pug.	: Puggalapaññatti (Abhidhamma)
PvA.	: Petavatthu Aṭṭhakathā (Paramatthadīpanī IV)
S.	: Saṃyuttanikāya (5 vols.)
Sn.	: Suttanipāta (Khuddakanikāya)
Thīg.	: Therīgāthā (Khuddakanikāya)
Vbh.	: Vibhaṅga (Abhidhamma)
Vin.	: Vinaya Piṭaka (5 vols.)

## **B) List of Common Scholarly Abbreviations**

<b>Single</b>	<b>Plural</b>	<b>Full Word/Meaning</b>
Assoc. Prof.		associate professor
Asst. Prof.		assistant professor
B.E.		Buddhist Era
C.E.		Common Era or Current Era
ed.	eds.	editor (s), edited by
e.g.		example gratia, example
et al.		et alii/ and others
etc.		et cetera/ and others
Ibid.		Ibiden/ in the same page, i.e., the same source which has been cited in the immediately preceding note
i.e.		id est, that is to say\
MCU		Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University
NRCT		National Research Council of Thailand
n.d.		no date (of publication)
n.p.		no page (of publication)

no.	nos.	number (s)
Op.cit		opera citato/ as referred
p.	pp.	page (s)
Ph.D.		Doctor of Philosophy
Prof.		professor
PTS		Pali Text Society
tr.	trs.	translator (s), translation, translated by
Ven.		venerable
vol.	vols.	Volume (s) (Vol.II, but of 2 vols.)

# Chapter 1

## Introduction

### 1.1 Background and Significance of the Problems

Buddhism is a religion that aims to teach an understanding of the principles of natural law of causality and conditionality which leads to equilibrium between faith and wisdom based on the fully understanding of nature as they really are “In Dhamma, there is no creed and there are no dogmas” (Laurence-Khantipalo Mills, 1999: 1.).

There is convincing evidence from Theravada Buddhism indicating the development of the teaching of “natural laws” or *niyāma*, one of the vital concepts to an endeavor to augment our wisdom in understanding Dhamma and its surroundings. The concept of *niyāma* has been interpreted currently by modern Buddhist scholars such as Ven. Phra Brahmagunabhorn (P.A. Payutto) defined *niyāma* as “orderliness of the law of nature, such law has a common characteristic as causality and conditionality”. Furthermore, it can be divided into five according to specific characteristics or types of relationship, namely: - 1. *Utu-niyāma* 2. *Bīja-niyāma*; 3. *Citta-niyāma*; 4. *Kamma-niyāma*; 5. *Dhamma-niyāma*. The five types represent five natural laws concerning physical phenomenon, organic reproduction, working of mind, working of human beings, and dependent co-arising respectively (Phra Dhammapīṭaka (P.A. Payutto), 2546: 152-153). Such an explanation has been widely recognized among Buddhists’ enthusiasm.

However, when traced back to examine *niyāma* in the primary source of Tipiṭaka, the abovementioned five types of natural laws surprisingly cannot be found. The Exalted One did not subdivide into types but only just showed the essence, as the Buddha said in Paccaya Sutta and Uppādāya Sutta:

### Paccayasutta

*Katamo ca bhikkhave, paṭiccasamuppādo. jātipaccayā bhikkhave jarāmaraṇaṃ uppādā vā tathāgatānaṃ anuppādā vā tathāgatānaṃ ṭhitāva sā dhātu dhammaṭṭhitatā dhammaniyāmatā idappaccayatā (S.II. 25.)*

Whether there is an arising of Tathāgatas or no arising of Tathāgatas, that element still persists, the stableness of the Dhamma, the fixed course of the Dhamma (*dhamma-niyāmatā*), specific conditionality (S.II. 25.)

### Uppādāyasutta

*Uppādā vā bhikkhave tathāgatānaṃ anuppādā vā tathāgatānaṃ ṭhitāva sā dhātu dhammaṭṭhitatā dhammaniyāmatā sabbe saṅkhārā aniccā'ti . . . sabbe saṅkhārā dukkhā'ti . . . sabbe dhammā anattā'ti (A.I.285.)*

Monks, whether there be an appearance or non-appearance of Tathāgata, this causal law of nature<sup>1</sup>, this orderly fixing of things<sup>2</sup> prevails, namely, All phenomena are impermanent (*aniccā*). . . misery (*dukkhā*). . . not the self (*anattā*) (A.I.285.)

From the above suttas, it is clear that the Buddha speaks about the presence of *niyāma* in only two distinct contexts, namely: - 1. the dependent origination; 2. the three characteristics.

Therefore, the great Buddhist commentator, Bhadantācariya Buddhaghosa, provides a meaning to *niyāma* as “certainty” as well by classifying it into five categories named “the fivefold order” as appears in the

---

<sup>1</sup> Dhātu-dhammaṭṭhitatā = sabhāva-ṭṭhitatā. Comy. Cf. Pts. Of Contr. 387, “that which, as cause, establishes elements as effects.” – look in footnote no.3, **The Book of the Gradual Sayings**, Vol.I (Ones, Twos, Threes), Tr. F.L. Woodward, (Oxford: The Pali Text Society, 2000), p.264.

<sup>2</sup> Dhamma-niyāmatā, “that which, as cause, invariably fixes things in our minds, as effects,” Cf.S.ii, 25 (K.S.ii, 21), where a further term is added, idappaccayatā, “the relation of this to that.” - look in footnote no.4, **The Book of the Gradual Sayings**, Vol.I (Ones, Twos, Threes), Tr. F.L. Woodward, (Oxford: The Pali Text Society, 2000), p. 264.

commentarial scriptures of Sumaṅgalavilāsinī<sup>3</sup> and Aṭṭhasālinī<sup>4</sup> (DA.II.432; DhsA.272.):

1. Caloric Order (*Utu-niyāma*);
2. Germinal Order (*Bīja-niyāma*);
3. Psychical Order (*Citta-niyāma*);
4. Moral Order (*Kamma-niyāma*);
5. Natural Phenomenal Order (*Dhamma-niyāma*) respectively.

Bhadantācariya Buddhaghosa further describes interestingly in each category:

Utu-niyāma means when in the rural areas of some times, picking flowers and fruits by cutting just once, the wind blow or does not blow, strong or weak sunlight, raining or no rain, lotus bloom in the daytimes and close at night time. (DA.II.432);

The simultaneous blossoming, fructifying and sprouting of such and such trees at such and such seasons. (DhsA.272.).

Bhadantācariya Buddhaghosa has also expanded Dhamma-Niyāma into supernatural phenomenology that occurs in the life of Bodhisats<sup>5</sup> starting from the conception to the extinction of the Aggregates (Khandha-parinibbāna) that make ten thousand of the universes shaken:

The world-earthquake when Bodhisats proceed into the mother's womb. (DA.II.432.);

Bodhisats taking conception, being born of a mother, their final enlightenment, as Tathāgata turning the wheel of Dhamma, the surrender of life and utter passing away: - the world-earthquake at each. (DhsA.272.)

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<sup>3</sup> Commentary to the Dīghanikāya, a collection of long discourses.

<sup>4</sup> Commentary to the Dhammasaṅgaṇī, the first book of the Abhidhamma piṭaka.

<sup>5</sup> Bodhisats, Bodhisattva, or Bodhisatta means one who has resolved to attain enlightenment for the helping of his fellow beings.

The explanations of the concept of *niyāma* in this commentarial age are vastly different from the explanations stated in Tipitaka, in terms of normal natural phenomena in everyday life and supernatural phenomena of the Buddha's life. However, these dissimilarities influence and affect the description of the Buddhist concept of *niyāma* later.

Studying the exegetical scriptures lets us know the rationale why modern scholars interpret *niyāma* extensively in terms of numerical and detailed description. Contemporary scholars apply phenomena that occur in everyday life as their method, as Venerable Phra Debvedi described:

When one feels headaches, this may be caused by brain tumor disease (*bīja-niyāma*). May be caused by living in a place where insufficient air, or too hot (*utu-niyāma*). Or maybe caused by one's anxiety (*kamma-niyāma*). (Phra Debvedi (Payuddha Payutto), 2536: 106.)

Another example to show how Buddhist scholar propounds *niyāma* is the making use of the term “natural law” to explain each *niyāma* widely in modern times as C.A.F. Rhys Davids says “This order which Buddhism saw in the universe has its five branches namely:- *kamma-niyāma*, order of act-and-result; *utu-niyāma*, physical (inorganic) order; *bīja-niyāma*, order of germs, or seeds (physical organic order); *citta-niyāma*, order of mind, or conscious life; *dhamma-niyāma*, order of the norm, or the effort of nature to produce a perfect type”, (C.A.F. Rhys Davids, 1912: 119)

Likewise, another aspect to show the diversity of thought is that Ven. Ledi Sayadaw surprisingly mentioned the Eightfold Niyāma by adding three more distinct *niyāma* to his unique explanation. He explains:

*Buddha-Niyāma* as the order of the Buddha, which shows that the enlightenment of the Buddha was not coincidence. Meanwhile, *Sāvaka-Niyāma* in his aspect means the order of the disciples comprising the laymen, devas and Brahmās who have received deliverance from any one of the many Buddhas. Lastly, *Jāti-Niyāma* represents the order of birth (Ledi Sayadaw, 1978: 178, 247)

Having explained in this manner, it is evident that the modern Buddhist scholars explain *niyāma* by taking the core concept from the commentaries and then adding more detailed content later based on their autonomy. Some modern scholars' interpretations even more differed as described in Tipitaka and the exegetical scriptures. Thus, this evidence brought toward different perspective. That is to say, the development of *niyāma*'s explanation has a tendency or inclination to fluctuate in the future.

From these viewpoints, natural law can be understood as the inherent and universal principles that govern the functioning of the universe. These principles are not imposed by an external entity but are an intrinsic part of the nature of reality itself. Natural law operates impartially, affecting all beings and phenomena, and is not subject to personal preferences or biases. Learning natural laws enhances our understanding of the world, guiding decision-making and problem-solving. It fosters critical thinking, enabling us to anticipate outcomes and adapt to challenges. By understanding patterns of nature, we align our actions with universal principles, promoting sustainability, innovation, and a deeper connection to the environment.

From the above statements, the development of such teachings has interesting patterns to study in depth. The researcher is particularly interested in studying “A Developmental Model of Teachings on Natural Laws (*Niyāma*) in Theravāda Buddhism” to bridge academic understanding with real-world applications and guide effective decision-making. This enriches the body of knowledge across disciplines and supports continuous development in both scholarly and practical contexts.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problems Desired to Know**

The research starts with delineating the two researchable problems to be discussed. They are:

1.2.1 What are the teachings on natural laws (*niyāma*) as appeared in Tipitaka and Commentaries?

1.2.2 What are the teachings on natural laws (*niyāma*) from modern scholars' perspectives?



1.2.3 In what ways should a developmental model of teachings on natural laws (*niyāma*) in Theravāda Buddhism be proposed?

### 1.3 Objectives of the Research

1.3.1 To explore the teachings on natural laws (*niyāma*) as appeared in Tipiṭaka and Commentaries;

1.3.2 To explore the teachings on natural laws (*niyāma*) from modern scholars' perspectives and to propose a developmental model of teachings on natural laws (*niyāma*) in Theravāda Buddhism.

### 1.4 Scope of the Research

The scope of the research can be focused on the following three dimensions, namely: -1) Scope of Sources of Data; 2) Scope of Content; and 3) Scope of Key Informants. The details are as follows:

#### 1.4.1 Scope of Sources of Data

The researcher focuses on studying A Developmental Model of Teachings on Natural Laws (*Niyāma*) in Theravāda Buddhism by first exploring deeply the primary resource of the Pāli Canon (Tipiṭaka), Commentaries (Atthakathā), etc., respectively by using the Pāli Text Society's Pāli version and English translation series. Second, the secondary sources were explored by usage of later Buddhist works of literature such as Sub-commentaries (Tīkā), Sub-Subcommentaries (Anutīkā), and Special Texts (Pakaraṇa-visesa), textbooks, research works, Doctoral dissertations and thematic papers, journals, books, encyclopedias, dictionaries, newspapers, including online sources, etc. All these sources come from four languages, namely: Pāli, Sanskrit, English, and Thai.

Apart from this, sources of data also came from the in-depth interviews with six key informants from three countries<sup>6</sup> around the world.

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<sup>6</sup> See 1.4.3 Scope of Key Informants in this Chapter, and Topic 3.2 Key Informants in Chapter 3 for comparison.

### 1.4.2 Scope of Content

The researcher has established a framework based on the two objectives for the exploration: - 1) The teachings on natural laws (*niyāma*) as appeared in Tipiṭaka and Commentaries, and 2) The teachings on natural laws (*niyāma*) from modern scholars' perspectives and proposing a developmental model of teachings on natural laws (*niyāma*) in Theravāda Buddhism. Therefore, the research work focuses on the three areas as follows:

#### 1. The Teachings on Natural Laws (*Niyāma*) as Appeared in Tipiṭaka and Commentaries

To understand the important contents of the teachings on natural laws. The scope of the content under the first research objective is defined to study in three frameworks as follows: 1) Teachings on Natural Laws as they Appear in the Tipitaka, 2) Teachings on Natural Laws as they Appear in the Commentaries, and 3) Analysis of the Development of the Teachings on Natural Laws as Appeared in Tipiṭaka and Commentaries.

#### 2. The Teachings on Natural Laws (*Niyāma*) from Modern Scholars' Perspectives and Proposing a Developmental Model of Teachings on Natural Laws (*Niyāma*) in Theravāda Buddhism

The teachings of natural laws have been conveyed through various and different perspectives of modern scholars and have evolved from the era of the Tipitaka to the modern era. The study under this objective requires extensive basic knowledge of the data collection process from scriptures and in-depth interviews.

The scope of the content under the second research objective is defined to study in three frameworks as follows: 1) Teachings on Natural Laws by Scholars in Thailand, 2) Teachings on Natural Laws by International Scholars, and 3) Developmental Model of Teachings on Natural Laws.

### 1.4.3 Scope of Key Informants

This is qualitative research by analyzing data from documents and field studies relating to A Developmental Model of Teachings on Natural

Laws (*Niyāma*) in Theravāda Buddhism. According to the second objective, some data and information were gathered from textual collection, and in-depth interviews were carried out. The key informants for in-depth interviews were the experts and scholars from both local and international salient organizations. The purposive and snowball sampling techniques were used based on the significance of the studies with a total of 6 key informants who are monks, Buddhist scholars, and philosophers from the Theravāda tradition. There is a total of three countries<sup>7</sup> among the domestic and international organizations around the world, namely: - (1) Australia, (2) the United Kingdom, and (3) Thailand. The following name list exhibits all expert and scholar names who participated in this research:

### **AAA: In-depth Interviews**

1. Venerable Ajahn Brahmali,<sup>8</sup> Bodhinyana Buddhist Monastery, Australia;
2. Elizabeth June Harris,<sup>9</sup> University of Birmingham, United Kingdom;
3. Professor Dr. Soraj Hongladarom,<sup>10</sup> International Buddhist Studies College (IBSC), Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, Thailand.

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<sup>7</sup> See Topic 1.4.1 Scope of Sources of Data in this Chapter, and Topic 3.2 Key Informants in Chapter 3 for comparison.

<sup>8</sup> Venerable Ajahn Brahmali, Bodhinyana Buddhist Monastery, Australia. Fields of Expertise: Early Buddhism.

<sup>9</sup> Elizabeth June Harris, Honorary Senior Research Fellowship and Former Associate Professor in Religious Studies, the University of Birmingham, United Kingdom. Fields of Expertise: Theravada Buddhism; religion and conflict; interreligious studies.

<sup>10</sup> Professor Dr. Soraj Hongladarom, International Buddhist Studies College (IBSC), Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, Thailand. Fields of Expertise: Philosophy, Religion, Buddhism.

4. Prof. Dr. Somparn Promta,<sup>11</sup> Director of Center for the Study of Buddhist Philosophy, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University (MCU), Thailand.

5. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Suvin Raksat,<sup>12</sup> Mahamakut Buddhist University (MBU), Thailand.

6. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Praves Intongpan,<sup>13</sup> Department of Philosophy and Religion, Faculty of Humanities, Kasetsart University, Thailand.

### CCC: CVI Examiners

The in-depth interview forms' content validity<sup>14</sup> was examined with the Content Validity Index (CVI) by the 3 experts, namely: -

1. Venerable Asst. Prof. Dr. Phramaha Somphong Khunakaro, IBSC, MCU, Thailand;

2. Venerable Neminda, IBSC, MCU, Thailand;

3. Asst. Prof. Dr. Somboon Watana, College of Religious Studies, Religious Studies Academic Group, Mahidol University, Thailand.

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<sup>11</sup> Prof. Dr. Somparn Promta, Pāli Grade 8, Ph.D. (Chulalongkorn University), Director of Center for the Study of Buddhist Philosophy, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, Thailand. Fields of Expertise: Philosophy, Buddhist Philosophy.

<sup>12</sup> Assoc. Prof. Dr. Suvin Raksat, Mahamakut Buddhist University (MBU), Thailand. Fields of Expertise: Buddhist Studies, Theravāda Buddhism, Mahāyāna Buddhism.

<sup>13</sup> Assoc. Prof. Dr. Praves Intongpan, Department of Philosophy and Religion, Faculty of Humanities, Kasetsart University, Thailand. Fields of Expertise: Philosophy, Eastern Philosophy, Ethics, Buddhism, Buddhist Ethics.

<sup>14</sup> Animesh Hazari, **Research Methodology for Allied Health Professionals: A Comprehensive Guide to Thesis & Dissertation**, (Singapore: Springer, 2023), p. 77; Donna M. Mertens, **Research and Evaluation in Education and Psychology: Integrating Diversity with Quantitative, Qualitative, and Mixed Methods**, 6<sup>th</sup> ed., (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2024), p. 312; See CVR for comparison in Herman Aguinis, **Research Methodology: Best Practices for Rigorous, Credible, and Impactful Research**, (California: Sage, 2024), p. 147.

### **DDD: Locations for Field Studies**

The location of this research covered 6 Institutes and Organizations:

1. Bodhinyana Buddhist Monastery, Australia;
2. University of Birmingham, United Kingdom;
3. International Buddhist Studies College (IBSC), MCU, Thailand;
4. Center for the Study of Buddhist Philosophy, MCU, Thailand;
5. Mahamakut Buddhist University (MBU), Thailand;
6. Department of Philosophy and Religion, Faculty of Humanities, Kasetsart University, Thailand.

## **1.5 Definition of the Terms Used in the Research**

In this research, technical terms related to the study were frequently mentioned. To avoid some misunderstanding among them and to make the most accurate benefit to the study, the key definitions are thus given as follows:

**1.5.1 The Teachings on Natural Laws** refer to the teachings of fundamental principles that govern the functioning of the universe and all phenomena within it. These principles are often described in terms of natural laws or truths or *niyāma* in Pali that underlie the nature of existence. They are also known as the Five Niyāmas: 1. *utu-niyāma* 2. *bīja-niyāma*; 3. *citta-niyāma*; 4. *kamma-niyāma*; 5. *dhamma-niyāma*.

**1.5.2 Tipiṭaka** refers to the Pali Canon, the canonical collection of scriptures in Theravada Buddhism consisting of Vinaya Piṭaka, Suttanta Piṭaka, and Abhidhamma Piṭaka, emphasizing the teachings related to natural law or *niyāma*.

**1.5.3 Commentaries** refer to the commentaries to the Pali Canon (*atthakathā*), consisting of three main scriptures, namely: - 1. Sumaṅgalavilāsinī, commentary to Dīghanikāya; 2. The Expositor (Aṭṭhasālinī), commentary to Dhammasaṅgaṇī; 3. The Dispeller of Delusion (Sammohavinodanī), commentary to Vibhaṅga, including other commentaries and literature, emphasizing the teachings related to natural law or *niyāma*.

**1.5.4 Modern Scholars** refer to the perspectives of four contemporary Buddhist scholars and philosophers from the textual analysis, namely: - 1. Phra Brahmaganabhorn (P.A. Payutto); 2. Prof. Dr. Somparn Promta; 3. C.A.F. Rhys Davids; 4. Ven. Ledi Sayadaw, including the views of key informants as well.

**1.5.5 A Developmental Model** refers to a new model that has been created and proposed by the researcher explaining the development of teachings on natural laws (*niyāma*) in Theravāda Buddhism from the Tipiṭaka period to the modern era.

**1.5.6 Theravāda Buddhism** refers to the orthodox school of Buddhism which is based on the Tipiṭaka or Pali Canon, emphasizing the teachings related to natural law or *niyāma* in Pali tradition.

## **1.6 Advantages Expected to Obtain from the Research**

This research paper contributes to the advantages as follows:

1.6.1 Acquisition of the Body of knowledge about the teachings on natural laws (*niyāma*) appeared in Tipiṭaka and Commentaries.

1.6.2 Acquisition of the Body of knowledge about the teachings on natural laws (*niyāma*) from modern scholars' perspectives.

1.6.3 Obtaining a developmental model of teachings on natural laws (*niyāma*) in Theravāda Buddhism.

1.6.4 Bridging academic understanding with real-world applications and guiding effective decision-making.

1.6.5 Enriching the body of knowledge across disciplines supports continuous development in both scholarly and practical contexts.

## Chapter 2

### Concepts, Theories, and Related Research Works

#### 2.1 The Concept of Natural Laws (*Niyāma*)

##### 2.1.1 Multiple Interpretations of the Term Nature

Buddhism in the universe of the virtues of any action would lead toward responsibility for the consequences according to the goodness law of nature. Therewith, not only meaning but types of *niyāma* are described thoroughly as “This order which Buddhism saw in the universe was called in Pali *niyāma*, that is, going-on, process. In it five branches, strands, phases were discerned: - *kamma-niyāma*, order of act-and-result; *utu-niyāma*, physical (inorganic) order; *bīja-niyāma*, order of germs, or seeds (physical organic order); *citta-niyāma*, order of mind, or conscious life; *dhamma-niyāma*, order of the norm, or the effort of nature to produce a perfect type”

##### 2.1.2 Meanings of Natural Laws

The Fivefold *Niyāma* serves as a framework to expound the phenomena of a rapidly degraded environment. Each facet of the degradation is a natural linking network, with the main cause from human beings. Starting from the world’s overall heat degradation (*utu-niyāma*); degradation of heredity caused by human’s intelligent innovation of genetic engineering in crops and animals (*bīja-niyāma*); mental degradation that has been overlooked in this era (*citta-niyāma*); moral or action degradation to reduce humans to be a lower-human (*kamma-niyāma*); natural and environmental degradation in which people live their lives (*dhamma-niyāma*).<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Mahatthanadull, Sanu. “**Buddhist Response to Environmental Degradation under Conceptual Framework of the Five *Niyāma***”. Proceedings Document. The 1<sup>st</sup> MCU International Academic Conference (MIAC) on Buddhism and World Crisis. Graduate School. May 29. 2015. BKK: MCU Printing: 65-78.

**C.A.F. Rhys Davids** has underlined the significance of *kamma-niyāma* by its results in a book named “Buddhism: A Study of the Buddhist Norm”<sup>2</sup>

From the book, it can be inferred that Buddhism in the universe of the virtues of any action would lead toward responsibility for the consequences according to the goodness law of nature. Therewith, not only meaning but types of *niyāma* are described thoroughly as “This order which Buddhism saw in the universe was called in Pali *niyāma*, that is, going-on, process. In it five branches, strands, phases were discerned: - *kamma-niyāma*, order of act-and-result; *utu-niyāma*, physical (inorganic) order; *bīja-niyāma*, order of germs, or seeds (physical organic order); *citta-niyāma*, order of mind, or conscious life; *dhamma-niyāma*, order of the norm, or the effort of nature to produce a perfect type”

**Ledi Sayadaw** has stated types of *niyāma* in a book named “Manuals of Buddhism”<sup>3</sup>

From the mentioned book, he created the eightfold unconventional types of *niyāma*. Such types are based on the commentary’s explanation. Then three more special types, namely: *Buddha-niyāma*; *Sāvaka-niyāma*; *Jāti-niyāma*, were added. Systematizing in this way makes his teaching very remarkable. For example, *Jāti-niyāma* were explained as “It is the order of precepts, etc., of the disciples, comprising the laymen, devas and Brahmās who have received deliverance from any one of the many Buddhas, surpassing in number the sands of the river Ganges, who have appeared in the cycles of aeons that have no knowable beginning”

**Phra Debvedi (Payuddha Payutto)** wrote about the five *niyāma* as natural law in a book named “*Buddhadhamma: Natural Laws and Values for Life*”<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> C.A.F. Rhys Davids, **Buddhism: A Study of the Buddhist Norm**, (London: Williams and Norgate, 1912), pp. 118-119.

<sup>3</sup> Ledi Sayadaw, **Manuals of Buddhism**, (Bangkok: Mahamakut Press, 1978), p. 247.

<sup>4</sup> Phra Debvedi (Payuddha Payutto), **Buddhadhamma: Natural Laws and Values for Life**, Tr. by Grant A. Olson, (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995), p. 90.



The book described five types of natural law dealing with the three common characteristics: the state of impermanence, instability, arising, and fading away is called *aniccatā*. Being subject to the pressures of arising and fading away, experiencing pressures from latent conflict, and having a feeling of insufficiency is called *dukkhatā*. Being without a real self is called *anattatā*. The principle of dependent origination allows us to see these three conditions in all things, and it explains the relationship of interconnected factors in all things and the forms that those factors may take in nature.

Five various natural laws can be discerned, e.g., *dhamma-niyāma*, the law concerning relationships between cause and effect; *utu-niyāma*, natural law concerning physical inorganic matter, etc., all of which have a special relationship with *sukkhā* and *dukkhā* in life and also must have a direct bearing on a person's ethics or conduct.

**Phra Brahmagunabhorn (P.A. Payutto)** has mentioned how suffering and natural law are related in a book named “A Brief Introduction to the *Buddha-Dhamma*.”<sup>5</sup>

His book pointed out how natural law is concerned with human beings' suffering. He says the natural law of cause and effect is the truth of all things. If one knows this law, suffering cannot overwhelm one anymore. There is nothing that could cause one problem because one's wisdom knows and is therefore able to solve problems in accordance with the law of nature of cause and effect. It doesn't matter what one may encounter: there will be no suffering.

**Phra Debvedi (Payuddha Payutto)** has stated the extent of the science of the Five Niyāma in the book named “Buddhism as the Foundation of Science”<sup>6</sup>

From the work, it can be inferred that Science believes in *Dhamma-niyāma*. By limiting the scope of the study is limited to *Utu-niyāma* and *Bīja-niyāma*. Meanwhile, practical Buddhism is highlighted

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<sup>5</sup> Phra Brahmagunabhorn (P.A. Payutto), **A Brief Introduction to the Buddha-Dhamma**, Tr. by Bhikkhu Nirodho, Martin Seeger, (Bangkok: Phli-dhamma Publishing, B.E. 2554), p. 13.

<sup>6</sup> Phra Debsobhon (Prayoon Dhammacitto), **Buddhism as the Foundation of Science**, (Thai edition), 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., (Bangkok: Mahachulalongkorn University Press, B.E.2536), p. 103.

especially in the *Kamma-niyāma*. Although Abhidhamma study focuses on *Citta-niyāma* to take action related to *Kamma-niyāma* and *Dhamma-niyāma*.

**Somparn Promta** mentioned various types of natural law in a book named “Buddhism and Science”<sup>7</sup>

From the book, his method of explanation about *niyāma* is based on commentaries. This makes the number of types five. Moreover, he gives an explanation of each law as follows: 1. Physical Law means the law of nature relating to temperature and weather, or environmental phenomenology of earth, water, wind, sky; 2. Biological Law means the law of nature relating to reproduction and heredity; 3. Psychological Law means the law of nature relating to the working mechanism of the mind. It regulates how constituents of the mind affect behavior and the function of the mind; 4. Moral Law means the law of nature about the behavior of human beings. This ethical system is the process of *kamma*’s consequence, which consists of two sides: good action and bad action; and 5. Causal Law means the law of nature about relationships, cause and effect, or conditionality of all things.

**Banjob Bannaruji** mentioned the meaning of *Dhamma-niyāma* in a book named “*Paṭiccasamuppāda: Dhamma Process for Understanding Life*”<sup>8</sup>

From the book, it can be inferred that *dhammaniyāmatā* or *dhammaniyāma* means the certainty of ordinary, the state of certainty of Dhamma, the certainty of conditionality, e.g., depending on ignorance, arises mental formations.

**Phra Dhammavisuddhikavi (Picit Dhitavañño)** has mentioned *Kamma-niyāma* in a book named “Law of Kamma”<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> Somparn Promta, **Buddhism and Sciences**, (Thai Edition), 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., (Bangkok: Chulalongkorn University Press, B.E. 2540), pp. 70-72.

<sup>8</sup> Banjob Bannaruji, ***Paṭiccasamuppāda: Dhamma Process for Understanding Life*** (Thai Edition), 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., (Bangkok: Pornboon Printing, B.E. 2538), pp. 4-7.

<sup>9</sup> Phra Dhammavisuddhikavi (Picit Dhitavañño), **Law of Kamma**, (Thai Edition), 8<sup>th</sup> ed., (Bangkok: Mahamakut Buddhist University, B.E. 2547), pp. 42-43.

The book gives an explanation that having *kamma* as a tribe means we have a partisan action. A good fraternity brings good and prosperity to us. In contrast, bad fraternity leads us to evil and degradation. The seeds of action that we do, whether good or bad, will grow and result from their origin. If we do a good thing, we are given a great inheritance. If we were evil, we were poor breeding. Suppose we establish the heredity of cursing. We were cursed by heredity already. But if we build the heredity of donation. This gene also makes us rich. It depends on the breed of action whether good or bad. This kind of action is a species of partisan races. The seed we sow or did.

## **2.2 Theories of Model Development**

Theories of model development explain how conceptual models are created to represent real-world systems. Key theories include the Descriptive Theory, which focuses on how models are actually developed; Prescriptive Theory, which offers guidelines for how models should be developed; and Cognitive Theory, examining how human cognition influences modeling. Models evolve through abstraction, simplification, and iteration. Effective development involves understanding system components, relationships, and goals, ensuring the model accurately represents essential dynamics while remaining usable and adaptable for decision-making or simulation. Theories of model development explain how conceptual models represent real-world systems. Descriptive theories describe actual practices, while prescriptive theories guide ideal approaches. Cognitive theories explore how human thought influences modeling. Models are developed through abstraction, simplification, iteration, and validation. They must balance accuracy and usability, capturing essential components, relationships, and system behaviors.

## **2.3 Related Research Works**

Research works related to this study are under the two objectives set. The researcher therefore determined the presentation topics to be two: 1. Research Works Related to the Teachings on Natural Laws (*Niyāma*) as Appeared in the Tipiṭaka and Commentaries, and 2. Research Works

Related to the Teachings on Natural Laws (*Niyāma*) from Modern Scholars' Perspectives and A Developmental Model of Teachings on Natural Laws (*Niyāma*) in Theravāda Buddhism. The details are as follows:

### **2.3.1 Research Works Related to the Teachings on Natural Laws (*Niyāma*) as Appeared in Tipiṭaka and Commentaries**

1. **Ven. Nyarnait Thara** studied the meanings of *Niyāma* that appeared in Theravada Tipiṭaka and Commentaries in his Ph.D. Thematic Paper “The Concept of the Five *Niyāma* in Theravāda Buddhism”.

From the study, it can be summarized that *Niyāma* in Suttanta Piṭaka refers to “restraint, constraint, restriction, inevitability, assurance, necessity”. It is occasionally found as “being fixed, a fixed course”, or “fixity”. As in Commentaries, it was translated as “certainty”.

2. **Phramaha Rangsang Thammaraso (Saengseesom)** has mentioned the relationship between Five *Niyāma* and *Kamma-niyāma* in his M.A. Thesis (Buddhist Studies) entitled “Relation of Kamma and Reincarnation Influencing on the Recall of Previous Life”<sup>10</sup>

From the thesis, it can be concluded that *Kamma-niyāma* relates to the Five *Niyāma* as being one of the five *Niyāma* which were divided from *Dhamma-niyāma*. The purpose of the classification of *Niyāma* as Fives is to simplify the principle to explain the cause and effect of nature for easier understanding among villagers and common people.

3. **Phramaha Sompong Candavamso (Yungram)** has mentioned human life under the law of nature in his **M.A. Thesis (Philosophy)** entitled “Human Nature in Theravada Buddhist Philosophy and Aristotelian Philosophy: A Comparative Study.”<sup>11</sup>

From the thesis, it can be concluded that from the viewpoint of Theravada Buddhist Philosophy, human social nature has both mundane

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<sup>10</sup> Phramaha Rangsang Thammaraso (Saengseesom), “Relation of Kamma and Reincarnation Influencing on the Recall of Previous Life”, (Thai Edition), **M.A. Thesis (Buddhist Studies)**, (Graduate School: Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya, 2550), pp. 66.

<sup>11</sup> Phramaha Sompong Candavamso (Yungram), “Human Nature in Theravada Buddhist Philosophy and Aristotelian Philosophy: A Comparative Study”, (Thai Edition), **M.A. Thesis (Philosophy)**, (Graduate School: Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, 2547), pp. iii-iv.

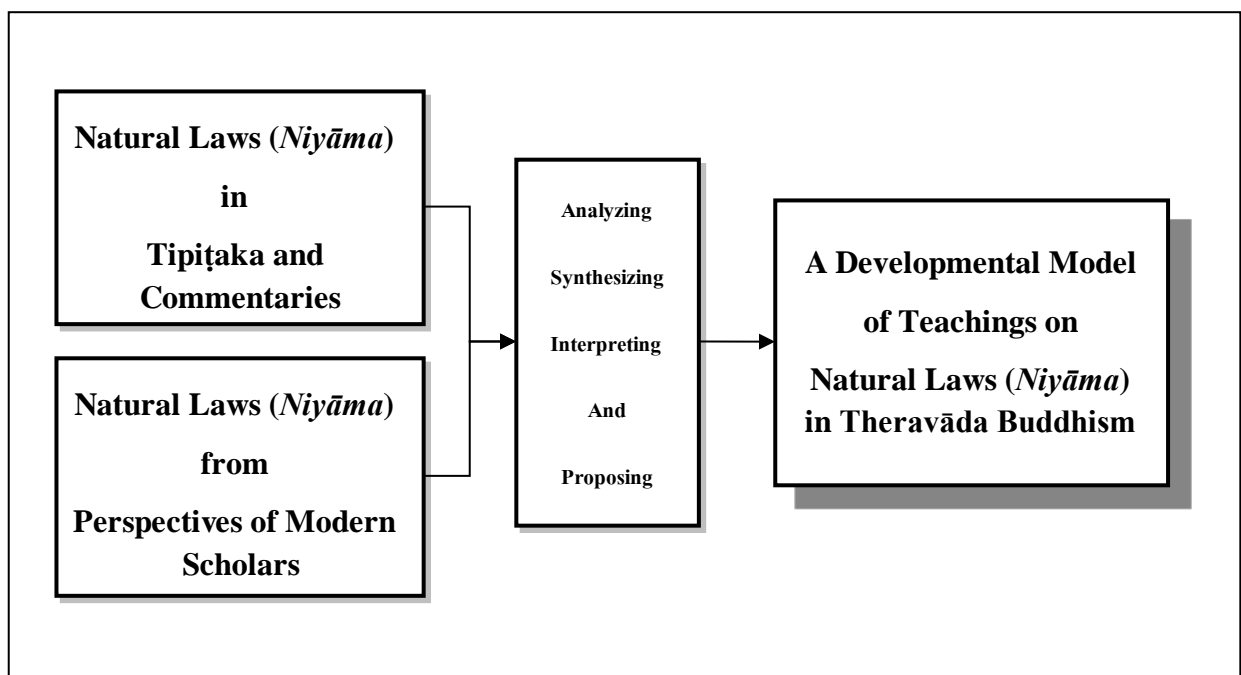
and supramundane levels. Consciousness is by nature momentary (*khanika*). It arises, sustains, and perishes in every moment. Consciousness is subdivided into three sub-moments, namely, genesis (*uppāda*), development (*thīti*), and dissolution (*bhaṅga*). Besides, it is bound to the natural law or law of the Dhamma (*Dhamma-niyāma*).

### **2.3.2 Research Works Related to the Teachings on Natural Laws (*Niyāma*) from Modern Scholars' Perspectives and A Developmental Model of Teachings on Natural Laws (*Niyāma*) in Theravāda Buddhism**

From the above review of related literature and research works, it can be seen that there is still no direct research on “A Developmental Model of Teachings on Natural Laws (*Niyāma*) in Theravāda Buddhism”. Thus, the researcher should study further on this matter scrupulously to promote a clearer understanding of society and the world.

The conceptual framework of the research exhibits the significant research process in terms of input, process, and output as follows:

**Chart 1: Conceptual Framework**



## Chapter 3

### Research Methodology

In the study of this research “A Developmental Model of Teachings on Natural Laws (*Niyāma*) in Theravāda Buddhism”, the following two objectives are to be examined, namely: - (1) to explore the teachings on natural laws (*niyāma*) as appeared in Tipiṭaka and Commentaries, and (2) to explore the teachings on natural laws (*niyāma*) from modern scholars’ perspectives and to propose a developmental model of teachings on natural laws (*niyāma*) in Theravāda Buddhism.

The research methodology can be presented in five areas, namely: (1) Format of the Research, (2) Key Informants, (3) Research Tools, (4) Collection of Data, and (5) Data Analysis. Details for each area are as follows:

#### 3.1 Format of the Research

This is qualitative research studying documents and field studies. The methodology of the research was established by employing research materials and instruments. The research findings create a body of knowledge on a developmental model of teachings on natural laws (*niyāma*) in Theravāda Buddhism.

#### 3.2 Key Informants

To obtain insightful answers covering the issues that the researcher sought in the research questions, the key informants were a group of knowledgeable people who had skills in the concept of natural law in Theravada Buddhism and also had the potential to analyze the development of the teachings on natural laws (*niyāma*) in Theravāda Buddhism.

The purposive and snowball sampling techniques were used based on the significance of the studies to select appropriate key

informants. They are a group of six monks, Buddhist scholars, and philosophers from both regional and international organizations consisting of three countries, namely: (1) Australia, (2) the United Kingdom, and (3) Thailand. Name lists are given as follows:

1. Venerable Ajahn Brahmalī,<sup>1</sup> Bodhinyana Buddhist Monastery, Australia;
2. Elizabeth June Harris,<sup>2</sup> University of Birmingham, United Kingdom;
3. Professor Dr. Soraj Hongladarom,<sup>3</sup> International Buddhist Studies College (IBSC), Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, Thailand.
4. Prof. Dr. Somparn Promta,<sup>4</sup> Director of Center for the Study of Buddhist Philosophy, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University (MCU), Thailand.
5. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Suvin Raksat,<sup>5</sup> Mahamakut Buddhist University (MBU), Thailand.
6. Assoc. Prof. Dr. Praves Intongpan,<sup>6</sup> Department of Philosophy and Religion, Faculty of Humanities, Kasetsart University, Thailand.

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<sup>1</sup> Venerable Ajahn Brahmalī, Bodhinyana Buddhist Monastery, Australia. Fields of Expertise: Early Buddhism.

<sup>2</sup> Elizabeth June Harris, Honorary Senior Research Fellowship and Former Associate Professor in Religious Studies, the University of Birmingham, United Kingdom. Fields of Expertise: Theravada Buddhism; religion and conflict; interreligious studies.

<sup>3</sup> Professor Dr. Soraj Hongladarom, International Buddhist Studies College (IBSC), Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, Thailand. Fields of Expertise: Philosophy, Religion, Buddhism.

<sup>4</sup> Prof. Dr. Somparn Promta, Pāli Grade 8, Ph.D. (Chulalongkorn University), Director of Center for the Study of Buddhist Philosophy, Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, Thailand. Fields of Expertise: Philosophy, Buddhist Philosophy.

<sup>5</sup> Assoc. Prof. Dr. Suvin Raksat, Mahamakut Buddhist University (MBU), Thailand. Fields of Expertise: Buddhist Studies, Theravāda Buddhism, Mahāyāna Buddhism.

### 3.3 Research Instruments

The research instruments enable the researcher to explore the concept of natural laws and manage the data and information. The essential tools employed in this research consist of in-depth interview forms with technological devices in data collection and analysis, such as systematic analysis of related equipment.

Therefore, the research tools that have been chosen and employed to be suitable for the types of research are as follows:

1. In-depth interview forms,
2. Laptop,
3. The internet,
4. Photographs,
5. Camera,
6. Audio recordings,
7. Etc.

The abovementioned in-depth interview forms consisted of five questions, mainly based on the objectives of the research as well as the research's problems. They are as follows:

**Question 1:** What does “Natural Laws” mean in Buddhism?

**Question 2:** Following on from the previous question, do you think the natural laws of Buddhism are different from the worldly natural laws? How?

**Question 3:** In your opinion, what goals in Buddhism can be achieved from the teaching on natural laws (*niyāma*)?

**Question 4:** How can we apply Buddhist teachings on natural laws (*niyāma*) to our lives? (Please answer one by one.)

1. Caloric Order (*Utu-niyāma*);
2. Germinal Order (*Bīja-niyāma*);

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<sup>6</sup> Assoc. Prof. Dr. Praves Intongpan, Department of Philosophy and Religion, Faculty of Humanities, Kasetsart University, Thailand. Fields of Expertise: Philosophy, Eastern Philosophy, Ethics, Buddhism, Buddhist Ethics.



3. Psychological Order (*Citta-niyāma*);
4. Moral Order (*Kamma-niyāma*);
5. Natural Phenomenal Order (*Dhamma-niyāma*).

**Question 5:** What do you think of the developmental model of teachings on natural laws (*niyāma*) in Theravāda Buddhism?

The above in-depth interview forms' content validity<sup>7</sup> was examined with the Content Validity Index (CVI) by the 3 experts, namely: -

1. Venerable Asst. Prof. Dr. Phramaha Somphong Khunakaro, IBSC, MCU, Thailand;
2. Venerable Neminda, IBSC, MCU, Thailand;
3. Asst. Prof. Dr. Somboon Watana, College of Religious Studies, Religious Studies Academic Group, Mahidol University, Thailand.

### 3.4 Collection of Data

This research is a qualitative study using the qualitative method, starting by collecting data from the primary source of Pali Canon (*Tipiṭaka*), Commentaries (*atthakathā*), Sub-commentaries (*tīkā*s), Sub-sub-commentaries (*anutīkā*s), etc., respectively by using the Pali Text Society's Pali version and English translation series. The data collection will also be gathered from secondary sources of Buddhist textbooks, books, dictionaries, encyclopedias, Ph.D. thematic papers, Ph.D. dissertations, research works, and articles, including online sources, etc., in Pali, English, and Thai. In addition, in-depth interviews were employed to collect the information from key informants stated in Chapter 1, Topic

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<sup>7</sup> Animesh Hazari, **Research Methodology for Allied Health Professionals: A Comprehensive Guide to Thesis & Dissertation**, (Singapore: Springer, 2023), p. 77; Donna M. Mertens, **Research and Evaluation in Education and Psychology: Integrating Diversity with Quantitative, Qualitative, and Mixed Methods**, 6<sup>th</sup> ed., (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 2024), p. 312; See CVR for comparison in Herman Aguinis, **Research Methodology: Best Practices for Rigorous, Credible, and Impactful Research**, (California: Sage, 2024), p. 147.

1.4.3 Scope of Key Informants. Such information was used in Chapter 4, where the analytical study is carried out.

However, the process of collecting, synthesizing, and utilizing the data may be understood depending on the response to each objective in the following ways:

### **3.4.1 Data Collection for the First Objective**

Exploring the teachings on natural laws (*niyāma*) as appeared in Tipiṭaka and Commentaries:

The researcher collected data from the primary source, especially the suttas from the Tipitaka, and the secondary source from various commentaries, such as the Mahāpadāna Sutta Atthakathā and Dhammasaṅgaṇī Atthakathā, a commentary to Abhidhammapitaka Dhammasaṅgaṇī, etc.

### **3.4.2 Data Collection for the Second Objective**

Exploring the teachings on natural laws (*niyāma*) from modern scholars' perspectives and proposing a developmental model of teachings on natural laws (*niyāma*) in Theravāda Buddhism.

This study was done by data collection from secondary sources, mostly from modern scholars' perspectives regarding the teachings on natural laws (*niyāma*). The information and ideas obtained from the in-depth interview were also gathered and analyzed in this step. Nevertheless, the information obtained from key informants was used only for the 2<sup>nd</sup> objective.

## **3.5 Data Analysis**

For data analysis, this research used two methods: (1) content analysis, and (2) descriptive analysis. First, content analysis was used to systematically examine textual data from the texts, and auditory data from the interviews. The researcher identified patterns, themes, or frequencies in content to draw inferences. Second, descriptive analysis was used to summarize and describe the main features of a dataset. It helped identify patterns, trends, and relationships within the data without drawing conclusions or making predictions.

At the end, the research may be concluded using objectives as a determinant which resulting in two steps as follows:

**Step 1:** The teachings on natural laws (*niyāma*) as appeared in Tipiṭaka and Commentaries

- 1.1 Issues for Search:**
- 1) The Teachings on Natural Laws (*Niyāma*) in Tipiṭaka
  - 2) The Teachings on Natural Laws (*Niyāma*) in Commentaries
  - 3) Developmental Analysis of the Teachings on Natural Laws (*Niyāma*) as Appeared in Tipiṭaka and Commentaries

**1.2 Method:** Documentary study

**1.3 Data Sources:** Tipiṭaka/Commentaries/Sub-commentaries  
/Buddhist textbooks/Theses/Dissertations  
/Research works /Journals

**1.4 Instruments:** Note papers/Computer

**1.5 Data Collecting:** Reading and conclusion

**1.6 Data Analysis:** Content analysis/Descriptive analysis

**Step 2:** The teachings on natural laws (*niyāma*) from modern scholars' perspectives, and to propose a developmental model of teachings on natural laws (*niyāma*) in Theravāda Buddhism

- 2.1 Issues for Search:**
- 1) Thai Scholars' Perspectives on Natural Laws (*Niyāma*)
  - 2) International Scholars' Perspectives on Natural Laws (*Niyāma*)
  - 3) A Developmental Model of Teachings on Natural Laws (*Niyāma*) in Theravāda Buddhism

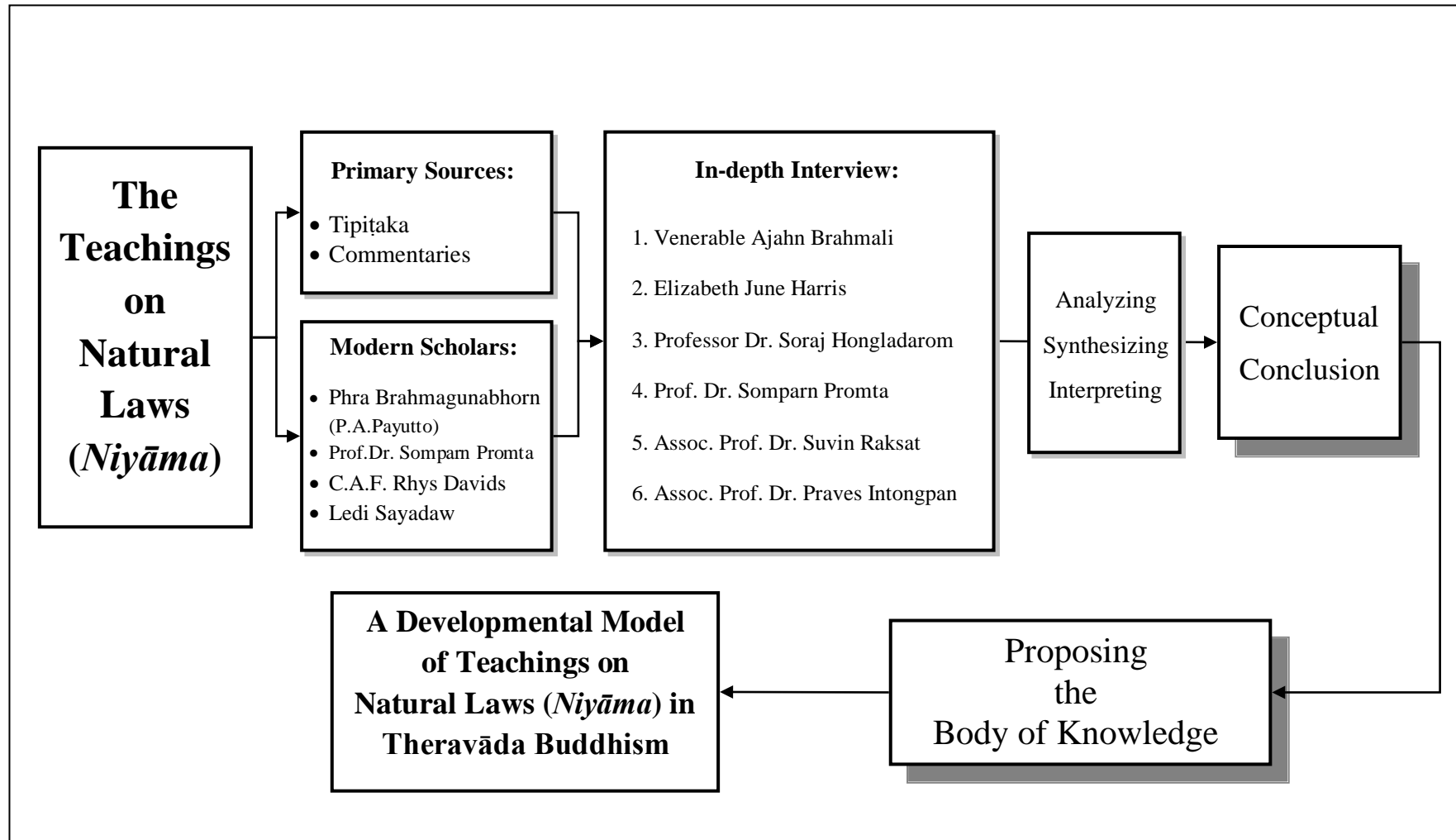
**2.2 Method:** Documentary study/In-depth interview

**2.3 Data Sources:** Tipiṭaka/Commentaries/Sub-commentaries/  
Buddhist textbooks/Theses/Dissertations/

	Research works/Journals/Specialists/Key informants
<b>2.4 Instruments:</b>	Note papers/Voice recorder/In-depth interview forms
<b>2.5 Data Collecting:</b>	Reading and conclusion/In-depth interview
<b>2.6 Data Analysis:</b>	Content analysis/ Descriptive analysis

The following research process flow chart shows the steps of the entire research process that were carried out in accordance with the research objectives:

**Chart 1: The Research Process**



## Chapter 4

### Research Findings

#### 4.1 The Teachings on Natural Laws (*Niyāma*) as Appeared in Tipiṭaka and Commentaries

The concept of natural laws (*niyāma*) is another concept that is very important to Buddhists because it is a teaching about the natural order of things. It is a teaching for humans to learn and observe phenomena or events around them, that is, events that they experience every day in their lives. Therefore, if humans do not learn to view nature correctly through such concepts, it may cause a distorted view of nature, even further away from reality.

However, the traces of the teachings on natural laws in the parts that appear in the Tipiṭaka and the commentaries are different. If Buddhists cannot distinguish these differences, it may result in more confusion. Therefore, to study and point out the development of the concept and teachings on natural laws that appear in the Tipiṭaka and the commentaries, in this chapter, the researcher presents the framework of the study into 3 categories: 1) The Teachings on Natural Laws (*Niyāma*) in Tipiṭaka, 2) The Teachings on Natural Laws (*Niyāma*) in Commentaries, and 3) Developmental Analysis of the Teachings on Natural Laws (*Niyāma*) as Appeared in Tipiṭaka and Commentaries as detailed below.

##### 4.1.1 The Teachings on Natural Laws (*Niyāma*) in Tipiṭaka

The Pali Canon defines *niyāma* as “this causal law of nature, this orderly fixing of things.”<sup>1</sup> It is an element that already exists, whether the Buddha has arisen. It has a more causative sense of “inevitability” or

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<sup>1</sup> The Buddha says of *dharmma-niyāma* in Saṃyuttanikāya in the form of dependent origination (*paṭiccasamuppāda*), and Aṅguttaranikāya as the three common characteristics (*sāmaññalakkhaṇa*). S.II.1; A.I.285.

“certainty”.<sup>2</sup> Interestingly, such teaching appeared only in a few places in the Tipiṭaka. The researcher presents it in two topics: (1) Natural Laws as Dependent Origination (*Paṭiccasamuppāda*), and (2) Natural Laws as The Three Characteristics (*Tilakkhaṇa*).

### 1. Natural Law as Dependent Origination (*Paṭiccasamuppāda*)

The first evidence appears as the Buddha uses *niyāma* to describe the inevitable working of dependent arising in the form of teachings on “the stability of the Dhamma”, the fixed course of the Dhamma, and Dependent Origination, as appeared in Paccaya Sutta:

With existence as condition, birth’  
 With clinging as condition, existence’  
 With craving as condition, clinging’  
 With feeling as condition, craving’  
 With contact as condition, feeling’  
 With the six sense bases as condition, contact’  
 With name-and-form as condition, the six sense bases’  
 With consciousness as condition, name-and-form’  
 With volitional formations as condition, consciousness’  
 With ignorance as condition, volitional formations’<sup>3</sup>

The term *paṭiccasamuppāda*<sup>4</sup> has been translated into various English terms, e.g., dependent origination, dependent arising, interdependent co-arising, conditioned arising. To be correctly translated, it means “The Arising of Result Depending on a Cause”.<sup>5</sup> Yet the most common translation is dependent origination or DO. It deals with the profound interrelationships among all things in the world and universe in

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<sup>2</sup> Margaret Cone, **A Dictionary of Pali**, vol II, (Bristol: Pali Text Society, 2010), p. 599.

<sup>3</sup> S.II.25.

<sup>4</sup> In Sanskrit term used as “*pratītyasamutpāda*”.

<sup>5</sup> Paṭhamakyaw Ashin Thīṭṭhila (Seṭṭhila) Aggamahāpaṇḍita (tr.), **The Book of Analysis (Vibhaṅga)**, p. xxxiv. (introduction).

the sense that all things do not exist alone without interacting with other things around them. For this reason, the Buddha went on to say, “*katamo ca bhikkhave, paṭiccasamuppādo. jātipaccayā bhikkhave jarāmaraṇaṃ uppādā vā tathāgatānaṃ anuppādā vā tathāgatānaṃ tithāva sā dhātu dhammaṭṭhitatā dhammaniyāmatā idappaccayatā*”<sup>6</sup> Whether there is an arising of *Tathāgatas* or no arising of *Tathāgatas*, that element still persists, the stableness of the *Dhamma*, the fixed course of the *Dhamma* (*dhamma-niyāmatā*), specific conditionality.<sup>7</sup> It can be said that the Buddha simply uses *niyāma* to describe the intrinsic nature of things. The nature of the fixed course of the *Dhamma*.

From the Sutta, it is clear that the “*niyāma*” that appears is like its own causes and conditions. From this perspective, *niyāma* may seem like a straightforward principle. However, in reality, *niyāma* in the context of Dependent Origination is a complex principle that is difficult for ordinary people to comprehend. As the Venerable Ānanda once said to the Buddha: “Wonderful, lord, and marvelous it is, that whereas this doctrine of events as arising from causes is so deep and looks so deep, to me it seems as clear as clear can be!”<sup>8</sup> Then the Buddha replied;

Do not say that, Ānanda, do not say that! This dependent origination is profound and appears profound. It is through not understanding, not penetrating this doctrine that this generation has become like a tangled ball of string, covered as with a blight, tangled like coarse grass, unable to pass beyond states of woe [*apāya*],<sup>9</sup> the ill destiny [*dukkhati*], ruin [*vinipāta*] and the round of birth-and-death [*samsāra*]<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> S.II.25.

<sup>7</sup> Bhikkhu Bodhi (tr.), **The Connected Discourses of the Buddha A New Translation of the Saṃyutta Nikāya**, Vol. I, 2 vols. set, p. 551.

<sup>8</sup> D.II.55; T.W. and C.A.F. Rhys Davids (trs.), **Dialogues of the Buddha Translated from the Pali of the Dīgha Nikāya**, Part II, (London: Oxford University Press, 1910), p. 50.

<sup>9</sup> “*Tattha apāyo ti: niraya-tiracchānāyoni-pittivisaya-asurakāyā.*” “*Apāya* means states or places of loss and woe in 4 ways: (1) hell (*niraya*), (2) the animal kingdom (*tiracchānāyoni*), (3) realm of hungry ghosts (*pittivisaya*), (4) host of demons (*asurakāya*)” - DA. II.496.

<sup>10</sup> D.II.55; Op.cit.



As the Buddha reminded Ānanda Thera, who earlier referred to *Paṭiccasamuppāda* with the word “deep”. The *Sumaṅgalavilāsinī*, a Commentary to the *Mahānidāna Sutta*, the profundity of Dependent Origination (*Paṭiccasamuppādagambhīratā*) is mentioned, “*Tattha attha-gambhīratāya dhamma-gambhīratāya desanā-gambhīratāya paṭivedha-gambhīratāyāti catūhi ākārehi paṭicca-samuppādo gambhīro nāma.*”<sup>11</sup> Which can be translated as “*Paṭiccasamuppāda* is said to be profound in four ways: profound in meaning, profound in Dhamma, profound in teaching, and profound in attainment”.

Therefore, *niyāma*, in this context, is a great and profound Dhamma principle. A principle that if anyone truly understands, they will be able to untie the knot that the Buddha compared to a tangled ball of string. When one understands the nature of things according to their causes and conditions, one will be able to transcend from the states of woe [*apāya*], the ill destiny [*dukkhati*], ruin [*vinipāta*], and the round of birth-and-death [*saṃsāra*], which are the highest goals that one can achieve, to the *dhamma-niyāmatā*<sup>12</sup> of things in the universe. One truly understands nature; one becomes a part of it.

## 2. Natural Law as The Three Characteristics (*Tilakkhaṇa*)

*Niyāma* in another context appears, similar to the first context, in the form of “causal law of nature,” but differs in content. In the *Uppādāyasutta*, the Exalted One said the three characteristics:<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> DA. II.493.

<sup>12</sup> *Dhammaniyāma* is a synonym for *paṭiccasamuppāda*, as it appears in the *Samyutta Nikāya*, *Nidānavagga*. They are: *dhammatṭhitatā*; *dhammaniyāmatā*; *idappaccayatā*; *tathatā*; *avitathatā*; *anaññathatā*; *idappaccayatā*; *paṭiccasamuppāda*, etc.

The original texts are as follows, “*dhammatṭhitatā dhammaniyāmatā idappaccayatā... avijjāpaccayā bhikkhave saṅkhārā. Iti kho bhikkhave yā tatra tathatā avitathatā anaññathatā idappaccayatā ayaṃ vuccati bhikkhave paṭiccasamuppādo.*” *Āhāra Vagga* - S.II.25.

<sup>13</sup> The three characteristics (*tilakkhaṇa*) or the Common Characteristics (*sāmañña-lakkhaṇa*) are *aniccatā*-impermanence; *dukkhatā*-state of suffering; *anattatā*-soullessness or not self.

*Uppādā vā bhikkhave tathāgatānaṃ anuppādā vā tathāgatānaṃ  
tthitāva sā dhātu dhammaṭṭhitatā dhammaniyāmatā sabbe saṅkhārā  
aniccā'ti.. . . sabbe saṅkhārā dukkhā'ti.. . . sabbe dhamma anattā'ti.*<sup>14</sup>

Monks, whether there be an appearance or non-appearance of *Tathāgata*, this causal law of nature,<sup>15</sup> this orderly fixing of things<sup>16</sup> prevails, namely, All phenomena are impermanent.

About this a *Tathāgata* is fully enlightened, he fully understands it. So enlightened and understanding he declares, teaches and makes it plain. He shows it forth, he opens it up, explains and makes it clear: this fact that all phenomena are impermanent (*aniccā*).

Monks, whether there be an appearance or non-appearance of *Tathāgata*, this causal law of nature, this orderly fixing of things prevails, namely, All phenomena are misery (*dukkhā*).

About this a *Tathāgata* is fully enlightened. . .

Monks, whether there be an appearance or non-appearance of *Tathāgata*, this causal law of nature, this orderly fixing of things prevails, namely, all phenomena are not the self (*anattā*).

About this a *Tathāgata* is fully enlightened. . . <sup>17</sup>

The above *Sutta* points out that the three characteristics are the causal law of nature or the orderly fixing of things that existed before the world and the universe, even before the emergence of the Buddha. Howsoever, *niyāma* in this context means *dhamma-niyāma*, which indicates the intrinsic nature of things in three entities as impermanent

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<sup>14</sup> A.I. 285.

<sup>15</sup> *Dhātu-dhammaṭṭhitatā* = *sabhāva-tṭhitatā*. Comy. Cf. Pts. Of Contr. 387, “that which, as cause, establishes elements as effects.” - look in footnote no.3, **The Book of the Gradual Sayings**, Vol.I (Ones, Twos, Threes), Tr. F.L. Woodward, (Oxford: The Pali Text Society, 2000), p. 264.

<sup>16</sup> *Dhamma-niyāmatā*, “that which, as cause, invariably fixes things in our minds, as effects,” Cf.S.ii, 25 (K.S.ii, 21), where a further term is added, *idappaccayatā*, “the relation of this to that.” - look in footnote no.4, **The Book of the Gradual Sayings**, Vol.I (Ones, Twos, Threes), Tr. F.L. Woodward, (Oxford: The Pali Text Society, 2000), p.264.

<sup>17</sup> A.I. 285; F.L. Woodward (tr.), **The Book of the Gradual Sayings (Anguttara-Nikāya)**, Vol. I (Ones, Twos, Threes), p. 265.

(*aniccā*), misery (*dukkhā*). In addition, all dhammas have the characteristic of being no self (*anattā*), which is no less important than the reality of dependent origination.

### 3. Natural Law as the True Path of Assurance (*Sammattaniyāma*)

However, in addition to the definitions in the context of *paṭiccasamuppāda* and *sāmaññalakkhana* as mentioned above, it is found that there is another definition in the context of *sammattaniyāma*, as Dh. Dhivan agreed that *niyāma* also implies “assurance about rightness or *sammatta-niyāma*:

*Dhamma-niyāma*, or the ‘necessity of nature’, is hence a canonical concept meaning *paṭiccasamuppāda* or dependent arising in the special sense of its objective truth, its existence independent of the Buddhas who teach it. *Niyāma* secondly occurs in the phrase *sammatta-niyāma*, ‘necessity or assurance about rightness’, used to characterize the inevitable progress of a faith- or wisdom-follower towards eventual full awakening<sup>18</sup>

Here we delve deeper into the roots of this idea. *Sammattaniyāma* appears in Pathama Sammatta-Niyāma Sutta, Dutiya Sammatta-Niyāma Sutta, and Tatiya Sammatta-Niyāma Sutta,<sup>19</sup> respectively:

Monks, pursuing five courses and hearkening unto *Saddhamma* he must become one to enter the way<sup>20</sup>, the right way<sup>21</sup> in right things. What five?

He does not belittle talk, nor belittle the talker, he does not belittle the self, hears Dhamma with unperturbed mind and with mind one-pointed, makes thinking orderly.

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<sup>18</sup> Dh. Dhivan, “The Five Niyāmas, Sangharakshita, and the Problem of Karma, (May 2009).

<sup>19</sup> Catuttha-Paṇṇāsako - A.III.174-175; Chapter XVI.-Saddhamma, The Saddhamma Way - E. M. Hare (tr.), **The Book of the Gradual Sayings (Anguttara-Nikāya)**, Vol. III (The Books of the Fives and Sixes), (London: PTS, 1973), pp. 131-132.

<sup>20</sup> *Niyāma*.

<sup>21</sup> *Together*.

Verily, monks, pursuing these five courses and hearkening unto *Saddhamma* he must become one to enter the way, the right way in right things<sup>22</sup>

*Sammattaniyāma* here implies the entering into the right way in all *kusala dhammas*. That is, it is the orderly fixing of things to attain enlightenment. It is a law that has a specific context for transcending beyond the ordinary person to become a noble individual (*ariya-puggala*). It also appears in the Abhidhamma Piṭaka, Kathāvatthu, and Niyatassaniyāmakathā<sup>23</sup> regarding the orderly fixing of things of a certain person:

*Niato niyāmaṃ okkamatīti?*

*In Amantha.*

*Mikattaniyatho sammattaniyāmaṃ okkamati, sammataniadho micchattaniyāmaṃ okkamatīti?*

*Na h'evaṃ vattabbe . . .*<sup>24</sup>

The above active dialogue between Theravādin and Puggalavādin arguing about *sammattaniyāma* can be translated as follows:

**Th:**<sup>25</sup> Do you imply that the so-called ‘Assured’<sup>26</sup> enters upon the True Path of Assurance when assured of immediate retribution?

**P:**<sup>27</sup> Yes.

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<sup>22</sup> A.III.174; E. M. Hare ( tr. ), **The Book of the Gradual Sayings (Anguttara-Nikāya)**, Vol. III (The Books of the Fives and Sixes), (London: PTS, 1973), p. 132.

<sup>23</sup> Terasamo Vaggo, *Niyato niyāmaṃ okkamatīti?* - Kv.II.480; Book XIII, Of One whose Salvation is Morally Certain (*niyata*) - Shwe Zan Aung and Rhys Davids (trs.), **Points of Controversy**, (London: Messrs. Luzac & Company, LTD., 1969), p. 276.

<sup>24</sup> Kv.II.480.

<sup>25</sup> Theravādin or Sakavādī monks.

<sup>26</sup> The Pañcapakaraṇa Commentary describes a certain person (*niyata*) as a Bodhisattva who has received a prophecy from the Buddha that he definitely will attain enlightenment (wisdom as the means of enlightenment) in the future - KvA.143.

<sup>27</sup> Puggalavādin, which refers to monks in the Pubbaseliya and Paraseliya Sects.

**Th:** And upon the False Path of Assurance when assured of final salvation? . . . That finally, entrance upon Assurance comes after practice of the applications in mindfulness and the rest of the Factors of Enlightenment? . . .<sup>28</sup>

Buddhaghosācāriya explains that the reason why the Pubbaseliya and Paraseliya schools answer yes is because they hold the view that a Bodhisattva who has received the *ekaṃsa-vyākaraṇa* is said to have reached the *Niyāma*. They believe that receiving such a prediction is a step down to a certain kind of *Niyāma*. This differs from the view of the Sakavādī, who believe that receiving the *ekaṃsa-vyākaraṇa* does not constitute reaching the *Niyāma*.<sup>29</sup> Monks with different views argued in this way.

In the Pañcapakaraṇatthakathā, a commentary to the Kathāvatthu of Abhidhamma Piṭaka, it says “*Idāni niyatassa niyāmakathā nāma hoti. Tattha duvidho niyāmo micchattaniyāmo ca anantariyakammaṃ sammattaniyāmo ca ariyamaggo, ime dve niyāme thapetvā añño niyāmo nāma natthi*”<sup>30</sup> which can be translated as:

Now follows the controversy concerning one whose salvation is morally certain, he having entered upon assurance. *Niyāma* (assurance) is of two kinds, according as it is in the wrong or the right direction. The former is conduct that finds retribution without delay [*anantariyakamma*], the latter is the Ariyan Way [*ariyamagga*]. And there is no other (excepting these two).<sup>31</sup>

It can be said that *niyāma* consists of two: (1) the wrong assurance (*micchattaniyāma*): the five immediacy-deeds, and (2) the right assurance (*sammattaniyāma*): the Noble Path, *Sammattaniyāma* is also known for the stability of attaining the Dhamma that belongs to the Noble Ones, which refers to the four groups of people who have transcended

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<sup>28</sup> Shwe Zan Aung and Rhys Davids (trs.), **Points of Controversy**, (London: Messrs. Luzac & Company, LTD., 1969), p. 276.

<sup>29</sup> KvA.143; Bimala Churn Law (tr.), **The Debates Commentary (Kathāvatthupparakaraṇa-Atthakathā)**, (London: Humphrey Milford, 1889), p. 175.

<sup>30</sup> KvA.143.

<sup>31</sup> Bimala Churn Law (tr.), **The Debates Commentary (Kathāvatthupparakaraṇa-Atthakathā)**, (London: Humphrey Milford, 1889), p. 175.

worldly life to become Noble Individuals in the Buddhist religious system: Stream-Enterer (*sotāpannapuggala*), Once-Returner (*sakadāgāmipuggala*), Non-Returner (*anāgāmipuggala*), and the Worthy One (*Arahattapuggala*). As evidenced in the *Paṭisambhidāmagga*, Treatise on Insight:

‘So vata Bhikkhave bhikkhu sabbasaṅkhāre aniccato samanupassanto anulomikāya khantiyā samannāgato bhavissatīti’ *ṭhānaṃ etaṃ vijjati*, ‘anulomikāya khantiyā samannāgato sammattaniyāmaṃ okkamissatīti’ *ṭhānaṃ etaṃ vijjati*, ‘sammattaniyāmaṃ okkamamāno sotāpattiphalaṃ vā sakadāgāmiphalaṃ vā anāgāmiphalaṃ vā Arahattaphalaṃ vā sacchikarissatīti *ṭhānaṃ etaṃ vijjati*.<sup>32</sup>

‘Bhikkhus, when a bhikkhu sees any formations as impermanent it is possible that he shall make a choice in conformity [with actuality], and making a choice in conformity [with actuality] it is possible that he shall enter upon the certainty of rightness, and by entering upon the certainty of rightness it is possible that he shall realize the fruit of stream-entry or the fruit of once-return or the fruit of non-return or the fruit of arahantship.<sup>33</sup>

Among the group of monks who practice meditation to purify their minds and wisdom from all defilements, only a system of right practices can lead to the attainment of the supramundane Dhamma. This system is called the “natural law of rightness” or “the certainty of rightness”. On the contrary, the opposite system is called the “natural law of wrongness” or “the certainty of wrongness.”

In *Saddhammapakāsinī*, a commentary to *Paṭisambhidāmagga* Scripture, the following evidence was found:

*"Goh Cho? Lokutaramako or specialasto palm sotāpattimaggo. Thena hai magganiyāmena niyatattā 'niyato sambodhiparāyaṇo't*

<sup>32</sup> Paññāvaggo, Vipassanākathā, Ps.II.236.

<sup>33</sup> Treatise on Insight, - Bhikkhu Ñānamoli ( tr. ) , **The Path of Discrimination (Paṭisambhidāmagga)**, (London: PTS, 1982), p. 401.

*vuttaṃ. Taṃ sammattaniyāmaṃ okamichatti pavisissatīti etaṃ aṭṭhānanti atho*".<sup>34</sup>

What is that? It is the supramundane path, specifically the Stream Enterer path. Therefore, *niyato sambhodhiparāyano* was said to have certain enlightenment in the future, because it is certain with the *magganiyāma*, leading to *sammattaniyāma*.

From the above passage, Venerable Mahānāma elaborates *sammattaniyāma* as “a special kind of supramundane path (*lokuttaramaggo*) is the Path of Stream-Entry (*sotāpattimaggo*)”. Moreover, it also encompasses the group of Dhamma factors that come together to promote the attainment of *Nibbāna*:

Monks have reached the Noble State, namely, the *sammattaniyāma*, which is exquisite with the Dharma Jewel (*dhammaratanavicittaṃ*), namely, the 37 Factors of Enlightenment, beautiful in the beginning, middle, and end, in this way.<sup>35</sup>

The *Sammattaniyāma* is detailed and includes a cluster of factors that simultaneously come together to promote and support the attainment of the Dhamma holistically. The Vibhaṅga explains it as “the immutable rightness”:

*Ye te sattā na kammāvaraṇena samannāgatā na kilesāvaraṇena samannāgatā na vipākāvaraṇena samannāgatā saddhā chandikā paññavanto bhabbā niyāmaṃ okkamituṃ kusalesu dhammesu sammattaṃ*<sup>36</sup>

Those beings who are not furnished with the obstruction of (bad) action, not furnished with the obstruction of corruption, not finished with the obstruction of (bad) resultant, have confidence, have wish (to do good), have wisdom (accompanying rebirth consciousness), are fit

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<sup>34</sup> PsA.III.698.

<sup>35</sup> “*Ādimajjhapariyosānakalyāṇaṃ sattattiṃsabodhipakkhiyadhammaratanavicittaṃ sammattaniyāmasaṅkhātāṃ ariyabhūmiṃ okkanto hotīti.*”, *Maggasaccaniddesaṇṇanā* - PsA.I.196.

<sup>36</sup> Vbh.341.

to enter into the immutable rightness of good states (i.e., path consciousness).<sup>37</sup>

To sum up, the term “*sammattaniyāma*”, according to the above presentation, refers to the orderly fixing of things of a certain person (*niyato*) who enters upon the right way or the True Path of Assurance, the certainty of immutable rightness, which is the Noble Path (*ariyamagga*). *Sammattaniyāma* is a special kind of supramundane path (*lokuttaramagga*) that is the Path of Stream-Entry (*sotāpattimagga*), which is exquisite with the Dharma Jewel (*dharmaratanavacittam*), namely, the 37 Factors of Enlightenment (*bodhipakkhiyadhamma*). See the following table:

Resource	Definitions
1. Sammatta-Niyāma Sutta A.III.174-175	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The right way</li> </ul>
2. Paṭisambhidāmagga Ps.II.236.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The certainty of rightness</li> </ul>
3. Kathāvatthu Kv.II.480.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The orderly fixing of things of a certain person.</li> <li>• Assured enters upon the True Path of Assurance</li> </ul>
4. Saddhammapakāsinī PsA.I.196.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Exquisite with the Dharma Jewel</li> <li>• The 37 Factors of Enlightenment</li> </ul>
5. Saddhammapakāsinī PsA.III.698.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A special kind of supramundane path</li> <li>• The Path of Stream-Entry</li> </ul>
6. Pañcapakaraṇaṭṭhakathā KvA.143.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The right assurance of the Noble Path</li> </ul>

**Table 4.1 Definition of *Sammattaniyāma* from Various Sources**

The researcher has a view that *Sammattaniyāma* is one of the contexts of *Niyāmas* that is specific to “the result of noble attainment arising from right practice” and that this result is like a system of guarantees of Buddhist outcomes to comfort practitioners of the Noble Eightfold Path all over the world that they can be confident in “a

<sup>37</sup> Paṭhamakyaw Ashin Thitṭila (Seṭṭhila) Aggamahāpaṇḍita (tr.), **The Book of Analysis (Vibhaṅga)**, (Oxford: PTS, 1995), p. 448.



sustainable system of guarantees of Noble Path, Noble Fruition and *Nibbāna*".

Based on all of the abovementioned evidence, the following table illustrates the teachings on natural laws (*niyāma*) in Tipiṭaka, along with their sources of information:

<i>Niyāma:</i> Inevitability / Certainty				
<i>Dhammaniyāma:</i> Causal law of nature The orderly fixing of things The fixed course of the Dhamma		<i>Sammattaniyāma:</i> The certainty of rightness		<i>Micchattaniyāma:</i> The certainty of wrongness
<i>Paṭiccasamuppāda:</i> • Dependent Origination	<i>Tilakkhaṇa:</i> • The Three Characteristics	<i>Sattattisabodhi- pakkhiyadhamma:</i> • The 37 Factors of Enlightenment	<i>Ariyamagga:</i> • The right assurance of the Noble Path	<i>Anantariyakamma</i> • The five immediacy-deeds • The wrong assurance

**Table 4.2 The Natural Laws (*Niyāma*) in Tipiṭaka**

From the studies of the teachings on natural laws (*niyāma*) in Tipiṭaka, the Pali term “*niyāma*” refers to inevitability or certainty. The most common teaching is “*dhammaniyāma*”, a Pali term meaning the orderly fixing of things, or the fixed course of the Dhamma (*dhammaniyāmatā*), which is a synonym for the term the stableness of the Dhamma, or causal law of nature (*dhammaṭṭhitatā*). In addition, “*niyāma*” can also be found in other contexts that refer to the certainty of goodness, the natural law of the certainty of the Noble Fruits (*sammattaniyāma*). *Niyāma* exists in the following three contexts: (1) *Niyāma* in the context of *dhammaniyāma*, namely, Dependent Origination, is the most important principle of Buddhism that guides the wisdom of people to understand the natural law of all things that depend on each other to come into being. Nothing can stand on its own without relying on the others. The Buddha uses this natural law to describe “Dependent Origination”. Therefore, *Niyāma*, in this context, is a great and profound Dhamma principle. A principle that if anyone truly understands, they will be able to untie the knot that the Buddha compared to a tangled ball of string; (2) *Niyāma* in the context of *dhammaniyāma*, namely, the three characteristics, which are characteristics that appear universally. These characteristics are of utmost

importance in many contexts, namely, it is a principle that teaches human beings to understand the law of nature that all things are composed of these three universal characteristics. It teaches human beings to understand the non-existence of impermanence, the existence of suffering, and the non-existence of the self, etc.; and (3) *Niyāma* in the context of *sammattaniyāma* is truly the teaching of the natural law that encourages practitioners to continue on their right path without discouragement. In addition, it is a natural law that confirms the existence of a system of Dhamma practice, especially the “Right Noble Path that arises from the right practice.”

To make the picture clearer, after drawing the *Niyāma* according to the sources found in the Tipiṭaka, the following figure shows the Teachings on *Niyāma* that appear in the Tipiṭaka:



**Figure 4.1 The Teachings on *Niyāma* Appeared in the Tipiṭaka**

#### **4.1.2 The Teachings on Natural Laws (*Niyāma*) in Commentaries**

The concept of natural laws that appear in the commentarial works is classified into five types based on their characteristics. They appear in two main commentary texts, the Suttanta Piṭaka Commentary and the Abhidhamma Piṭaka Commentary. This research will be presented in order according to the said texts: 1) Natural Law in Suttanta Piṭaka Aṭṭhakathā, 2) Natural Law in Abhidhamma Piṭaka Aṭṭhakathā, and 3) Natural Law in Other Suttas’ Aṭṭhakathā, as follows:

## 1. Natural Law in Suttanta Piṭaka Aṭṭhakathā<sup>38</sup>

In the Sumaṅgalavilāsinī (Dīghanikāya Aṭṭhakathā), an exegetical work on the Mahāpadāna Sutta, Buddhaghosācāriya has classified the Natural Laws into five different categories in detail: - 1) Moral Certainty (*Kamma-Niyāma*), 2) Caloric Certainty (*Utu-Niyāma*), 3) Germinal Certainty (*Bīja-Niyāma*), 4) Psychical Certainty (*Citta-Niyāma*), and 5) Natural-phenomenal Certainty (*Dhamma-Niyāma*).<sup>39</sup>

### 1) Moral Certainty (*Kamma-Niyāma*)

Moral certainty implies the certainty, or the law, of action. It is one of the most fundamental principles of Buddhism that pertains to human actions and their consequences. The commentators explain, “*Tattha kusalassa iṭṭhavipākadānaṃ, akusalassa aniṭṭhavipākadānanti ayaṃ kamma-niyāmo.*”<sup>40</sup> which is translated as “the production of desirable good deeds and the production of undesirable evil deeds, is *Kamma-Niyāma*.” Buddhaghosācāriya has given an interesting example:

*Apica ekā kira itthī sāmikena saddhiṃ bhaṇḍitvā ubbandhitvā maritukāmā rajjupāse gīvaṃ pavesesi. Aññataro puriso vāsiṃ nisedento taṃ itthikammaṃ disvā. Rajjuṃ chinditukāmo “mā bhāyi mā bhāyi” ti taṃ samassāsento upadhāvi. Rajju āsīviso hutvā aṭṭhāsi. So bhīto hutvā palāyi.*<sup>41</sup>

For example, a woman quarreled with her husband and wanted to hang herself, so she put her neck into a rope loop. A man was sharpening a knife, saw the woman, and wanted to cut the rope. He ran to comfort her, saying, “Don’t be afraid, sister. Don’t be afraid.” The rope turned into a venomous snake and strangled the woman. The man was scared and ran away. The woman died right there.

From this example, it can be seen that when the woman intended to hang herself, due to the power of defilement (*kilesa*), she then determined her action by hanging herself (*kamma*), which ultimately

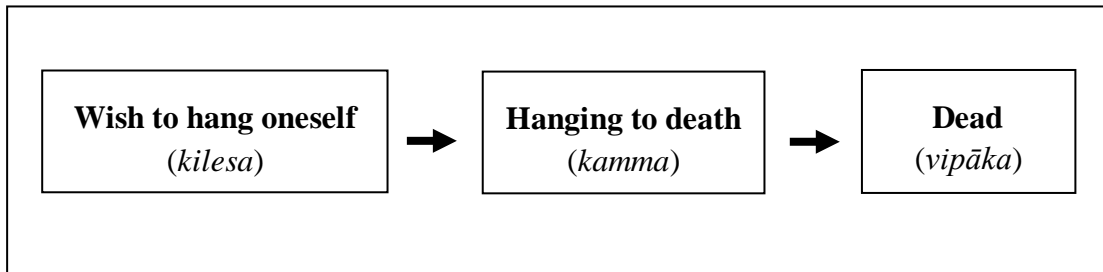
<sup>38</sup> DA. II.432; Sumaṅgalavilāsinī (Dīghanikāya Aṭṭhakathā).

<sup>39</sup> “*Niyāmo ca nāmesa kammaniyāmo utuniyāmo bījanīyāmo cittanīyāmo dhammanīyāmoti pañcavidho*” Mahāpadāna-Sutta-Vaṇṇanā- DA. II.432.

<sup>40</sup> DA.II.432.

<sup>41</sup> DA.II.432.

resulted in her death (*vipāka*). It can be written as an example chart as follows:



**Figure 4.2 Moral Certainty (*Kamma-Niyāma*)**

This example most clearly reflects the principle of “certainty of action”. In Lonaphala Sutta: A Grain of Salt, the Buddha said,

*yo ca kho bhikkhave evaṃ vadeyya yathā yathā vedanīyaṃ ayaṃ puriso kammaṃ karoti tathā tathāssa vipākaṃ paṭisaṃvediyatīti evaṃ santaṃ bhikkhave brahmacariyavāso hoti okāso paññāyati sammā dukkhassa antakiriyāyāti.*<sup>42</sup>

But, monks, if one should say: “Exactly according as a man does a deed that can be experienced (hereafter), exactly in such manner does he experience the fruition thereof,” - that being so there is living of the holy life: there is opportunity afforded for the utter ending of Ill.<sup>43</sup>

It clearly shows that the belief in action is a crucial factor in driving him to live a life of good conduct and practice, which will enable him to escape suffering completely. When this is the case, it can be said that he is truly living under the practice of the Threefold Training. Therefore, the giving of results of certainty in nature that is directly related to humans is an indication of the certainty of the giving of results of human actions in the sense that humans themselves, not others, determine their destiny. It is also a good example of the scope of the five definitions under the framework of *kamma-niyāma*. The explanations concerning the principle of *kamma-niyāma* in this commentarial level are very detailed,

<sup>42</sup> A.I.252.

<sup>43</sup> F. L. Woodward (tr.), **The Book of the Gradual Sayings (Anguttara-Nikāya)**, Vol. I (Ones, Twos, Threes), London: PTS, 1979), p. 230.

which is consistent with the explanations in the Visuddhimagga and Abhidhammatthasaṅgaha Pakaraṇa.

In Manorathapūranī, the Commentary on the Aṅguttara-Nikāya, Buddhaghosa mentions the 11<sup>44</sup> and 12 types<sup>45</sup> of action according to the Suttantika Pariyāya:

*Suttantikapariyāyena hi ekādasa kammāni vibhattāni. Seyyathīdaṃ? diṭṭhadhammavedanīyaṃ upapajjavedanīyaṃ aparapariyāyavedanīyaṃ, yaṃ garukaṃ yaṃ bahulaṃ yadāsannaṃ kaṭattā vā pana kammaṃ, janakaṃ upatthambhakaṃ upapīlakaṃ upaghātakanti.*<sup>46</sup>

By implication in the Sutta (*Suttantikapariyāyena*), the Buddha has classified action into 11 types as follows:

- (1) Immediately Effective Action (*Diṭṭhadhammavedanīya kamma*),
- (2) Subsequently Effective Action (*Upapajjavedanīya kamma*),
- (3 ) Indefinitely Effective Action (*Aparapariyāyavedanīya kamma*),
- (4) Weighty Action (*Garuka kamma*),
- (5) Habitual Action (*Bahula kamma*),
- (6) Death-proximate Action (*Yadāsanna kamma*),
- (7) Reserve Action (*Kaṭattāvāpanakamma*),
- (8) Productive Action (*Janaka kamma*),
- (9) Supportive Action (*Upatthambhaka kamma*),
- (10) Obstructive Action (*Upapīlaka kamma*), and
- (11) Destructive Action (*Upaghātaka kamma*).<sup>47</sup>

<sup>44</sup> In the 11 types of action, defunct action (*ahosi-kamma*) is not included.

<sup>45</sup> The 12 types of action count as ‘Defunct action (*ahosi-kamma*)’ in the 4<sup>th</sup> rank, after ‘Indefinitely Effective Action (*Aparapariyāyavedanīya kamma*)’.

<sup>46</sup> AA.II.210.

<sup>47</sup> AA.II.210.

The explanation in *Manorathapūranī* shows that there are another 16 types of action according to the *Abhidhamma Pariyāya*, which explains certain actions that, when undertaken badly or well, are prohibited and depend on the two factors, namely: (1) wealth (*sampatti*), and (2) disaster (*vipatti*) to not produce results or produce results in the following four aspects: (1) destination (*gati*), (2) appearance (*upadhi*), (3) time (*kāla*), (4) endeavor (*payoga*):

*Abhidhammapariyāyena ca soḷasa kammāni vibhattāni, seyyathīdaṃ: - “atthekaccāni pāpakāni kammamādānāni gatisampattiṃ paṭibāḷhāni na vipaccanti, atthekaccāni pāpakāni kammamādānāni upadhisampattiṃ paṭibāḷhāni na vipaccanti, atthekaccāni pāpakāni kammamādānāni kālasampattiṃ paṭibāḷhāni na vipaccanti, atthekaccāni pāpakāni kammamādānāni payogasampattiṃ paṭibāḷhāni na vipaccanti. Atthekaccāni pāpakāni kammamādānāni gativipattiṃ āgamma vipaccanti, upadhivipattiṃ, kālavipattiṃ payogavipattiṃ āgamma vipaccanti. Atthekaccāni kalyāṇāni kammamādānāni gativipattiṃ paṭibāḷhāni na vipaccanti, upadhivipattiṃ, kālavipattiṃ, payogavipattiṃ paṭibāḷhāni na vipaccanti. Atthekaccāni kalyāṇāni kammamādānāni gatisampattiṃ āgamma vipaccanti, upadhisampattiṃ, kālasampattiṃ, payogasampattiṃ āgamma vipaccanti” ti.*<sup>48</sup>

The complexity of the moral certainty in Buddhism, as evident in these commentaries, confirms that nature has mysterious aspects and dimensions hidden beneath the natural source codes that await human exploration to reach that point eventually. The foundation of the action system here is nothing but wealth (*sampatti*) and disaster (*vipatti*), which create a profound dimension, giving rise to 16 different types of moral systems, as shown in the following table:

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<sup>48</sup> AA.II.210.

	Pali	The Sixteen Types of Action
1.	<i>Atthekaccāni pāpakāni kammasamādānāni gatisampattiṃ paṭibāḷhāni na vipaccanti,</i>	Certain bad actions that prevent the right destination are unfruitful
2.	<i>Atthekaccāni pāpakāni kammasamādānāni upadhisampattiṃ paṭibāḷhāni na vipaccanti,</i>	Certain bad actions that prevent the right appearance are unfruitful
3.	<i>Atthekaccāni pāpakāni kammasamādānāni kālasampattiṃ paṭibāḷhāni na vipaccanti,</i>	Certain bad actions that prevent the right time are unfruitful
4.	<i>Atthekaccāni pāpakāni kammasamādānāni payogasampattiṃ paṭibāḷhāni na vipaccanti.</i>	Certain bad actions prevent the right endeavor are unfruitful
5.	<i>Atthekaccāni pāpakāni kammasamādānāni gativipattiṃ āgamma vipaccanti,</i>	Certain bad actions, relying on the wrong destination, are fruitful
6.	<i>Atthekaccāni pāpakāni kammasamādānāni upadhivipattiṃ āgamma vipaccanti</i>	Certain bad actions, relying on the wrong appearance, are fruitful
7.	<i>Atthekaccāni pāpakāni kammasamādānāni kālavipattiṃ āgamma vipaccanti</i>	Certain bad actions, relying on the wrong time, are fruitful
8.	<i>Atthekaccāni pāpakāni kammasamādānāni payogavipattiṃ āgamma vipaccanti.</i>	Certain bad actions, relying on the wrong endeavor, are fruitful
9.	<i>Atthekaccāni kalyāṇāni kammasamādānāni gativipattiṃ paṭibāḷhāni na vipaccanti,</i>	Certain good actions that prevent the wrong destination are unfruitful
10.	<i>Atthekaccāni kalyāṇāni kammasamādānāni upadhivipattiṃ paṭibāḷhāni na vipaccanti,</i>	Certain good actions that prevent the wrong appearance are unfruitful
11.	<i>Atthekaccāni kalyāṇāni kammasamādānāni kālavipattiṃ paṭibāḷhāni na vipaccanti,</i>	Certain good actions that prevent the wrong time are unfruitful
12.	<i>Atthekaccāni kalyāṇāni kammasamādānāni payogavipattiṃ paṭibāḷhāni na vipaccanti.</i>	Certain good actions prevent the wrong endeavor are unfruitful
13.	<i>Atthekaccāni kalyāṇāni kammasamādānāni gatisampattiṃ āgamma vipaccanti,</i>	Certain good actions, relying on the right destination, are fruitful
14.	<i>Atthekaccāni kalyāṇāni kammasamādānāni upadhisampattiṃ āgamma vipaccanti,</i>	Certain good actions, relying on the right appearance, are fruitful
15.	<i>Atthekaccāni kalyāṇāni kammasamādānāni kālasampattiṃ āgamma vipaccanti,</i>	Certain good actions, relying on the right time, are fruitful
16.	<i>Atthekaccāni kalyāṇāni kammasamādānāni payogasampattiṃ āgamma vipaccanti.</i>	Certain good actions, relying on the right endeavor, are fruitful

**Table 4.3 The Abhidhamma Pariyāya's Sixteen Types of Action**

No matter how many types of action are divided in detail, whether it is 11 types, 12 types, or 16 types, etc., the main principle of the moral certainty or so-called “law of *kamma*” is only a clear indication for us to see the delicacy of actions and their results. This serves as a reminder for humans to strive to do good deeds and avoid evil ones. In short, a person is responsible for the results of their actions.

## 2) Caloric Certainty (*Utu-Niyāma*)

Caloric certainty denotes the certainty, or the law, of the season. One of the Buddhist rules concerns the external physical characteristics of the natural environment. The commentator gives an example:

*Tesu tesu janapadesu tasmim tasmim kāle ekappahāreneva rukkhānaṃ pupphaphalaggahaṇādīni, vātassa vāyanaṃ avāyanaṃ, ātapassa tikkhatā mandatā, devassa vassanaṃ avassanaṃ, padumānaṃ divā vikaṣanaṃ rattiṃ sammilananti evamādi utu-niyāmo.*<sup>49</sup>

In a particular countryside, at a particular time, the collection of flowers and fruits from trees, cutting them only once, the wind blows and the wind does not blow, the sun is strong and the sun is weak, the rain falls and the rain does not fall, the lotus blooms during the day and closes at night, and so on, is *Utu-Niyāma*.

From the above passage, *Utu-Niyāma* means the certainty of the climate or seasons. The commentator has elaborated the certainty of nature through the perspective of seasonal phenomena, such as the phenomena of time, the flowering and fruiting of flowers, the blowing of wind, the strength or weakness of sunlight from the sun, the falling of rain, etc. This description certainly extends to the “physical hot-cold temperatures and seasonal changes” of the Earth and the universe, which is consistent with its name, “*utu*,” which means “season”.

### 3) Germinal Certainty (*Bīja-Niyāma*)

Germinal certainty denotes the certainty, or the law, of the plants. *Bīja-Niyāma*, one of the rules in Buddhism, concerns the physical appearance of crops such as wheat, vegetables, and fruits. It reflects the transmission of genetic characteristics of various plant species in nature from one generation to the next, from ancestors to descendants. All living things in the universe, whether human beings or animals, with different life forms, are subject to this certainty in terms of their distinct evolutionary paths according to their species. The evolutionary patterns of one’s ancestors reflect this pattern of certainty.

In the *Sumaṅgalavilāsinī* (Dīghanikāya Atthakathā), Buddhaghosācāriya mentioned, “*Yaṃ panetaṃ sālibījato sāliphalameva, madhurato madhurarasamyeva, tittato tittarasamyeva phalaṃ hoti, ayaṃ*

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<sup>49</sup> DA.II.432.



*bīja-niyāmo*.”<sup>50</sup> “Wheat is the fruit that comes only from wheat; sweetness is the fruit of nectar; bitterness is the fruit of bitter plants, is *Bīja-Niyāma*.”

From the above statement, *bīja-Niyāma* means the certainty of plants in the sense that the nature of plants and grains all have genetic characteristics that are passed on to their offspring. As true as the Buddha said about the five kinds of plants in *Bīja Sutta* of *Saṃyutta Nikāya*, “*Pañcimāni bhikkhave bījajātāni. Katamāni pañca. mūlabījaṃ khandhabījaṃ phalabījaṃ aggabījaṃ bījabījaññeva pañcamaṃ*.”<sup>51</sup> Which can be translated as, “Bhikkhus, there are these five kinds of seeds. What five? Root-seeds (*mūlabīja*), stem-seeds (*khandhabīja*), joint-seeds (*phalabīja*), cutting-seeds (*aggabīja*), and germ-seeds (*bījabīja*) as the fifth.”<sup>52</sup> Any plant in the five categories mentioned above depends on soil for its growth; therefore, soil is an essential food for plants. The Buddha compared the earth to the Noble Eightfold Path:

*bhikkhave ye kecime bījagāmahūtagāmā vuḍḍhiṃ virūlhiṃ vepullaṃ āpajjanti sabbe te paṭhaviṃ nissāya paṭhaviyaṃ patiṭṭhāya evamete bījagāmahūtagāmā vuḍḍhiṃ virūlhiṃ vepullaṃ āpajjanti. evameva kho bhikkhave bhikkhu sīlaṃ nissāya sīle patiṭṭhāya ariyaṃ aṭṭhaṅgikaṃ maggaṃ bhāvento ariyaṃ aṭṭhaṅgikamaggaṃ bahulīkaronto vuḍḍhiṃ virūlhiṃ vepullaṃ pāpuṇāti dhammesu.*<sup>53</sup>

Bhikkhu, just as whatever kinds of seed and plant life attain to growth, increase, and expansion, all do so based upon the earth, established upon the earth, so too, based upon virtue, established upon virtue, a bhikkhu develops and cultivates the Noble Eightfold Path, and thereby he attains to growth, increase, and expansion in [wholesome] states.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> DA.II.432.

<sup>51</sup> S.V.54.

<sup>52</sup> Bhikkhu Bodhi (tr.), *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha A New Translation of the Saṃyutta Nikāya*, Vol. I. 2 vols. set. (Oxford: PTS, 2000), p. 891.

<sup>53</sup> S.V.46.

<sup>54</sup> Bhikkhu Bodhi (tr.), *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha A New Translation of the Saṃyutta Nikāya*, Vol. II. 2 Vols. set. (Oxford: PTS, 2000), p. 1553.

All seed and plant life, just as all sentient beings in this world depend on food for their growth, so too monks rely on morality (*sīlaṃ nissāya*) as their foundation and life food to develop the Noble Eightfold Path, and thus reach greater growth and prosperity. All kinds of seed and plant life existing in the world fall under the germinal certainty in this way. This is an evolutionary pattern of genetic inheritance. This pattern has been passed down through history for generations and will continue to be so in the future. Although the phenomenon of “mutation” may occur during these processes, it can also be understood subject to this law.

#### 4) Psychological Certainty (*Citta-Niyāma*)

Psychical certainty refers to the certainty, or the law, of consciousness. One of the most significant rules that Buddhism places great importance on.

*Purimā purimā cittacetāsikā dhammā pacchimānaṃ pacchimānaṃ cittacetāsikānaṃ dhammānaṃ upanissayapaccayena paccayoti evaṃ yadetam cakkhuvīññāṇādīnaṃ anantarā sampañicchannādīnaṃ nibbattanaṃ, ayaṃ citta-niyāmo.*<sup>55</sup>

The previous consciousness and mental factors are factors of Dhamma by relying (*upanissaya paccaya*) on the later consciousness and mental factors. Therefore, the arising of receiving an object of consciousness (*sampañicchanna citta*), etc., in the sequence of eye-consciousness, etc., is *Citta-Niyāma*.

*Citta-Niyāma* means the certainty of the mind. Evidence from the Visuddhimagga and Abhidhammatthasaṅgaha shows the certainty of the mind, which is an iron law regarding the different functions of all fourteen types of consciousness as follows:

1. Rebirth-linking (*Paṭisandhi*)
2. Life-continuum (*Bhavaṅga*)
3. Adverting (*Āvajjana*)
4. Seeing (*Dassana*)

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<sup>55</sup> DA.II.432.

5. Hearing (*Savana*)
6. Smelling (*Ghāyana*)
7. Tasting (*Sāyana*)
8. Touching (*Phusana*)
9. Receiving (*Sampaṭicchana*)
10. Investigating (*Santīraṇa*)
11. Determining (*Voṭṭhapana*)
12. Impulsion (*Javana*)
13. Registration (*Tadālamhana*)
14. Death (*Cuti*)<sup>56</sup>

These fourteen types of mental functions are recognized as the 14 modes of occurrence of consciousness (*viññāṇapavatti*) or (*viññāṇapavatti ākāra*).<sup>57</sup> From the functioning of the first type of consciousness, which is rebirth-linking, to the last functioning type of consciousness, which is death, Buddhaghosa elaborated them as follows:

1. The occurrence of nineteen kinds of resultant consciousness should be understood as rebirth-linking (*Paṭisandhi*).
2. The occurrence of those same [nineteen kinds of] consciousness should be understood as life-continuum (*Bhavaṅga*).
3. The occurrence of two kinds of functional consciousness should be understood as adverting (*āvajjana*).
4. The occurrence of ten kinds of resultant consciousness should be understood as seeing (*dassana*).
5. The occurrence of ten kinds of resultant consciousness should be understood as hearing (*savana*).

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<sup>56</sup> Vism.458-460; Comp.114; Bhadantacariya Buddhaghosa, **The Path of Purification (Visuddhimagga)**, Tr. By Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli, 4<sup>th</sup> Ed., (Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 2010), pp. 463-466.

<sup>57</sup> Vism.457; Comp.114.

6. The occurrence of ten kinds of resultant consciousness should be understood as smelling (*ghāyana*).

7. The occurrence of ten kinds of resultant consciousness should be understood as tasting (*sāyana*).

8. The occurrence of ten kinds of resultant consciousness should be understood as touching (*phusana*).

9. The occurrence of two kinds of resultant consciousness should be understood as receiving (*sampaṭicchana*).

10. The occurrence of three kinds of resultant consciousness should be understood as investigating (*santīraṇa*).

11. The occurrence of one kind of resultant consciousness should be understood as determining (*voṭṭhapana*).

12. The occurrence of fifty-five kinds of profitable, unprofitable, functional, and resultant consciousness should be understood as impulsion (*javana*).

13. The occurrence of eleven kinds of resultant consciousness should be understood as registration (*tadālabhāna*).

14. The occurrence of nineteen kinds of resultant consciousness should be understood as death (*cuti*).<sup>58</sup>

The certainty of mind or *Citta-Niyāma* is the unchanging nature of consciousness (*citta*) and concomitants (*cetasika*) in terms of the mutual causal relationship between *cittas* and *cetasikas*. It also refers to the relationship between different types of mental functions. For instance, the receiving consciousness (*sampaṭicchana citta*) occurs in close relationship with the mental functions of seeing (*dassana*), hearing (*savana*), smelling (*ghāyana*), tasting (*sāyana*), and touching (*phusana*). This certainty of consciousness reflects the non-delusional nature to reach the ultimate level of the objective nature. It influences how individuals perceive and interpret the non-physical subjective reality around them.

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<sup>58</sup> Vism.458-460; Comp.114; Bhadantacariya Buddhaghosa, **The Path of Purification (Visuddhimagga)**, Tr. By Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli, 4<sup>th</sup> Ed., (Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 2010), pp. 463-466.

### 5) Natural-phenomenal Certainty (*Dhamma-Niyāma*)

Natural-phenomenal certainty refers to the certainty, or the law, of the whole of nature. It is the most important rule of Buddhism, which is the most detailed and profound of all the rules.

"*Yā panesā bodhisattānaṃ mātukucchiṃ okkamanādīsu dasasahassilokadhātukampanādīnaṃ pavatti, ayaṃ dhamma-niyāmo nāma.*"<sup>59</sup>

*Dhamma-Niyāma* denotes the certainty of Dhamma. The commentator explains in detail that it means "The arising of the trembling of the ten thousand worlds when the Bodhisattvas descended into the womb of their mothers is *Dhamma-Niyāma*."<sup>60</sup> The explanation of *Dhamma-Niyāma* in this manner is considered very outstanding because it explains supernatural-seeming phenomena. It requires faith for it to seem reasonable and understandable to some extent.

Significantly, the teachings of natural law are not only found in the various commentaries as mentioned above. They are also found in other commentaries to the Suttas. The evidence showing traces of *niyāma* appears in the *Dīgha Nikāya*, *Sīlakkhandhavagga-aṭṭhakathā*, which widely discusses the meaning, "*Dhammaṭṭhitatanti navalokuttaradhammesu ṭhitasabhāvaṃ. Dhammaniyāmatanti lokuttaradhammaniyāmaniyataṃ.*"<sup>61</sup> "*Dhammaṭṭhitataṃ* means the state of being in the nine supramundane *Dhamma*. *Dhammaniyāmataṃ* means the certainty and correctness according to the path of the supramundane *Dhamma*." This means that *niyāma* is a definite law of a state of things that truly exist and are unavoidable. It may be called natural law, a definite law of the supramundane *Dhamma*." In *Paramatthadīpanī*, Ven. Dhammapāla further explains: "*Niyatoti dhammaniyāmena sammattaniyāmena niyato.*"<sup>62</sup> "*Niyato* means certain by natural law, that is, by certain determination." It can be analyzed that all the explanations about "*niyāma*" in the commentary level are in the same direction, which is the word

<sup>59</sup> DA.II.432.

<sup>60</sup> DA.II.432.

<sup>61</sup> *Paṭṭhapādasutta*, *Paṭṭhapādaparibbājakavatthuvaṇṇanā* - DA.I.378.

<sup>62</sup> *Udānaṭṭhakathā*, *Suppabuddhakutṭhisuttavaṇṇanā* - UdA.290.

“certainty” as we have often seen in the commentarial works. It is the certainty or law of the nature that does not depend on the feelings and thoughts of human beings.

Moreover, in the Commentary to the Majjhimanikāya, Mūlapaṇṇāsa, the explanation of Natural-phenomenal certainty is found on “*nibbijja pakkamiṃsu*” as follows:

*Nibbijja pakkamiṃsū ti ukkaṇṭhitvā dhammaniyāmen’ eva pakkantā. Bodhisattassa sambodhiṃ pattakāle kāyavivekassa okāsadānatthaṃ dhammatāya gatā. Gacchantā ca aññattha agantvā Bārāṇasim eva agamaṃsu. Bodhisatto tesu gatesu adḍhamāsaṃ kāyavivekaṃ labhitvā Bodhimande aparājitapallaṅkena nisīditvā sabbaññutaññaṃ paṭivijjhi.*<sup>63</sup>

“*nibbijja pakkamiṃsu*” implies that the Bhikkhus of the group of five [*Pañcavaggiyā*] were weary and left according to the natural-phenomenal certainty. It is explained that they went according to the law to give the Bodhisatta an opportunity to have bodily seclusion when he attained enlightenment, and when they went, they did not go anywhere else but the city of Benares. When the Bhikkhus of the group of five left, the Bodhisatta had bodily seclusion for half a month, sat on the Throne of Victory in the Bodhimandala, and had penetrated omniscience

The abovementioned implication is considered strange and different from all the evidence that has been discussed. Base on the fivefold certainties of the commentary, it should be more in line with the moral certainty, which is the certainty of action, dealing with the human’s action and its result.

Therefore, the concept and teachings on certainties in the Suttanta Piṭaka Commentary emphasize the explanation of the five types of certainties through various events, both those that occur regularly in daily life and those that are supernatural phenomena, such as explaining the *utu-niyāma* as the certainty of the seasons, the earth, the sky, the air, the wind, the sun, and the rain, including the certainty of the blooming and

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<sup>63</sup> Mahāsaccakasuttavaṇṇanā, MA.II.291.

closing of flowers. The explanation of the *bīja-niyāma* as the certainty of plants, emphasizing the giving of results, that is, which plants give results of that kind of plant, similar to their tastes. Sweet tastes are the result of nectar, and bitter tastes are the result of bitter plants. The explanation of the *citta-niyāma* as the certainty of the consciousness, emphasizing the factors of the consciousness and its concomitants. The explanation of the *kamma-niyāma* as the certainty of action, emphasizing the giving of results, that is, both wholesome and unwholesome. And the explanation of the *dhamma-niyāma* as the certainty of dhamma, emphasizing the phenomenal characteristics that are beyond nature, such as the trembling of the ten thousand worlds when the Bodhisattvas descended into the womb of their mothers.

One thing to note here is that the certainties, according to the commentarial context, namely, moral certainty (*kamma-niyāma*), caloric certainty (*utu-niyāma*), germinal certainty (*bīja-niyāma*), psychical certainty (*citta-niyāma*), and natural-phenomenal certainty (*dhamma-niyāma*), can all be explained using the principle of dependent origination or *Dhamma-niyāma* in the Tipiṭaka as exposed by the Buddha.

## 2. Natural Law in Abhidhamma Piṭaka Aṭṭhakathā<sup>64</sup>

Since the Expositor (Atthasālinī), the commentary to the Dhammasaṅgaṇī, the first book of the Abhidhamma Piṭaka, is an important scripture in the commentary level that elaborates the Abhidhamma Piṭaka, the explanation of the laws of nature in this scripture is especially detailed. Plus, the examples of natural events and phenomena are given to support the explanations. They are stated about the fivefold order of the cosmos, or the ‘fivefold cosmic order’.<sup>65</sup> The order of each definition differs slightly from the commentary to the Suttanta Piṭaka, as already mentioned respectively, as follows: 1) Germinal Order (*Bīja-Niyāma*), 2) Caloric Order (*Utu-Niyāma*), 3) Moral Order (*Kamma-Niyāma*), 4) Natural-

<sup>64</sup> DhsA.272; Buddhaghosa, **The Expositor (Atthasālinī)**, Vol. II., tr. Maung Tin, (London: The Oxford University Press, 1921), pp. 360-362.

<sup>65</sup> “*niyāmakakathā*” - DhsA.285;

“fivefold cosmic order” - Buddhaghosa, **The Expositor (Atthasālinī)**, Vol. II., 2 Vols. Set, tr. Maung Tin, (London: The Oxford University Press, 1921), p. 374.

phenomenal Order (*Dhamma-Niyāma*), 5) Psychical Order (*Citta-Niyāma*).<sup>66</sup>

### 1) Germinal Certainty (*Bīja-Niyāma*):

It is undeniable that the human population not only consumes meat as food, but also consumes plants and vegetables. Plants and vegetables have their seeds of life, just like humans do. This principle of the seeds of life itself is a small starting point for humans to learn about nature through the life cycle of plants, as the efforts of Venerable Buddhaghosa have given:

Of these, the Germinal certainty [reveals] a giving of this and that similar modes of fruition to this or that seed, as in the gram's top shoots sprouting to the north, the southern creeper growing round a tree from the right, the sunflower's facing the sun, the Maluva creeper growing towards a tree, the holes occurring in the top of the cocoanut.<sup>67</sup>

*Bīja-Niyāma* is directly related to the fruiting patterns of plants, as the term "modes of fruition" was used, which is observed in the flowering and fruiting of plants in nature. In germinal certainty, there is no single cause for the fruitions but only multiple fruits from multiple causes. Therefore, fruits are called a shoot having visible form, smell, taste, etc. arise from multiple causes, such as temperature, earth, seed, and moisture, etc., as in the following paragraph:

For here there is no single nor multiple fruit of any kind from a single cause, nor is there a single [fruit] from multiple causes, but only multiple [fruit] from multiple causes. Thus from the multiple causes, called temperature, earth, seed and moisture, fruit called a shoot having visible form, smell, taste, etc. is found to arise.<sup>68</sup>

It would seem that the nature of these living things called plants is not very important. These living things appear to human perception and awareness very faintly. For this reason, the commentator explains *bīja-*

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<sup>66</sup> “*Imasmiṃ pana ṭhāne pañcavidhaniyāmaṃ nāma gaṇhiṃsu bījanīyāmaṃ utunīyāmaṃ kammanīyāmaṃ dhammanīyāmaṃ cittanīyāmaṃ ti.*” - DhsA.272

<sup>67</sup> DhsA.272: Ibid., p. 360.

<sup>68</sup> VbhA.147; Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli ( tr. ), **The Dispeller of Delusion (Sammohavinodanī)**, Part I, (Oxford: PTS, 1996), p. 181.



*niyāma* by relating the growing processes of plants to the perception of the observer. Only one who sees the nature of plants as they are can truly understand the secret of their true nature, without distortion, with the eye of wisdom. Therefore, intelligent observation is something that humans should do of the environment around them.

Just like a seed's reaching the state of a tree through the state of the shoot and so on, is called the "method of identity". One who sees this rightly abandons the annihilation view by comprehending the unbrokenness of the continuity which occurs due to the linking of cause with fruit.<sup>69</sup>

This secret of nature is a unique plant characteristic that the commentator calls “method of identity,” which is not only plants but also in animals, nature, and the environment, but it is different according to their seeds. And when the eye of Dhamma arises, a person will transcend beyond the ordinary individual to become a Noble individual. The first Ariya person is *ekabījī sotāpanna* (*eka* = single; *bījī* = seed; *sotāpanna* = stream enterer), “One with a single seed (*ekabījī*),”<sup>70</sup> a person whose name is similar to *bīja-niyāma*, meaning a stream enterer who still has a seed left to bring him back to be born once more.

## 2) Caloric Certainty (*Utu-Niyāma*):

In The Dispeller of Delusion (Sammohavinodanī), the following terms, like “climate”<sup>71</sup> “season”<sup>72</sup> “temperature”,<sup>73</sup> etc. were used in translation from the Pāli "*utu*". Here, caloric certainty should cover all natural phenomena related to climate change, changing seasons, fluctuating hot-cold temperatures, as well as calories, etc. The text that appears in the Visuddhimagga shows its definition: “*Tattha utu nāma catusamuṭṭhānā*

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<sup>69</sup> VbhA.198; Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli ( tr. ), **The Dispeller of Delusion (Sammohavinodanī)**, Part I, (Oxford: PTS, 1996), p. 242.

<sup>70</sup> VbhA.430; Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli ( tr. ), **The Dispeller of Delusion (Sammohavinodanī)**, Part II, (Oxford: PTS, 1996), p. 178.

<sup>71</sup> Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli ( tr. ), **The Dispeller of Delusion (Sammohavinodanī)**, Part II, (Oxford: PTS, 1996), pp. 307, 364.

<sup>72</sup> Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli ( tr. ), **The Dispeller of Delusion (Sammohavinodanī)**, Part II, (Oxford: PTS, 1996), pp. 342, 364.

<sup>73</sup> VbhA.8, 24, 70; Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli ( tr. ), **The Dispeller of Delusion (Sammohavinodanī)**, Part I, (Oxford: PTS, 1996), pp. 7, 27, 82.

*tejodhātu, uṇha-utu-sīta-utūti evaṃ pan' esa duvidho hoti.*"<sup>74</sup> Which can be translated as, "Temperature is the fire element of fourfold origination; but it is twofold as hot temperature and cold temperature."<sup>75</sup> In this context, *utu-niyāma* could also be translated as "certainty of temperature".

Although the explanation of *utu-niyāma* is not found in much of this Atthasālinī scripture, Buddhaghosa somehow leaves some of its characteristics as follows: "The caloric certainty is the simultaneous blossoming, fructifying and sprouting of such and such trees at such and such seasons."<sup>76</sup> Unlike the germinal certainty, the explanation of caloric certainty does not focus on the genetic transmission of plants, but rather on the phenomena of flowering, fruiting, and the simultaneous emergence of leaves in different seasons. In short, this specific certainty focuses on the "different seasons" that have different effects on natural plants."

### 3) Moral Certainty (*Kamma-Niyāma*):

The certainty of action, according to the context of the commentary, is about "actions and their results". The giving of suitable results by various actions is emphasized:

Thrice-conditioned *kamma* gives thrice-conditioned, twice-conditioned, unconditioned result; twice-conditioned *kamma* gives twice-conditioned, unconditioned result, not thrice-conditioned result - this giving of suitable results by various *kammās* is the Moral Order.<sup>77</sup>

The commentator also gives examples of *Kamma-Niyāma* through the three stories of action<sup>78</sup> that occurred during the time of the Buddha as follows:

**The First Story of a Crow:** In the time of the supreme Buddha, a village near the gate of Sāvattihī was burnt down, a blazing wisp of hay

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<sup>74</sup> Vism.616.

<sup>75</sup> Bhadantacariya Buddhaghosa, **The Path of Purification (Visuddhimagga)**, Tr. By Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli, 4<sup>th</sup> Ed., (Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 2010), p. 643.

<sup>76</sup> DhsA.272; Buddhaghosa, **The Expositor (Atthasālinī)**, Vol. II., tr. Maung Tin, (London: The Oxford University Press, 1921), p. 360.

<sup>77</sup> DhsA.273; Ibid., pp. 360-361.

<sup>78</sup> DhsA.272-273; Buddhaghosa, **The Expositor (Atthasālinī)**, Vol. II., tr. Maung Tin, (London: The Oxford University Press, 1921), pp. 361-362.

therefrom rose up and caught the neck of a crow flying in the sky. The crow, screeching, fell to the ground and died.

**The Second Story of a Woman:** In the ocean, too, a certain ship got aground. They, not seeing any obstruction from below, cast lots; the unlucky number fell into the hand of the captain's wife. They then said: 'Owing to one woman let not all perish; we must throw her into the water.' The captain, saying 'I cannot bear to see her floating in the water,' tied a pot of sand to her neck and had her thrown. At that moment, the ship moved off like an arrow shot from a bow.

**The Third Story of a Bhikkhu:** A certain bhikkhu lived in a cave. A huge mountain peak fell and closed up the entrance. On the seventh day of itself it moved away.

They [monks] told these three stories together to the perfect Buddha, as he sat in the Jetavana preaching the Doctrine. The Teacher said, 'This *kamma* was not the work of other; it was done by the crow itself,' etc., and he showed the related past: - The crow in a previous existence was a man, who, being unable to tame a vicious ox; tied a bundle of straw to its neck and set it on fire, and the ox died. Now that action did not allow the crow to escape, even though he flew into the sky. That woman in a previous existence was also a woman. A dog was devoted to her, and when she went to the forest went and came back with her. Men scoffed at her with: 'There goes our dog-mistress.' She felt ashamed and, being unable to restrain the dog, tied a pot of sand to its neck and threw it into the water. That action did not allow the woman to escape in mid-ocean. That bhikkhu in a previous existence was a cowherd. When an iguana entered a hole he closed the entrance by a handful of broken twigs, and on the seventh day himself came and opened it. The iguana came out trembling. Through pity he spared its life. That action did not allow that bhikkhu to escape even when he had entered a mountain cave and sat there.

From these three examples of moral certainty, which are derived from all these stories, the jigsaw puzzle can be made clearer in the following table:

Stories	Present Existence			Previous Existence		
	Person	Cause	Result	Person	Cause	Result
<b>First Story</b>	Crow	Burning hay caught its neck	It died	Man	He tied a bundle of straw to the ox's neck and set it on fire	The ox died
<b>Second Story</b>	Woman	She had a pot of sand tied around her neck and was thrown into the sea	She died	Woman	She tied a pot of sand to the dog's neck and threw it into the water	The dog died
<b>Third Story</b>	Bhikkhu	A mountain peak closed the entrance; on the seventh day, it moved away	He was trapped in a cave	Cowherd	He closed the hole's entrance with broken twigs and opened it on the seventh day	The iguana was trapped for seven days

**Table 4.4 Giving of Suitable Kamma Results Relating to Previous Existence**

The above giving of suitable *kamma* results relating to previous existence best describes the moral certainty. It demonstrates the "fairness of the results of karma" by taking into account the actions performed in each individual's past lives. Thus connecting these three stories, the Teacher spoke this verse: -

*na antalikkhe                      na samuddamajjhe*  
*na pabbatānaṃ                  vivaraṃ pavissa*  
*na vijjate                          so jagatippadeso*  
*yatraṭṭhito                      mucceyya pāpakammā" ti.*<sup>79</sup>

Not to the sky nor to mid-ocean, nor  
 By hieing him to any cavern of the hills,  
 Nor is there any spot in all the earth

<sup>79</sup> DhsA.274.

Where he could stand so that he might escape  
From deed of wickedness that he had wrought.<sup>80</sup>

From the above examples of the moral certainty that the commentator has mentioned, we can see the working principles of *kamma* in the dimensions of one's action, including the results of such action, which are all causes and factors of each other. All of the bad actions were wrought in the past, making "the crow that has a tuft of burning grass around its neck", "the woman who was thrown into the ocean", and "the bhikkhu who was trapped in a cave". This shows that in reality, there is no such thing as "coincidence". Everything that happens is caused by various causes and factors. These are examples that support the principle of moral certainty (and the results) as stated by the Buddha in the Cūḷakammavibhaṅga Sutta, The Shorter Exposition of Action, "*Kammassakā māṇava sattā kammadāyādā kammayonī kammabandhū kammaṇṇasaraṇā kammaṇṇ satte vibhajati yadidaṇ hīnappaṇītātāyāti.*"<sup>81</sup>

Students, beings are owners of their actions, heirs of their actions; they originate from their actions, are bound to their actions, have their actions as their refuge. It is action that distinguishes beings as inferior and superior.<sup>82</sup>

Similarly, in all three cases of action mentioned above, the Crow, the Woman, and the Bhikkhu have all committed evil deeds in their past lives, such as taking life or harming others. These evil deeds will give only evil results under this moral certainty.

#### 4) Natural-phenomenal Certainty (*Dhamma-Niyāma*):

A unique and different explanation from the previous certainties is found in "Natural-phenomenal Certainty". The Pali word "dhamma" here implies the most extensive possibilities, and is translated into English

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<sup>80</sup> Buddhaghosa, *The Expositor (Atthasālinī)*, Vol. II., tr. Maung Tin, (London: The Oxford University Press, 1921), p. 362.

<sup>81</sup> M.III.203; Bhikkhu Ñānamoli and Bhikkhu Bodhi (trs.), *The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha*, (Oxford: PTS, 2001), p. 1053.

<sup>82</sup> M.III.203; Bhikkhu Ñānamoli and Bhikkhu Bodhi (trs.), *The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha*, (Oxford: PTS, 2001), p. 1053.

as “natural phenomenon”. But here, the commentator limits it to the description of important events that happened to the Buddha as follows:

*Bodhisats* taking conception, being born of a mother, their final enlightenment, as *Tathāgata* turning the wheel of *Dhamma*, the surrender of life and utterly passing away:- the world-earthquake at each is of the *Dhamma*-Order.<sup>83</sup>

In Buddhism, earthquakes hold both natural and spiritual significance. Symbolically, earthquakes represent impermanence (*aniccam*), reminding practitioners that even the Earth is unstable and subject to change. They are often seen as signs marking profound events in the Buddha’s life, such as his birth, the descent into the Mother’s Womb, enlightenment, giving the First Sermon, pre-determination of death date, and passing into Mahāparinibbāna. Thus, earthquakes hold deep significance in the Buddhist spiritual and cosmological perspective.

One of the most controversial natural phenomena is the explanation of the cause of earthquakes from a Buddhist perspective, which encompasses not only scientific explanations but also beliefs in supernatural phenomena. As stated in the Suttanta Piṭaka, Dīgha Nikāya, Mahavagga, Mahaparinirvana Sutta, the Buddha told Ananda: “Ānanda, there are eight reasons, eight causes for the appearance of a great earthquake.”<sup>84</sup> They are as follows:

**First Reason:** This great earth is established on water, the water on the wind, the wind on space. And when a mighty wind blows, this stirs up the water, and through the stirring-up of the water the earth quakes.

**Second Reason:** In the second place, there is an ascetic or Brahmin who has developed psychic powers, or a mighty and powerful deva whose earth-consciousness is weakly developed and his water-consciousness is immeasurable, and he makes the earth shudder and shake and violently quake.

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<sup>83</sup> DhsA.274; Buddhaghosa, **The Expositor (Atthasālinī)**, Vol. II., tr. Maung Tin, (London: The Oxford University Press, 1921), p. 362.

<sup>84</sup> D.II.107; Maurice Walshe (tr.), **Thus Have I Heard: The Long Discourses of the Buddha (Dīgha Nikāya)**, (London: Wisdom Publications, 1987), p. 247.

**Third Reason:** Again, when a Bodhisatta descends from the Tusita Heaven, mindful and clearly aware, into his mother's womb, then the earth shudders and shakes and violently quakes.

**Fourth Reason:** Again, when the Bodhisatta emerges from his mother's womb, mindful and clearly aware, then the earth shudders and shakes and violently quakes.

**Fifth Reason:** Again, when the Tathāgata gains unsurpassed enlightenment, then the earth shudders and shakes and violently quakes.

**Sixth Reason:** Again, when the Tathāgata sets in motion the Wheel of the Dhamma, then the earth shudders and shakes and violently quakes.

**Seventh Reason:** Again, when the Tathāgata, mindful and clearly aware, renounces the life-principle, then the earth shudders and shakes and violently quakes.

**Eighth Reason:** Again, when the Tathāgata gains the Nibbāna-element without remainder, then the earth shudders and shakes and violently quakes.

The above eight reasons are “the eight causes for the appearance of a great earthquake”.<sup>85</sup> The following table demonstrates the said different causes:

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<sup>85</sup> D.II.107-109; See Maurice Walshe (tr.), **Thus Have I Heard: The Long Discourses of the Buddha (Dīgha Nikāya)**, (London: Wisdom Publications, 1987), pp. 247-248.

No.	Causes	Geography	Mental Power	The Buddha-Related Key Events
1	When a mighty wind blows, this stirs up the water, and through the stirring up of the water, the earth quakes	✓	-	-
2	By the powerful ones whose earth-consciousness is weakly developed and whose water-consciousness is immeasurable	-	✓	-
3	A Bodhisatta descends into his mother's womb	-	-	✓
4	The Bodhisatta emerges from his mother's womb	-	-	✓
5	The Tathāgata gains unsurpassed enlightenment	-	-	✓
6	The Tathāgata sets in motion the Wheel of the Dhamma	-	-	✓
7	The Tathāgata renounces the life-principle	-	-	✓
8	The Tathāgata gains the Nibbāna-element without remainder	-	-	✓

**Table 4.5 The Eight Causes of a Great Earthquake**

Among these eight causes, as stated by the Buddha, the great earthquake can first occur according to scientific theories, especially geography, which deals with the physical characteristics of the earth, water, wind, air, and space, etc. In addition, the Buddha also mentioned the power of the human and divine minds, which have great potential to inspire earthquakes. The remaining six causes are directly related to important events of the Buddha, starting from his descent into his mother's womb to his Mahāparinibbāna. These six important events related to the Buddha are in line with the explanation of *Dhamma-Niyāma* in The Expositor (Atthasālinī), that the great earthquake caused by (1) *Bodhisats* taking conception, (2) being born of a mother, (3) their final enlightenment, (4) as *Tathāgata* turning the wheel of *Dhamma*, (5) the surrender of life and (6) utterly passing away.

### **5) Psychical Certainty (*Citta-Niyāma*):**

Among the five kinds of certainty, psychical certainty is one that Buddhism attaches great importance to, as the abstract element of life, in



addition to the material element of life. Psychological certainty (*citta-niyāma*) refers to the certainty of consciousness, as explained in the following way:

And when an object strikes the sentient organism there is no doer or instigator to say, ‘Be thou adverting,’ etc. From the time the object strikes the sentient organism; each according to its own nature adverting by the five doors agitates the life-continuum, visual cognition accomplishes the function of seeing, the resultant mind-element accomplishes the function of receiving, the resultant mind-cognition-element that of examining, the inoperative mine-cognition-element that of determining, apperception enjoys the taste of the object: - all this understood as the Psychological Order<sup>86</sup>

This psychological certainty, explained by Venerable Buddhaghosa, refers to the certainty of consciousness. Since the mind has a nature that cannot be seen by the naked eye, understanding this requires a concept that is intelligent and aware of the nature of abstractions. Whenever objects (*ārammaṇa*) affect the sensory organs (*pasāda*), there is no “doer” or “mastermind” who orders the mind to do this or that. It is just the 14 different functions of the abstract mind, namely: - 1. rebirth-linking (*paṭisandhi*), 2. life-continuum (*bhavaṅga*), 3. adverting (*āvajjana*), 4. seeing (*dassana*), 5. hearing (*savana*), 6. smelling (*ghāyana*), 7. tasting (*sāyana*), 8. touching (*phusana*), 9. receiving (*sampañicchana*), 10. investigating (*santīraṇa*), 11. determining (*voṭṭhapana*), 12. impulsion (*javana*), 13. registration (*tadālamhana*), and 14. death (*cuti*). It is purely a matter of “mental functions” under the psychological certainty.

When, by thrice-conditioned [*hetuka*] and non-automatic [*sasaṃkhārika*] moral consciousness [*kusala citta*], and also by automatic [*asaṃkhārika*] or non-automatic moral consciousness accompanied by indifference [*upekkhā*] *kamma* is wrought, and similar resultant consciousness [*vipāka citta*] comes in the re-conception obtained, the same method holds good. But in the two classes of consciousness accompanied by indifference, procedure, having first been shown by way of a fairly desirable object

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<sup>86</sup> DhsA.274; Buddhaghosa, **The Expositor (Atthasālinī)**, Vol. II., 2 Vols. Set, tr. Maung Tin, (London: The Oxford University Press, 1921), p. 362.

[*iṭṭhamajjhārammaṇa*], should afterwards be shown by way of a desirable object [*iṭṭhārammaṇa*]. Thus in each door are twelve, making sixty in all. By taking what has not been taken sixteen kinds of resultant consciousness arise.<sup>87</sup>

From the above passage, Venerable Buddhaghosa points out in detail the minds from the Abhidhamma perspective, both in terms of their functioning and their fruition, whether it is moral consciousness (*kusala citta*), immoral consciousness (*akusala citta*), conditioned mind (*hetuka citta*), automatic consciousness (*asaṃkhārika citta*), non-automatic consciousness (*sasaṃkhārika citta*), consciousness accompanied by indifference (*upekkhā sahagata citta*), resultant consciousness (*vipāka citta*), etc. The psychical certainty is the nature and functioning of all these minds.

Among the numerical scriptures of commentarial works, the most concise discussion was found in *Sumaṅgalavilāsinī*, in a discussion of the meaning of *dhammatā* in the Mahāpadāna Sutta. And a similar discussion is also found in the *Aṭṭhasālinī*, in the context of a discussion of the *abhidhamma* theory of perception.<sup>88</sup> It is noteworthy that there appear to be only a couple more references to the five-fold *niyāma* in the entire *Pāli* commentarial literature.

The concept and teachings on certainties in the Dhammasaṅgaṇī Commentary are explained in a similar way to those in the Mahāpadāna Sutta Commentary, that is, they explain in the same direction. However, there are some slight differences in the details. Therefore, to see the differences in these details, the researchers present a table showing a comparison of the explanations on the five types of certainties as follows:

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<sup>87</sup> DhsA.274; Buddhaghosa, **The Expositor (Aṭṭhasālinī)**, Vol. II., 2 Vols. Set, tr. Maung Tin, (London: The Oxford University Press, 1921), p. 362.

<sup>88</sup> And much the same discussion is put in verse in the Abhidhammāvatāra, a summary of *abhidhamma* by Buddhaghosa's contemporary, Buddhadatta, Abhidh-av. 54.

<i>Pañcavidha-niyāma</i>	<b>Suttanta Piṭaka Aṭṭhakathā<sup>89</sup></b> (Mahāpadāna Sutta Commentary)	<b>Abhidhamma Piṭaka Aṭṭhakathā<sup>90</sup></b> (Dhammasaṅgaṇī Commentary)
<b>1. Moral Certainty</b> ( <i>Kamma-Niyāma</i> )	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The production of desirable good deeds</li> <li>The production of undesirable evil deeds</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Tihetuka kamma</i> gives thrice-conditioned, twice-conditioned, unconditioned result</li> <li><i>Duhetuka kamma</i> gives twice-conditioned, unconditioned result, not thrice-conditioned result</li> <li>This giving of suitable results by various <i>kammās</i></li> </ul>
<b>2. Caloric Certainty</b> ( <i>Utu-Niyāma</i> )	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The collection of flowers and fruits from trees, cutting them only once</li> <li>The wind blows/does not blow</li> <li>The sun is strong/weak</li> <li>The rain falls/does not fall</li> <li>The lotus blooms during the day and closes at night</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The simultaneous blossoming, fructifying and sprouting of such and such trees at such and such seasons</li> </ul>
<b>3. Germinal Certainty</b> ( <i>Bīja-Niyāma</i> )	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Wheat is the fruit that comes only from wheat</li> <li>Sweetness is the fruit of nectar</li> <li>Bitterness is the fruit of bitter plants</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A giving of this and that similar modes of fruition to this or that seed</li> <li>The gram's top shoots sprouting to the north</li> <li>The southern creeper growing round a tree from the right</li> <li>The sunflower's facing the sun</li> <li>The Maluva creeper growing towards a tree</li> <li>The holes occurring in the top of the cocoanut</li> </ul>
<b>4. Psychical Certainty</b> ( <i>Citta-Niyāma</i> )	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The previous consciousness and mental factors are <i>upanissaya paccaya</i> on the later consciousness and mental factors</li> <li>The arising of <i>sampaṭicchanna citta</i>, etc., in the sequence of eye-consciousness, etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>From the time the object strikes the sentient organism; each according to its own nature advertizing by the five doors agitates the life-continuum, visual cognition accomplishes the function of seeing, the resultant mind-element accomplishes the function of receiving, the resultant mind-cognition-element that of examining, the inoperative mine-cognition-element that of determining, apperception enjoys the taste of the object</li> </ul>
<b>5. Natural-phenomenal Certainty</b> ( <i>Dhamma-Niyāma</i> )	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The arising of the trembling of the ten thousand worlds when the Bodhisattvas descended into the womb of their mothers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bodhisats taking conception, being born of a mother, their final enlightenment, as Tathāgata turning the wheel of Dhamma, the surrender of life and utterly passing away: - the world-earthquake at each</li> </ul>

**Table 4.6 Comparison of Pañcavidhaniyāma in Suttanta Piṭaka Commentary and Abhidhamma Piṭaka Commentary**

When comparing and summarizing the concepts from the two scriptures in the table, we can see some differences. Consider them in

<sup>89</sup> “*Niyāmo ca nāmesa kammaniyāmo utuniyāmo bījanīyāmo cittanīyāmo dhammanīyāmoti pañcavidho*” Mahāpadāna-Sutta-Vaṇṇanā- DA. II.432.

<sup>90</sup> “*Imasmiṃ pana ṭhāne pañcavidhaniyāmaṃ nāma gaṇhiṃsu bījanīyāmaṃ utuniyāmaṃ kammanīyāmaṃ dhammanīyāmaṃ cittanīyāmaṃ ti.*” - DhsA.272.

order, starting from the caloric certainty to the last order, which is natural-phenomenal certainty, as follows:

1) Moral certainty is defined in both Mahāpadāna Sutta Commentary and Dhammasaṅgaṇī Commentary as the certainty of action (*kamma*) according to the principle of actions and their fruitions (*vipāka*).

2) Caloric certainty in Mahāpadāna Sutta Commentary clearly emphasizes the climate, wind, sun, rain, etc. But in Dhammasaṅgaṇī Commentary, it only mentions the leafy and fruitful fruits of trees, but does not mention the climate in any way.

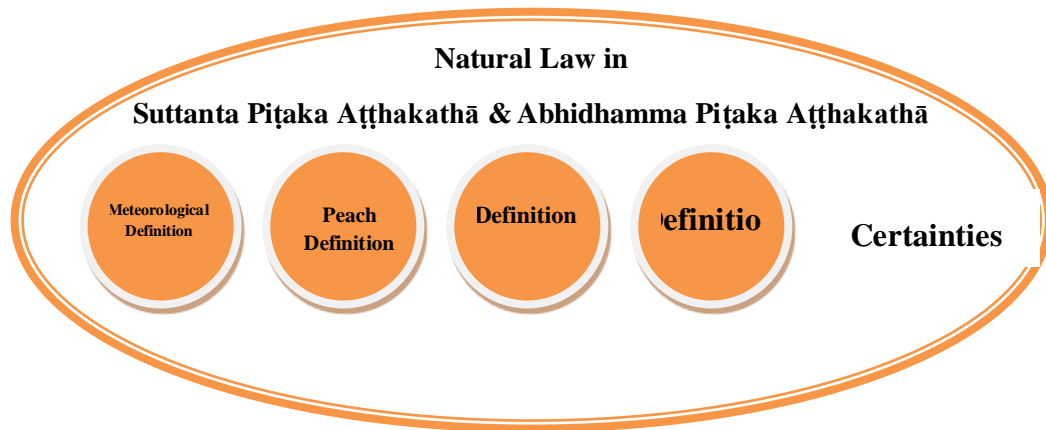
3) Germinal certainty, both in Mahāpadāna Sutta Commentary and Dhammasaṅgaṇī Commentary mention the same thing, which is the transmission of genetic traits from plant to plant. Dhammasaṅgaṇī Commentary further explains some of the specific characteristics of the plant, such as the clump of beans stretching to the left and the vines to the right enveloping the tree to the right, or the sunflower facing the sun. However, in the researcher's opinion, the explanation of the issue (specific characteristics of plants) is not as clear as it should be, and there is some ambiguity, which may be a turning point in the teaching of *niyāma*, potentially leading to different interpretations by scholars in later times. It is easy to get away from the traditional teachings.

4) Psychical Certainty, both Mahāpadāna Sutta Commentary and Dhammasaṅgaṇī Commentary explain the certainty of mind in the same direction, that is, it describes the function of the minds and their concomitants that are related to each other as causes and relational factors.

5) Natural-phenomenal Certainty in both Mahāpadāna Sutta Commentary and Dhammasaṅgaṇī Commentary explains that the certainty of Dhamma defines those supernatural phenomena, namely, the shaking in the ten thousand elemental worlds. This is due to the bodhisattvas.

Although there are some minor differences between the two scriptures, it is considered another unique explanation of the certainty. The researcher will analyze and present personal views in the following order as appropriate.

However, when the fivefold certainties are written as a chart according to the sources found in the commentary, they can be displayed as follows:



**Figure 4.3 Natural Law in Commentaries**

From the chart, it can be clearly seen that the definitions that the commentary classifies into 5 types. There is a definition of Dharma that is the certainty of the Dharma, which is the main principle that covers all the other 4 sub-principles.

From the study The concepts and teachings of definitions that appear in the commentary show that the commentary gives the meaning and definition of certainty and classifies it into 5 types according to the nature of the certainty.

The concept and teachings of definitions in the Maha Paṇṇa Sutra emphasizes the explanation of the five types of definitions in the manner of various events that are certainties that occur regularly in daily life, namely meteorism, peach definition, mental definition, and karma, while events that are supernatural phenomena are also certain, but may not occur very often during human life. When the Mother of Bodhisattvas descended into the womb,

Concepts and teachings on definitions in the Dhamma Sangani Commentary It is consistent and close to the explanation that appears in the Maha Pa Sutra. In other words, it is explained in the same direction as follows: (1) Atomism is an explanation of the meteorological definition.

Focus on the climate, soil. (2) Peach Definition is an explanation of the Peach Definition. (3) Definition is an explanation of mental definition. (4) Definition of Karma is an explanation of the definition of karma, emphasis is on the principle of karma, which is the action that produces the effect of karma. The emphasis is on supernatural phenomena that may not occur often, namely the tremors in the ten thousand elemental worlds. Because of the bodhisattvas

For the explanation of the two different scriptures, including the explanation of the Peach Definition in the Dhamma Sangkani Commentary. He further explains some specific characteristics of plants, such as the clump of beans hanging to the left and the vines to the right enveloping the tree, or the sunflower facing the sun, which is not as clear as it should be and may be somewhat ambiguous. In the Dhamma Sangani Commentary, it only mentions the leaf production and fruit of trees, but does not mention the climate in any way.

The concept and teachings of definitions in other commentaries on the sutras show that the commentaries have adopted the concept of explaining the meaning of the word "definition" from the Tika Sect Silkhanthawan Kortaktha text, including the word "certainty of". "Dharma Definition" shows that the Dharma Definition is the certainty of the Dharma that is broad and can cover all the remaining 4 definitions.

#### **4.1.3 Developmental Analysis of the Teachings on Natural Laws (*Niyāma*) as Appeared in Tipiṭaka and Commentaries**

When the facts of all the research from the Tipiṭaka and the commentaries respectively are processed, synthesized, and analyzed, the concept and teachings of this definition can be analyzed. The Buddha did not divide or classify anything, but he taught in the context of a "ordinary" principle, but it is of great importance, because it is about the highest goal that Buddhism can offer to the religious people to have a way to behave to achieve that goal. The principle of the Samadhi or the relational factor and the principle of the three ordinary characteristics of the elements that we are better than, the ordinary or the Trinity. These teachings are collected in a primary scripture called the "Tipiṭaka".

As time passed until about the 5th century, the Commentary was born<sup>91</sup>, which is the source of the explanation of the Buddhist doctrine or the principles of discipline or the explanation of the Trinity. The "5 Definitions" is considered an initiative to expand "From one to five" in all 5 significant ways, starting from the definition of the concept, the definition of the peach, the definition of the mind. The definition of karma and the definition of "from ordinary to certain" that the commentary uses in conjunction with explaining the definition along his lines.

The largest type of definition that the commentary explains is the "Dharma Definition", which is unique in that the bodhisattvas when they consider it at the time of the birth of the Buddha's mother. In the time of enlightenment, the Buddha Anuttara Samasambodhiyan is good. In the time when the wheel of the Dharma moves, in the time of the death of the Buddha, and in the time of the death of the Buddha, the elemental world will shake, and these phenomena are classified as the certainty of the Dharma (Dharma definition), the vibration of<sup>92</sup> the elemental world at the time of the birth of the bodhisattva, etc., is a great marvelous beauty. These are natural certainties called "dharma definition eyes".<sup>93</sup>

The researcher is of the opinion that the expansion of the Commentary on the Tipiṭaka is done in three major ways:

1) Explaining the meaning of the definition of "certainty" (niyato) instead of the original meaning in the Tipiṭaka that uses the word "ordinary".

2) Expansion or classification of definitions into 5 categories, including meteorological definitions and peach definitions, etc.

3) Explanation of the implications of those 5 types: He explained the first 4 types of definitions (Meteorology, Peach, Mindfulness, and

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<sup>91</sup> Until when the Tipiṭaka was inscribed in writing in Lanca, around 460 A.D., legend has it that the commentary was also inscribed along with it. : **The Pali Canon What a Buddhist Must Know**, (Bangkok: S.R. Printing Mass Products Co., Ltd., 2002), p. 53.

<sup>92</sup> Maung Tin, **The Expositor**, ed. by C.A.F. Rhys Davids., vol. 2, (London: PTS, 1921): p. 362.

<sup>93</sup> Buddhaddatta, ed. By A.P., **Buddhadatta's Manuals. Part 1 : Abhidhammāvatāra**, (London : PTS, 1980), p. 54.

Karma) in the form of natural phenomena with the characteristics of general events that appeared in daily life in the social context of the time, and explained the 5th definition (Dharma definition) in the manner of supernatural phenomena that occur from time to time. There is a fluctuation in the ten thousand elemental worlds. In descending into the womb of the Mother of Bodhisattvas, etc.

The researcher disagrees with the use of the word "certainty" instead of the word "ordinary" in the Tipiṭaka because the word "ordinary" is a word that already covers everything in the universe and has a neutral meaning and a much broader meaning without the predicate of certainty or uncertainty. If we talk about "certainty" by explaining it in conjunction with natural phenomena, there may be a problem that follows: "Is nature certain?" In the 16th-18th centuries, the world underwent a major change in scientific concepts due to the research and experimentation of various theories by a scientist named Nicholas Krishna. Nicholaus Copernicus<sup>94</sup> proposed a theory about the universe that the Sun is the center of the solar system, not the Earth. This theory is contrary to the original belief theory that existed more than 1,500 years ago proposed by Ptolemy.<sup>95</sup> He also rejected Aristotle's theory<sup>96</sup> that the Earth was flat.

This phenomenon is a phenomenon of a revolution of thought that has occurred in mankind, showing us that this kind of inductive reasoning can show that the earth and the universe are uncertain. Even the sun itself may change its orbit. Just like the change of the Earth's axis of rotation<sup>97</sup>, in terms of plant reproduction (peach definition) or

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<sup>94</sup> Nicholas Nicholas Copernicus was a scientist of Polish descent. Linton, Christopher M., **From Eudoxus to Einstein-A History of Mathematical Astronomy**, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 39.

<sup>95</sup> Ptolemy was a mathematician. astronomer Geographer and astrologer J e a n Claude Pecker, **Understanding the Heavens : Thirty Centuries of Astronomical Ideas from Ancient Thinking to Modern Cosmology**, (Heidelberg : Springer, 2001), p. 311.

<sup>96</sup> Aristotle was a Sturgeire. He was a pupil of Plato, lived from 284 to 322, quoted in Kirati Boonjue, Professor, **Folk Philosophy**. (Bangkok: Double Nine Publishing House, 2000), p. 120.

<sup>97</sup> Pole shift is the shift of the Earth's spindle pole. This caused the north and south poles of the earth to change their positions. It occurs because the Earth's



temperature, heat, season, rain, sky, etc., there is a chance of change and uncertainty. Therefore, the researcher's view is that the word "certainty" should not be used to describe things in the universe including the earth. In addition to being difficult to understand, it is also easy to cause confusion. It is due to the word chosen.

The reason why the commentary Separate the defining types and describe them in a more bizarre way. The researcher is of the opinion that there is a possibility caused by the era of the commentary. It was an era when many scriptures were produced, such as the Visuthamāṇa. From this perspective, it may cause the development of knowledge in the definition without difficulty. The development of the definition from the Tipiṭaka to the era of the commentary As the chart shows the development of concepts and teachings from the Tipiṭaka to the commentary. from now on

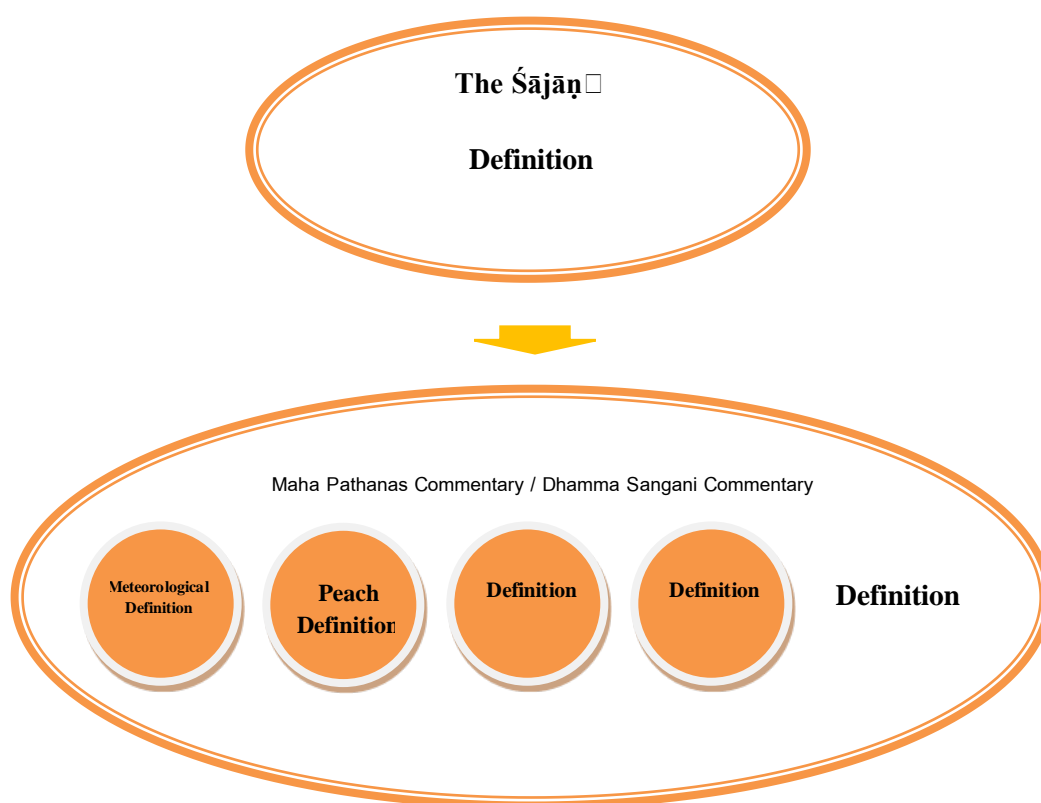


chart Two.๑ : Showing the development of concepts and teachings from the Tipiṭaka to the commentary.

symbols are not completely round. This phenomenon is believed to have actually occurred on Earth, including the planets and moons of other planets, The Thai Astronomical Society <http://thaiastro.nectec.or.th/library/faqs/faq.php> .

#### 4.1.4 Concluding Remarks

From the study of Chapter 2 on the concepts and teachings of definitions that appear in the Tipiṭaka and Commentary. It is found that the concept and teachings of definition that appear in the Tipiṭaka definition mean ordinary existence. Normality In addition, the definition also appears in two contexts: (1) the definition in the context of the Śāṃyasaṃyutta in the Present Sutra and (2) the definition in the context of the Ordinary Character. In the Uppata Sutra, in both contexts, The Buddha taught about the Samadhi and the Ordinary Characteristics by defining it as "ordinary existence, ordinary conformity".

The concepts and teachings of definitions that appear in the commentary The commentary gives the meaning and definition of certainty and classifies and defines it into 5 types according to the nature of the certainty.

The concept and teachings of definitions in the Maha Paṇṇa Sutra emphasizes the explanation of the five types of definitions in the manner of various events that are certainties that occur regularly in daily life, namely meteorism, peach definition, mental definition, and karma, while events that are supernatural phenomena are also certain, but may not occur very often during human life. When the Mother of Bodhisattvas descended into the womb,

Concepts and teachings on definitions in the Dhamma Sangani Commentary It is consistent and close to the explanation that appears in the Maha Pa Sutra Commentary, which is explained in the same direction as follows: (1) Void is the explanation of the Meteorological Definition. Focus on the climate, soil. (2) Peach Definition is an explanation of the Peach Definition. (3) Definition is an explanation of mental definition. (4) Definition of Karma is an explanation of the definition of karma, emphasis is on the principle of karma, which is the action that produces the effect of karma . The emphasis is on supernatural phenomena that may not occur often, namely the tremors in the ten thousand elemental worlds. Because of the bodhisattvas

For the explanation of the two different scriptures, including the explanation of the Peach Definition in the Dhamma Sangani

Commentary. It further explains some of the specific characteristics of the plant, such as the clump of beans hanging to the left and the vine to the right wrapping around the tree to the right, or the sunflower facing the sun, which is not as clear as it should be and may be somewhat ambiguous. In the Dhamma Sangani Commentary, it only mentions the leaf production and fruit of trees, but does not mention the climate in any way.

The Commentary has adopted the concept of explaining the meaning of the word "definition" from the Tika Sect Silkhantha Kortaktha Scripture, namely the word "certainty of" and found an explanation of "Dharma Definition" that shows that the Dharma definition is the certainty of the Dharma that is broad and can cover all the remaining 4 definitions.

Summary of the development of concepts and teachings on definitions that appear in the Pāli Canon and Commentary

Expansion of the commentary. It has three characteristics: (1) using the word "certainty" (*niyato*) to replace the meaning of the word definition, (2) classifying the five types of definitions, and (3) explaining the first four types of definitions (meteorological definition, peach definition, mental definition, and karma) in the nature of natural phenomena in daily life under the social context of the time, and explaining the definition of the fifth type (dharma definition) in the manner of supernatural phenomena.

## **4.2 The Teachings on Natural Laws (*Niyāma*) from Modern Scholars' Perspectives and A Developmental Model of Teachings on Natural Laws (*Niyāma*) in Theravāda Buddhism**

On this issue, The researcher presents the concept and teachings of the definition of scholars in the modern era, which is the view of scholars in the modern era after the era of the Commentary. As mentioned in Chapter 2, the research is presented by framing the research into three categories: (1) Teachings on Definitions of Scholars in Thailand, (2) Teachings on Definitions of Scholars Abroad, and (3) A Developmental Model of Teachings on Natural Laws (*Niyāma*) in Theravāda Buddhism follows

#### 4.2.1 Thai Scholars' Perspectives on Natural Laws (*Niyāma*)

Concepts and Teachings of Scholars' Definitions in Thailand  
The conference consisted of 2 scholars who presented according to the topics: (1) the concept and teachings of the definition of Brahma Kunaporn (P.O. Prayutto) and (2) the concept and teachings of Professor Dr. Sompha Promtha. as follows

##### 1. Venerable Phra Brahmagunabhorn (P.A.Payutto)

There are 3 interesting issues regarding the concept of the definition of Brahma Kunaporn , namely a) the 5th definition of Brahma Kunaporn, b) the scope of the scientific definition, and c) the presentation of the 6th definition of Brahma Kunaporn. as follows

##### a) Definition 5 of the Brahma Kunaporn (P.O. Puyutto)

definition In the meaning of Brahma Kunaporn (P.O. Prayutto) refers to natural laws or sub-rules that can be 5 rules.<sup>98</sup> There are 5 types as shown in the revised and expanded version of the Buddhist Dharma book that he composed as follows:

1) **Law** of Energy, Law of Physical Phenomena, Physical Inorganic Order: Meteorological laws can also be referred to as physical laws, which refer to natural laws related to material phenomena, especially the nature of the environment and material changes, such as wind, weather, seasons, etc. Thunder rain The fact that the lotus blooms day and night. Fertilizer water helps the tree to be beautiful. When a person coughs or sneezes. The decay of things, etc. His ideas focus on variations due to heat or temperature.

2) **Law** of heredity, physical organic order, biological laws: The law of reproduction, also known as genetics, refers to the natural law of reproduction, such as the principle of the fact that any plant produces such a fruit. Mango plants also bear fruit as mangoes, etc.

3) **Psychic law**, psychological laws: Psychotic law refers to the natural law of the functioning of the mind, for example, when emotions

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<sup>98</sup> For details, see Phra Dhamma Pitak (P.O. Pyutto), **Buddhist Dictionary of Dhamma Edition**, 12th ed., (Bangkok: Maha Chulalongkorn Royal College Press, 2003), p. 166.

(stimuli) affect the nerves, perception occurs, how the mind works, that is, there is an oscillation of the mind, there is an intermittent disturbance, then there is a victory, then there is seeing, hearing, etc., there is a realization, there is a reverence, there is a resurrection, there is a recitation

**4) Law of Karma**, order of act and result, karmic laws, moral laws: Karma refers to the natural law of human behavior, which is the process of causing and producing the results of actions. Doing evil deeds, having evil effects, etc.

**5) The general law of cause and effect**, order of the norm **The** definition refers to the natural law of relations and causal phenomena of things, especially what is called ordinary. It exists and disappears. People are naturally born and sick. The average life expectancy of people of this generation is about a hundred years. Whether the Buddha is born or not, it is the nature of things that are impermanent, oppressed by factors, and not ego. As follows:<sup>99</sup>

In this Buddhist book, Phra Phra Kun Naporn (P.O. Pyutto) explained that the Dharma is defined as Impermanence It does not last. Born and dissolved. It is called impermanence, a state of being oppressed by disintegration. There is pressure and conflict lurking. Imperfection in oneself is called suffering. Its own true impermanence. It is called Anatta. The Samadhi shows these three states in all things, and shows the continuous relationship of them as factors to each other. In nature Conditions and compliance with this principle of the Sabbath It is for all things, both concrete and abstract, both in the material world, and to life that is made up of abstract concrete, which are manifested in various natural laws, namely Dhamma (the law of the relationship between cause and effect), and the Uttu (the law of nature). Inorganic matter), peach definition (natural law of organic matter, including genetics), definition (law of mental function), and karma definition (law of karma), which are particularly related to the happiness and suffering of life, and are directly

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<sup>99</sup> Dhamma Pitak (P.O. Pyutto), **Buddhist Dhamma Revised and Expanded Edition**, 9th Edition, (Bangkok: Maha Chulalongkorn University, 2000), pp. 152-153.

related<sup>100</sup> to ethics. No explanation of any type of supernatural phenomenon is involved.

In his book "Buddhism as the Foundation of Science", Examples of everyday phenomena are given based on descriptive analysis. As the message goes:

The same phenomenon may be caused by different natural causes, and some phenomena are caused by the fact that many factors in the natural law work on each other. For example, when a person sheds tears, it may be caused by smoke (Meteorological Definition), it may be caused by great joy or sadness (Mental Definition), or it may be due to the manipulation of thoughts in a way that compresses one's mind (Definition).<sup>101</sup>

Another example He explained that a person has a severe headache, which may be caused by a brain tumor (peach), or it may be due to insufficient air or too hot (meteorological definition), or it may be due to anxiety (mental definition). Therefore, this phenomenon arises from the three factors according to the definition of 5, namely the definition of peach, the definition of meteorology, and the definition of karma.

### **b) Scope of scientific definition**

Phra Phra Phra Kunaporn also mentioned the scope of the definition in science, as follows:

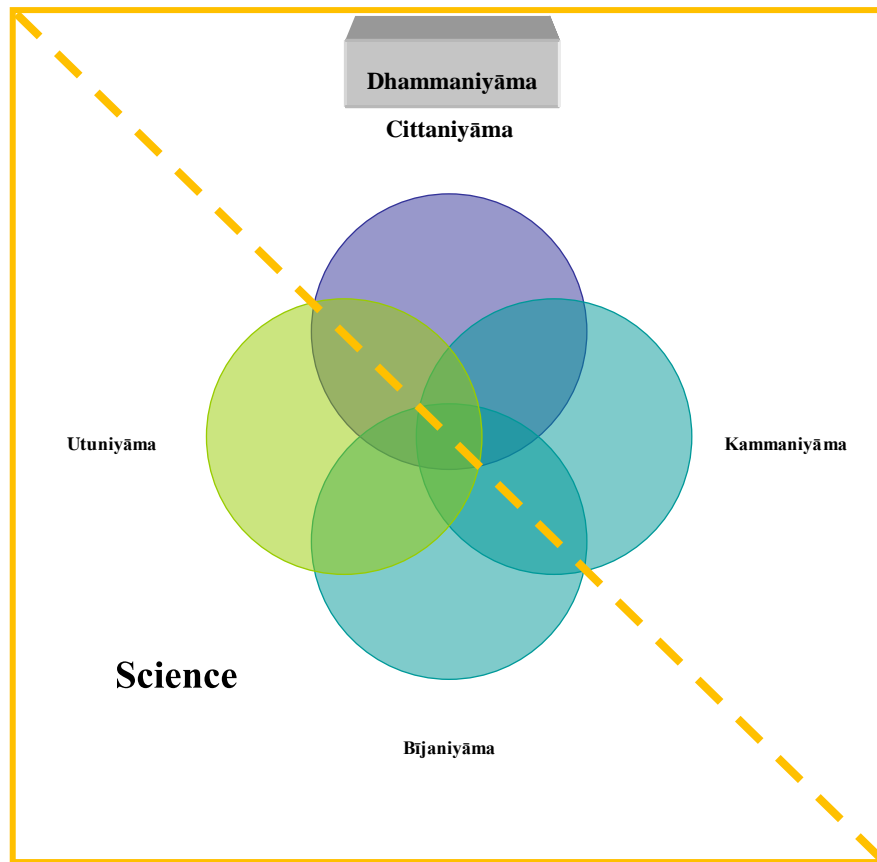
Science as far as it has ever been. Believe in the Dharma Definition by limiting the study to the scope of the Meteorological Definition and the Peach Definition. In practical Buddhism, it places a lot of emphasis on the definition of karma, although one aspect called Abhidharma emphasizes the study of the definition of the mind to link it with the definition of karma and the definition of the Dharma.<sup>102</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> Dhamma Pitak (P.O. Pyutto), Buddhist Dhamma, Revised and Expanded Edition, pp. 88-89.

<sup>101</sup> For details, see Phra Thepwethi (Prayuth Prayutto), **Buddhism as the Basis of Science**, 3rd ed., (Bangkok : Maha Chulalongkorn Royal College Press, 1993), p. 106.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid., p. 103.



When the explanation of science and its definitions is displayed using a chart, the following chart shows the scope of the scientific definition.

From the concept of Brahma Kunaporn in the scope of this scientific definition. In conclusion, science can reach explanations in the

concrete layer of matter. This is only comparable to the meteorological definition and the peach definition, because science aims to study nature on the material side. As for the nominal nature or the mind, science itself is not yet accessible because there is no tool that can be used to measure and explain the mind sufficiently.

### c) Presentation of the 6th definition of Brahma Kunaporn

In addition to the 5 natural laws mentioned above, Brahma Kunaporn said that there is another type of law, which is a human matter, especially that does not exist in nature. It is not directly related to nature, it is the rules that humans set up as an agreement to control the conduct among human beings to coexist in peace. It is considered a social law, such as rules, regulations, rules, laws, customs, traditions, discipline, etc., which may be included at the end of the set as the 6th rule, but there is no name that matches the set. If you are satisfied, you can call **it socialism**.<sup>103</sup> The rules of this society are human manipulations, so they are things that arise from karma and depend on karma, but they are only an additive to the definition. It is not the definition of karma itself, so it is not characterized in terms of relationship and reality like karma, but because it is superimposed on karma, it often causes confusion with karma and there are often controversy problems due to such confusion. The reason is that these two types of laws, namely karma and socialism, are human beings and are most closely related to human beings, so it is important to understand the difference clearly.<sup>104</sup>

From the concept of "Socialism" or the sixth definition of Brahma Kunaporn, as given in the example above. The researcher has a

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<sup>103</sup> "Society" is a canonical term in the Thai language, although it was originally used in Pali. It does not have the same meaning as it is prescribed in Thai. Here, it will be approved according to the Thai language, so the whole word must be rewritten. As for popularity, the word form has the same meaning as the definition or popularity. However, if it is used as a social definition, it is afraid of confusing the original definition of 5 that is of true nature. Therefore, it is a little strange enough to notice the difference, quote in Dhamma Pitak (P.O. Pyutto), **Buddhist Dhamma Revised and Enlarged Edition**, 7th Edition, (Bangkok: Maha Chulalongkorn Royal College Press, 2008), p. 156.

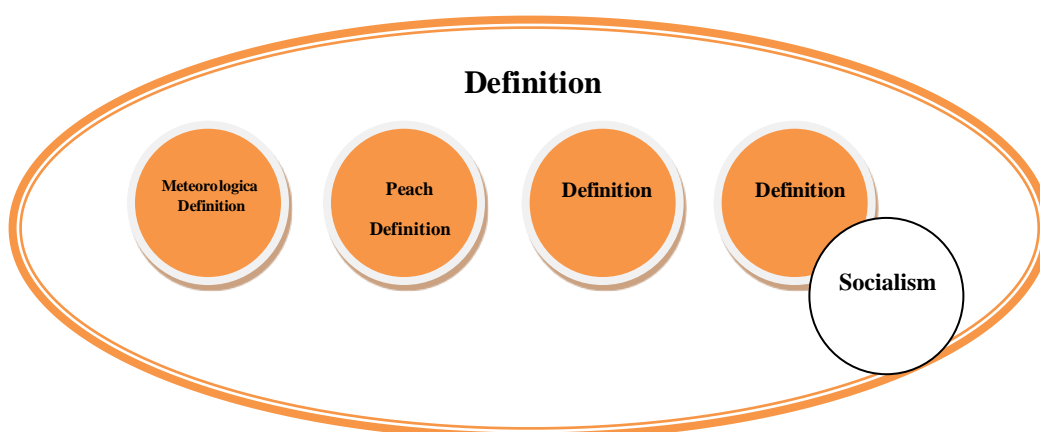
<sup>104</sup> Ibid., p. 156.



different opinion from you that "socialism" should not be classified as one of the definitions for at least two reasons:

(1) First, "socialism has a redundant nature with a definition of karma." As Brahma Kunaporn said, it is a matter of human manipulation, which is caused by karma, dependent, and additive to the definition. The separation of socialism is set up as Another "rule" is therefore a redundant feature with the existing one.

(2) Second, "Socialism is characterized by contradictions to the Dharma" because the Dharma Definition is a major principle in Buddhism. The Buddha taught the monks many things. "Ordinary existence, ordinary conformity. . . ." <sup>105</sup> Occurrence It is located and extinguished by the elements. Therefore, his statement that "socialism . . . is not characterized by relational factors" is of the opinion that <sup>106</sup> socialism and the teachings of socialism are at odds with the aforementioned implicit definition. However, when the concept of the definition of Brahma Kunaporn is shown using a chart, a chart showing the 6th definition of Brahma Kunaporn is obtained. as follows



*chart Three.๑ : Showing the 6th definition of Brahma Kunaporn*

<sup>105</sup> (Thai) 16/20/34, Ong.T (Thai) 20/137/385.

<sup>106</sup> Dhamma Pitak (P.O. Pyutto), Buddhist Dharma, Revised and Expanded Edition, p. 156.

From the study The concept and teachings of the definition of Brahma Kunaporn (P.O. Puyutto) found that the Brahma Kunaporn He mainly uses the concept of definition (especially in terms of the meaning of definition) of the commentary to explain his definition while maintaining the original meaning even though it appears in the Pāli Canon as "ordinary" and the commentary is "certainty".

Regarding the types of the 5 definitions, Brahma Khunaporn explains mainly according to the guidelines of the commentaries as well, but there are additional parts that differ from the following 3 points.

(1) First, the explanation of the concept. In short, it is a variation due to heat or temperature. For example, land, water, fertilizer help trees to be beautiful. When a person coughs or sneezes. The decay of all things.

(2) Secondly, the explanation of karma is defined as the possibility of volition related to ethics.

(3) Lastly, Giving an example to illustrate the definition of a person is that people are born and hurt and die. The average life expectancy of people of this generation is about a hundred years, etc.

There are some interesting observations about the concept of the Dharma Definition of the Lord Brahma. He explained differently from the commentary, that is, he did not mention the definition of the Dharma in the context of the supernatural events of the bodhisattvas. His explanation of the Dharma Definition is based on the guidelines that appear in the Tipiṭaka, which is to mention only 2 things: the Dharma Samadhi and the Ordinary Characteristics or the Trinity.<sup>107</sup>

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<sup>107</sup> According to the concept of Brahma Kunaporn, there are two meanings: (1) the Trinity and (2) the Trinity. As follows: (1) The Trinity (Dharma Definition 3) means the determination of the ordinary. Ordinary certainty. Natural Laws include the Trinity, see details in Phra Phra Phra Kunaporn (P.O. Prayutto), **Buddhist Dictionary of Dhamma Edition**, 16th ed., (Bangkok: S.R. Printing Mass Products Co., Ltd., 2008, p. 92., (2) (2) Prajjasamaupabat (Dhamma Definition) means: Dhammaniyāma: order of the norm; the general law of cause and effect; causality and conditionality), see details in *ibid.*, p. 166.

## 2. Professor Dr. Somparn Promta

The researcher divided the presentation into 2 points: a) Definition 5 of Professor Dr. Sompha Promtha and b) Method of Examining the 2 Definitions as follows:

### a) Definition 5 of Professor Dr. Sompha Promtha

Sompha Porntha<sup>108</sup> said that the origin of the concept of definition came from the Buddha's proclamation of Buddhism. This new concept is in various changes in nature. What is behind it is not a god. Rather, it is a natural law called itappajita. Buddhism<sup>109</sup> believes that these five natural laws cover all natural phenomena in this universe. It means that Buddhism sees that there are a number of things in this universe. These have different characteristics. These things, despite their characteristics, can be grouped into the same category as other things, such as inanimate matter such as stones, living beings but without minds such as plants, living beings and minds such as humans and animals<sup>110</sup>. Therefore, it is appropriate to have a translator define it as "the general law of cause and effect".<sup>111</sup>

He explained the 5 definitions according to the implications of the commentary as follows:

- (1) Physical laws are the laws of nature that relate to inanimate objects.
- (2) Biological laws are the laws of nature that relate to living things.
- (3) Psychic laws are natural laws about the mechanism of the mind.

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<sup>108</sup> His current position is Professor Dr. Sompha Promtha, Ph.D. 8, Ph.D. Maha Chulalongkorn Royal College, M., Ph.D. (Philosophy), Chulalongkorn University, currently a lecturer at the Department of Philosophy. Faculty of Letters, Chulalongkorn University.

<sup>109</sup> Sompha Phromtha, **Buddhism and Science**, (Bangkok : Maha Chulalongkorn Royal College, 1991), p. 60.

<sup>110</sup> Sompha Phromtha, Assoc., **Religion for the Development of Quality of Life**, 3rd ed., (Bangkok: Arun Printing Co., Ltd., 2006), p. 31.

<sup>111</sup> Sompha Phromtha, **Buddhism and Science**, p. 65.

(4) Laws of Karma are the rules of karma. It is divided into good karma and bad karma.

(5) Causality or general law of cause and effect is a summary that combines all definitions and is a big law that covers all laws.<sup>112</sup>

He emphasized the definition of dharma as the main definition. The remaining 4 definitions have meteorological definitions and peach definitions as sub-definitions<sup>113</sup> as explained in detail as follows:

### **Definition**

1. When there is a, there is b.
2. When there is no a, there is no b.

Both A and B in this law are everything in the universe, but there is a clause that what can enter this law must be related to each other as a cause. And the only consequence is that the above rule, when translated into ordinary language, means that Buddhism believes that there is order in nature. This order is observed by the fact that the same cause always produces the same effect<sup>114</sup> on human life. It is also a process of reconciliation. Life changes are cyclical, that is, they arise, exist and dissolve, not by accident or caused by a single factor, but by a group of causes and factors that are constantly connected to each other. When you trace the Yod area to the origin of the universe, you will find that the cycle and process of change of life begins from the air, which is emptiness.<sup>115</sup>

**The definition** reads:

- (1) Material objects: All things are related to each other.
- (2) between two objects that are related in the sense that one is the cause and the other is the effect; Orderliness and consistency And the exact rules.

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<sup>112</sup> Ibid., p. 62.

<sup>113</sup> Same story.

<sup>114</sup> Same story.

<sup>115</sup> For details, see Sompha Promtha, **Time and Space in Theravada Buddhist Philosophy**, Master of Arts Thesis. Department of Philosophy, (Graduate School: Chulalongkorn University, 1998), p. 7.

(3) Inside each object. There is order, consistency, and exact rules.

(4) In the material world. The same cause will have the same effect.

**Peach's definition** reads:

(1) All organisms are related to each other.

(2) between two units of living beings that are related in the sense that one is a cause and the other is an effect. Orderliness and consistency And the exact rules.

(3) Within each unit of living things. There is order, consistency and definite rules.

(4) In the world of living beings The same cause will have the same effect.

**The definition** reads:

(1) All minds are related to each other.

(2) Between two minds that are related in the sense that one is the cause and the other is the effect. Orderliness and consistency And the exact rules.

(3) Inside each mind. There is order, consistency and definite rules.

(4) In the world of the mind. The same cause will produce the same effect.

**The definition of karma** reads:

(1) Karma means that all intentional actions always have a satisfying effect on the perpetrator. Except for the karma that cannot be satisfied because the person who commits the karma does not exist in samsara anymore that has no effect. This type of karma is called ahoshikarma.

(2) There are two types of karma: good karma and bad karma. Good karma will produce good results. Evil karma will produce evil reactions.

(3) Between karma and the effect of karma. There is order, consistency and exact rules. The same karma. Acts done by persons with the same qualities, and those who do things with the same qualities will be subject to the same evil.<sup>116</sup>

Human beings will have a high value of life in the true sense of the word "human" , which is by practicing good deeds (charity) or having virtue, and having virtue or doing good deeds will be a measure among human beings whether their life is of high value or low value.<sup>117</sup>

The content of all definitions is the same, which is to believe in orderliness, consistency, and certainty. Between what is cause and what is effect.<sup>118</sup>

Meteorology refers to inanimate objects such as stones, earth, tables, books, stars, etc.

The peach definition talks about living things (plants and animals), for example, some organs in a person work constantly. Whether we are aware of it or not, for example, the heart will keep beating like that, whether we are awake or asleep. The heart is a unit of living things. That it works so consistently is an order in a particular unit of life.

This peach definition seems to be more important than the meteorological definition because it is more close. We are more afflicted with our own bodies than with other things such as possessions and money.

The researcher has different views as follows: The idea that people suffer more about their own bodies than things outside of their bodies. Indeed, this statement may not always be true. In this IT world, there are still many people who are fascinated by materialism. They are willing to lose their hard-earned money in exchange for facilities that are more than necessary in their daily lives. Technology has been produced to meet the endless human struggles that have Mobile phones, notebook

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<sup>116</sup> Ibid., p. 66.

<sup>117</sup> For details, see Sompha Promtha, **Buddhism and Ethical Issues: Prostitution, Abortion and Execution**, (Bangkok: Chulalongkorn University Press, 2008), pp. 156-157.

<sup>118</sup> Sompha Phromtha, **Buddhism and Science**, pp. 66-67.

computers, tablets , etc. Humans are even willing to go into debt to acquire these objects, rather than to have good health or a beautiful body.

However, Sompha Promtha There is a concept of the mind that defines the mind as an abstract that is hidden within the human being. It is very detailed. Buddhism calls this mysterious nature "mind".<sup>119</sup> It is the good nature and the bad nature. Good nature will lead us in a good way. The evil nature will lead us in the evil way. Good nature, he calls it charity. There are three main types of charity: non-greed. Not angry. Not lost. There are also three important non-charitable attitudes: greed; anger The delusion<sup>120</sup> in Theravada Buddhist philosophy also believes that the human mind has one of the characteristics, which is that it can record what has passed through to cognition.<sup>121</sup>

#### **b) Method of checking the 2 definitions.**

The content of the first two definitions, meteorological and peach, refers to what can be observed with a sense of humor. The content of the latter two definitions, the definition and the definition of karma, refers to things that cannot be perceived by the senses. From this point of view, only the definition of ideology and the definition of peach should be classified as a rule in the sense used in the scientific community. Definition and karma are not classified as rules because there is a part of the content that mentions things that are beyond the senses. The latter two definitions are more likely to be classified as theories.

The definition is as follows:

1. Meteorological and Peach: Examine by the same method used to check the rules in science.
2. Definition and Determination are examined by the same method used to verify theories in science.

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<sup>119</sup> For more information, see Sompha Promtha, **Buddhist Philosophy: Human, Social and Ethical Issues**, (Bangkok, Thailand : Chulalongkorn University Press, 2009), pp. 13-14.

<sup>120</sup> Sompha Phromtha, **Buddhism and Science**, p. 85.

<sup>121</sup> Sompha Promtha, **Zen Buddhism : An Analytical Study**, 3rd ed., (Bangkok : Chulalongkorn University Press, 2003), p. 29.

Concepts and Teachings on the Definition of Professor Dr. Sompha Pronta It can be summarized by 3 distinctive characteristics as follows:

(1) The method of explanation focuses on the "Rules", Regulations, Consistency Certainty, according to the concept of the commentary.

(2) Explain according to the implication of The Sabbath or Itappajaya based on the principle of "Cause and effect"

(3) Explain by linking it to the principles of Scientific "rules" and "theories" are the starting points.

However, the view on translation and choosing to use the word "rule" instead. The "definition" of the two scholars is Phra Phrom Kunaporn <sup>122</sup> and Prof. Sompha Phromtha <sup>123</sup>. The researchers had a different opinion. In other words, the researcher is of the opinion that the word "rule" should not be used according to the English translation (Law of. . .) for at least two reasons:

(1) It is a word that does not match the meaning.

The word "rule" has the meaning according to the Royal Academy of Sciences' Dictionary B.E. 2542 (1999) as "means written down as evidence, seal, imperative, or requirement or ordinance that must be complied with". <sup>124</sup> The word law is probably something related to humans, it comes from mutual agreement among humans and is set up to

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<sup>122</sup> For details, see Dhamma Pitak (P.O. Pyutto), Buddhist Dhamma Revised and Enlarged Edition, pp. 88-89.

<sup>123</sup> Prof. Sompha Promtha Explain a law of nature with two implications: (1) rules that are not related to humans, and (2) rules related to humans. It can be explained as follows: (1) Rules that are not related to humans. It came into existence with the universe. It is a rule that has its own. Whether someone is aware of it or not. (2) The laws related to man are laws proposed by man, such as the law of gravity of the earth discovered by Galileo Galilei, that two objects of different weights falling from a height at the same time will always fall to the ground at the same time. The latter rule could not have existed without people, see for details in Sompha Promtha, **Buddhism and Science**, (Bangkok: Maha Chulalongkorn Royal College, 1991), pp. 180-181.

<sup>124</sup> Royal Academy of Sciences, **Dictionary of the Royal Academy Edition B.E. 2542**, (Bangkok: Nanmi Books Publications, 2003), p. 3.



force humans to use it together to achieve a certain purpose. Only under a certain period of time in a particular place or situation. In addition, such rules may also change with the times. Therefore, by implication, the word "rule" does not meet the true meaning of the word "definition" because the definition in Buddhism is not a rule, evidence, or mandatory requirement at all.

(2) It is a word that is distorted from the traditional Buddhist scriptures.

**Traditional Buddhism** This refers to the Tipiṭaka and the Commentary. When I look back in time and study and interpret those scriptures, One thing that is evidence for us to observe is the word that is used instead. According to research, the word "definition" when translated from Pali to Thai appears in only 2 words: in the Tipiṭaka scripture, the word "ordinary"<sup>125</sup> is used, while in the commentary scripture the word "normal" is used. "Certainty"<sup>126</sup>

From the study Concepts and Teachings of Scholars' Definitions in Thailand It was found that the first scholar was Phra Phra Ph It is explained mainly by using the concept of commentary. In terms of meaning, he kept the same meaning as it appeared in the Tipiṭaka as "ordinary" and in the commentary as "certainty", but explained it with a new meaning of "natural law".

Regarding the types of the 5 definitions, Brahma Khunaporn explains mainly according to the guidelines of the commentaries as well, but there are additional parts that differ from the following 3 points.

(1) First, the explanation of the concept. In short, it is a variation due to heat or temperature. For example, land, water, fertilizer help trees to be beautiful. When a person coughs or sneezes. The decay of all things.

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<sup>125</sup> The Buddhist saying "Ordinary existence, ordinary conformity" appears in the Sangyutta sect. Fairy tale Sutra Factor, S.Ni. (Thai) 16/20/34, and in the Ankut sect. Uppata Sutra, Ong.T. (Thai) 20/137/385.

<sup>126</sup> The commentary uses the terms of the certainty of the seasons, plants, minds, karma and dharma respectively, see TMA (Thai) 13/56/100-101, Apisonga (Thai) 76/416/82.

(2) Secondly, the explanation of karma is defined as the possibility of volition related to ethics.

(3) Lastly, Giving an example to illustrate the definition of a person is that people are born and hurt and die. The average life expectancy of people of this generation is about a hundred years, etc.

In addition, the definition of the Dharma of the Brahma Kunaporn is explained differently from the commentary, which is that it does not mention the Dharma definition in the context of the supernatural events of the Bodhisattva in any way. His explanation of the Dharma Definition is based on the guidelines that appear in the Tipiṭaka, which is to mention only 2 things: the Dharma Samadhi and the Ordinary Characteristics or the Trinity.

Another scholar is Professor Dr. Sompha Promtha. There are 3 distinctive conceptual characteristics as follows:

(1) The method of explanation focuses on "rules", order, and consistency. Certainty, according to the concept of the commentary.

(2) Explain according to the implication of Śāṣṇ❖

(3) Explain by linking it with the principles of scientific "law" and "theory".

Both scholars have explanations taken from the concepts of the commentaries, as well as references to Definition 5 and scientific laws and theories.

#### **4.2.2 International Scholars' Perspectives on Natural Laws (*Niyāma*)**

Concepts and Teachings on Definitions of Scholars Abroad In this research, two people are proposed: (1) C.A.F. Rhys Davids and (2) Ledi Sayadaw as follows:

##### **1. C.A.F. Rhys Davids**

C.A.F. Rhys Davids was one of the first Western scholars to mention the definition of 5 in her book "Buddhism" published in 1912. The reason for mentioning this is to emphasize that Buddhism, which is in

the universe of virtue, any action leads to responsibility for the result of that action according to the order of natural virtue.<sup>127</sup>

His view of the 5th definition is as follows: "Buddhism looks at all things and calls this organization "definition", which is the process of moving things."<sup>128</sup>

C.A.F. Rhys Davids defines 5 as meaning

1) Karma ("Action") is a rule related to karma and the consequence of one's actions.

2) Meteorology ("Time and Season") is a law related to seasonal changes and weathering, and a law of non-living matter.

3) Peach definition ("plant species") is a rule related to heredity.

4) The definition of the mind ("mind") is the law of the will of mind.

5) Dharma Definition ("Natural Law") is a pure natural characteristic.

This explanation is similar to that proposed by Ledi Sayadaw , a Western bishop who took the concept of C.A.F. Rhys Davids and extended it to his own perspective on the teaching of vipassana<sup>129</sup> . The concept of the definition of Ledi Sayadaw will be presented in the next order.

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<sup>127</sup> C.A.F. Rhys Davids, **Buddhism : a study of the Buddhist norm**, (London : Williams and Norgate, 1912), pp.118–9, Padmasiri De Silva, **Environmental philosophy and ethics in Buddhism**, (London : Macmillan Press, 1998), p. 41.

<sup>128</sup> "This order which Buddhism saw in the universe was called in Pali *niyāma*, that is, going-on, process. In it five branches, strands, phases were discerned:– *kamma-niyāma*, order of act-and-result; *utu-niyāma*, physical (inorganic) order; *bīja-niyāma*, order of germs, or seeds (physical organic order); *citta-niyāma*, order of mind, or conscious life; *dhamma-niyāma*, order of the norm, or the effort of nature to produce a perfect type", C.A.F. Rhys Davids, **Buddhism : a study of the Buddhist norm**, (London : Williams and Norgate, 1912), p. 119.

<sup>129</sup> Sangharakshita Bhikshu, **The Three Jewels**, (Surrey : Windhorse, 1977), pp. 69-70, and in the lecture 'Karma and Rebirth', in edited form in, Sangharakshita, **Who is the Buddha ?**, (Glasgow : Windhorse, 1994), pp.105-108.

## 2. Venerable Ledi Sayadaw

Lady Syadot He was a famous Burmese Vipassana monk (lived c. 1389-1966, 1846-1923) both for spreading the Dharma and reviving the practice of Vipassana meditation in the typical Burmese way. His descendants include S.N. Goenka, a book called the *Manuals of Buddhism*, which is a <sup>130</sup> series of texts that he has compiled as well as the "Definition of Tipni" or *Manual of Cosmic Order*.

In the book "Defining Tipney", he proposes a type of definition that is very unconventional. In other words, there are 8 types as follows:

His first interesting piece of evidence is the concept of the Dhamma definition:

Explaining the Order of the Universe covers the rules of the Universe of the Buddha. These precepts mention enlightenment as a Buddha who is a bodhisattva who has fully practiced the 10 noble stages, the three stages of meditation, the three virtues, and the three virtues while sitting on the bodhi throne. With specific rules, including awareness while in meditation and breath control. These implicit characteristics are not accidental for the Buddha's enlightenment. <sup>131</sup>

Considering the above statement, it is clear that his definition of the Dharma is a concept taken from a commentary that explains supernatural phenomena such as the shaking of the universe as the certainty of a bodhisattva. Buddha

The 5 types of definitions according to your explanation are as follows:

**1) Meteorological definition** (*Utu-niyāma*) refers to the regulation of thermal energy, temperature (The Caloric Order).

**2) Bija-niyāma** refers to the Germinal Order.

**3) Kamma-niyāma** refers to the moral order.

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<sup>130</sup> Ledi Sayadaw, "**Manuals of Buddhism**", (Bangkok : Mahamakut Press, 1978).

<sup>131</sup> Maha Thera Ledi Sayadaw, Aggamaha Pandita, D.Litt, **The Manuals of Ledi Dipani**, Trans. Sayadaw U Nyana, Patannagayaw, Ed. Mother Ayeyarwaddy, (Yangon : Mother Ayeyarwaddy Publishing House, p. 78.

**4) Definition of the mind** (*Citta-niyāma*) refers to the Psychological Order.

**5) Dhamma-niyāma** refers to the regulation of the Natural Phenomenal Sequence.<sup>132</sup>

In addition to the 5 definitions mentioned above, there is also evidence that is no less interesting, that is, the expansion of the types of definitions into 8 points:

**6) Buddha's definition** is the natural law of the Buddha. Whenever the bodhisattva has cultivated the bodhisattva is complete. Attaining bodhicitta led to complete attainment of arhat samma buddha at the bodhi throne. These phenomena that occur naturally are called the Buddha's natural law, which shows that the Buddha's enlightenment was not caused by chance.<sup>133</sup>

**7) Disciple definition** is the natural law of instruction of the disciples, consisting of laymen, angels, and Brahmins. who have listened to the teachings of the Buddhas, which are more than the number of grains of sand in the Ganges in the immeasurable cycle of compassion.<sup>134</sup>

**8) Nation definition** is the natural law of birth, quoting from the "Vasettha Sutra" that all plants and animals are classified according to the characteristics of their species, but humans are not classified as such. Human beings are classified by karma as the Buddha says:

A person cannot be called a Brahmin because of his birth, he cannot be called a non-Brahmin because he is born. But to be called a Brahmin because of karma, to be called not a Brahmin because of karma, to be called a farmer because of karma, to be called an artist, to be a

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<sup>132</sup> Maha Thera Ledi Sayadaw, Aggamaha Pandita, D.Litt, **The Manuals of Ledi Dipani**, Trans. Sayadaw U Nyana, Patannagayaw, Ed. Mother Ayeyarwaddy, (Yangon : Mother Ayeyarwaddy Publishing House, p. 78.

<sup>133</sup> Ledi Sayadaw, "**Manuals of Buddhism**", (Bangkok : Mahamakut Press, 1978). p. 178.

<sup>134</sup> "It is the order of precepts, etc., of the disciples, comprising the laymen, devas and Brahmās who have received deliverance from any one of the many Buddhas, surpassing in number the sands of the river Ganges, who have appeared in the cycles of aeons that have no knowable beginning", Ledi Sayadaw, "**Manuals of Buddhism**", (Bangkok : Mahamakut Press, 1978), P. 247.

merchant, to be a servant, because of karma, to be called a thief, to be a professional soldier, to be a priest, even to be a king, because of karma.<sup>135</sup>

Therefore, the definition of nation is clearly different from the definition of peach and the definition of karma in the sense of Lady Syado, and can be separated into another definition.

The original purpose of explaining the 5 definition in the style of Ledi Sayadaw is not to explain the law of karma specifically, but to illustrate the law of nature as an alternative to the cult that believes in the existence of God. This interpretation seems logical. Hinduism, which is a devotee, began to have the work of "Upanishads" and "Bhagavad-gita" have been established as a solid foundation.<sup>136</sup>

However, the researcher's view of the 8 definitions (6-8 are the Buddhist definition, the disciple definition, and the national definition) still has some shortcomings, namely, there is still overlap with the original 5 types of definitions. If you examine it carefully, it is found that the Buddhist definition is the definition according to the implications of the commentary, the disciple definition is the definition in the Tipiṭaka ( as discussed in detail in Chapter 2, section 2.1.2, defined in the context of the common character) and the national definition is the karmic definition.

When the concept of the 8th definition of Lady Sayadaw is presented using a chart, the chart showing the 8th definition of Lady Sayadaw is obtained as follows:

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<sup>135</sup> (Thai) 25/656-658/655.

<sup>136</sup> Dh. Dhīvan, **The 'Five Niyāmas', Sangharakshita, and the Problem of Karma** : 20.

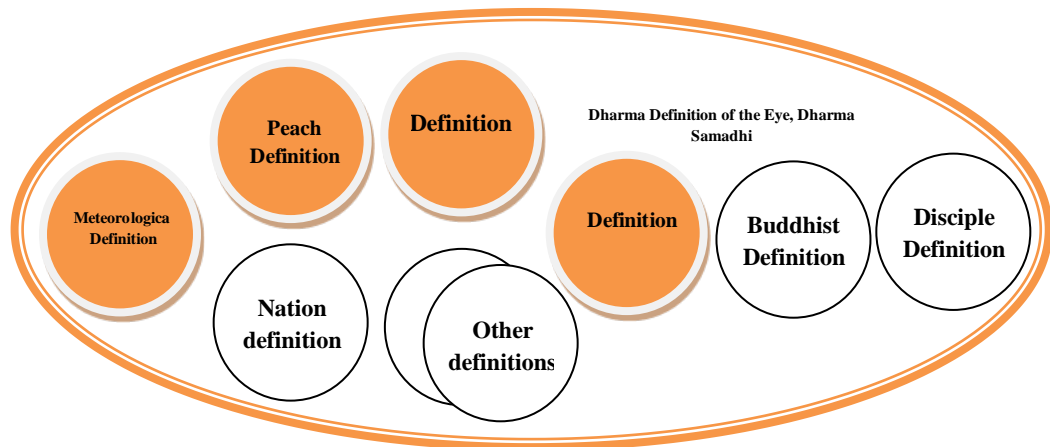


chart Three.၈ : Show definition 8 of Lady Syadow

From the study Concepts and Teachings on Definitions of Scholars Abroad It is found that C.A.F. Rhys Davids explains the types of definitions along the lines of the five types of commentaries, but defines them as "rules" , while Ledi Sayadaw tries to expand the types of definitions to eight categories: (1) the definition of the universe, (2) the definition of peach, (3) the definition of karma, (4) the definition of the mind, (5) the definition of dharma, (6) the definition of Buddhism, (7) the definition of disciples, and the definition of nation.

#### 4.2.3 A Developmental Model of Teachings on Natural Laws (*Niyāma*) in Theravāda Buddhism

From the study Concepts and Teachings of Scholars' Definitions in Thailand It was found that the first scholar was Phra Phra Ph It is explained mainly by using the concept of commentary. In terms of meaning, he kept the same meaning as it appeared in the Tipiṭaka as "ordinary" and in the commentary as "certainty", but explained it with a new meaning of "natural law".

The teaching on the Fivefold *Niyāma* according to the commentary is the most widespread. Its concept is of great help in integrating with natural and the environmental dimension. Sanu Mahatthanadull has demonstrated:

The Fivefold *Niyāma* serves as a framework to expound the phenomena of a rapidly degraded environment. Each facet of the

degradation is a natural linking network, with the main cause from human beings. Starting from the world's overall heat degradation (*utu-niyāma*); degradation of heredity caused by human's intelligent innovation of genetic engineering in crops and animals (*bīja-niyāma*); mental degradation that has been overlooked in this era (*citta-niyāma*); moral or action degradation to reduce humans to be a lower- human (*kamma-niyāma*); natural and environmental degradation in which people live their lives (*dhamma-niyāma*).<sup>137</sup>

Buddhism's Five *Niyāmas* can be closely integrated with various pure and applied sciences, such as physics, biology, psychology, ecology, etc.

Regarding the types of the 5 definitions, Brahma Khunaporn explains mainly according to the guidelines of the commentaries as well, but there are additional parts that differ from the following 3 points.

(1) First, the explanation of the concept. In short, it is a variation due to heat or temperature. For example, land, water, fertilizer help trees to be beautiful. When a person coughs or sneezes. The decay of all things.

(2) Secondly, the explanation of karma is defined as the possibility of volition related to ethics.

(3) Lastly, Giving an example to illustrate the definition of a person is that people are born and hurt and die. The average life expectancy of people of this generation is about a hundred years, etc.

In addition, the definition of the Dharma of the Brahma Kunaporn is explained differently from the commentary, which is that it does not mention the Dharma definition in the context of the supernatural events of the Bodhisattva in any way. His explanation of the Dharma Definition is based on the guidelines that appear in the Tipiṭaka, which is to mention only 2 things: the Dharma Samadhi and the Ordinary Characteristics or the Trinity.

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<sup>137</sup> Mahatthanadull, Sanu. “**Buddhist Response to Environmental Degradation under Conceptual Framework of the Five *Niyāma***”. Proceedings Document. The 1st MCU International Academic Conference (MIAC) on Buddhism and World Crisis. Graduate School. May 29. 2015. BKK: MCU Printing: 65-78.



Another scholar is Professor Dr. Sompha Promtha. There are 3 distinctive conceptual characteristics as follows:

(1) The method of explanation focuses on "rules", order, and consistency. Certainty, according to the concept of the commentary.

(2) Explain according to the implication of Śāṣṇ❖

(3) Explain by linking it with the principles of scientific "law" and "theory".

Both scholars have explanations taken from the concepts of the commentators, including references to Definition 5 and scientific laws and theories<sup>138</sup>.

From the study Concepts and Teachings on Definitions of Scholars Abroad It is found that C.A.F. Rhys Davids explains the types of definitions along the lines of the five types of commentaries, but defines them as "rules", while Ledi Sayadaw tries to expand the types of definitions to eight categories: (1) the definition of the universe, (2) the definition of peach, (3) the definition of karma, (4) the definition of the mind, (5) the definition of dharma, (6) the definition of Buddhism, (7) the definition of disciples, and the definition of nation.

The development of the concept and doctrine of definition implies all the changes that have taken place in order. From one era to another From one generation of teachings to another. Those changes are very important. Both to embracing the teachings in accordance with the traditional teachings and to taking a stance on the teachings that have been changed.

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<sup>138</sup> Dhamma Ko Sara The same idea is that the definition of dharma is a natural law that encompasses the four laws, these four rules are the rules that govern the name, divided into two groups: (1) the first group, the definition of the concept, and the definition of peach, which are concrete laws, (2) the second group, the definition and the definition, which are abstract laws, see for details in Phra Thepsophon (Prayun Thamjitto) et al., **Buddhism and Modern World Science**, 2nd ed., (Bangkok: Maha Chulalongkorn Royal College Press), 2005, Phra Dhamma Ko Sara (Prayun Thamajitto), Prof.Dr., Honorary Royal Graduate, **Integrative method: Buddhism & Modern Sciences**, (Bangkok, Bangkok, Thailand : Maha Chulalongkorn University, 2010), p. 47.

From the study "Development of Teachings or Concepts of Definition in Theravada Buddhism", it was found that the concept and teachings of Theravada Buddhism. There is an important turning point in the commentary where the classification of the definition "from one to five" (the concept of the commentary) occurred, which is the source of the foundation of the new concept of Definition to the teachings of later generations. In addition, it was also found that the explanation of the teachings on the definition of scholars both domestically and internationally. As a result, there are more examples to illustrate the explanation. Sometimes it is difficult to analyze which views are right or which are wrong because they are interpreted differently.

From this different interpretation, This makes the type of definition constantly adjust. According to the times and their interpretations. "From five to eight" (Ledi Sayadaw's concept) or "From five to six" (the concept of Brahma Kunaporn). This "addition" raises the question, "How many types of definitions will be added in the future?" What is the concept of Theravada Buddhism?

The issue of the meaning used is another issue that should be watched. In the Tipiṭaka, the word "ordinary" is used for the definition of dharma. The word "certainty" is used instead of the old word. Although there are still some traces to be found, scholars in Thailand have changed to use the term "Natural law" as used by foreign scholars as "Laws of. . ."

Therefore, to illustrate the development of definitions, especially their meanings and types. The authors presented a table showing the development of definitions and types of definitions. from now on

definition	Pāli Canon	Commentary	Modern Scholars	
			Domestic	foreign
<b>meaning</b>	usually	certainty	usually certainty natural law	natural law (Laws of...)
<b>category</b>	Definition	Meteorological Definition Peach Definition Definition Definition Definition	Meteorological Definition Peach Definition Definition Definition Definition Socialism	Meteorological Definition Peach Definition Definition Definition Definition Buddhist Definition Disciple Definition Nation definition
<b>amount</b>	one	5	6	8 . . . .

**Table 3.4 : Showing the development of definitions and types of definitions**

From the table, it can be seen that the "types of definitions" were added after the period of the Tipiṭaka. If you consider it in terms of the content of the definition, it is a big principle with a lot of detail. It has a lot of content. Therefore, it is possible to expand the subdivision to the 8 categories. One thing that must be accepted is the concept of the commentary. Expanding the definition into definition 5 is holistic thinking based on the idea that life does not depend on karma alone. Therefore, it is quite incorrect to look at everything in the world and stereotype that it is caused by all karma. Therefore, the commentary tries to add other aspects of the definition to describe the world in all dimensions.

The progress of science in the past is different from the present. Science evolves and grows according to the context of society. Therefore, this concept of definition is an attempt to explain the phenomenon that occurs in the social context of each era. Each period In the past, all the interpretations of all the aspects discussed in this study may have been accepted. In the present era, what must be accepted is to try to interpret

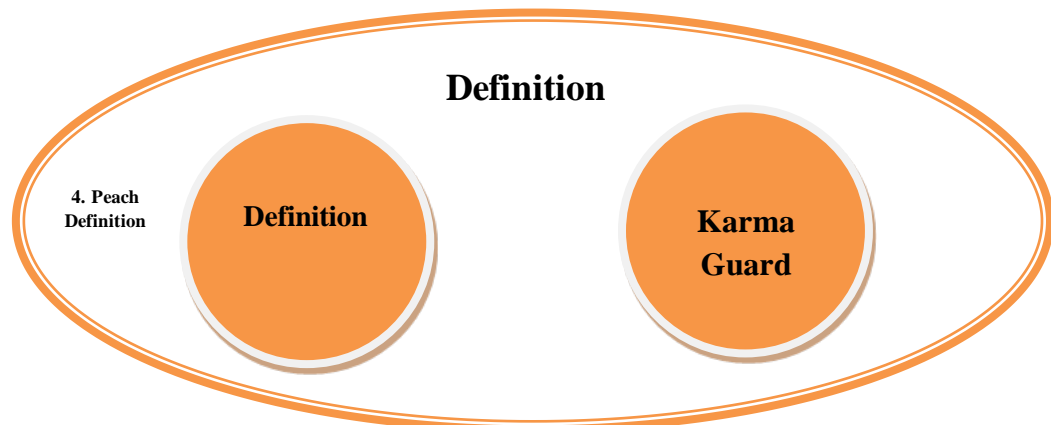
the new things that have happened in the present era, and it is certain that in the future there will be a lot of new interpretations. The development of the teachings is something that is always happening, so the most important thing is to develop without forgetting the original ideas.

The researcher presents the 3rd definition principle according to the researcher's viewpoint based on the main concept of meaning that appears in the Tipiṭaka: "Ordinary" is classified into 3 categories, consisting of (1) Definition, (2) Definition, and (3) Dharma Definition, as follows:

- (1) **Definition of mind** means the ordinariness of the mind.
- (2) **Definition of karma** means the ordinariness of karma.
- (3) **Dharma definition** means the ordinariness of the Dharma.

These three definitions are expanded from the definition in the Tipiṭaka, but do not mention the definition of the utun or the definition of the peach (according to the implication of the commentary) in any way, because the researcher is of the view that the phenomena in human life do not need to rely too much on the principle of "ordinary". The definition of **the mind** (the ordinariness of the mind) is intended to describe the characteristics of the mind, which is the most unique and closest to the human being, as well as the most intricate, as well as the definition of **karma** (the ordinariness of karma) which is intended to describe the actions and consequences of human actions in the case of phenomena related to the mind. Especially about the effect of karma.

At this point, the question may arise as to why the researcher chose the main "Ordinary" is used only for abstract explanations. The answer lies in the last type of "ordinary", which is **the definition** of dharma (the ordinariness of dharma), which explains all phenomena, both concrete and abstract, which controls all the remaining forms and is above all "ordinary". The following chart shows the definition 3 according to the researcher's viewpoint.



*Chart 3.5 : Definition 3 is shown from the researcher's point of view.*

After all, The development of the teachings or concepts of definition in Theravada Buddhism has been going on for a very long time, for almost 3,000 years. The researcher would like to conclude Chapter 3 by presenting a summary table of the development of concepts and teachings on definitions. In order to compare the differences in the teachings of all hierarchies in detail. as follow

<b>definition</b>	<b>Tipiṭaka</b>	<b>Maha Pa Sutra</b>	<b>Dhamma Sangani Commentary</b>	<b>Phra Phrom Kunaporn (P.O. Pyutto)</b>	<b>Prof. Sompha Promtha</b>	<b>C. A. F. C.A.F. Rhys Davids</b>	<b>Lady Syadot (Ledi Sayadaw)</b>
<b>Meteorological Definition</b>	-	Pick flowers and fruits by cutting them once, wind, sun, rain, lily of the smile. close	The tree blooms and bears fruit. There are young leaves at the same time.	Natural Laws of Materiality, Seasons Weather, weather, cough, sneeze, heat, temperature	Natural law, part about inanimate objects.	Seasonal rules Weather about Inorganic matter	Energy Regulation Heat, Temperature
<b>Peach Definition</b>	-	Wheat is the result of wheat, sweet and bitter taste. As a plant fruit	Fruiting plants: clumps of peas, vines, sunflowers, sand-roasting vines, coconut fruits.	Natural laws regarding reproduction, genetics Mango bears fruit	Natural law, part about living things.	Inheritance rules	Regulations on reproduction
<b>Definition</b>	-	Habits of Mind and Attitude	duty The Cause of the Mind, the Task, the Consensus, etc.	Natural laws about the functioning of the mind, attitudes,	Natural laws about the mechanisms of the mind	Rules of the mind	Regulation of the mind
<b>Definition</b>	-	Giving the fruits of charity, non-charity	Giving the effect of karma	Natural laws about human behavior	The Law of Giving Effects of	Rules of Karma and Fruiting	Moral Regulations

<b>Definition</b>	Blessing Common Characteristics	Wavering In the Ten Thousand Elemental Worlds	Ten thousand universes are shaken.	Natural laws about Cause and Effect	Good Karma to Bad Karma		
					Big rules that cover all the rules	Pure natural characteristics	Regulation of natural phenomena
<b>Socialism</b>	-	-	-	The Rules of Human Conduct	-	-	-
<b>Buddhist Definition</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	Natural Laws of Buddha
<b>Disciple Definition</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	The Natural Law of Disciples
<b>Nation definition</b>	-	-	-	-	-	-	The natural law of birth

**Table 3.6 : Summary of the development of concepts and teachings on definition**

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- Buddhist integration
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### **1.7.1 Head of the Research Project**

- 1) “Buddhist Biology: Life-Supporting Factors According to the Seven Suitable (*Sappāya*)” (Thai Edition). Research funded by the National Research Council of Thailand (NRCT), 2014.
- 2) “The Five Precepts: Criterion and Promotion of Individual and Social Peace” (Thai Edition). Research funded by Thai Health Promotion Foundation, 2015.
- 3) “A Study of the Holistic Well-beings Promotion for Balanced Way of Life according to Buddhist Psychology”. Research funded by the National Research Council of Thailand (NRCT), 2016.
- 4) “Human Behaviors in Promoting Balance of Family according to Buddhist Psychology”. Research funded by the National Research Council of Thailand (NRCT), 2017.
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- 1) “Strengthening the Emotional Strength of Professional Nurses: Principle and Buddhist Ideal, 2016.
- 2) “The Integrated Buddhist Psychology: The Model and Process for Promotion Holistic Health of Families and Society”, A Research Fund of National Research Council of Thailand (NRCT), 2016.
- 3) “Development of Plasma Generator Improving Titanium Alloys Surface for Biomedical Applications”, Research Report, (BRI: MCU), 2018.
- 4) “Mindfulness: The Development of Mindfulness-Based-Learning Model in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century”, A Research Fund of National Research Council of Thailand (NRCT), 2021.

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- 1) “The Creating and Developing Buddhist Happiness Indicators according to the Buddha’s Principle of Teaching”, Research funded by the National Research Council of Thailand (NRCT), 2015.
- 2) “An Analytical Study of the Factors Causing Sexual Deviation as Depicted in Buddhist Scriptures”, Research funded by the National Research Council of Thailand (NRCT), 2017.
- 3) “Buddhism-based Moral Solution to Commercial Surrogacy Issue in Thai Society”, Research funded by the National Research Council of Thailand (NRCT), 2018.
- 4) “Suicide: Buddhism-based Moral Solution to Suicide Issues in Thai Society”, Research funded by the National Research Council of Thailand (NRCT), 2020.
- 5) “The Development of Systematic Thinking Based on a Buddhist Approach in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century”, Research funded by Science Research and Innovation Fund, 2021.

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