

HARMONY AT HOME: EXPLORING THE INFLUENCE OF BUDDHIST TEACHING ON MODERN FAMILY DYNAMICS FOR A PLEASURABLE FAMILY LIFE

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Abstract

This research paper is to investigate the influence of Buddhist teachings on contemporary family dynamics and their role in cultivating a more pleasurable family life. The main objective of this research is to examine how Buddhist teachings affect modern family dynamics, seeking to identify the ways in which these teachings contribute to creating a more harmonious and enjoyable family environment. This study follows a desk research methodology, involving a comprehensive search across scholarly articles, databases, peer-reviewed journals, E-sources and relevant literature. Selection criteria were established to include publications focusing on the impact of Buddhist teachings on family dynamics in contemporary society. Thematic analysis was conducted, synthesizing information from selected sources to understand the relationship between Buddhist principles and modern family life. The literature review revealed several key themes regarding the influence of Buddhist teachings on modern family dynamics. These teachings, including mindfulness, compassion, and interconnectedness, were found to significantly impact family relationships by promoting effective communication, conflict resolution, and emotional well-being. Moreover, the literature suggested that the application of these teachings can contribute to a more joyful and harmonious family life. Based on the findings, it is evident that Buddhist teachings play a substantial role in shaping modern family dynamics. The study recommends further exploration into the practical applications of these teachings within family contexts, emphasizing the potential for enhancing family well-being and fostering harmonious relationships. This study contributes to understanding how Buddhist teachings positively influence modern family dynamics, paving the way for potential applications to promote pleasurable and harmonious family lives.

Keywords: Buddhism, Family Dynamics, Harmonious Relationships, Modern Challenges, Well-being

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Introduction

Family dynamics are the patterns of relating, or interactions, between family members. Each family system and its dynamics are unique, although some common patterns exist. The interactions and connections that might occur within a family are called family dynamics. Every family has a unique dynamic that shows itself in different ways. By discovering these ties, humans may gain a deeper understanding of their own family and others, including how families operate (Di Pietro, 2012). The system of relationships and interactions among family members that includes many necessary components is known as a family dynamic (family arrangements, hierarchies, rules, and patterns of family interactions). Each family has distinct traits that may be both advantageous and detrimental. Ultimately, family dynamics will shape how young people see the world, others, and themselves. It will affect their future well-being as well as their relationships and actions (Gerhardt, 2020). Every family member needs to strike some balance between their interests and what's best for the group as a whole for the family to remain united. Even though, in recent times, families have changed a lot. There's more variety in the kinds of families we see today. It's not just about the usual families living together anymore. Families now include stepfamilies, single-parent families, couples who live together, and families spread across different places. With these changes, new problems have come up. It can be hard to juggle work and family time, especially with all the latest technology. Plus, when family members have different ideas or beliefs, it can lead to arguments and stress, making family life more complicated (Hung, 2002).

Family is the first social institution of society. It has various functions such as sexual reproduction, economics, socialisation, and love. When these functions break down, family life is destroyed. So, it may lead to divorce as well. Divorce is a challenging experience for all parties involved. It can be emotionally and financially draining. While it often signals the end of a relationship, it can also have positive outcomes, such as newfound freedom and improved relationships between parents and children. Divorce affects not only adults but also children; studies suggest that they are at higher risk of mental health issues and substance abuse due to their familial circumstances (Divorce rates by country, 2023). Onyango (2013) cited that most marriages today are far from good. Instead, they are bearable, tolerable, or just enduring. He further observed that unmarried men and women need to receive adequate information as to what marriage is all about.

Every family has unique, difficult circumstances at various phases of their lives. In real life, we work with families where several issues have arisen concurrently, burdening every family member in different ways; alternatively, a significant problem has been plaguing the family for a long time, or it is a generational issue that the family members pass down to the next generation (Miłek, 2022).

If a family does not fulfil some of its essential functions at the level set by social norms in each country, we say that it has family disorders. (Kraus, 2018) The family finds itself in danger of failing in one of its functions; it becomes disharmonious, which ultimately affects all family members. Early intervention can prevent problems from deepening or even eliminating these problems. From the point of view of social work, a multi-problem family needs a support system in which, in addition to family members, other institutions and experts may be involved. The aim is to look together with the family for its resources and motivational factors that will lead to a change in the family's behavior a change in its attitudes (Budayová, 2021).

In this context, the influence of Buddhist teachings has garnered attention as a potential cornerstone for fostering harmonious and pleasurable family environments. Concepts such as mindfulness, compassion, and interconnectedness can serve as guiding principles for family interactions. Encouraging mindfulness within the family context can promote a deeper appreciation of the present moment, allowing family members to be fully engaged and connected. Compassion, a core value in Buddhism, encourages empathy, understanding, and kindness toward one another, leading to a more supportive and caring familial environment. Additionally, the notion of interconnectedness underscores the understanding that each family member's well-being is intertwined with the collective well-being of the family unit, promoting a sense of shared responsibility and unity. Integrating these teachings into daily family life can cultivate patience, understanding, and emotional resilience, creating a more joyful, content, and pleasurable family experience.

The central tenet of Buddhism is the *Tripitaka* (Canon), which consists of three categories: *Sutta Piṭaka*, *Vinaya Piṭaka*, and *Abhidhamma Piṭaka*. The *Sutta Piṭaka*, in turn, comprises five parts: *Dīghanikāya*, *Majjhimanikāya*, *Samyuktanikāya*, *Aṅguttaranikāya*, and *Khuddakanikāya*. Significant *Suttas* can be used for cultivating a pleasurable family life as follows:

Sigālovādasutta, *Mahāparinibbānasutta*, *Aggaññasutta*, *Uggahasutta*, *Pattakammasutta*, *Migasālasutta*, *Sabbrahmasutta*, *Paṭhama and Dutiya Saṃvāsakasutta*, *Vasalasutta*, *Parābhavasutta*, *Mahāgovindasutta*, *Sattabhariyāsutta*, *Cūlavyuhasutta*, *Mallikāsutta*, *Cullavedellasutta*, *Vattusutta*, *Kulasutta*, *Avenikasutta*, *Natthiputtasutta*, *Dhītusutta*, *Vepullasutta*, *Vañijjāsutta*, *Vyaggapajjasutta*, *Kintisutta*, *Parisasutta*, *Kosambisutta*, *Mahānāmasutta*, *Sakkanamassasutta*, *Itthi bandhanasutta*, *Purisa bandhanasutta*, *Sāma jātaka* and *Mātuposatha Jātaka* and so on.

Literature Review

Dynamic family and issues refer to the ever-evolving nature of family structures and the challenges or concerns in this dynamic environment. Families are subject to constant change due to various societal, cultural, economic, and technological factors, giving rise to various issues. The family dynamics indicate a shift in the family structure, such as parental remarriage and divorce. As a result, the effects they have on relationships within families have been examined in several research. These studies include (step) parenting and the quantity and quality of interaction that resident and non-resident parents have with their kids. These family dynamics have the potential to create disparities between parents in their access to and relationships with their children, and vice versa, since it is still more common for children to remain with the mother, either full-time or part-time, after parental separation. (McLanahan & Percheski, 2008) Conversely, divorced parents re-enter the dating scene, which might result in creating a stepfamily. Family dynamics can thus affect family relationships and parenting practices. According to the family process paradigm (Cavanagh, 2008), changes in family status can change family roles and functioning. The process of family dissolution, including transitional period following it, can often be chaotic and stressful for parents and their children (Braver, Shapiro, & Goodman, 2006; Hetherington, 1993). This might disturb parenting (Braver et al., 2006). Overall, family problems can be traced as toxic relationships, disengagement, unhappiness, unfaithfulness, arguments, alcoholism/drug abuse, divorce etc. Religious and spiritual teachings profoundly shape the values, beliefs, and behaviours within family structures. Among these teachings, Buddhist principles offer a unique perspective on fostering harmony, compassion, and well-being within the family unit. The influence of

Buddhist teachings on family life holds the potential to create a nurturing and harmonious environment. As a spiritual tradition, Buddhism emphasizes core principles such as mindfulness, compassion, interconnectedness, and ethical living. These principles serve as guiding lights, influencing how individuals interact within their families and navigate the complexities of modern family dynamics.

The *Sigālovādasutta* (PTS: D III 180), a discourse by the Buddha, offers timeless philosophy applicable to various aspects of life, including family relationships. It outlines guiding principles for individuals within a family context, emphasising respect, care, and responsibility. In the *sutta*, the Buddha advises on the duties and responsibilities of family members, encompassing reverence for parents, support for spouses and children, fidelity in relationships, generosity toward relatives, and ethical conduct. These teachings advocate for nurturing harmonious family relationships, guiding individuals on their roles and obligations within the family unit. The *Mettasutta* (PTS: SN 143-152), a discourse on loving-kindness in Buddhism, outlines qualities essential for personal development. Before marriage, partners becoming acquainted with and cultivating these virtues could potentially contribute to a harmonious and prosperous relationship. The *Sutta's* emphasis on qualities like loving-kindness, compassion, joy, and equanimity underscores their significance in fostering a fulfilling and joyous marital life. Integrating these virtues into one's character might potentially enhance the quality and happiness within the context of marriage. The *Sattabhariyāsutta* (PTS: AN.7.63), or "The Seven Wives Discourse," found in the *Aṅguttaranikaya* of the Pali canon, details four archetypal wives a man might encounter. This teaching offers insights into the qualities and behaviours of these wives, each presenting different characteristics ranging from loyalty, wisdom, and service to unfaithfulness, bickering, and laziness. Exploring this discourse could provide an understanding of traditional societal expectations, roles, and the qualities that define an ideal wife, shedding light on the diversity and complexities within marital relationships. Understanding these archetypes might offer insights into the dynamics and challenges individuals encounter in conjugal life, contributing to exploring traditional norms and roles within marriage. *Lōka vijayasutta*, (PTS AN. VIII. 05) illuminates the multifaceted duties of a wife in promoting a harmonious and prosperous family life. Understanding the distinction between good and bad character traits in both wife and husband is pivotal for the sustenance of a harmonious and thriving family life. The character of individuals within a marriage profoundly influences the dynamics and atmosphere within the household. *Samvāsasutta* (PTS A.N IV 06) is a discourse in Buddhist scripture that categorizes families into four types based on their ethical and moral behaviour.

In exploring "Harmony at Home: Exploring the Impact of Buddhist Teachings on Modern Family Dynamics for Pleasurable Family Life," the synthesis of existing literature reveals a profound intersection between age-old Buddhist principles and the contemporary dynamics of family life. The holistic approach of Buddhist teachings, encompassing mindfulness, compassion, and interconnectedness, offers invaluable insights that can significantly enrich and transform the modern family landscape. Through the review, it becomes evident that the application of Buddhist principles within family dynamics promotes not only a sense of harmony but also cultivates empathy, resilience, and emotional intelligence among family members. The emphasis on mindfulness aids in fostering deeper connections within the family, encouraging individuals to be present, attentive, and responsive to the needs of one another.

Research Problem

Despite a growing interest in the integration of Buddhist teachings into modern family life, a comprehensive understanding of how these teachings specifically impact family interactions, emotional well-being, conflict resolution, and overall satisfaction, and how they contribute to fostering a pleasurable and harmonious family life within diverse cultural and familial contexts remains underexplored.

Research Objectives

- To analyse the influence of Buddhist teachings on family interactions,
- To evaluate the effect of Buddhist teachings on emotional well-being and conflict resolution in families
- To assess the contribution of Buddhist principles to overall family satisfaction and pleasurable family life
- To examine the adaptability and evolution of Buddhist principles within diverse family contexts

Research Methodology

This study's focus on textual analysis involves thoroughly examining various literature sources to investigate how Buddhist teachings impact modern family dynamics. The comprehensive literature review identifies and analyses critical principles such as mindfulness, compassion, and interconnectedness in family life. The study uses textual analysis and interpretation to uncover how these teachings influence family interactions, emotional well-being, conflict resolution, and overall household satisfaction. A comparative analysis will also explore how these teachings adapt to different cultural and familial contexts, facilitating an understanding of commonalities and discrepancies within the literature. The study intends to conclude by providing insights into the potential applications and challenges of integrating Buddhist teachings into modern family settings and proposing future research directions.

Results and Discussion

Following the analysis of textual sources concerning the impact of Buddhist teachings on modern family dynamics, several key themes emerged. The identified Buddhist principles, particularly mindfulness, compassion, and interconnectedness, were recurrent in discussions relating to family interactions and emotional well-being. Textual analysis revealed that applying these teachings significantly correlated with improved communication and conflict resolution within the household, fostering a more harmonious family environment. However, discrepancies were noted concerning the adaptability of these teachings across diverse cultural and familial contexts. While some texts highlighted successful integration, others pointed to challenges in applying these principles uniformly across different family structures. These findings indicate the potential and the complexities associated with implementing Buddhist teachings within varied family settings. The discussion further explores the implications of these results and offers insights into the challenges and benefits of incorporating these teachings into diverse modern family dynamics.

According to research by Christy Bieber (2003), lack of commitment and sexual misconduct are the top reasons for raising family problem. *Sigālovādasutta* (PTS: DN. 3. 180) promotes marital loyalty, faithfulness, and cooperation. It underscores the commitment to maintaining a harmonious relationship, emphasising that both partners must be dedicated to each other's well-being. Ten obligations needed for harmony among the family members are shown in

Sigālovādasutta. Furthermore, we can identify the Buddhist attitudes which can be used as guidance to improve interpersonal relationships. Commitment gets strong when the relationship is firmed. Commitment is a fundamental pillar of any solid and enduring relationship. It is the deep sense of dedication and responsibility that each partner feels towards the other and the relationship itself. When commitment is firmed and avoiding sexual misconduct have several key elements come into play, such as: security, resilience, long-term planning, support and encouragement, emotional intimacy, mutual growth, happiness, and cohesion.

Sigālovādasutta gives ideal guidance to couples on how they should behave after marriage. These guidelines pave the way to long-lasting relationships and happy marriage lives.

Duties should be followed by the husband towards his wife are:

1. by being courteous to her,
2. by not despising her,
3. by being faithful to her,
4. by handing over authority to her,
5. by providing her with adornments.

“*sammānanāya anavamānanāya anaticariyāya issariyavossaggena alaṅkāranuppādānena.*” (PTS: DN. 3. 180)

Obligations should be followed by the wife towards her husband are:

1. she performs her duties well,
2. she is hospitable to relations and attendants,
3. she is faithful,
4. she protects what he brings,
5. She is skilled and industrious in discharging her duties.

“*susamvihitakammantā ca hoti, susaṃgahitaparijanā ca, anaticārīnī ca, sambhatañca anurakkhati, dakkhā ca hoti analasā sabbakiccesu*” (PTS: DN. 3 180).

Stress, intolerance, depression, impulsion, discontent, misrepresentation etc. are kinds of reasons that arise conflicts in the family. When the stress and the above-mentioned facts are increased couples cannot control themselves. Accordingly, this situation leads to many family issues in the family. Due that mutual misunderstanding, family members become ill physically and mentally. The family is gradually deteriorated. Each member is hostile and enraged with the others. Moreover, the family deviated from conventions and became immoral. As a result, we must carefully and scientifically investigate the variables like stress, sadness, impatience intolerance, impulsivity, and discontent. A critical examination of the current topic with a theoretical and practical foundation is also necessary. It is possible to investigate this issue's root cause and impact using this study. Additionally, the Buddha conveyed the highly personal aspect of the cause-and-effect basis.

In the *Selasutta* of *Sanyuttanikāya*, the Buddha illustrates how conflicts arise and, when the causes are eradicated, the conflicts disappear. Similarly, in the context of family dynamics, when a problem arises, each individual needs to understand the cause of the issue before seeking a resolution (PTS: SN. 1.134).

The *Mātugamasutta* (PTS SN. 37. 1), attributed to Buddha, delineates qualities a woman may possess that can significantly influence her compatibility and desirability as a partner within a marital relationship. The *sutta* identifies specific factors that make a woman disagreeable or agreeable to a man. In the *sutta*, it is expressed that a woman who lacks beauty, wealth, and virtue, is lethargic, and does not bear children is deemed extremely disagreeable to a man. In contrast, a woman who possesses beauty, wealth, and virtue, is characterised by intelligence and industry, and bears children is considered extremely agreeable to a man. According to the *Sutta*, these qualities play a substantial role in a woman's desirability and perceived compatibility within a marital relationship. While the *Sutta* emphasis on these qualities reflects the cultural context of its time, it's essential to approach these teachings with an understanding of their historical context and the evolving dynamics of relationships in contemporary society, considering mutual respect, shared values, and emotional connection as fundamental aspects in the context of a fulfilling and harmonious marriage.

"Bhikkhus, when a woman possesses five factors, she is extremely disagreeable to a man. What five? She is not beautiful, not wealthy, not virtuous; she is lethargic, and she does not beget children. When a woman possesses these five factors, she is extremely disagreeable to a man."

"Bhikkhus, when a woman possesses five factors, she is extremely agreeable to a man. What five? She is beautiful, wealthy, virtuous, clever, industrious; and begets children. When a woman possesses these five factors, she is extremely agreeable to a man." (PTS SN. 37. 1).

Mettasutta suggests fostering thirteen specific attributes to achieve success. Both partners should familiarise themselves with these qualities before marriage; if they are not inherent, efforts to nurture them are recommended. Cultivating these qualities is fundamental for establishing a content and satisfying marital life. The subsequent list details these essential attributes. 1. *Sakkō* – be able 2. *Ujū* - up right 3. *Sujū* – perfectly upright 4. *Suvaca* – polite in expression 5. *Mudu* – be gentle 6. *Anatimāni* – humble 7. *Santussako* – be with contentment 8. *Subharō* – quickly satisfy 9. *Appakiccō* – not bothered by duties 10. *Sallahukavutti* – simplicity in livelihood 11. *Santindriyō* – restrain in behaviour 12. *Nipakō* – being skilful 13. *Appagabbō* – not being arrogant (PTS SN. 1. 143-152).

Effective communication is a vital skill within successful relationships, a focus also emphasised in Buddhist teachings. Before delving into the significance and function of communication, it is crucial to comprehend how Buddhism perceives the entire concept of speech. Thus, a deeper understanding of the Buddhist theory concerning speech formation is essential. In Buddhism, speech is not solely perceived as a mere acoustic event but is regarded from an ethical viewpoint. It evaluates speech across three distinct aspects. (1) volition (*cetanā*), (2) abstinence (*virati*) and (3) sound (*sadda*). Among these, it gives utmost importance to volition. Volition is said to be thinking as active thought, but it can also be considered as intention, purpose, or will. Regarding speech, it is the volition to utter good or harsh words. The volition is explained as follows: "Words endowed with four factors, ... (1) well spoken, (2) not ill-spoken, (3) faultless and (4) unblamed by the wise. The *Subhāsitasutta* enumerates four factors (1) *attha*, (2) *dhamma*, (3) *piya*, and (4) *sacca*. In this connection, *attha* means the intention of benefiting others, *dhamma* means leading to freedom from suffering, *piya* means friendly purpose and *sacca* implies truth (SN. 1. 450-454).

During challenging or sorrowful times, a partner needs to offer solace through positive words. The *Abhaya Theragāta* recounts monk Abhaya's motivation derived from the Buddha's teachings. Monk Abhaya found his way to ultimate happiness, Nibbana, by hearing the Buddha's encouraging words, highlighting the significant impact of pleasant speech. The Buddha also instructs on steering clear of four types of detrimental speech, emphasising their avoidance.

- Lies
- Harsh words
- Slandering
- Useless words (PTS KN. 26. 6)

In *Vācasutta* (PTS AN. 3. 243), Buddha teaches the monks the five characteristics of a pleasant speech. They are as thus,

- It is spoken at the right time.
- It is spoken in truth.
- It is spoken beneficially.
- It is spoken with a mind of goodwill.
- It is spoken affectionately.

‘Pañcahi, bhikkhave, aṅgehi samannāgatā vācā subhāsītā hoti, no dubbhāsītā, anavajjā ca ananuvajjā ca viññūnaṃ. Katamehi pañcahi? Kālena ca bhāsītā hoti, saccā ca bhāsītā hoti, saṅhā ca bhāsītā hoti, atthasamhitā ca bhāsītā hoti, mettacittena ca bhāsītā hoti. Imehi kho, bhikkhave, pañcahi aṅgehi samannāgatā vācā subhāsītā hoti, no dubbhāsītā, anavajjā ca ananuvajjā ca viññūna’nti. Aṭṭhamaṃ (PTS AN. 3. 243).

Using words effectively in a marriage is paramount as they serve as the primary means of communication and connection between partners. Words are a potent tool to communicate and understand. Critical reasons for using good words in marriage life can be traced as follows: effective communication, conflict resolution, expressing love and affection, building trust, validation, and empathy, setting expectations, strengthening intimacy, problem-solving, sharing goals and plans, preventing assumptions, empowerment, apologising and forgiving, celebrating achievement, maintaining a connection, and preserving romance.

According to Buddhist Social doctrine, as stated in *Sattabhariyāsutta* (PTS AN. 4. 73) highly values the wife, playing the role of a mother, a sister, and a friend to her husband. It is something worthy, says *Sutta*, and points out that it is the way to show reverence and a very loving, caring wife to her husband. (*Sattabhariyāsutta*) Buddhism outright rejects causing mental and physical harm meted out to wives under the concept of male domination.

Four kinds of good wives

- Wife like a mother - She's always caring and kind, looking after her husband like a mother to her child. She keeps the wealth that he has earned secure. A man's wife of this sort is called a wife and a mother.
- Wife like a sister - She respects her husband as a younger sister and respects her elder. Conscientious, she does what her husband says. A man's wife of this sort is called a wife and a sister.

- Wife like a friend - She's delighted to see him like one reunited with a long-lost friend. She's well-raised, virtuous, and devoted. A man's wife of this sort is a wife and a friend.
- Wife like a bondservant - She has no anger when threatened with violence by the rod. Without hate or anger, she endures her husband and does what he says. A man's wife of this sort is called a wife and a bondservant.

Three kinds of bad wives

- Wife like a killer - Wife With a mind full of hate and no kindness, lusting for others, looking down on her husband, she longs to murder him who paid the price for her. A man's wife of this sort is called a wife and a killer.
- Wife like a thief - A woman's husband earns wealth by applying oneself to a profession, trade, or farming. And even if it's only a little, she wants to take it. A man's wife of this sort is called a wife and a thief.
- Wife likes a load. She's an idle glutton who doesn't want to work. Her words are harsh, fierce, and rude. She rules over him, though he rises early. A man's wife of this sort is called a wife and a lord (PTS AN. 4. 73).

Within a family setting, a wife shoulders numerous responsibilities and is expected to embody admirable qualities and ethical conduct. The essence of a successful and joyful marriage lies in the collective embodiment of these traits by both partners. Trustworthiness, respect, effective communication, patience, understanding, empathy, selflessness, and forgiveness are integral aspects of moral behaviour emphasised in the *Sattabhariyāsutta*. This *Sutta* underscores the cultivation of these qualities both before and after marriage. Such teachings within Buddhism shed light on the approach toward happy family life, emphasising the pivotal role of a wife's behaviour in nurturing a contented family. Additionally, the *Khattiyasutta* (PTS AN. 6. 52) highlights the significance of a good wife in fulfilling her husband's needs. Buddhism advocates for shared responsibilities and active involvement, promoting a harmonious and affectionate family relationship, thus nurturing a thriving family life.

The *Sanvāsasutta*, featured in the *Aṅguttaranikāya*, a section of Buddhist scripture, classifies families into four categories based on their ethical and moral conduct. These classifications serve to categorize families, distinguishing them based on their behavioural characteristics.

1. *chavō chavāya saddhiṃ saṃvasati.*
2. *chavō deviyā saddhiṃ saṃvasati.*
3. *dēvō chavāya saddhiṃ saṃvasati.*
4. *dēvō dēviyā saddhiṃ saṃvasati.* (PTS AN. 6. 132)

The first is a bad husband with a bad wife, the second is a terrible husband with a good wife, the third is a good husband with a bad wife, and the fourth is a good husband with a good wife. The last one is given the most weight. According to the *Sutta*, their marriage is comparable to that of a deity and a goddess. Thus, Buddhism has given a heavenly worth to family life while respecting it. That is obvious from the explanation of how a husband becomes a god. The essence of divine wealth that has been assigned to such spouses may be understood from this *Sutta*. Buddhism provides a meaningful space for secular life in this way. This teaching can be used as guidelines for cultivating a happy family life. The importance of a good husband and wife in a marriage cannot be overstated. A harmonious and happy life often the result of the partnership between two individuals committed to being good spouses.

The results and ensuing discussion shed light on the profound impact of Buddhist teachings on various facets of family life. The attributes and ethical considerations emphasised in the scriptures, such as kindness, trust, ethical conduct, and communication, underscore the fundamental principles contributing to harmonious family dynamics. The teachings highlight the significance of individual conduct and emphasize shared responsibilities and the importance of mutual understanding in fostering a wholesome family environment. Additionally, the classifications and descriptions provided in the various *Suttas* signify the intricate moral fabric upon which families are categorised, offering valuable insights into the ethical framework necessary for nurturing content, compassionate, and morally conscious family lives advocated by Buddhist teachings.

The study investigating the impact of Buddhist teachings on modern family dynamics has revealed crucial insights into the significance of fundamental virtues within family life. The virtues emphasised in Buddhist teachings, including kindness, trust, ethical conduct, and effective communication, play pivotal roles in nurturing harmonious family relationships. Moreover, delineating four types of families in the *Sanvāsasutta* underlines the ethical distinctions guiding familial categorisations.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the study's outcomes, several recommendations can be made to integrate these teachings into family life and further explore their practical application:

- Incorporation of Buddhist Virtues - Encourage the integration of Buddhist virtues within daily family interactions to enhance harmony and overall well-being.
- Pre-marital Education - Introduce teachings from Buddhist scriptures into pre-marital counselling sessions, aiding couples in comprehending fundamental ethical considerations essential for a successful marital life.
- Research in Practical Application - Advocate for further research focusing on practically applying Buddhist teachings in contemporary family settings and diverse cultural contexts to understand their relevance.
- Adaptation to Evolving Structures - Explore the adaptability of Buddhist teachings within evolving societal and familial frameworks to effectively tailor these virtues to varying cultural settings.
- Promotion of Shared Ethical Responsibilities - Advocate for shared ethical responsibilities within families, emphasising mutual understanding and ethical conduct to foster a harmonious family environment.

Implementing these recommendations could significantly enhance family dynamics and overall well-being by infusing Buddhist virtues into the fabric of family life. This combined section highlights the essential findings and provides actionable recommendations based on the study's outcomes in exploring integrating Buddhist teachings into modern family dynamics.

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