



# Analyze the Explanation of the Kamma of Buddhist Elderly People in Ban Lawa Community, Mueang Phia Subdistrict, Ban Phai District, Khon Kaen Province

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## Abstract

The objectives of the research were as follows: to study principles for explaining kamma in Theravada Buddhist scriptures; to study the explanation of kamma among the elderly Buddhists in Ban Lawa community Mueang Pia Subdistrict, Ban Phai District; to analyze the explanation of the kamma of Buddhist elderly people in Ban Lawa community, Mueang Phia Subdistrict, Ban Phai District, Khon Kaen Province. This study was carried out by means of qualitative research through an in-depth interview of 28 key informants. The obtained data were interpreted by descriptive analysis before making conclusions, discussions, and recommendations. The research results were as follows: The principles of explaining kamma in Theravada Buddhist scriptures: Kamma is an action that is both good and evil. Clever action is known as the creation of merit having right views or *Sammādiṭṭhi* and action with ignorance has a wrong view or *Micchādiṭṭhi* with components and characteristics of actions divided into two types: omission and action, etc. The explanation of kamma among the elderly Buddhists in Ban Lawa community Mueang Pia Subdistrict, Ban Phai District: Ban Lawa community explains how to make the mind calm, know wrong, know right, and have a clear mind. Actions can be divided into three ways: physical, verbal, and mental [mind] as follow: 1. Physical is to restrain the body and proper posture. 2. The verbal is speaking that is beneficial to oneself and the surrounding society. 3. The mental is creative thinking that is beneficial to the public. The analysis of the explanation of the kamma of Buddhist elderly people in Ban Lawa community, Mueang Phia Subdistrict, Ban Phai District, Khon Kaen Province: the villagers pay attention to doing good and avoiding evil. There is a set of wishes based on beliefs, including the observance of the five precepts, eight precepts or the *Upasatha* precepts, making good, having the right view [*Sammādiṭṭhi*] which is an action that consists of faith with wisdom to know accordingly. There is a belief in creating virtue and avoiding evil, resulting in physical and mental happiness.

**Keywords:** Kamma, Buddhist Elderly People, Ban Lawa Community

## 1. Introduction

According to the Buddha doctrine about the faith, there are four things: *Tathagatabodhi-saddha*: belief in the Enlightenment of the Buddha, *Kammaphala-saddha*: belief in kamma and its result; *Vipaka-saddha*: belief in the consequences of actions and *Kammasakata-saddha*: belief in the individual ownership of action. It is believed that the results that human beings receive are the results of their own actions, which may be kamma has done in the present or past lives, it believes about kamma [Phrabrahmagunabhorn [P.A. Payutto]: 1995, 140] [1] a person who believes in kamma would have the right to be freed from suffering on a more basic level than a person who does not believe it. As the Buddha said “when the mind is sad, happy states is hopeful” [M.A. [Thai] 12/70/62] [2]. The mind is not depressed if the mind is clear. The kamma leads him to be born in a peaceful place is a good kamma, it is not evil, likewise, most of the people who perform bad deeds, both physically, verbally, and mentally, do not believe in their kamma. They don’t believe in merit and sin. When he dies, his mind becomes gloomy because he thinks of the bad kamma he has done before when the mind is sad, the states of unhappiness (*duggati*) is indeed the destination. As the Buddha said “When the mind is sad, the states of unhappiness is hopeful” [M.A. [Thai] 12/70/63] [3]. Human beings have different burdens such as good or bad, rich or poor, growth or decline, happiness or suffering, all

because of their own kamma and any kamma done will be either good or bad kamma will always be returned. As the Buddha said “All dhammas have a mind, let’s have a mind to be great and succeed with the mind. If a person has a bad mind, they have to speak bad thing or do it overnight. Because evil will follow him like a spinning wheel following the footsteps of the oxen that pull the wagon” [Kh. [Thai] 25/1/23] [4]. Men have different lifestyles. The daily lives of human beings are all kamma that has been done in the past, present and leading to the future. The kamma that occurs like it is good or bad kamma, is caused by expression in three ways: body, speech, and mind. As the Buddha said “Bhikkhus, for this reason, I refer to intention as kamma; having thought, one acts with body, speech, and mind”. [A. [Thai] 22/63/577] [5] it will result in the human being to live according to the way of kamma. As the Buddha said “What goes around, comes around, all animals are indeed the kamma], all beings have kamma as a bond. It is like a car with pins attached to it and sails away. Honorable person, glorification, declination, killing, and imprisonment are because one’s kamma clearly knows the kamma that makes the difference. Why should it be said that there is no kamma in the world? [Kvu. [Thai] 37/785/821] [6] in other words, all beings are subject to the law of kamma. They must receive the result of that kamma whether good or bad, sooner or later, either in this life or in the next life, or in the next lifetime, depending on the kamma done by the person [Phrabrahmagunabhorn [P.A. Payutto: 2002, 92] [7] Kusala-dhamma (skillful), Akusala-dhamma (unskillful) and Abyakata-dhamma (indeterminate) are all kamma that has been done and will continue to receive the results of those actions.

Nowadays, people in Thai society still have a lot of debate about the effect of kamma, particularly according to the doctrine said that “What goes around, comes around”, is it true or not? Because as far as we can see together in the real world in today’s society, people do bad things but receive good things, there are many who do good things, but receive bad things. They don’t believe in this doctrine. When the problems are found, they should be studied clearly [Phrabrahmagunabhorn [P.A. Payutto: 2012, 269] [8]. Understanding kamma is necessary and important to make humans have a way of life, to completely understand life and the coexistence of people in society. Studying and learning about kamma will answer the problems that occur very well.

Therefore, the researcher is interested in studying “Analyze the explanation of the kamma of Buddhist elderly people in Ban Lawa community, Mueang Phia Subdistrict, Ban Phai District, Khon Kaen Province”, particularly the belief in the kamma of those who enter the temple to make merit and practice Dhamma in every traditional festival whether there is an understanding of kamma or the result of kamma, then analyze and present to society.

## 2. Research Questions

- 2.1) How is the explanation in Theravada Buddhist scriptures?
- 2.2) How is the explanation about kamma of Buddhist elderly people in Ban Lawa community, Mueang Phia Subdistrict, Ban Phai District, Khon Kaen Province?
- 2.3) How the explanation is analyzed about kamma of Buddhist elderly people in Ban Lawa community, Mueang Phia Subdistrict, Ban Phai District, Khon Kaen Province?

## 3. Research objectives

- 3.1) to study the explanation in Theravada Buddhist scriptures.
- 3.2) to study the explanation about kamma of Buddhist elderly people in Ban Lawa community, Mueang Phia Subdistrict, Ban Phai District, Khon Kaen Province.
- 3.3) to analyze the explanation about kamma of Buddhist elderly people in Ban Lawa community, Mueang Phia Subdistrict, Ban Phai District, Khon Kaen Province.

## 4) Research Method

The researcher conducts this research as qualitative research, it can be done as follows;

- 4.1) Documentary study, data collection is from documents and related people, Tripitaka, textbooks, the research report, the document demonstrates the relationship showing the concept of the explanation of the kamma of Buddhist elderly people in Ban Lawa community, Mueang Phia Subdistrict, Ban Phai District, Khon Kaen Province.
- 4.2) In-depth interview with 28 copies from the target group in Ban Lawa community, Mueang Phia Subdistrict, Ban Phai District, Khon Kaen Province.
- 4.3) Observation participation from key informants about consideration of the explanation of the kamma of Buddhist elderly people in Ban Lawa community, Mueang Phia Subdistrict, Ban Phai District, Khon Kaen Province, and the data were analyzed descriptively.

## 5. Expected Benefits

- 5.1) to know the principles of explanation of the kamma in Theravada Buddhist scriptures.
- 5.2) to know the explanation of the kamma of Buddhist elderly people in Ban Lawa community, Mueang Phia Subdistrict, Ban Phai District, Khon Kaen Province.

5.3 able to analyze the explanation of the kamma of Buddhist elderly people in Ban Lawa community, Mueang Phia Subdistrict, Ban Phai District, Khon Kaen Province.

## 6. Results

### 1) The principles for explaining kamma in Theravada Buddhist scriptures.

Kamma in Theravada Buddhist Scriptures is an action that is both good and evil in an act of intelligence that produces a good thing, right view (Sammaditthi) which is called Kusala-kamma (wholesome action). It is based on meritorious action which is known as Sila (precepts), Dana (giving) and Bhavana (Mental development). In other words, the ignorance of doing good is called a false view (Micchaditthi). It has elements and characteristics of the action divided into 2 parts: refrain and action are shown in Kaya-kamma (bodily action), Vaci-kamma (verbal action) and Mano-kamma (mental action).

### 2) The explanation of kamma among the elderly Buddhists in Ban Lawa community Mueang Phia Subdistrict, Ban Phai District.

Activities to observe the precepts, meditation, mental development throughout the rains-entry day can calm the mind, know more about the wrong thing, and the right thing, mind clear, pray anything as you wish, able to build knowledge and understanding principles and practices of Buddhism to a certain extent, able to build happiness for the family, community, and society better, as well as preserving good culture and traditions that can be passed down from generation to generation in practice. It can be divided into three ways: Kaya-kamma (bodily action), Vaci-kamma (verbal action) and Mano-kamma (mental action) as follows; 1) bodily action is proper posture, behaving well and dressing appropriately for the situation, sacrificing bodily strength without expecting anything return with a charitable heart, bodily action can be both good and evil 2) verbal action can be bad or good for example sweet speech with malicious intent or slanderous words with good intentions according to the good intentions of each person's speech 3) mental action is the laying of creative ideas that benefit the public, truth in thought, having a mind concentrating on the matter of Sila (precepts) and Bhavana (mental development). There is no envious mind, only a kind heart wishing others to find prosperity in their lives, a mind without greed, hatred, and delusion.

### 3) Analyze the explanation of the kamma of Buddhist elderly people in Ban Lawa community, Mueang Phia Subdistrict, Ban Phai District, Khon Kaen Province.

Building good deeds according to the correct principles is a right view that consists of faith, having morality as the basis for creating goodness. Having Hiri and Ottappa are the act of renunciation or moral shame and moral dread for all sins by consciously controlling every manner, thought, speech, and action without violating morality and Dhamma. This Dhamma will make the mind clear, not sorrowful, and the mind will be normal, will make the mind calm, and bright purification of the mind through mindfulness meditation. The people lack confidence in creating virtue because there is a belief that doing good deeds has no effect making one worthless in society, and lack of humility. They often do not really study and practice the doctrine of Buddhism. They do not believe that doing evil is the path leading to suffering. They, therefore, become unwise in doing good deeds. There is boredom and dissatisfaction with going to the temple to practice Dhamma. They have views on practices that are contrary to the principles of morality. There is no concentration of the mind to create only evil, there is no shame in doing evil.

## 7. Discussion

Analyze the explanation of the kamma of Buddhist elderly people in Ban Lawa community, Mueang Phia Subdistrict, Ban Phai District, Khon Kaen Province can be discussed as follows;

**7.1) The principles for explaining kamma in Theravada Buddhist scriptures.** The principle of the explanation of kamma in Theravada Buddhist Scriptures is an action that is both good and evil in an act of intelligence that produces a good thing, right view (Sammaditthi) which is called Kusala-kamma (wholesome action). It is based on meritorious action which is known as Sila (precepts), Dana (giving) and Bhavana (Mental development). In other words, the ignorance of doing good is called a false view (Micchaditthi). It has elements and characteristics of the action divided into 2 parts: refrain and action are shown in Kaya-kamma (bodily action), Vaci-kamma (verbal action) and Mano-kamma (mental action) which is consistent with Chaba Onnak [10] her study is "A study of belief of kamma in Buddhism of the high school students: A case study on students of the Chonburi "Sukkhobot" school in Chonburi Province". The result revealed that kamma of Buddhism referred to actions that are based on desires showing in bodily, verbal, and mental actions. There are both good kamma and bad kamma affecting perpetrators caused by Phassa (sense-impression). It starts with the mind, thoughts are called mental development affecting those who commit bodily, and verbal actions. The result of the action, whether good action or bad action will be retrained in the subconsciousness. It waits for an opportunity to give results to the owner of the

kamma. To decide which kamma is a good or bad kamma, in Buddhism, the criteria have been laid out by looking at the causes of kamma and the consequences of kamma that affect oneself or others or both themselves and others.

**7.2 The explanation of kamma among the elderly Buddhists in Ban Lawa community Mueang Phia Subdistrict, Ban Phai District.** Activities to observe the precepts, meditation, mental development throughout the rains-entry day can calm the mind, know more about the wrong thing, and the right thing. It can be divided into three ways: Kaya-kamma (bodily action), Vaci-kamma (verbal action) and Mano-kamma (mental action) as follows; 1) bodily action is proper posture, behaving well and dressing appropriately for the situation, sacrificing bodily strength without expecting anything return with a charitable heart, bodily action can be both good and evil 2) verbal action can be bad or good for example sweet speech with malicious intent or slanderous words with good intentions according to the good intentions of each person's speech 3) mental action is the laying of creative ideas that benefit the public, truth in thought, having a mind concentrating on the matter of Sila (precepts) and Bhavana (mental development). There is no envious mind, only a kind heart wishing others to find prosperity in their lives, a mind without greed, hatred, and delusion which is Sammaditthi (right view). It is consistent with Phramaha Suporn Rakkhittadhammo [Pungklang] [11], whose study is "An analytical study of the belief in kamma according to Theravada". The result revealed that the law of Kamma was action with the intention to cause a result of that action. The word, 'Kamma' was a general language without stressing only goodness or badness. Some Kamma produced a result in the present time but some Kamma gave a result in the future when all proper factors came together. In Buddhism, there was a way to stop and cease it by training oneself in a way of Threefold Training: morality, concentration, and wisdom.

**7.3 Analyze the explanation of the kamma of Buddhist elderly people in Ban Lawa community, Mueang Phia Subdistrict, Ban Phai District, Khon Kaen Province.**

Building good deeds according to the correct principles is a right view that consists of faith, having morality as the basis for creating goodness. Having Hiri and Ottappa are the act of renunciation or moral shame and moral dread for all sins by consciously controlling every manner, thought, speech, and action without violating morality and Dhamma. This Dhamma will make the mind clear, not sorrowful, and the mind will be normal, will make the mind calm, and bright purification of the mind through mindfulness meditation. The people lack confidence in creating virtue because there is a belief that doing good deeds has no effect making one worthless in society, and lack of humility. They often do not really study and practice the doctrine of Buddhism. They do not believe that doing evil is the path leading to suffering. They, therefore, become unwise in doing good deeds. There is boredom and dissatisfaction with going to the temple to practice Dhamma. They have views on practices that are contrary to the principles of morality. There is no concentration of the mind to create only evil, there is no shame in doing evil. It is consistent with Phramaha Prasak Aggapanno (Changsaeng) [12] said that the word "belief" in Pali language is "faith", Sanskrit language in the Thai alphabet is "Satha". This mix languages. The meaning is also understood when it comes to "belief". It must be mentioned the doctrine itself. That is to say, all religions are born out of faith and belief. Faith is the belief that is the starting point of all religions. It can be divided into 2 things, first, it is called "Nanasampayuta", it is a belief that consists of wisdom, knowledge of causes, and results. Another one is called "Nanavippayuta" consisting of the belief that arises from ignorance. All religions, large and small were born from faith.

## 8. New explicit knowledge

Analyze the explanation of the kamma of Buddhist elderly people in Ban Lawa community, Mueang Phia Subdistrict, Ban Phai District, Khon Kaen Province as shown below. Bodily action is to humbly and respectfully respect the place, dress neatly, know how to maintain cleanliness in the place of meditation, set yourself up for morality, suggest how to make merit, arrange flowers, incense, and candles to worship the Triple Gems on Buddhist holy days in both waxing moon and waning moon on the eighth, fourteenth and fifteenth day of the lunar month. Verbal action is calming the speech, truthful words in praying, praising the Triple Gems, and not gossiping, persuading, and suggesting ways to make merit for others. Mental development is the humility of the mind toward the place of Dhamma practice, thinking only of good things that are charitable to other people, having a heart filled with kindness, and not being jealous of others including finding ways to practice and refine until the mind is bright, peaceful, clean, free from greed, hatred, and delusion.

## 9. Conclusion

Wholesome action activity, observing precepts, giving, and mental development during the three months of the Buddhist Lent Day can build wholesome action and unwholesome action in the beliefs of the villagers, which is to set the truth and pray to make merit, do good deeds and avoid evil deeds, entering to a temple to practice

Dhamma, practicing charity, precepts, and mental development, moral shame, moral dread, avoiding doing evil in bodily action, verbal action, and mental action

## 10. Recommendations

The title of “Analyze the explanation of the kamma of Buddhist elderly people in Ban Lawa community, Mueang Phia Subdistrict, Ban Phai District, Khon Kaen Province” can be suggested as follows;

### a) Recommendation for Policy

There should be a policy of jointly helping, promoting, and supporting activities of attending the temple and practicing Dhamma of the community throughout every festival in a concrete way both about the budget and public relations.

### b) Recommendation Academic

There is coordination for public relations, and dissemination of information on activities in the temple practice of the community throughout every festival through the electronic information center of relevant government agencies, and subdistrict administrative organizations.

### c) Recommendation for Further research

There should be a study and development to create patterns and skills in activities for attending community temples and Dhamma practices throughout every festival along with assessing the understanding of wholesome action and unwholesome action among youths.

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