

Somchart Sakulkoo

The Chicago School of Professional Psychology

Buddhism and Radical Behaviorism: Commonalities and Applications

Introduction

- Buddhism is the fourth largest religion with over 488 million followers (Hackett & McClendon, 2017).
- Buddhists have been practicing their religion for more than 2500 years.
- Buddhist philosophies overlap with science in many points (Wallace, 2003).
- There are only two seminal articles by Diller and Lattal (2008) and Bass (2010) that directly tie Buddhism to radical behaviorism.
- The purpose of this poster is to offer the applications of the commonalities of Buddhism and radical behaviorism in practical ways.
- The commonalities can be applied to improve radical behaviorism reach through finding natural collaborations (i.e., Buddhism).

Points of Comparison

- This poster mainly focused on the conception of the human conditions which was described by Diller and Lattal (2008).
- There are at least five areas that the philosophies of Buddhism and radical behaviorism can be compared.

Critique

- Studying the commonalities between Buddhism and radical behaviorism may impede progress and misrepresent behaviorism (Williams, 1986).
- The field needs a variation of practices to expand the extent to which the philosophies can be applied.
- Studying the commonalities is a variety of studying behaviors (i.e., social practices) which is important to create novel areas of study (Skinner, 1981).

Points	Radical Behaviorism	Buddhism	Applications
Free Will and Karma	• Determinism (Baer, Wolf, & Risley, 1968) • Ontogeny (Skinner, 1981)	• Majority of phenomena are codependent (Bass, 2010; Yong, 2005) • Buddhism believes in karma, which is action or doing • Actions in the past can affect lives in the present and future	• Deliver reinforcement contingent on good karma (e.g., improving society, helping others, etc.) • Implement extinction or punishment contingent on bad karma (e.g., releasing pollution, engaging in crime, etc.)
Mindfulness	• Knowing what an individual is doing may be beneficial to the individual (Skinner, 1981) • Mindfulness may sharpen stimulus control (Diller & Lattal, 2008)	• Right mindfulness in the Noble Eightfold Path • Practices leads to liberation and being in the painful cycle of rebirth (samsara)	• The more behaviors are under the fine control of the environment, the more individuals can identify problems they are facing
Love, Compassion, and Empathy	• Feeling compassion would contribute to the survival of species which occasions helping others (Skinner, 1959/1999) • Application of behavior analytic principles could contribute to the goodness of society (Baer, Wolf, & Risley, 1968)	• When working toward enlightenment, individuals better understand the world and share compassion with other people	• Guanyin is the most beloved goddess in Eastern Asia • She is respected because she is a protector of women and children • The folklore may inspire people to promote the welfare of women and children
Moral Behaviors	• Rule-governed behaviors (Skinner, 1984) • Verbal behaviors (antecedent) specifies behavior and consequence	• Five precepts or Buddhism's ethics code ◦ No killing ◦ No stealing ◦ No sexual misconduct ◦ No false speech ◦ No taking intoxicants	• Five precepts can potentially save the world: ◦ Consume meat less, decrease methane emission, or decrease crime ◦ Decrease crime rate ◦ Decrease STDs, crime (e.g., sexual assault), or being unfaithful ◦ Decrease fraud and scams ◦ Decrease DUIs and alcohol-related diseases (e.g., liver problems)
Death	• No behavior can be observed • Removal of the self (Diller & Lattal, 2008)	• Reincarnation • Organism exists in other forms • Achieving nirvana (suffering world)	• Better understand how the world works (e.g., being aware of changes) • Those who achieve enlightenment can share what they have learned with other people

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References



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