

## **CONFLICT RESOLUTION IN MULTI-CULTURAL SOCIETIES: ADOPTING WESTERN APPROACH TO ENHANCE THE BUDDHIST PERSPECTIVE**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The word “conflict” in this paper is used mainly in the sense of serious disagreement, argument, difference in views or ideologies between two or more persons. This definition of the scope of meaning is mainly to make a distinction between conflict within oneself, which is more an emotional disturbance, and hence, coming more under psychology, and conflict between two or more persons which, when generally contradicted, falls under sociology. Therefore, conflict herein is taken more as a societal issue.

What is clearly seen, when the term conflict is taken in this sense, is that it needs more than one person for a conflict to arise. Such conflicts can exist due to diverse causes such as differences of character, personality, thinking, expectations two or more people possess and express, due to the incompatibilities they show with regard to beliefs, ideas, the aspired goals, ideals pursued, means employed to fulfill these aspirations etc. Then, there is nothing abnormal in conflicts as it is a part of the nature of ‘thinking’ of sentient beings. There is no need to underscore the fact that no two people are exactly the same in their general mode of behavior: physical, vocal and mental. Therefore, conflict by itself is not a bane as long as it remains at this level of verbal expression of differences and disagreement.

By nature, ‘conflict’ is a very volatile subject. Hidden in it are many combustible forces that could explode at the most unexpected moment, causing immense damage. Though it starts with harmless vocal expression, it could turn out to be a verbal assault, leading to struggle and fist-cuffs, fierce fighting and even to war.

Conflict has been a part of human history; and humans have from the very beginning, prone to lead a community life in which conflict is an intrinsic feature. Human history, therefore, clearly shows that there has been no fairly reasonable period of time which has been free from conflicts. This makes it obvious that the aspirations and attempts to make a ‘conflict free’ human society will always remain a laudable, but an unattainable wishful goal. This paper is completely a study based on literary sources, such as Pali Tripitaka, their relevant commentaries and secondary materials published by the western scholars.

### **KEYWORDS**

Conflict, Disagreement, War, Psychological Approach, Social Approach