JSL, 11(5), May 2026: 39 - 44

Online ISSN: 2456-1495
CODEN (USA): JSLOBJ



FAITH IN MODERN TIMES: A CONCEPT FROM MAHAYANA BUDDHISM

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ABSTRACT

Modern people lack faith on things which they see in their surroundings. This is because, for long they have seen no change in the civilization. Epistemological origin lies in the doubts, evolving from diversified and preconceived notions on religion, practices, customs, and traditions. Much of exposure among the people have created doubt among them, for the right judgment, which will lead to their wellbeing. External influences further aggravate complexities on selecting the right aspect, which will trigger faith towards the systems, process, networks, governing smooth functioning of society.

Keywords: Faith, modern times, concepts, Mahayana Buddhism

Online ISSN: 2456-1495
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1. INTRODUCTION

People now are very busy in their life. They are always running, managing office, home, outside equally. They have turned into machines, working like this. They have no emotions, lack of leisure time to spend, and always working. They always fear that if they do not work, something will not fall into the right place. Being in this pressure, they fail to take care of their health, falling ill most of the times. They consume processed foods, which are harmful for their health. Earlier people had faith, which was transferred from their parents and grandparents. They assured people to have faith on the systems, law, and governance, which will make things right. But now people lack faith on systems, processes, perceptions, as possessed among the constructs. According to Mahayana Buddhism, faith is considered as great vehicle. This is practiced in China, Japan, Korea, Tibet, Vietnam, among others.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Clammer, (2022) Mahayana Buddhism and social science is related, in terms of faith. Understanding of world is diversified, as people are varied in terms of faith. Some people follow their instincts, from which faith comes itself. Others really have faith on the issues in the world. Some others, feel faith, by being under the influence of someone whom they can trust. While there are some others, who do not have faith, rather cannot trust others, except their own. Mahayana Buddhism considers faith to be something, which comes when people are engaged into something. This is true as people cannot trust something until and unless they are into it.

Oza, (2022) Modern touch, in Buddhism comes, when religion, ritual, customs, and traditions are fully present. This fullness creates an urge among the people to trust their religions and others. Reincarnation evokes redevelopment of the rituals, customs, traditions, and practices, within a culture. During earlier times, outsiders were accepted on the condition, that they have to follow social norms. But in modern times, people have become broad-minded, as they are under western influence. As a result of this, cultural diversity has enhanced to a great extent. In places where Hindu religion is mostly practiced, influx of Muslims, has changed religious practices. Government also have extended much of helping hand towards these Muslims. Sometimes, this help compromises the needs of Hindus. According to Mahayana Buddhism, faith is something, which heals the disturbed minds of people when they are exposed to unfamiliar religious practices. Here, consideration of faith, as greater vehicle is affirmed.

Suzuki, (2023) Mahayana Buddhism strengthens faith in terms of universal truth. It is universal

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truth that man is mortal. But according to the religious customs and traditions, man lives for a certain time, and dies when it is predestined. Modern thoughts are directed towards life after death. Catholic priests, following precepts of Mahayana Buddhism consider preconceived ideas for evoking faith among the people. Preconceived ideas on the worldly issues, and faith are different, and subjected to conflicting interests. If these interests are considered, from modern aspect, then broadmindedness comes. This is because most of the people live in the present, having faith on almighty, who is supremely powerful to ensure wellbeing of all.

Mackenzie, (2025) Faith and doubt are placed side by side. Doubt comes when people are involved into something. For instance, people doubt the activities of people, when they inspect and minutely observe them. On the contrary, consistent observation on government ensuring protection of people from harmful aspects, develops faith and trust. Epistemological origin of faith and doubt comes from religion, practice, values, beliefs, and attitudes. These are different, and vary from culture to culture. Religious traditions, according to Mahayana Buddhism, operates according to divine truths. As a result of this, people, through questioning, reach to the state of self-enlightenment, which Buddha adopted for being successful in life. Faith and doubt are the two sides of same coin, which people are to consider for gaining awareness about their behaviour in the modern environment and situation. Studies consisting of enquiries, introspect the ways in which faith and doubt operate for clarifying the notions on issues taking place in the society. For instance, in some cultures, work is something faithful for the employees. But in other cultures, if salary is not increased, after a certain point of time, then employees doubt management policies, and their tenure in the company or organization.

Verma, (2024) Currently, the world is suffocating on issues like global warming, deforestation, scarcity of natural resources. Solutions to these issues are diversified. But Buddhists are of the view that ignorance is the best solution, for not being adversely affected from these issues. On the contrary, engaged Buddhists are deeply involved into the problems, attempting to solve issues, by weighing the effectiveness of applied solution, in the related context. Movements from the grassroot reflects engaged Buddhit followers, trying to stop the environmental crisis from grassroot level. Mahayana Buddhists urge people to meditate, which increases concentration on the relationship which people have with nature. Delving deeper, it can be observed that this crisis has arisen, due to immature actions of the people towards cutting trees and building factories, high rise building, shopping malls. Consistency of these actions has lost faith among people, leaving no scope for excepting benefits from nature. Yet, they are asked to have faith, as nature has high

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CODEN (USA): JSLOBJ

healing powers. But people act according to their reliance, which they have on religious values, beliefs, and attitudes.

Qi & Sang, (2025) Modern situation is filled with conflicts, where there is hardly compassion and charity for the poor and needy. Everyone is busy in fulfilling their needs, instead of caring for others. Buddhism urges people to reunite with others, so that universal love is restored in an ambience of conflict and instabilities. In Thomistic Christianity, philosophy of friendship is discussed. Evolution of this friendship comes from dual nature of virtue and love. In this evolution, another important aspect is the transition of virtue to love, under the guidance of God. Mahayana Buddhists are of the view that compassion, which is spiritual, evokes protection for the world. This is irrespective of caste, class, gender. Developmental domains considered is constant, only the environment is changing. Human centric model is adopted for reducing self and seeing others' care in a large form. Uniqueness lies in rethinking the role of religion in friendship. If people make friends, based on their religion, then they are being partial, and is against the Buddhist teachings of leading simple life with minimal pleasures. Collaboration towards developing universal love has scope for reducing worldly conflicts and issues.

3. METHODOLOGY

Post-positivism philosophy is apt for detecting the scenario after modern times, when faith is multifaceted among the religions, and cultures. Deductive approach is applied for deducing how faith is perceived by Mahayana Buddhists in modern times. For deduction, exploration is done on multiple studies conducted previously by scholars and researchers. This evokes the use of secondary sources being considered for collecting data on how faith is perceived by Mahayana Buddhists in modern times. Analysis of collected data is done through themes, case studies, narratives, and observations. This type of analysis extends the scope, arena and dynamics of research. While considering the sources, reliability and validity is maintained. This is by considering those sources which has been published in the last 10 years, and not older than that. Ethically, all sources are acknowledged, for avoiding the instances of plagiarism and collusion. It is also ensured that collected data is used only for research purpose and not for fulfilling commercial benefits.

4. CONCLUSION

Faith has multiple perspectives among the cultures. This faith altered and experienced shifts from earlier to modern age. Narrowing down, the paper focused on Mahayana Buddhism, which

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CODEN (USA): JSLOBJ

considers faith as the greater vehicle, giving people larger exposure to the universal truths. But not all people agree with the precepts of Mahayana Buddhism, and follow their own instincts, religious values, beliefs, customs, and traditions. But conflicting interests are seen when they are asked to take standpoint. This is acceptable, but if it affects religious sentiments, then it is unacceptable, as it is unethical.

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Online ISSN: 2456-1495
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