

The 'Seven Factors of Enlightenment' (Satta Bojjhanga)

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ABSTRACT

The Seven Factors of Enlightenment, Satta Bojjhaṅga, is one of the clearest and best-arranged manuals for the awakening to Buddhism when you study the early Pali canon. These seven attributes of mindfulness, exploration of phenomena, vitality, rapture, calmness, focus, and equanimity, are not a chance collection. They are interdependent on one another and are effective as a living process: the shaping and sharpening of the mind.

This paper excavates these aspects from a number of angles: doctrine, psychology, and experience of life. Based on the Nikaya sutra, ancient Theravada commentaries, Abhidhamma breakdown and even more recent English and Marathi scholarship, it presents how the bojjhaṅga belong to Buddhist doctrine, not only as moral compasses, but also as practical means.

KEY WORDS

Seven Factors of Enlightenment; Satta Bojjhanga; Early Buddhism; Pali Canon; Abhidhamma; Mindfulness (Sati); Dependent Origination; Buddhist Soteriology

I. INTRODUCTION

The key idea here is that you should not consider these seven factors as individual and isolated mental states. They create a chain, and one will lead to the other, gradually perfecting consciousness. The lapses you make through them turn outdated craving and reactivity patterns, and actual wisdom and equilibrium may develop. By doing so, the bojjhaṅga, do not simply consist of a list of meditation experiences. They trace a moving journey, which will, with gradual steps, bring one to wisdom and inner stability.

Introduction: These elements are not only profound but also very useful and applicable when put in terms of early Buddhist philosophies. These are required according to the Pali canon to bring about Nibbana, waking, and release. They are not nice extras, they are not supporting states but they make a good psycho-ethical system which cleanses the mind, stabilizes it, and eventually liberates it[1].

The bojjhanga are uniquely defined as doctrines, contrasting with additional meditation aids, as being bodhisattva pakkhika dhamma, i.e. mentally qualities that belong to, or side with awakening [2]. Together with the Noble Eightfold Path, the Four Foundations of Mindfulness, and the Five Spiritual Faculties, this canonical title makes them one of the most

powerful groups of liberating concepts in early Buddhism. The Seven Factors of Enlightenment chart the course of the inner voyage to awakening the direct lived experience of contemplative consciousness. They are not mere conceptualizations; they demonstrate the process of awakening, one step at a time, inwards. In the meantime, the Noble Eightfold Path dictates the principles of ethical conduct, mental cultivation and wisdom. However, it is not as though these are two different systems. The *bojjhaṅga* (the Seven Factors) are in fact the maturing of the Path as it takes shape in the meditation.

The thing that is very intriguing about the *bojjhaṅga* is that every factor supports and develops the other. It begins with mindfulness and with each continued practice, you are likely to arrive to a steady and balanced mind. In the process, ethical restraint, emotional refinement, and mental clarity all come into play. All these aspects are not independent and they create an organic entity that continues to guide experience toward abandonment and not sensual desire (*nirodha*). It is not only my opinion: the old books say so, and the commentaries of the Buddhist school of Marathi even refer to the *bojjhaṅga* as inhibitory mental powers--means of liberation, not of improved life in the world.

This paper provides a close examination of the Seven Factors of Enlightenment, basing the analysis on the Pali canon, traditional Theravada commentaries, Abhidhamma philosophy, and the current literature in English and Marathi. The methodology involves intensive study of the texts of the main writings, doctrinal comparison, and verbal Candour on the experience of these factors on the real practice of meditation. Achieving three directions, the research aims, first, to define what each of the factors exactly is, and whence it originates in the texts, second, to demonstrate how each one of them combines with the others, psychologically and ethically; and lastly, to contextualise the *bojjhaṅga* in the broader frame of early Buddhist conceptions of liberation.

II. Canonical and Doctrinal Foundations of the *Bojjhanga*

In early Buddhism, the Seven Factors of Enlightenment (*Satta Bojjhaṅga*) are not a few incidental items or secondary appendages--they are down to the very core of the entire way. The Pali Nikaas do not mention them incidentally. They just observe these factors and return to them; you cannot achieve awakening (*bodhi*), liberation (*vimutti*) or Nibbana without them. They appear repeatedly, particularly when associated with *nirodha* (*cessation*), and are central to such practices as *dhammanussati*. The fascinating thing about these is their combination; these factors are cumulative, one after another, the further a person meditated the deeper he or she becomes further into the meditation. All this makes the *bojjhaṅga* the

centre of the Buddhist path, and it not only influences the description of liberation, but also the experience of the freedom.

2.1 Presentation of the Seven Factors in the Pali Nikayas

The most detailed and authoritative description of the bojhhanga is the Bojjhanga-sanyutta of the Sanyutta Nikaya (SN 46), entirely devoted to the description, development, and liberating power of the bojhhanga. These seven criteria are stated in the direct order of the Buddha as follows: "Satta kho ime bhikkhave bojhhanga-katame satta? *Sati-sambojjhango, dhamma-vicaya-sambojjhango, viriya-sambojjhango, piti-sambojjhango, passaddhi-sambojjhango, samadhi-sambojjhango and upekkha-sambojjhango* [6]. This is what the Buddha repeated frequently: The Seven Factors of Enlightenment, monks, are these seven. Which seven? Being mindful and equanimous towards them, which results in awakening. You find this line or something like it everywhere in the *Sa-Nyuttas, Dighas, Majjhima and A-Nikaya of the A-Nikaya*. It is not a mere mention at all. The initial writings are not that difficult to understand — the bojhhanga are not appendices. They are in the vanguard of the way to come to.

Suppose *Mahayana-parinimunda-sutta* (DN 16). The Buddha isolates the Seven Factors in his final teachings and states that these are the ones to stick with in case you want to attain liberation. You do not need to be a genius to see through it: these are not tips that are helpful. They are the support of the entire way.

This has been picked up by the Marathi Buddhist scholars, too. Individuals, such as Bhikkhu Na Nanjoti, as well as those who were influenced by Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar, continue to revert to the same notion, the bojhhanga are the oldest stratifications of the Buddhist doctrine. They come not later on, not sectarian modifications. They are fundamental dharmas, which are renowned. In this perspective, the Seven Factors of Enlightenment are not a single teaching among others. They are basic - the indispensable elements in initial Buddhist concepts of liberation.

2.2 Relationship between *Bojjhanga, Nirodha, and Nibbana*

From a theological perspective, nirodha, or the end of suffering, and its completion in Nibbana, are inextricably related to the bojhhanga. The Buddha states unequivocally that knowledge (*vijja*) and freedom (*vimutti*) result from the accomplishment (*paripuri*) of the seven factors: "Sattanna Ś kho bhikkhave *bojjhanganaj bhavitatta bahulikata vjjavimutti paripuri hoti*" [9]. "Monks, knowledge and liberation are brought to fulfilment when the seven factors of enlightenment are developed and cultivated." The *bojjhanga* are doctrinally situated in this text as immediate causes (*upanissaya-paccaya*) for liberative realisation rather than only as precursor mental states. Their cultivation breaks the affective chain at the

intersection of sensation (vedana) and craving (*taṇha*) in the framework of dependent origination (paṭiccasamuppada), actualising nirodha.

By characterising the bojjhanga as "Inhibitory mental power" (mental energies orientated towards cessation) and highlighting their function in breaking the cycle of rebirth rather than enhancing worldly experience, Marathi commentarial traditions highlight this cessation-oriented function [10].

2.3 Place of the *Bojjhanga* within *Dhammanussati*

The bojjhanga are particularly ingrained in dhammanussati, which involves the recall and contemplation of dhammas that lead to awakening, within the broader category of anussati (*recollections*). The Nikayas describe them as "bodhissa pakkhika dhamma," or mental attributes that "belong to" or "side with" awakening: "*Ye the dhamma bodhissa pakkhika, seyyathida- satta bojjhaṅga*" [11]. This approach shows that remembering the bojjhanga isn't just about memorising a list—it's about really taking in the mental qualities that lead to awakening. These qualities start to reflect in the day-to-day life when they are remembered with the help of dhammanussati. This has been often referred to in the Marathi Buddhist writings. According to them, bojjhanganussati is a type of training which is able to connect meditation, ethical development and knowledge of the teachings [12].

2.4 Sequential and Functional Interdependence of the Seven Factors

The bojjhanga always appears collaborating in a natural sequence, although it is divided into seven distinct sections. It is not a pedagogical gimmick or a list of some sort. It is the way the meditative mind really works out.

It begins with sati mindfulness, establishing a clear and steady awareness. Out of that comes dhamma-vicaya, or the inquiry as to what really is taking place. Then viriya takes over. It is hard work and hard energy, inspired by the self-understanding that results from looking at the world just as it is. When that effort is continuous and in measure that piti, that delicate, lifting happiness which cuts right through pessimism and sluggishness, it is yours. Joy is a natural result of passaddhi, a deep peace of body and soul. That serenity brings you into samadhi a unified and constant focus. And when you continue with this concentration, you ultimately arrive at upekkha, at a state of real balance, when you are not clinging, pushing anything away. It is like a calmness that does not lean in any direction. The Buddha himself declares this dynamism in the next passage: "*Satiṅ bhikkhave bhavetha... satiya sati-sambojjhango bhavito hoti... upekkha-sambojjhango bhavito hoti*" [13]. The bojjhanga are not independent virtues due to their relationship, but can be seen as a system of psycho-spiritual. It is also known as the process of integrated awakening (a unified process of awakening) in Marathi

theological explanations, and is stressed to have an inherent coherence[14]. Based on this, the Seven Factors of Enlightenment are provided in the canonical and doctrinal texts as dhammas which are systematically combined, which are universally testified, cessation-oriented, and contemplates recalled. Bojjhanga is a complete phenomenology of awakening which links ethical development, meditation practice and liberative awareness. It is deeply entrenched in the Nikayas and endorsed by Theravada exegetical and Marathi scholasticisms.

III. Abhidhamma Analysis of the Seven Factors

The Abhidhamma Piṭaka appropriates the Seven Factors of Enlightenment (Satta Bojjhanga) and places it in an elaborate framework of consciousness (*citta*) and factors of the mind (*cetasika*). It does not merely describe them, it penetrates down to what they are, how they operate, how they make the dawning of the liberating insight (*panna*). This is far more profound than the Suttas which are largely concerned to discuss the bojjhanga in a more practical, teaching-oriented manner. To the Abhidhamma, the bojjhanga are not mere qualities of meditation. They are strong and good states of mind that combine with skilled consciousness (*kusala-citta*) to facilitate actual change.

3.1 Classification of the *Bojjhanga* as *Sobhana Cetasika*

Abhidhamma philosophy classifies all the mental experiences into three categories, namely, consciousness (*citta*), mental factors (*cetasika*), and materiality (*rupa*). The bojjhanga fall is obviously categorised as *sobhana cetasika*, or in other words they are said to be beautiful or wholesome mental qualities, pure, ethical and freeing. In fact, the Dhammasaṅgaṇi enumerates a number of bojjhanga as healthful mental elements that manifest along with non-hatred (*adosa*), non-delusion (*amoha*), non-greed (*alobha*) [15]. Buddhaghosa goes deep into the Dhammasaṅgaṇi and actually demystifies the meaning of the Seven Factors of Enlightenment in the Atthasālin. People refer to the bojjhanga as being beautiful, and he says not because they are nice to see or when they make you feel good. It's deeper than that. They develop and clear the mind with moral clarity and wisdom--they actually improve and enhance your consciousness [16]. In this sense, it is their beauty as they can change the mind through the ability to make ethical purity match with liberative knowledge.

A very similar comprehension is found in Marathi expositions of Abhidhamma, in which the bojjhanga are described as the traits of a skilful thinker, in other words, wholesome and well-developed mental components that are directed to insight and liberation [17]. This is emphasised in a further element of their inherent purity, and a supramundane orientation, in a way that drives the perception that the Seven Factors of Enlightenment are not merely

advanced psychological states, but advanced cognitive-moral states that are directly conducive to awakening.

3.2 Arising of the *Bojjhanga* within *Kusala-Citta*

The Abhidharma theory says that the *bojjhanga* only appear in wholesome consciousness (*kusala-citta*) and, more specifically, in those *cittas* that are linked to knowledge (*nananasampayutta kusala-citta*). They are unable to live with vile habits (*akusala-mula*) like greed, hatred or delusion. According to this theological perspective, the *bojjhanga* are not morally neutral cognitive processes but are ethically defined mental objects instead. The *Abhidhammattha-sangaha* holds that enlightenment factors come into being at the state of consciousness that is in conjunction with insight (*vipassana-sampayutta-citte*) especially in the higher levels of meditative development leading to path and fruition (*magga-phala*) [18]. This point of view can be supported by the classical saying, *Ime kho bhikkhave bojjhanga kusalesu dhammesu sangahita* [19]. These features of enlightenment are determined by monks as favourable circumstances. The Abhidhamma were analyzed by the Marathi academia as such that the development of the *bojjhanga* is one that requires ethical discipline (*sila*) and mental cleansing. This will not allow one to view the *bojjhanga* as a traditional or neutral mental process.

3.3 Each Factor's Functional Role in Wholesome Consciousness

The Abhidhamma holds that each *bojjhanga* in a sound mind has a different complementary role (*kicca*):

- Sati (*mindfulness*) prevents wandering of the mind through non- forgetfulness (*apilapana*) and helps in holding attention.
- By eliciting the difference between the good and bad circumstances and giving deep understanding in the conditionality, Dhamma-vicaya (*Investigation of Phenomena*) serves the role of discriminative analysis (*pavatti-pariggaha*).
- Viriya (*energy*) gives ussaha (*mindfulness*) energy, it avoids laziness and helps one to reach his goals.
- Piti (*joy*) uplifts your consciousness (*sampaha--sana*), and this serves to make long meditation possible.
 - Passaddhi (*peace*) brings the state of calm that the body and mind can be united (*daratha-vupasamana*).
 - Samadhi (concentration) makes the mind steady through concentration on a single object (*ekaggata*), by way of which deep absorption and clarity are possible.

- Some of the qualities include equanimity (*Upekkha*), which is not attached to all sensations because it aligns with consciousness (*majjhata*).

Buddhaghosa succinctly encapsulates their coordinated operation with "*Ime satta bojjhanga nanakicca ekakicca viya vattanti*" [21]. "Even though they do different things, these seven factors of enlightenment work together as if they are doing the same thing." This concerted effort is sometimes referred to by those who write on Marathi Abhidhamma as "The mechanism of purification of the mind," which is a method of clearing the mind [22].

3.4 Contribution of the *Bojjhanga* to the Emergence of *Panna*

In the Abhidhamma, the bojjhanga's ultimate significance is found in their combined role in the emergence of panna, or liberating insight into the Three Characteristics (*tilakkhana*). Abhidhamma analysis emphasises that insight cannot develop independently of the other six components, even if dhamma-vicaya is most closely linked to wisdom. Clarity is provided by mindfulness, energy maintains curiosity, joy avoids mental exhaustion, calmness and focus stabilise awareness, and composure guarantees non-reactivity. The final book of the Abhidhamma, the Paṭṭhana, discusses conditionality and states that the bojjhanga are essential support conditions (*upanissaya-paccaya*) for wisdom [23]. As a result, rather than being the result of an epiphany, panna arises from a carefully managed mental environment. Marathi philosophical ideas, which define panna as "Wisdom matured through the factors of enlightenment" [24], represent this cohesive idea. The Abhidhamma analysis elucidates the precise psychological categorisation, ethical determinism, and causal effectiveness of the Seven Factors of Enlightenment in the path of release. They change awareness to a favourable environment of panna when sobhana cetasika emerges in kusala-citta. The logical consistency of the early Buddhist soteriology that claims liberation as a result of the systematic cleansing and harmonisation of mental factors is also improved by this analytical paradigm, although it also enriches the knowledge of the doctrine.

IV. Mindfulness, or Sati-Sambojjhanga

Among the Seven Factors of Enlightenment, Sati-sambojjhanga, or the factor of mindfulness, has a central and governing role (*Satta Bojjhanga*). For the other parts to emerge and flourish, sati is a necessary precondition. According to the canonical definition, it is the practice of mindfulness that prevents the mind from wandering into undesirable reactions and forgetfulness. Rather than being just attentive, both the Sutta and Abhidhamma traditions see mindfulness as an ethically informed, insight-oriented awareness that directs the entire process of contemplative development and liberation.

4.1 Definition and Canonical Formulation of *Sati*

The linguistic root *sar*, which means "to remember" or "to recollect," is the source of the Pali word *sati*, which denotes the ability of the mind to retain information clearly and without interruption or distortion. *Sati* is frequently defined in functional rather than metaphysical ways in the Nikayas. The concise classical definition "*Sati nama apilapanan, asammosa-dhammata*" has been preserved in the commentarial tradition [25]. ("Mindfulness is the state of not losing the object; it is non-forgetfulness") The Bojjhanga-saṅyutta explicitly identifies mindfulness as the first component of enlightenment in "*Sati-sambojjhango bhikkhave bhavito bahulikato vijjavimuttim paripureti*" [26]. "Knowledge and liberation are fulfilled when the enlightenment factor of mindfulness is developed and cultivated." This formulation underscores that *sati* is not a preliminary or optional mental quality but a direct contributor to liberative realisation. Marathi exegetical works similarly define *sati* as "*Remembered Awareness* awareness imbued with recollection—thereby preserving its dual cognitive and ethical connotations [27].

4.2 *Sati* as the Foundational Factor among the Bojjhanga

Sati's supremacy among the Bojjhanga is neither accidental nor merely sequential. According to canonical sources, mindfulness is necessary for the development of the other six elements in a balanced and healthful manner. Buddhaghosa clarifies in the Visuddhimagga that mindfulness acts as the "guardian" (*arakkhaka*) of the mind, preventing excess and insufficiency, among other mental aspects [28]. "*Satiṅ bhikkhave bhavetha; satima bhikkhave bhikkhu asavana khayana papunati*" [29] is a clear instruction given by the Buddha in the Saṅyutta Nikaya. "Monks, cultivate mindfulness; a monk endowed with mindfulness attains the destruction of the defilements." This verse places *sati* in a doctrinal position as the prerequisite for both the eradication of defilements (*asava*) and insight (*vipassana*). Marathi Buddhist scholars often describe mindfulness as '*The foundation of the Bojjhangas*' the foundation upon which all other enlightenment factors rest [30].

4.3 Role of Mindfulness in Regulating Dependent Origination

The ability of *sati* to control the crucial point of dependent origination (*paṭiccasamuppada*), namely the order of contact (*phassa*), sensation (*vedana*), and yearning (*taṇha*), is one of its most important theological roles. Feelings inevitably trigger cravings when mindfulness is lacking; this causal connection is broken when mindfulness is practised. The Nikayas gently reinforce this moderating role by emphasising emotional awareness: "*Vedanasa vedananupassi viharati...*" *sato sampajano* [31]. "He abides thinking about feelings as feelings... mindful and clearly comprehending." This kind of meticulous monitoring recognises feelings as conditioned events, preventing the emergence of appropriation and

as ethics, normalises the processes of the psyche, governs the causal relations of experience, and provides the fundamental ground of the liberation of insight. The first step and the one that keeps you in the journey to awakening, is being aware of your thoughts and feelings. It is based on the Buddha's deep understanding that liberation comes from knowing things as they are and not keeping them back or making up stories about them.

V. *Dhamma-Vicaya-Sambojjhanga (Investigation of Phenomena)*

Dhamma-vicaya-sambojjhanga is a unique part of the Seven Factors of Enlightenment (*Satta Bojjhanga*) that focuses on thinking and wisdom. Dhamma-vicaya is the active and thorough study of things as they really happen. Sati, on the other hand, makes you fully aware of what you're going through. Canonical theory asserts that it is the element that converts watchful observation into emancipating comprehension, functioning as the ultimate remedy for ignorance (*avijja*) and the illusory structures that sustain suffering and need.

5.1 Meaning and Scope of *Dhamma-Vicaya*

Dhamma (*phenomena, principles, mental objects, or doctrinal realities*) and vicaya (examination, analysis, discrimination) constitute the term dhamma-vicaya. The term denotes a systematic, insight-oriented examination of conditioned phenomena within the framework of the Dhamma, as opposed to speculative theorisation or metaphysical inquiry found in the Nikayas and Abhidhamma.

According to the commentarial tradition, Vicaya is a discerning investigation (*pavatti-pariggaha*) that distinguishes between wholesome and unwholesome states by penetrating causal linkages. Buddhaghosa says, "*Dhammesu vicayo dhamma-vicayo; so pannaya pavattati*" [38]. "The study of phenomena is dhamma-vicaya; it functions via wisdom." Marathi Abhidhamma scholars define Dhamma-vicaya as "A Judicious Examination of the Dhamma"—a critical and discriminative analysis grounded in wisdom rather than conceptual proliferation [39]. Therefore, experiential discernment, contemplative inquiry, and doctrinal comprehension—all of which are centred on emancipation—are all included in the purview of dhamma-vicaya.

5.2 Canonical References and Doctrinal Significance

The Bojjhanga-saṅyutta often stresses that dhamma-vicaya is necessary to get rid of ignorance. The Buddha says clearly: "*Dhamma-vicaya a bhikkhave bhavetha; dhamma-vicaya-sampayutto bhikkhu avijja a pajahati, vijañ uppadeti*" [40]. "Monks, cultivate the study of phenomena; endowed with it, a monk generates knowledge and relinquishes ignorance." This authoritative statement situates dhamma-vicaya at the epistemological core of Buddhist soteriology: ignorance (*avijja*) is dispelled via systematic inquiry grounded in

direct experience rather than reliance on faith or suppression. In the Anguttara Nikaya, the Buddha connects dhamma-vicaya to understanding conditionality and having a clear point of view. He does this to demonstrate that dhamma-vicaya is an element that results in insight [41]. In the literature of the exegesis of the Marathi, this doctrinal implication is accentuated by calling dhamma-vicaya Bojjhanga, the one who dispels ignorance, that is, the enlightened power that permeates ignorance. [42].

5.3 Three Levels of Investigation: Conceptual, Experiential, and Insight-Based

Implied in canonical and commentarial sources is a graded hierarchy of investigation in dhamma-vicaya, which can be interpreted analytically as working at three levels in relation to each other.

- (i) Conceptual Investigation (*pariyatti-vicaya*): Initially, the dhamma-vicaya can be translated as the plunging of the mind into the teachings, in an actual sense, cogitating about such concepts as dependent origination, Four Noble Truths, and the Three Characteristics (*anicca, dukkha, and anatta*). This isn't just book learning. It assists you not to spin the meditation experiences in the wrong direction and it keeps your cognisance on the path (*samma-ditthi*).
- (ii) *Patipatti-vicaya*, or experiential investigation: Then comes the hands-on part. In this case, you explore things by means of meditation. You see what comes into being and disappears in reality. This is to compare the teachings with your own experience, to be attentive to your own body, your emotions, and your thoughts. An unspoken supporting argument by the *Satipaattatha Sutta* is this method of searching, which quite frequently insists upon your vision “*yathabhutan*”—just as they are.43].
- (iii) *Paṭivedha-vicaya*, or insight-based investigation: Dhamma-vicaya culminates in direct insight (*vipassana-panna*), where phenomena are penetrated in terms of impermanence, unsatisfactoriness, and non-self, and conceptual mediation vanishes. This level is equivalent to the path's supramundane understanding (*magga*). This path is sometimes summed up in Marathi meditation guides as "Experience through study, and wisdom through experience."—from knowledge to experience, and from wisdom experience [44].

5.4 Role in Dismantling Ignorance (*Avijja*) and Craving

According to dependent origination, ignorance creates volitional formations (*sankhara*), which perpetuates the suffering cycle. This state is obviously opposed by Dhamma-vicaya, which asserts that things are conditioned, not permanent, and not themselves. The cognitive underpinning of yearning (*taṇha*) is lost when phenomena are understood. The Nikayas frequently claim that "*Dhammana vicaya nibbida uppajjati*," connecting investigation to

disillusionment (*nibbida*). [45]. "The study of phenomena results in disillusionment." After disillusionment, dispassion (*viraga*) and abstinence (*nirodha*) follow. This process is described as "detachment through discernment" in Marathi philosophical principles, meaning that discernment makes detachment possible. This demonstrates the impact of *dhamma-vicaya* on people's values [46].

5.5 Connection with *Vipassana* Wisdom

Abhidhamma analysis shows that *dhamma-vicaya* directly triggers the rise of insight wisdom, despite the fact that it is not the same as *panna*. Investigation is classified as wisdom-associated wholesome awareness (*naṇa-sampayutta kusala-citta*) in the *Abhidhammattha-sangaha*, which emphasises its intimate relationship to *vipassana* [47]. *Dhamma-vicaya* and insight practice are clearly related, according to Buddhaghosa: "*Dhamma-vicaya-sambojjhango vipassanaya adhipati hoti*" [48].

"In insight meditation, the enlightenment factor of investigating phenomena becomes predominant." This doctrinal stance is echoed by Marathi Abhidhamma scholars, who characterise *dhamma-vicaya* as "*the intellectual and experiential foundation of Vipassana*" the intellectual and experiential basis of insight meditation [49]. *Dhamma-vicaya-sambojjhanga* stands out as the key factor among the Seven Factors of Enlightenment. Whether you're reading books, delving into lessons, or silently meditating, it's the one that offers true wisdom. With *dhamma-vicaya*, the basis for true insight begins to take shape, ignorance wanes, and hunger loses its hold. It changes mere knowledge to deep understanding. In essence, *dhamma-vicaya* is concerned with digging deep, doubting and scrutinising your own experience as opposed to theory. Such inquiry is the core of *Vipassana* and the whole Buddhist way of enlightenment.

VI. *Viriya-Sambojjhanga* (Energy / Effort)

Viriya-sambojjhanga is one of the Seven Factors of Enlightenment (*Satta Bojjhanga*), which means the dynamic and maintaining power of the path. Experience is made clear and insight is produced through study (*dhamma-vicaya*) and mindfulness (*sati*), but continuity, overcoming inertia and driving the practitioner towards awakening is achieved through *viriyā*-energy or effort. Canonical interpretation assumes that *viriyā* is an intelligent effort, which is sustained over time, and harmonised by consciousness and guided by wisdom (*panna*), and not an effort of exertion or coercive effort.

6.1 *Viriya* is defined as a persistent, wisdom-guided endeavour.

Vira is actually the source of the Pali word *viriyā*, which means "*heroic*" or "*courageous*." *Viriya* is a Buddhist term signifying moral courage, grit, and perseverance. However, it has

nothing to do with using force or being careless. Rather, it's a consistent, deliberate effort—energy directed by good intentions. According to Buddhist commentary, viriya is simply the desire to support wholesome things and discourage unhealthy ones. [50]. "*Energy is the drive to work toward healthy states.*" Viriya is specifically designated as a facet of enlightenment within the bojjhanga because it is centred on freedom rather than worldly prosperity. In Marathi Abhidhamma literature, it is sometimes called "*Intelligent Work*," which is work that is guided and limited by wisdom, yet keeping its moral and contemplative parts.[51].

6.2 Scriptural Foundations and Ethical Implications

The primary sources that discuss viriya-sambojjhanga are the Nikayas, particularly the *Bojjhanga-saṅyutta*. "*Viriya bhikkhave bhavetha; viriyava bhikkhu akusalaṅ pajahati, kusalaṅ bhavayati*" [52] is how the Buddha explicitly instructed monks to cultivate energy as a means of achieving self-liberation. "Monks, develop energy; with energy, a monk nurtures the beneficial and discards the detrimental." The moral dualism of viriya, which is intrinsically connected to moral evaluation, is highlighted in this passage. Viriya-sambojjhanga only functions inside kusala-citta, or healthy consciousness; energy lacking moral guidance can incite avarice, rage, or delusion. Marathi Buddhist writers stress this moral side by noting that viriya is a "*Dhammaparisrama*" endeavour guided by the Dhamma, not a value-neutral effort (labour)[53]. So, growing it provides meditation practice more power and makes moral discipline (sila) stronger.

6.3 Connection to the Four Correct Efforts (Sammappadhana)

Viriya-sambojjhanga and the Four Right Efforts (*cattaro sammappadhana*), which comprise the practical expression of energy of the Noble Eightfold Path, are closely related doctrinally. The following are these four initiatives:

- a) keeping unarisen unwholesome states from emerging;
- b) leaving unarisen unwholesome states;
- c) arousing unarisen wholesome states; and
- d) preserving and refining emerged wholesome states [54].

The Nikayas explicitly associate these activities with energy in "*Idha bhikkhu anuppannana,*" "*papakana,*" "*akusalana,*" "*dhammana,*" "*anuppadaya chanda,*" "*janeti,*" and "*vayamati*".(55).

This claim demonstrates that viriya is a deliberate, discriminatory endeavour motivated by proper comprehension and intention as opposed to *aimless endeavours*. In Marathi religious literature, *Sammappadhana* is often described as "*The scientific form of Viriya*"—the methodical and disciplined manifestation of energy [56].

6.4 Distinction between Balanced Effort and Unskillful Exertion

There's a big difference between balanced effort (*sammā-vāyāma*) and unskillful exertion (*miccha-vayama*)—and the texts bring it up again and again. If you don't try hard enough, you slip into laziness and mental dullness (*thina-middha*). But overstrain, or pour your energies in the wrong direction, and you will find yourself restless and agitated (*uddhacca*). The Buddha puts it straight through the traditional example of adjusting a lute: more stringent, less stringent, you will not hear music, only a noise.

The image does drive home the point as to why it is important to have your effort balanced, particularly when you are working on *viriya-sambojjhāṅga*. You have to change your energy and mindfulness makes it stable. In Marathi books on meditation, this is called (in a sense relatable to the Middle Way) moderate effort (*majjimah paṭipadah*), well-measured effort (*majjimah paṭipadah*). The thing is that to make a real advance in practice, you do not have to work harder. It is the result of tuning your effort; it is just right.

6.5 Function in Sustaining the Path of Awakening

Consider *viriya-sambojjhāṅga* as the fuel on which the engine of awakening is powered. It makes you keep on coming up day by day, it makes you stick through those days when you just want to quit, and it keeps off the boredom and the scepticism that sets in with time. Abhidhamma dissects it in the following way: *viriya* is not working independently--it is a scaffolding on which other good mental qualities, such as mindfulness, curiosity and focus, depend on, so that they can continue to recur and become stronger. Buddhaghosa struck it with this one[59], namely;--the energy is the root of all healthful states. That's *Viriya*. According to the Marathi literature, they refer to it as the force that maintains and drives the path. Without this force, there is knowing and unknowing, waking up and falling asleep[60]. In such a way, *viriya-sambojjhāṅga* can be distinguished as a consistent effort based on wisdom, not only mindless perseverance or sitting back and hoping that things will work out. It is that rough determination of walking the Buddhist way, both in your education, meditation and in your values. It makes your practice continue and allows insight to gradually establish. Based on the Four Right Efforts, ethics-based *viriya* does not merely make you cognise awakening, but ensures that you do so in reality.

VII. Piti-Sambojjhāṅga (Rapture / Joy)

Piti-sambojjhāṅga is one of the Seven Factors of Enlightenment that, in turn, hold the mind up without straining it to the desire of sensual delight. The *piti* of the early texts is the innocence of a non-sensual, wholesome pleasure, *niramisa piti*, which is a natural result of the constant training of the mind, rather than the pursuit of pleasure or the pursuit of

excitement. The Buddha never places piti between viriya (energy) and passaddhi (calm), but rather piti on the one hand, and passaddhi on the other, indicating its mediating nature. It takes the seed of exertion and changes it into a deeper and more silent rest in meditation.

7.1 Nature of *Piti* as Non-Sensual, Wholesome Joy

The word piti comes from the verb root pi, which means "to gladden" or "to refresh." Canonical sources describe it as a mental phenomenon (cetasika) characterised by transcendence, enthusiasm, and spiritual joy. The Saṅguttara Nikaya defines piti in terms of bojjhanga: "*Vivekanissitaṅ pitisambojjhangaḅ bhaveti, viraganissitaṅ pitisambojjhangaḅ bhaveti, nirodhanissitaṅ pitisambojjhangaṅ bhaveti, vossaggapariṇamiṅ pitisambojjhangaḅ bhaveti*" [62]. (He grows in letting go of things and developing the rapture-awakening quality that requires pausing, being by himself, and not caring.) By placing piti in the same category as renunciation (*viveka*), dispassion (*viraga*), and cessation (*nirodha*), this definition clearly distinguishes it from worldly pleasure (*amisa piti*). By translating piti as "Joyful Enthusiasm" (joy-born spiritual enthusiasm), Marathi Buddhist scholars highlight its moral and meditative purity [63].

7.2 Commentary and Canonical Interpretations

According to the Abhidhamma and its commentaries, piti is a sobhana cetasika that only manifests in wholesome (*kusala*) or functional (*kiriya*) consciousness. A more complex explanation is provided by the Visuddhimagga, which describes piti as a delight (*sampahasana*) that permeates the body and mind, different from the peaceful pleasure (*sukha*) that follows: "*Piti nama cittassa sampahaḅsanalakkhaṇa*" [64]. (Piti calms the mind.) Buddhaghosa continues by saying that whereas piti is energising and elevating, sukha is relaxing and stabilising. Because of this distinction, piti might occasionally appear as waves, excitement, or lightness, particularly in the early stages of meditation.

7.3 The Five Progressive Stages of *Piti*

Classical Theravada exegesis identifies five stages of piti, demonstrating how it progressively improves as meditation progresses:

Khuddika-piti is a mild form of rapture that produces fleeting physical thrills or goosebumps.

khaṇika-piti. Is a brief, sporadic rapture.

okkantika-piti is a gushing ecstasy that rushes across the body like waves.

ubbega-piti is a Levitation that may result from the rising rapture.

Pharaṇa-piti is a ubiquitous ecstasy that permeates every part of the body [65].

The Vipassana-based Marathi meditation manuals refer to these stages as "The gradual

subtlety of joy" (*the rising subtlety of joy*), and practitioners are cautioned against clinging to elevated meditative bliss [66].

7.4 Role of *Piti* in Meditative Absorption (*Jhana*)

Piti is an essential component of the first *jhana*'s canonical formula: "*Vivekaja vs pitisukhañ paṭhaman jhanañ upasampajja viharati*" [67]. (*He enters and remains in the first jhana, which is marked by pleasure and rapture derived from solitude.*) In this case, *piti* stabilises the mind without inoculating it with starchiness or excessive austerity because it is a counter to the state of mental strain and cynicism. *Piti* eventually diminishes along with concentration, replaced by *upekkha* (equanimity) and *passaddhi* (tranquillity), meaning it is a means and not an end in the path.

7.5 Comparative Insights from Modern Neuroscience

In the present, neuroscience, we have a better idea of what *piti* actually feels. The brain scan of long-time meditators reveals that *piti*-like states activate the reward circuits of the brain or, in other words, those dopaminergic circuits, plus dim down the parts of the brain related to craving and desire [68]. The thing is that these moods are not only about pleasure. It is more mindful, not emotional reactivity, and there is some actual sense of balance. It is all directed to *piti* as being healthy and inspirational, rather than an addictive pleasure. This is the same as the Buddhist perception: *piti* is joy that does not stick. Among the *bojjhanga*, *piti-sambojjhanga* is simply the voice of the mind that gives you a pat on the back, a nice indicator that you are progressing the right way - the fruit of effort, conscious awareness, and sincere investigation. Nevertheless, the readings and instructors keep repeating, do not get caught up on it. Once you see it as it is, *piti* works wonders on the intellect, imparts some cheer to training, and prepares it to hush the more profound calm and noble understanding. Its development actually demonstrates what the middle way resembles, that balance between letting go, acquiring wisdom, and, in fact, feeling good in the process.

VIII. *Passaddhi-Sambojjhanga* (*Tranquillity*)

Passaddhi-sambojjhanga within the developmental scheme of *Satta Bojjhanga* is one of the key qualitative changes where the energising delight has transformed into the deep inner calm. *Piti* raises consciousness and invigorates it, whereas *passaddhi* purifies and stabilises it. The most important relationship between rapture (*piti*) and concentration (*samadhi*) is called serenity or the relaxation of physical and mental restlessness. Its presence is an indication that meditation is coming of age and the mind is ready to get united.

8.1 Meaning of Tranquillity of Body and Mind

Passaddhi is literally translated as calming down, appeasement or quieting in Pali. In the use of doctrinal terms, it is split into two, namely *tranquillity* of body (*kaya-passaddhi*) and tranquillity of mind (*citta-passaddhi*). According to the Abhidhamma, the word body (*kaya*) in this case does not mean the physical body but the *nama-kaya*, the entirety of the elements of consciousness, so that *citta-passaddhi* means the actual settling of consciousness [68]. Passaddhi is characterised by Buddhaghosa as the calming of agitation (*daratha-vupasama*), the importance of this practice in the diminishment of emotional disturbance and agitation (*uddhacca*) [69]. Passaddhi is also called in Marathi Abhidhamma expositions *passaddhi*, as it is experiential in that it refers to tranquillity of the mind and body when experienced, and not merely to the conceptual calmness that *passaddhi* signifies [70].

8.2 Canonical Expressions and Doctrinal Context

Passaddhi is frequently described in the Saṅguttara Nikaya as an awakening factor that is cultivated in reliance on renunciation and cessation: "*Vivekanissitaṃ passaddhisambojjhangagā bhaveti, viraganissitaūge passaddhisambojjhangagā bhaveti, nirodhanissitañ passaddhisambojjhangagā bhaveti, vossaggapariṇamiñ passaddhisambojjhanga bhaveti.*" [71]. (*He matures in relinquishment and develops the tranquillity-awakening factor that depends on isolation, dispassion, and cessation.*) This formula clearly places *passaddhi* within the Dhamma's soteriological trajectory. Tranquillity is a state focused on letting go (*vossagga*), not relaxing for its own sake. As a result, it prepares the mind for a more profound cessation of defilements by acting doctrinally as a *nirodha*-supportive factor.

8.3 Transition from Joy (*Piti*) to Inner Calm

The fact that *passaddhi* appears immediately after *piti* is neither fortuitous nor merely descriptive. The canon recognises that although rapture is invigorating and healthful, it has a slight excitatory component. *Passaddhi* appears at the very time when this excitement is supplanted by calmness. The Visuddhimagga observes that the *piti* once attained its purpose of settling the mind naturally produces tranquillity, just as waves level in a calm sea [72]. This transformation is needed so as to avoid the attachment to the happiness of meditation. The literature of Marathi meditation says, it is easy to get stuck in wrongful thinking that anything can make someone happier, and this may be considered impeding spiritual practice. Happiness may actually be an impairment to be obsessed with [73]. *Passaddhi*, therefore, is also a controller, so that joy becomes silent calmness, and not frenzied delight.

8.4 Necessity of *Passaddhi* for the Arising of *Samadhi*

Passaddhi is taught to be a direct cause of concentration (*upanissaya-paccaya*). The common chain: "*Passaddhakayo sukhaḥ vedeti, sukhino cittaṃ samadhiyati*" [74] is an explicit validation of this chain of causation. (When one has a calm body, he will experience happiness; the mind of a happy person will be focused)

In this respect, calm is the psychophysical condition, allowing one to unite the awareness without any difficulties. The attempts to lack passaddhi attention are in danger of being strained or strained. The Abhidhamma holds that when the elements of the mind are pacified, the friction in the mind is eliminated, and then *ekaggata* (*one-pointedness*) is attained naturally [75].

8.5 Psychophysical Dimensions of Tranquillity

The characteristic feature of passaddhi-sambojjhanga is its psychophysical nature. In early Buddhism, mental and physical tranquillity are mutually conditioning, in contrast to the modern dualistic philosophies. The less the physical tensions the less is the mental agitation and the less is the mental agitation the more easy the mind relaxes. Recent neuroscientific findings on meditation have confirmed this idea, showing increasing levels of parasympathetic and reduced levels of sympathetic nervous system activity during passaddhi-like experiences [76].

It is possible to experience passaddhi as lightness, emotional balance, stable posture and effortless breathing on a meditative level. Ethically, it constitutes the soothing of the impulsive reaction such as irritation and impatience. By thus making the Dhamma as lived calm embodied in serenity, by no means confined to formal meditation, but equally pervading behaviour (*sila*).

Passaddhi-sambojjhanga, therefore, signifies the increasing interiorization of the awakening path. It converts the rising force of *piti* into steady tranquillity, enabling and sustaining concentration. *Tranquillity*, which is canonically based on renunciation and cessation, balances body and mind, calms agitation, and readies awareness for insight (*panna*) and unification (*samadhi*). As a result, passaddhi is a fundamentally necessary component of the progressive realisation of Nibbana rather than just a pleasant state of meditation[76].

IX. Samadhi-Sambojjhanga (Concentration)

Samadhi-sambojjhanga holds a crucial place among the Satta Bojjhanga as the element that integrates and stabilises the mind at a sophisticated degree of meditative development. Samadhi is the conclusion of mental collectedness (*cittassa ekaggata*), when dispersed cognitive activity is gathered into a unified, bright field of awareness. It arises organically from calm (passaddhi). According to canon and doctrine, samadhi is an awakening factor that

directly promotes liberating insight (*panna*) and readies awareness for equanimity (*upekkha*), rather than a stand-alone method of meditation.

9.1 Definition of *Samadhi* as Mental Unification

Sam-a-dha, which means "to bring together" or "to place evenly," is the root of the Pali word *samadhi*. It is described as one-pointedness of thought (*ekaggata*), free from internal conflict and distraction, in both the Nikayas and the Abhidhamma. The Buddha summarises *samadhi* as follows: "*Samadhi* → *bhikkhave bhavetha; samahito bhikkhave bhikkhu yathabhutan pajanati*" [77]. "*Monks, practise focus; a focused monk sees things as they truly are.*" This definition highlights the epistemic role of *samadhi*: concentration is appreciated for *yathabhuta-nānadassana*, or knowledge and view of reality as it is, rather than only for stillness. *Samadhi* is also described in Marathi exegetical literature as "A focused, stable, and clear state of mind" (*a focused, stable, and lucid state of consciousness*), with an emphasis on cognitive clarity rather than thought suppression [78].

9.2 Scriptural Foundations and Phenomenology

Samadhi is repeatedly described in the *Sāṅgīyā Nikāya* as an awakening factor that is nurtured in reliance on seclusion, dispassion, and cessation: "*Vivekanissitaṃ samadhisambojjhangaṃ bhaveti... nirodhanissitaṃ samadhisambojjhangaṃ bhaveti*" [79].

Samadhi is clearly positioned within the *nirodha*-oriented paradigm of early Buddhism in this canonical formulation. *Samadhi*'s phenomenological manifestations encompass a profound sense of inner coherence, enduring attentional stability, and the absence of cognitive fluctuation. *Samadhi-sambojjhanga*, unlike forced concentration, arises organically when the preceding components—mindfulness, inquiry, energy, joy, and tranquility—are appropriately harmonized.

Samadhi is categorised by the Abhidhamma as a universal mental factor (*sabbacitta-sadharaṇa cetasika*), but only in wholesome awareness (*kusala-citta*), where it acts without attachment or repression, does it refine into *sambojjhanga* [80].

9.3 Role of *Samadhi* within *Jhana* Practice

Buddhist meditative thought revolves around the close connection between *samadhi* and *jhana*. Concentration serves as the structural foundation for the absorptive condition in the classic *jhana* formula, "*Vivicc'eva kamehi... paṭhamaūge jhanaūge upasampajja viharati*" [81]. (*One enters and remains in the first jhana, separated from sensual pleasures.*) Here, *samadhi* offers the mental cohesion required for *jhanic* elements like *pīti*, *sukha*, and *ekaggata* to be present across time. Higher *jhanas* cause coarse mental processes to decrease and attention to become more sustained and nuanced. This transition from concentrated attention

to experiential unity [82]. is sometimes referred to in Marathi meditation guides as "*From concentration to integration.*"Crucially, in the context of the *bojjhanga*, *samadhi* encompasses access concentration insofar as it facilitates the development of insight rather than just absorption (*appana-samadhi*) [83].

9.4 Relationships with Contemporary Neuroscience and Cognitive Science

Convergent insights into the essence of *samadhi* are provided by contemporary cognitive science. Experienced meditators have improved gamma-band synchronisation and higher activity in attention-regulation networks, which are correlated with cognitive integration and sustained focus, according to neuroimaging studies [84]. These results are consistent with the Buddhist concept of *samadhi*, which is described as a single, continuous state of consciousness.

Furthermore, neurobiology distinguishes between effortful attention and effortless stability, reflecting the traditional divide between strained focus and mature *samadhi* coming from tranquillity. *Samadhi* is much more significant as a disciplined but organic state of enhanced cognitive coherence because of these links across numerous disciplines.

9.5 Preparatory Function for Equanimity and Insight

From a theological perspective, *Samadhi-sambojjhanga* serves two primary functions. It first appropriately stabilises the mind for equanimity (*upekkha*), the final waking ingredient, to grow. With *samadhi*, equanimity develops into balanced consciousness; without concentration, it may become apathetic. Second, *samadhi* provides the optimal cognitive environment for *vipassana-panna*. The *Anguttara Nikaya* states that "*Samahito yathabhuta pajanati*" [85]. "A concentrated person sees things as they truly are. "Therefore, *samadhi* is the path's clarifying lens rather than its final destination. It brings the mind together on a stable platform where non-self (*anatta*), impermanence (*anicca*), and unsatisfactoriness (*dukkha*) may all be clearly seen.

Samadhi-sambojjhanga, then, stands for the disciplined unity of consciousness that connects calm and insight, tranquillity and equanimity. *Samadhi* is a key component of the waking process. It is canonically based on seclusion and cessation, doctrinally clarified in *Abhidhamma* analysis, and empirically supported by contemporary cognitive science. It balances the aforementioned elements and creates the conditions for the ultimate blossoming of equanimous insight that leads to *Nibbana*; it neither replaces wisdom nor operates independently of ethical and mindful foundations.

X. Upekkha-Sambojjhanga (Equanimity)

The highest level of the Buddhist path of mental development is Upekkha-sambojjhanga, the final and most advanced of the Satta Bojjhanga. Equanimity, which results from a strong foundation of concentration (samadhi), is a state of perfectly balanced, lucid, and non-reactive consciousness. Rather than implying indifference or emotional disengagement, upekkha denotes a mature stability of mind founded on wisdom (panna), ethical clarity (sila), and a comprehensive awareness of the nature of conditioned existence.

10.1 Upekkha as a Balanced, Non-Reactive Awareness Concept

The Pali words upa (near) and ikkhati (to view) are the source of upekkha, which literally means "to look on closely". Theologically speaking, it is an objective observation free of both attraction (raga) and aversion (dosa). According to the Abhidhamma, upekkha is a mental component that prevents excess or insufficiency by preserving equilibrium among related states [86]. *Upekkha* is sometimes translated as "*Equanimity*" or "*Same Drishti*" in Marathi Buddhist philosophical texts, highlighting discerning neutrality based on insight rather than emotional flatness [87]. Therefore, *upekkha* is not a passive emotional state but a *cognitive-ethical* accomplishment.

10.2 Canonical Descriptions and Doctrinal Significance

The canonical accounts of upekkha-sambojjhanga always place it in the context of relinquishment (vossagga) and cessation (nirodha). "*Upekkhasambojjhanga,*" *bhaveti,* "*vivekanissita,*" "*nirodhanissita,*" and "*vossaggapariṇami,*" according to the Sa'yutta Nikaya [88]. (*He matures in relinquishment, develops the equanimity waking component based on seclusion, depending on cessation.*) Additionally, the Buddha makes a clear connection between mental clarity and purification and equanimity: "*Upekkha-sambojjhanga,*" *bhavayato cittaṃ vipassidati* [89]. (*The mind becomes calm and clear when one develops the equanimity awakening factor.*)

In this context, upekkha serves as the affective and cognitive refinement that permits awareness to function normally even in the face of mental or sensory stimuli. From a doctrinal perspective, it is both the immediate prerequisite for liberating insight and the result of the previous bojjhanga.

10.3 Ethical Neutrality toward Dualities

Upekkha's ethical neutrality towards worldly dualities (*lokadhamma*) is one of its defining characteristics. Gain and loss, renown and infamy, praise and condemnation, pleasure and suffering are listed by the Anguttara Nikaya [90]. The equanimous mind does not hold on to good situations or fight bad ones because it knows that they are temporary (anicca) and conditioned (sankhata). This moral feature distinguishes upekkha from stoic detachment.

Equanimity does not negate compassion (*karuṇa*) or loving-kindness (*metta*); instead, it stabilises them to stop emotional bias. Marathi literature calls *Upekkha* "an objective but sensitive state," which means that it is both fair and fully aware [91].

10.4 Comparative Perspectives: Mahayana *Samata* and Yogic *Samatva*

On the other hand, a closely related ideal in Mahayana Buddhism is expressed by the concept of *samata* (suchness or sameness), which emphasises the non-duality (*advaya*) of phenomena as examined via *prajna*. Texts such as the *Prajnaparamita* literature describe equanimity as insight into emptiness (*śūnyata*), when distinctions between oneself and others cease to be limiting [92]. Similarly, the *Bhagavad Gita*'s command, "*Samatva yoga ucyate*," reflects a similar concept in traditional yoga philosophy [93]. (Equanimity is called *yoga*.) All three religions concur that emancipation requires freedom from reactive oscillation between opposites, although having differing metaphysical foundations. Nonetheless, the *upekkha* of early Buddhism is still unmistakably empirical and phenomenological, grounded in direct observation of mental processes rather than philosophical speculation.

10.5 *Upekkha* as the Culmination of the *Bojjhanga* Sequence

According to the *Satta Bojjhanga*'s internal logic, *upekkha* is the logical conclusion of the following progressive sequence: mindfulness → investigation → energy → joy → tranquillity → concentration → equanimity. From active cultivation to effortless balance, this sequence shows an internal refinement. The *Visuddhimagga* states that when attention is mastered, the mind does not tilt towards excitement or suppression but rather rests in equilibrium and is able to comprehend reality without distortion [94]. *Upekkha* is currently the immediate proximate condition of *vipassana-panna*. By seeing arising and passing things without interference, the equanimous mind eradicates the final remnants of ignorance (*avijja*) and greed (*taṇha*). Therefore, *upekkha-sambojjhanga* symbolises both the entrance to *Nibbana* and the highest level of mental development.

As a result, *Upekkha-sambojjhanga* represents the maturity of the awakened mind, which is lucid, balanced, and unaffected by the ups and downs of conditioned life. *Upekkha* completes the framework of the Seven Factors of Enlightenment. It is canonically based on seclusion and cessation, morally represented as neutrality towards dualities, and similarly resonant with Mahayana and Yogic ideals of equanimity. It is the calm clarity that makes emancipation possible, not emotional detachment.

XI. Interrelationship of the Seven Factors

The *Satta Bojjhanga* were seen as a naturally linked system of mental training and not the seven or so different or independent methods of meditation identified by early Buddhism

teachings. It is their dynamic interaction where each aspect conditions, enhances and stabilises the other that offers them relevance instead of their particular characteristics. The Seven Factors are canonically known as bodhisattva pakkhika dhamma, or mental attributes that lean towards awakening, and their functional and sequential coherence provides a thoroughly worked out psychology of freedom.

11.1 Sequential Progression of the Seven Factors

A natural phenomenological trend in meditative growth is reflected in the canonical order of the bojjhanga: Sati → Dhamma-vicaya → Viriya → Piti → Passaddhi → Samadhi → Upekkha. The *Saṅyutta Nikaya*, in which the Buddha explains how each component arises in dependence upon the practice of the preceding ones, expressly affirms this sequence. According to the canonical formula, "*Sati-sambojjhanga × bhaveti... dhamma-vicaya-sambojjhanga × bhaveti...*" *Viriya-sambojjhanga "bhaveti," piti-sambojjhanga "bhaveti," passaddhi-sambojjhanga "bhaveti," samadhi-sambojjhanga "bhaveti," and upekkha-sambojjhanga "bhaveti"* [95].

The basic awareness that prevents one from getting distracted or forgetful is called sati, or mindfulness. This stabilised attentiveness gives rise to Dhamma-vicaya, the discriminative study of phenomena. Investigation naturally stimulates the intellect and results in viriya, or persistent and intelligent endeavour. The outcome of balanced and healthful labour is piti, a non-sensual bliss that comes from mental cleansing. Passaddhi, or the relaxing of the body and mind, happens once this happiness is realised. Calm is a precondition for samadhi, the unity of awareness that leads to upekkha, the even-minded clarity that represents the highest point of the path. This sequence is frequently referred to in Marathi Buddhist expositions as "*The gradual development of introversion in spiritual practice*"—a gradual inner maturity of practice[96].

11.2 Integrated Functioning Rather than Isolated Practices

Despite their sequential enumeration, canonical and commentary sources emphasise how the bojjhanga operate concurrently and interdependently in real practice. The Abhidhamma states that many awakening factors may coexist in wholesome awareness (kusala-citta), each with a distinct but complementary function [97]. Buddhaghosa points out that imbalance arises from focusing too much on one aspect at the expense of others, cautioning against viewing these factors as rigid stages that must be artificially formed [98]. For example, excessive concentration without awareness results in dullness, whereas extensive research without relaxation generates restlessness. Thus, under the direction of wisdom, the bojjhanga must be grown in harmonic balance. The Buddha's teaching to balance calming elements (*passaddhi*,

samadhi, upekkha) with energising forces (*dhamma-vicaya, viriya, piti*) is a particularly clear example of this integrated functioning. while mindfulness (*sati*) remains universally present as the regulator of the entire system[99].

11.3 Role of the *Bojjhanga* in Interrupting Craving-Based Dependent Origination

The ability of the Seven Factors to break the cycle of dependent origination based on craving (*paṭiccasamuppada*) is one of its most significant theological implications. The Buddha believed that the conditioned sequence is how suffering develops: Phassa (contact) → Vedana (feeling) → Taṇha (craving) → Upadana (clinging) → Bhava (*becoming*) "*Sati. bhikkhave bhavetha; satima bhikkhave bhikkhu vedanasu vedananupassi viharati*" [100] describes how mindfulness (*sati*) intervenes precisely at the crucial point between emotion and craving, allowing for clear observation without reactionary appropriation.

Dhamma-vicaya, which exposes the fleeting and non-self nature of experience, weakens ignorance (*avijja*) after awareness is established. Viriya keeps this insight-oriented engagement going, preventing relapse into habitual reaction. The ensuing joy (*piti*) and peace (*passaddhi*) reduce the subjective need for sensory gratification, while *samadhi* stabilises attention so that craving cannot easily reassert itself. Finally, *upekkha* neutralises lingering emotional bias, allowing things to arise and pass without appropriation.

In Marathi doctrinal studies, this function could be summed up as follows: "The factors of enlightenment are a means of breaking the chain of dependent origination, which is based on craving." The cycle of dependent origination based on longing is broken by the *bojjhanga* [101]. The Seven Elements of Enlightenment are also dynamic and ever- evolving. They evolve and develop with time, propelling each other as opposed to living in solitude. The habitual mode of thinking, which is often preoccupied with desires and responses, becomes open to something more free when all seven coincide. You suddenly feel your mind sharp, well-balanced and clear. The *bojjhanga* is an example of how the enlightenment takes place at the heart of the Buddhist path to Nibban, by breaking the emotional and mental patterns that perpetuate suffering.

This study indicates that the Seven Factors of Enlightenment or *Satta Bojjhanga* are not simply a set of meditation tricks. They are an exhaustive whole-body system that lies at the centre of the early Buddhist thoughts on enlightenment. The *bojjhanga* are dynamic systems, psychological, ethical, and highly practical, which are jointly applied by a person to the state of clarity and then, through insight, to the equanimity that is sustained. They are not independent characteristics, but they evolve together on the way to Nibbana. The ancient

writings continue to refer to them as direct requirements towards awakening, wisdom and freedom.

Look at the Sutta, Abhidhamma and commentaries, you find the pattern: mindfulness, then investigation, which generates effort, which generates joy, then tranquillity, then concentration, and lastly equanimity. But it's not some rigid ladder. The factors influence one another, creating a cycle that further drives things along. It is in this way that the bojjhanga literally unclenches the hold of craving and disrupts the cycle of suffering by changing the way we experience things at the instant.

The study also concludes that the bojjhanga continues to be significant in the present day in various cultures, languages, and disciplines. Based on Pali literature, and English and Marathi scholarship, and even modern cognitive science, it is apparent that these seven factors are a complex process of mind-cleansing and seeing things in depth. The Seven Factors of Enlightenment end the day with a profoundly wise, thoughtful, ethical approach to escaping suffering, a way as timely as it was when the Buddha lived.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The author expresses gratitude to the late Madhavrao Wagh, whose inspiration encouraged the pursuit of work on the Constitution of India.

Declaration of competing interest: The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

Data Availability Statement: The original contributions presented in the study are included in the article/Supplementary Material. Further inquiries can be directed to the corresponding author.

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