



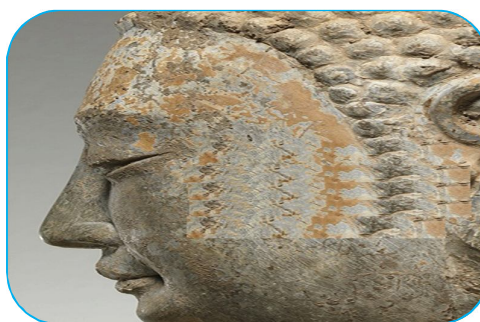
THE CONCEPT OF MINDFULNESS IN EARLY BUDDHIST TEXTS: A STUDY OF PĀLI CANONICAL LITERATURE

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ABSTRACT :

Mindfulness occupies a central position in early Buddhist thought and represents an important component of the Buddhist path toward ethical development, mental discipline, insight, and liberation. This study examines the concept of mindfulness in early Buddhist texts with particular reference to Pāli canonical literature. The research focuses on the presentation of sati and its relationship with awareness, attention, recollection, concentration, wisdom, and ethical conduct. Selected teachings from the *Dīgha Nikāya*, *Majjhima Nikāya*, *Saṃyutta Nikāya*, *Aṅguttara Nikāya*, and other relevant Pāli sources are examined to understand the textual foundations and practical dimensions of mindfulness. Particular attention is given to the *Satipaṭṭhāna* teachings, which explain mindfulness through contemplation of the body, feelings, mind, and mental phenomena. The study explores how mindfulness functions within the Noble Eightfold Path and how it supports the development of clear comprehension, concentration, and insight into impermanence, suffering, and non-self. The analysis also considers the relationship between mindfulness and meditation practices in early Buddhism. A qualitative and textual methodology is employed, using descriptive, historical, and analytical approaches to interpret selected canonical passages. The study demonstrates that mindfulness in early Buddhist literature is not limited to simple concentration or present-moment awareness but forms part of a broader discipline involving careful observation, ethical awareness, mental clarity, and insight. The research concludes that the Pāli Canon presents mindfulness as an integrated practice connected with the transformation of mental experience and the pursuit of liberation. The study contributes to a deeper understanding of the textual and philosophical foundations of mindfulness within early Buddhist thought.



KEYWORDS : Mindfulness, Sati, Early Buddhism, Pāli Canon, *Satipaṭṭhāna*, Buddhist Meditation, Buddhist Philosophy, Awareness, Insight, Liberation.

INTRODUCTION :

Mindfulness occupies an important position in the teachings of early Buddhism and is closely associated with the cultivation of awareness, ethical discipline, meditation, and wisdom. In Pāli canonical literature, mindfulness is primarily expressed through the term *sati*, which carries meanings related to recollection, attentive awareness, and careful observation. The concept is discussed in several discourses preserved in the Pāli Canon and is particularly prominent in the *Satipaṭṭhāna* teachings. Early Buddhist texts present mindfulness as a systematic practice rather than merely a state of passive

attention. The practice involves observing bodily processes, feelings, states of mind, and mental phenomena with clarity and careful awareness. The Satipaṭṭhāna framework provides an important foundation for understanding the role of mindfulness in Buddhist meditation. Mindfulness is also connected with clear comprehension, concentration, ethical conduct, and the development of insight. Through sustained observation, practitioners are encouraged to understand the changing and conditioned nature of experience. The teachings on mindfulness are closely related to the broader Buddhist doctrines of impermanence, suffering, and non-self. Thus, the study of sati in Pāli canonical literature provides important insights into early Buddhist approaches to mind, experience, and liberation.

The concept of mindfulness is presented across different Pāli texts in connection with the Noble Eightfold Path and the cultivation of wisdom. The Dīgha Nikāya, Majjhima Nikāya, Saṃyutta Nikāya, and Aṅguttara Nikāya contain important discussions concerning mindfulness and its practical application. The Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta and Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta are especially significant for understanding the four foundations of mindfulness. These teachings explain mindfulness through contemplation of the body, feelings, mind, and mental phenomena. Mindfulness enables the practitioner to observe experience without becoming dominated by attachment or aversion and supports the development of insight. It also contributes to concentration and prepares the mind for deeper understanding of Buddhist teachings. Early Buddhist literature therefore presents mindfulness as an integrated discipline involving observation, awareness, ethical sensitivity, and wisdom. A study of these canonical sources can help distinguish the original textual understanding of mindfulness from later interpretations and modern applications. The present study examines the concept of mindfulness in selected Pāli canonical texts and analyzes its philosophical, ethical, and meditative significance within early Buddhist thought.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

Aim

To critically examine the concept, meaning, development, and significance of mindfulness (sati) in early Buddhist texts, with particular reference to Pāli canonical literature.

Objectives

- ❖ To examine the meaning and textual significance of sati in early Buddhist literature.
- ❖ To study the presentation of mindfulness in selected Pāli canonical texts.
- ❖ To analyze the concept of mindfulness in the Dīgha Nikāya, Majjhima Nikāya, Saṃyutta Nikāya, and Aṅguttara Nikāya.
- ❖ To examine the Satipaṭṭhāna teachings as a major framework of Buddhist mindfulness practice.
- ❖ To study the four foundations of mindfulness: body, feelings, mind, and mental phenomena.
- ❖ To examine the relationship between mindfulness and clear comprehension (sampajañña).
- ❖ To analyze the role of mindfulness in the Noble Eightfold Path.
- ❖ To examine the relationship between mindfulness, concentration, and meditation.
- ❖ To study the contribution of mindfulness to the development of wisdom and insight.
- ❖ To examine the relationship between mindfulness and the understanding of impermanence, suffering, and non-self.
- ❖ To analyze the ethical dimensions of mindfulness in early Buddhist teachings.
- ❖ To examine the role of mindfulness in controlling attachment, aversion, and unwholesome mental states.
- ❖ To study the relationship between mindfulness and mental purification.
- ❖ To examine the role of mindfulness in the Buddhist path toward liberation.
- ❖ To analyze selected Pāli passages dealing with mindfulness from a textual and philosophical perspective.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The concept of mindfulness in early Buddhism has received considerable attention in Buddhist studies, particularly through the examination of the Pāli Canon and the meaning of *sati*. Classical and modern scholars have explored mindfulness in relation to meditation, ethical discipline, concentration, wisdom, and liberation. The *Satipaṭṭhāna Suttas* in the *Majjhima Nikāya* and *Dīgha Nikāya* are especially important sources for understanding the four foundations of mindfulness. Rhys Davids and other early Pāli scholars contributed to the translation and interpretation of canonical texts containing references to *sati*. Ñāṇamoli and Bodhi, in their translation of the *Majjhima Nikāya*, provide detailed access to discourses concerning mindfulness and meditation. Bodhi's studies of the Pāli Nikāyas explain mindfulness within the broader framework of the Buddha's path of practice. Gethin examined the foundations of Buddhist meditation and highlighted the relationship between mindfulness, meditation, and awakening. Analayo's extensive studies of *Satipaṭṭhāna* provide a detailed comparative examination of mindfulness practices described in early Buddhist sources. These works indicate that *sati* should be understood within a wider framework of attentive awareness, recollection, observation, and mental cultivation. Scholarly literature also connects mindfulness with the observation of body, feelings, mind, and mental phenomena. The existing literature therefore provides important textual and philosophical foundations for studying mindfulness in early Buddhist thought.

Further scholarship has examined mindfulness in relation to concentration, insight, ethics, and liberation. Studies of early Buddhist meditation emphasize that mindfulness functions together with clear comprehension, concentration, and wisdom rather than operating as an isolated practice. Rahula discussed mindfulness within the broader Buddhist path and connected it with the understanding of human experience and liberation. Ñāṇamoli's translations and interpretations of Pāli texts provide important evidence for examining the practical dimensions of mindfulness. Analayo's comparative studies have examined the *Satipaṭṭhāna* framework across different early Buddhist textual traditions and have highlighted the importance of careful textual interpretation. Gethin's research has contributed to understanding the relationship between mindfulness and the wider Buddhist path to awakening. Contemporary scholarship has also examined the distinction between the canonical concept of *sati* and modern uses of the term "mindfulness." This literature suggests that early Buddhist mindfulness involves sustained awareness of experience together with ethical and contemplative development. However, further research is needed to examine the concept systematically across different Pāli canonical texts and to distinguish early textual meanings from later interpretations. The present study therefore focuses on selected Pāli sources to critically examine the meaning, practice, philosophical significance, and role of mindfulness in early Buddhist thought.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study adopts a qualitative, descriptive, analytical, and interpretive research methodology to examine the concept of mindfulness in early Buddhist texts, with particular emphasis on Pāli canonical literature. The primary sources consist of selected texts from the Pāli Tipiṭaka, especially the *Sutta Piṭaka*, including the *Dīgha Nikāya*, *Majjhima Nikāya*, *Saṃyutta Nikāya*, and *Aṅguttara Nikāya*, along with relevant passages from the *Khuddaka Nikāya*. Special attention is given to texts dealing directly with mindfulness, meditation, mental cultivation, and the path to liberation, including the *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta* and *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta*. The study examines Pāli terminology such as *sati*, *sampajañña*, *ānāpānasati*, and *satipaṭṭhāna* in their textual contexts. Secondary sources include scholarly books, journal articles, translations, commentaries, dictionaries, and previous academic studies concerning early Buddhism and Buddhist meditation. A textual research approach is used to identify recurring concepts, practices, meanings, and philosophical relationships associated with mindfulness.

The collected textual material is analysed through close reading, thematic analysis, comparative interpretation, and contextual examination. Relevant passages are compared to identify similarities and differences in the presentation of mindfulness across selected canonical texts. The study considers

mindfulness in relation to the four foundations of mindfulness, ethical conduct, concentration, wisdom, the Noble Eightfold Path, and the Buddhist understanding of liberation. Where appropriate, Pāli terms are examined with reference to their linguistic meanings and contextual usage rather than relying exclusively on modern translations. The research also distinguishes between early canonical formulations and later interpretive developments in order to maintain textual clarity. The study does not attempt to evaluate mindfulness through experimental or quantitative methods, as its primary objective is to understand its textual, philosophical, and religious significance within early Buddhist literature. Attention is given to accurate textual interpretation, appropriate citation of primary sources, and comparison of different scholarly perspectives. The methodology therefore provides a systematic framework for understanding the meaning, practice, and philosophical significance of mindfulness as presented in early Pāli canonical literature.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Mindfulness occupies an important place in early Buddhist teachings, particularly in the Pāli Canon, where the concept appears in relation to meditation, ethical conduct, mental cultivation, wisdom, and liberation. The Pāli term *sati* is frequently translated as “mindfulness,” but its meaning and function within early Buddhist texts are broader and context-dependent. Different canonical passages present mindfulness in connection with awareness of the body, feelings, mental states, and phenomena, while also relating it to clear comprehension, concentration, and the Noble Eightfold Path. The diversity of these textual presentations creates a need for careful examination of the concept within its original literary and doctrinal contexts. Modern discussions sometimes interpret mindfulness primarily as attention to present experience or as a psychological technique, which may not fully represent its significance in early Buddhist thought. Therefore, the central problem of this study is to examine how mindfulness is conceptualized, described, and practiced in early Pāli canonical literature and to understand its relationship with the broader Buddhist path of mental and ethical development.

The study further addresses the problem of interpreting mindfulness consistently across different texts of the Pāli Canon while recognizing differences in literary context and doctrinal emphasis. Questions arise concerning the precise meaning of *sati*, its relationship with *sampajañña*, *ānāpānasati*, and *satipaṭṭhāna*, and its role in developing concentration, insight, and liberation. The relationship between mindfulness and other elements of Buddhist practice, including morality, meditation, wisdom, and the Noble Eightfold Path, also requires systematic investigation. Another important issue is distinguishing the early canonical understanding of mindfulness from interpretations that developed in later Buddhist traditions or modern secular contexts. Translation differences and variations in scholarly interpretation can further influence the understanding of key Pāli concepts. Hence, the study seeks to provide a systematic textual and analytical examination of mindfulness in selected early Buddhist texts, identify its major dimensions and functions, and clarify its significance within the philosophical and soteriological framework of early Buddhism.

NEED OF THE STUDY

The concept of mindfulness occupies a central position in early Buddhist teachings and is closely associated with meditation, ethical awareness, mental discipline, wisdom, and liberation. The Pāli Canon contains numerous references to *sati* and related practices, but the concept cannot be fully understood through a single definition or isolated textual passage. Its meaning varies according to literary and doctrinal contexts, particularly in discussions of the four foundations of mindfulness, mindfulness of breathing, contemplation of the body, feelings, mind, and phenomena, and the development of insight. The study is therefore needed to examine mindfulness within its original canonical framework and to clarify its relationship with other elements of Buddhist practice. Careful study of early Pāli texts can help distinguish the canonical understanding of mindfulness from later interpretations and modern approaches that sometimes emphasize only attention, concentration, or psychological well-being. Such examination is important for understanding the philosophical depth and practical significance of mindfulness in early Buddhism.

The study is also needed because translations and interpretations of important Pāli terms can differ considerably among scholars and translators. Examining terms such as *sati*, *sampajañña*, *satipaṭṭhāna*, and *ānāpānasati* within their textual contexts can contribute to a more precise understanding of early Buddhist thought. A systematic investigation can further explain how mindfulness functions in relation to ethical conduct, concentration, wisdom, suffering, impermanence, non-self, and the path toward liberation. The study may contribute to Buddhist studies, Pāli literature, comparative philosophy, religious studies, and the academic understanding of meditation traditions. It can also provide a textual foundation for distinguishing early Buddhist teachings from later doctrinal developments and contemporary secular applications of mindfulness. By examining selected canonical sources through a critical and contextual approach, the study seeks to contribute to a clearer understanding of the meaning, practice, functions, and philosophical significance of mindfulness in early Buddhist literature.

FURTHER SUGGESTIONS FOR RESEARCH

Further research on mindfulness in early Buddhist texts can examine the concept of *sati* across a wider range of Pāli canonical sources and compare its usage in different literary and doctrinal contexts. Future studies may undertake detailed textual comparisons among the four major Nikāyas and selected texts of the Khuddaka Nikāya to identify similarities, variations, and developments in the presentation of mindfulness. Greater attention can be given to related concepts such as *sampajañña*, *ātāpi*, *ānāpānasati*, and *satipaṭṭhāna* and their relationship with ethical discipline, concentration, and wisdom. Linguistic and philological studies of Pāli terminology may provide further clarification of the semantic range of *sati* and associated terms. Comparative research between different translations of the Pāli Canon can also examine how translation choices influence modern interpretations of mindfulness. Studies may further investigate the relationship between mindfulness and central Buddhist teachings such as impermanence, suffering, non-self, dependent origination, and liberation. Such research can contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of mindfulness within the doctrinal structure of early Buddhism.

Future research may also compare the canonical understanding of mindfulness with its presentation in later Buddhist traditions, including Theravāda commentarial literature and other Buddhist textual traditions. Comparative studies involving Sanskrit Buddhist texts, Chinese Āgama materials, and Tibetan sources may help identify similarities and differences in early Buddhist approaches to mindfulness. Researchers can examine the historical development of mindfulness from early canonical formulations to later meditation manuals and contemporary interpretations. Interdisciplinary research combining Pāli studies, Buddhist philosophy, religious studies, linguistics, psychology, and history may provide additional perspectives while maintaining clear distinctions between textual evidence and modern applications. Further studies could also examine the representation of mindfulness in specific contexts such as monastic discipline, daily activities, meditation practice, and the cultivation of insight. Digital humanities methods, searchable Pāli textual databases, and computational analysis may assist researchers in tracing the frequency and contextual usage of key terms across the canon. Such approaches can deepen academic understanding of mindfulness and contribute to systematic research on its textual, philosophical, historical, and practical dimensions.

SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

The scope of the study focuses on the concept of mindfulness as presented in selected early Buddhist texts of the Pāli Canon. It examines the meaning, nature, functions, and significance of *sati* within the early Buddhist doctrinal framework, with particular attention to the Dīgha Nikāya, Majjhima Nikāya, Saṃyutta Nikāya, Aṅguttara Nikāya, and selected texts of the Khuddaka Nikāya. The study gives special attention to *satipaṭṭhāna*, *ānāpānasati*, *sampajañña*, meditation, mental cultivation, ethical awareness, wisdom, and liberation. It examines mindfulness in relation to the contemplation of the body, feelings, mind, and phenomena and considers its relationship with the Noble Eightfold Path and

other important Buddhist teachings. The study also considers the contextual meaning of important Pāli terms and examines relevant translations and scholarly interpretations. Secondary literature, including academic books, research articles, commentaries, and studies of early Buddhist philosophy, is used to support the textual analysis.

The study has certain limitations because it concentrates mainly on selected Pāli canonical sources rather than the complete body of Buddhist literature. It does not provide an exhaustive analysis of every occurrence of *sati* or related terms throughout the entire Pāli Canon. Later Buddhist traditions, including Sanskrit, Chinese, Tibetan, and other textual traditions, are not examined in equal detail. Differences in Pāli editions, translations, linguistic interpretations, and scholarly approaches may affect the understanding of particular passages. Certain Pāli concepts may not have exact equivalents in modern languages, creating challenges in interpretation and translation. The study is primarily qualitative, textual, and interpretive and does not employ experimental methods to measure the psychological or clinical effects of mindfulness. Contemporary secular applications of mindfulness fall outside the main scope of the study except where they are discussed for comparison with early Buddhist formulations. Despite these limitations, the study provides a focused examination of the textual, philosophical, and practical dimensions of mindfulness in early Pāli canonical literature.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The scope of the study is focused on examining the concept of mindfulness in early Buddhist texts, particularly within the Pāli Canon. It explores the meaning and significance of the Pāli term *sati* and its relationship with related concepts such as *sampajañña*, *satipaṭṭhāna*, and *ānāpānasati*. The study gives particular attention to selected texts from the *Dīgha Nikāya*, *Majjhima Nikāya*, *Saṃyutta Nikāya*, *Aṅguttara Nikāya*, and *Khuddaka Nikāya*. It examines the four foundations of mindfulness, namely contemplation of the body, feelings, mind, and phenomena, and considers their place within early Buddhist meditation and mental cultivation. The study also explores the relationship between mindfulness, ethical conduct, concentration, wisdom, suffering, impermanence, non-self, and liberation. Pāli terminology is examined within its textual and doctrinal contexts to understand the concept beyond simplified modern translations. Relevant translations, commentaries, academic books, research articles, and scholarly interpretations are also considered to support a systematic analysis of the canonical material.

The study further covers the philosophical and practical significance of mindfulness within the broader framework of early Buddhist teachings. It examines how mindfulness contributes to awareness, mental discipline, insight, and the development of the Buddhist path. The study also considers the relationship between mindfulness and other practices such as breathing meditation, contemplation, sense restraint, and the cultivation of wholesome mental states. Where relevant, later interpretations may be referred to in order to distinguish early canonical formulations from subsequent developments. The study provides scope for comparative textual analysis of different Pāli passages and scholarly translations and may contribute to research in Pāli literature, Buddhist philosophy, religious studies, and the history of meditation. However, its primary focus remains the early Pāli canonical understanding of mindfulness rather than contemporary therapeutic or secular applications. Through this focused approach, the study seeks to provide a clearer understanding of the textual foundations, philosophical meaning, practical dimensions, and soteriological significance of mindfulness in early Buddhist literature.

DISCUSSION

The concept of mindfulness in early Buddhist texts is presented as an important component of systematic mental cultivation and spiritual development. In the Pāli Canon, *sati* is associated with attentive awareness, recollection, and careful observation of bodily and mental processes. The teachings on *satipaṭṭhāna* provide a structured framework through which practitioners contemplate the body, feelings, mind, and phenomena. Such contemplation encourages continuous awareness of experience while recognizing its changing and conditioned nature. Mindfulness is closely connected

with *sampajañña*, or clear comprehension, which supports awareness of actions, thoughts, feelings, and circumstances. The canonical presentation therefore places mindfulness within a wider discipline involving ethical conduct, concentration, and wisdom. Mindfulness enables practitioners to observe experiences without becoming dominated by attachment or aversion and provides a foundation for investigating important Buddhist principles such as impermanence, suffering, and non-self. The textual discussion indicates that mindfulness is not an isolated meditation technique but an integrated element of the Buddhist path. Its importance can be understood through its relationship with the cultivation of wholesome mental states, the development of insight, and the gradual reduction of mental defilements.

The study also highlights the significance of *ānāpānasati*, or mindfulness of breathing, as an important form of mindfulness practice described in early Buddhist literature. Attention to breathing provides a practical basis for developing stability, awareness, and deeper understanding of bodily and mental processes. The relationship between mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom suggests that mental stability and careful observation work together in the development of Buddhist insight. At the same time, different canonical passages may emphasize different aspects of mindfulness, demonstrating that its meaning should be interpreted according to textual context rather than through one fixed definition. Careful examination of Pāli terminology is therefore necessary because translations may not fully communicate the range of meanings associated with terms such as *sati*, *sampajañña*, and *satipaṭṭhāna*. The early texts generally present mindfulness within an ethical and soteriological framework rather than as an independent technique for relaxation or attention. This distinction is important when comparing early Buddhist mindfulness with some contemporary interpretations. Overall, the discussion demonstrates that mindfulness in early Pāli literature has interconnected cognitive, ethical, meditative, philosophical, and liberating dimensions, making it a significant component of early Buddhist thought and practice.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Future academic studies should undertake a detailed and systematic examination of mindfulness across a wider range of Pāli canonical texts to develop a more comprehensive understanding of its meaning and functions. Researchers should examine the terms *sati*, *sampajañña*, *satipaṭṭhāna*, and *ānāpānasati* within their specific textual and doctrinal contexts rather than relying only on simplified translations. Comparative analysis of different Pāli editions and established translations can help identify differences in interpretation and clarify important concepts. Greater attention should be given to the relationship between mindfulness and ethical conduct, concentration, wisdom, impermanence, suffering, non-self, and liberation. Scholars should also distinguish clearly between early canonical formulations and later commentarial or modern interpretations of mindfulness. Interdisciplinary research involving Pāli linguistics, Buddhist philosophy, religious studies, history, and meditation studies can provide additional perspectives. Researchers may also use digital textual databases to trace the occurrence and contextual usage of mindfulness-related terminology throughout the Pāli Canon.

Further research should examine the development of mindfulness from early Buddhist literature to later Theravāda traditions and, where appropriate, compare it with corresponding concepts in other Buddhist textual traditions. Scholars should critically examine how translation choices influence contemporary interpretations of mindfulness and avoid equating the canonical concept exclusively with modern psychological or secular definitions. Academic institutions may encourage specialized research in Pāli language, Buddhist textual studies, and early Buddhist meditation practices to strengthen primary-source scholarship. Comparative studies of the *Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta*, *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna Sutta*, *Ānāpānasati Sutta*, and related texts can further clarify the practical dimensions of mindfulness. Researchers should also investigate the relationship between mindfulness and the broader Buddhist path, particularly morality, concentration, and wisdom. Modern applications of mindfulness may be studied separately while maintaining a clear distinction between historical textual evidence and contemporary adaptations. Such approaches can promote accurate interpretation,

preserve the contextual meaning of early Buddhist teachings, and contribute to a deeper academic understanding of mindfulness in Pāli canonical literature.

CONCLUSION

The study of mindfulness in early Buddhist texts demonstrates that sati occupies an important position within the philosophical and practical framework of the Pāli Canon. Mindfulness is presented not merely as simple awareness or concentration but as a systematic practice connected with mental cultivation, ethical conduct, insight, and liberation. The teachings on satipaṭṭhāna provide a structured approach to contemplating the body, feelings, mind, and phenomena, while ānāpānasati demonstrates the importance of mindful awareness of breathing in the development of concentration and insight. The study also highlights the close relationship between sati and sampajañña, showing that mindfulness operates together with clear comprehension and careful awareness of experience. Through sustained observation, practitioners are encouraged to understand the changing and conditioned nature of experience and to develop insight into impermanence, suffering, and non-self. Mindfulness is therefore situated within the wider Buddhist path rather than being treated as an isolated meditation technique.

The analysis further indicates that the meaning of mindfulness should be understood according to the textual, linguistic, philosophical, and doctrinal contexts of early Buddhist literature. Variations in the use and translation of terms such as sati, sampajañña, satipaṭṭhāna, and ānāpānasati demonstrate the importance of careful examination of the original Pāli sources. The early canonical understanding of mindfulness is closely integrated with morality, concentration, wisdom, and the pursuit of liberation, distinguishing it from interpretations that consider mindfulness primarily as a contemporary psychological or secular practice. The study therefore contributes to a clearer understanding of mindfulness as a multidimensional concept within early Buddhist thought. Further examination of Pāli texts, linguistic meanings, comparative Buddhist traditions, and later interpretations can deepen scholarly knowledge of its development and significance. Overall, mindfulness emerges from the early canonical literature as an important means of cultivating awareness, mental discipline, insight, and spiritual development within the broader framework of the Buddhist path.

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