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The Stagnation of Early Buddhist Studies in the Jabodetabek Area (A Case Study of the Dhammacitta Buddhist Community and the Early Buddhist Society of Indonesia)

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ABSTRACT
Early Buddhist studies in the Jabodetabek area have stagnated despite their cross-sectarian potential. Only two communities, DhammaCitta and the Early Buddhist Society of Indonesia (EBSI), actively engage in the study of Early Buddhism, with limited integration into formal education. This qualitative case study examined the causes, processes, and impacts of this stagnation. Data were collected through observation, a literature review, and in-depth interviews and were analyzed using Verstehen, interpretation, and heuristic approaches, with triangulation and Mahāpadesa validation. The findings identified 18 factors contributing to the stagnation of Early Buddhist studies in the Jabodetabek area. The major factors included low interest, trolling and negative discussions, time constraints, inadequate adaptation to technological developments, the Indonesian Buddhist ecosystem, the inherent characteristics of Early Buddhism, rule enforcement, and antipathy and rejection. The minor factors included a lack of interest in expansion, the COVID-19 pandemic, information overload, exhaustion of discussion topics, the absence of monastic involvement in the community, the imposition of Early Buddhist perspectives, a lack of competent teachers, the absence of a formal organization, emotional burnout, and inadequate promotion. The stagnation process occurred through social exchanges within the two communities that tended to generate negative emotions and were compounded by various barriers, resulting in a decline in the quality and reach of dissemination and, ultimately, a reduction or cessation of members' roles as guardians of the tradition. The stagnation of Buddhist studies in the Jabodetabek area resulted in reduced clarity regarding distinctions between early and later Buddhist traditions, increased information overload, diminished opportunities for deradicalization, cultural negotiation that may undermine fundamental Buddhist principles, and barriers to the integration of Early Buddhist studies into formal education.

INTRODUCTION

orientation. In 1934, Bhikkhu Narada Thera of Sri Lanka visited Indonesia, contributing to the revival of Buddhist activities in the country (Harcey & Arjana, 2024; Rizzo, 2022, 2024; Zain, 2025). In the same year, the Java Buddhist Association was divided into the Batavia (Afdeeling Batavia) and Buitenzorg (Afdeeling Buitenzorg) branches. The Batavia branch subsequently separated from the central organization and became the Batavia Buddhist Association, which tended to promote Mahāyāna Buddhism (Bhagavant, 2015). After activities had been interrupted during the Japanese occupation, the Tridharma movement was revived in 1952 through the establishment of the Sam Kauw Indonesia Association under Tee Boan An. In 1954, Tee Boan An was ordained as a Theravāda bhikkhu in Burma by the Venerable Mahasi

Sayadaw and received the monastic name Bhikkhu Ashin Jinarakkhita. He subsequently played an important role in the development of Buddhist institutions in Indonesia and established the Indonesian Buddhist Council in 1979 (Bhagavant, 2015). Subsequent developments saw the emergence of various Buddhist schools and organizations, including Nichiren Shoshu and Maitreya, which became associated with Buddha Dharma Indonesia (BUDHI) in 1972. Nichiren Shoshu later became controversial because some of its doctrines and institutional practices were regarded as inconsistent with mainstream Buddhist traditions, eventually resulting in its expulsion from the former WALUBI in 1987. Maitreya was initially accepted as part of Indonesian Buddhism, although doctrinal differences subsequently generated debate. These institutional and doctrinal dynamics contributed to the emergence of a new Buddhist organizational structure in 1998 that accommodated diverse Buddhist traditions. The diversity of Buddhist schools in Indonesia highlights the importance of strengthening cross-sectarian Buddhist studies to minimize potential tensions and promote greater understanding among Buddhist communities (Ilmiah & Kadi, 2025; Samsul Hady et al., 2025; Sujata et al., 2025).

One approach with the potential to bridge this diversity is Early Buddhist Studies, which focuses on teachings associated with the earliest historical strata of Buddhism before the development of established sectarian traditions (Gu & Kim, 2025; Husgafvel, 2023; Prastowo et al., 2026). By examining teachings shared across early textual traditions, Early Buddhist Studies provides a framework that is not exclusively tied to the doctrinal interests of a single contemporary Buddhist school. Internationally, Early Buddhist Studies has developed within universities, Buddhist educational institutions, and Dhamma study communities, including IBSC MCU and IBC in Thailand, the University of Kelaniya in Sri Lanka, and international institutions and resources such as SuttaCentral and the Barre Center for Buddhist Studies. These developments demonstrate that Early Buddhist Studies has become an important component of both academic Buddhist studies and contemporary Buddhist education at the international level (Mahatthanadull et al., 2026; Nyanabhadra et al., 2025; Seanburan, 2024; Tongsupachok et al., 2024; Yatno et al., 2026).

In contrast to developments in other countries, Early Buddhist Studies in Indonesia, particularly in the Jabodetabek area, remains limited. Although Jabodetabek is a major center of social, economic, and educational activity and hosts five Buddhist higher education institutions (Perguruan Tinggi Keagamaan Buddha [PTKB]), Early Buddhist Studies has not been incorporated as a dedicated course within their curricula. Outside formal education, discussions of Early Buddhism have been consistently facilitated primarily by two communities, DhammaCitta and the Early Buddhist Society of Indonesia (EBSI). DhammaCitta (2024) began introducing Early Buddhist perspectives through online discussion forums in 2008 and subsequently expanded its activities to include book publishing and specialized study forums. EBSI, established in 2015, has similarly sought to introduce Early Buddhist perspectives through social media, book publishing, and educational activities focusing on the historical development and early teachings of Buddhism.

The disparity between the development of Early Buddhist Studies in Indonesia and that observed internationally indicates a potential pattern of stagnation that warrants systematic investigation. Early Buddhist Studies has not yet been substantially integrated into Buddhist higher education or expanded through broader community-based educational initiatives, despite its cross-sectarian potential to facilitate dialogue among diverse Buddhist traditions.

Against this background, this study aimed to analyze the causes, processes, and impacts of the stagnation of Early Buddhist Studies in the Jabodetabek area through case studies of the DhammaCitta and EBSI communities. The findings are expected to contribute to academic scholarship in religion and culture and provide recommendations for government institutions, Buddhist higher education institutions, Buddhist organizations, and researchers regarding the development of Early Buddhist Studies within formal and nonformal education in Indonesia.

METHOD

Research Design

This study employed a qualitative approach with a case study design to examine the stagnation of Early Buddhist Studies in the Jabodetabek area. The study was grounded in the Verstehen paradigm and employed a phenomenological approach to understand the meanings of informants' experiences through epoché, eidetic analysis, interpretation, and heuristic analysis. Data were collected through observation, interviews, and literature review and were validated using triangulation. The Jabodetabek area was selected as the research setting because of its significant role in Buddhist education and community activities in Indonesia and the presence of Buddhist higher education institutions and Buddhist communities relevant to the study. Literature-based data were also collected from the National Library of the Republic of Indonesia and the Jakarta Library to support the analysis with relevant academic and historical sources.

Data Types and Sources

The type of data used in this study is qualitative data, both in the form of empirical data and meaningful data, obtained through literature studies, in-depth interviews, and observations. The data includes information about the factors that cause the stagnation of the development of Early Buddhist Studies in Greater Jakarta, the process of stagnation, and its impact on the development of Buddhist studies in the region. The results of the interviews were enriched with findings from literature studies and observations so that the analysis could be carried out more holistically and comprehensively through triangulation techniques. In addition to primary data, this study also utilizes supporting data, such as information about courses in the Buddhist Religious Education Study Program at Buddhist Religious Universities (PTKB) throughout Greater Jakarta and community data focusing on Early Buddhism Studies. The primary data sources came from purposively selected informants, including the administrators of the DhammaCitta community and the Early Buddhist Society of Indonesia (EBSI), community members, and religious leaders who have competence in Early Buddhism Studies. Meanwhile, secondary data sources are obtained from various documents, such as books, scientific journals, articles, and other relevant documents. The combination of these various data sources allows triangulation to increase the validity and reliability of research results.

Data Collection Techniques

The data collection techniques in this study include observation, literature studies, and in-depth interviews that complement each other to obtain comprehensive data. Observations were carried out to directly observe the conditions and activities of the DhammaCitta community and the Early Buddhist Society of Indonesia (EBSI), especially related to the process of propagation of Early Buddhist Studies and the dynamics of interaction among its members. Literature studies are used to collect various written sources, such as books, scientific

journals, articles, documents, and the Tipitaka canon obtained from print and digital sources, including SuttaCentral. Meanwhile, interviews were conducted in an in-depth and unstructured manner with purposive sampling techniques, so that the interviewees were selected based on their knowledge, experience, and role in the development of Early Buddhist Studies. The research resource persons came from DhammaCitta, namely Benny Wu, Indra Anggara, Seno Prajnadeva, Alex Chandra, and Ariyanto, as well as from EBSI, namely Frisian Salim, Harris Darmawan (2016), Stevenson, Fenny Tjan, and Franky Yodi. During the data collection process, researchers faced several obstacles, such as informants who were no longer active, converted, refused to be interviewed, or had died. This study did not use Focus Group Discussion (FGD) due to the limitations of the number and characteristics of participants, so the data was obtained through a combination of observation, literature study, and in-depth interviews which were then validated using triangulation techniques.

Data Analysis

In this study, data analysis was carried out using verstehen, interpretation, and heuristic approaches. The verstehen method is used to deeply understand the meaning, values, symbols, and experiences of informants related to the phenomenon of stagnation of Early Buddhist Studies in Greater Jakarta, then followed by an interpretation process to reveal the implicit and explicit meanings of the data obtained. Furthermore, the heuristic method is applied to develop findings into innovative scientific ideas or solutions in overcoming this stagnation through the stages of context description, criticism of existing paradigms, innovation discovery, and creativity development. To ensure the validity of the research results, the researcher also applied data triangulation by comparing information obtained from various sources, methods, and perspectives of resource persons consisting of community leaders, scholars, and community members. In addition, the research utilizes documents that have high social value, such as organizational documents and religious sources, which are verified for authenticity through the Mahāpadesa method, which is to compare each claim with the Sutta and Vinaya canons in the Tipitaka so that the validity of the data used can be accounted for both academically and religiously.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The Impact of Stagnation on the Development of Buddhist Studies in Greater Jakarta

Loss of Clarity between Early and Later Traditions

In 94, an Indian scholar named Homi K. Bhabha came up with a theory called 'hybridity', a theory that challenged the idea that colonial discourse and power were homogeneous and hegemonic. Introduced in The Location of Culture (1994), Bhabha's theory of hybridity and third space has dominated postcolonial and cultural studies over the past two decades. (Acheraïou, 2011)

Bhabha himself tries to define culture, discourse, and identity in his book as fluid and ambivalent/contradictory, rather than as fixed and one-dimensional. He also explained the idea of hybridity with the spatial metaphor of the third space, which is hybridity itself.

All forms of culture are constantly in the process of hybridization. But for me, the importance of hybridity is not to be able to trace the two initial moments from which the third moment emerges, but rather hybridity for me is the 'third space' that allows other positions to

emerge. […] The process of cultural hybridity gives rise to something different, something new and unrecognizable, a new area of negotiation of meaning and representation. (Bhabha, 1994)

This third space/hybridity is what Bhabha refers to as a place of subversion, displacement, novelty, renegotiation of culture and identity, and dual position. (Acheraïou, 2011) Furthermore, Triguna (2026) explains, 'negotiation' occurs as a result of interaction with other religious and cultural traditions, and also, sometimes, as a product of 'ambiguity' This is what Bhabha calls 'Hybridity', i.e. the process of cultural change is the result of negotiation and ambiguity.

The process of 'negotiation' or syncretism itself is subtle and difficult to understand. The process of hybridization can occur reflectively/involuntarily, which is almost like a mechanical process by absorbing foreign cultural and language patterns experienced by individuals living in multicultural environments. Cultural mixing also often occurs as a result of more pragmatic economic, political, and ideological motivations. (Acheraïou, 2011)

If we look at Buddhism itself, Buddhism itself also interacted with different religious and cultural traditions throughout its development. This process took place even when the Buddha Gotama was still alive. We can see this from the development of the Vinaya Pitaka which generally had the influence of the community/laypeople at that time. In the Vinaya canon, the laypeople are the ones who are very quick to generalize things. When a monk behaves inappropriately, they will complain, "How can these monks do that?" So, in order to maintain their belief in Buddhism, rules were made. (Thanissaro, 2013)

And this continues to this day. As time progressed, various negotiation rooms emerged, which Analayo called 'a certain idea of the Buddha'. He explained that there were certain ideas about the Buddha in one period and in another period there were other different ideas. In this way, we can place two or more views side by side without having to determine which is right and wrong, simply because we understand the historical foundation: This is early Buddhism, this is five hundred years later, this is fifteen hundred years later, and so on. (Analayo, 2019). Of course, we cannot easily say good or bad. However, we need to be honest that one concept appears in one time and another concept appears in another. And this is what is studied and put forward in the Early Buddhist Studies.

It is this honesty that can prevent further changes, which can even undermine fundamental principles in Buddhism as has happened recently, where the Ekayana Arama Monastery, Jakarta clarifies the existence of the False Sutra contained in Taiso Tripitaka V.21 No. 1307, which teaches the Bei Dou ritual, a ritual usually found in Taoism. The monastery quoted an argument from a western expert named Herbert Franke in his article entitled "The Taoist Element in The Buddhist Great Bear Sutra (Pei-Tou-Ching)". There he explained that the Sutra was certainly apocryphal, as it was never mentioned in the Buddhist canons of the five dynasties of China nor is it found in the fragments of Dunhuang, Turfan, and Khara-Khoto. (See figure 1.29 – 1.31) The existence of this case also affirms the theory of Bhabha hybridity, that cultural negotiations can occur due to ambiguity and can be subtle and difficult to understand. If there is no study that thoroughly explores texts in depth based on triangulation of sources such as Early Buddhist Studies, Buddhists will continue to find it difficult to distinguish Buddhist concepts from one another and even from non-Buddhist concepts as apocryphal texts and doctrinal syncretism continue to develop. Therefore, the existence of Early Buddhist Studies is essential to the survival of the Buddhist Sasana itself.

If the stagnation of Early Buddhist Studies continues, then the logical consequence is that there is no explanation between the early and later traditions. As a result, there is an excessive negotiation process so that the fundamental values in Early Buddhism that act as 'attitude calibration', 'guidelines', 'benchmarks' become ambiguous and even disappear, so Buddhism will turn into a version that can no longer be called 'Buddhism'.

Worsening Obesity Information

According to INDONESIAN CERTIFICATION (2024) Piliang himself tries to explain that nowadays, everything is dwarfed, reduced, and siltted. The various 'reality images' contained in the information are present at a high speed. Making people experience 'Information Obesity'. This is also the case with Buddhism, where a lot of information about Buddhism from various points of view floods the Indonesian Buddhist community, including those who study Early Buddhism. This is in accordance with what member II of EBSI said, where they cannot stem the flow from outside:

We can't go against the current current. Suppose we are a small community, you know, the current outside of Early Buddhist is too big. … (Fenny Tjan, question 14)

This information, which triggers 'obesity', is described by Piliang as 'poor intake', which in this case is full of spectacle imagery and dry of authenticity. Piliang himself in his writings tries to explain that identity without a consensus or claim of universally agreed truth is an identity that is antisocial. In this case, it is clear that Piliang is trying to maintain the status quo in the form of an attempt to give rise to an authentic identity, one of which is in the context of a conventional big religious spiritual context. (INDONESIAN CERTIFICATION, 2024)

The flood of information itself also actually occurred in the past, but not as fast as in the present. The Buddha has realized this. The decisive step He took in responding to things that were not important to be taught was to give understanding to the Bhikkhus in the Simsapa forest. He explained that what He knew was very much, but what He taught was very little. The reason is that they are not useful and have nothing to do with the realization of Nibbāna, so they are not taught.

… "What do you think, bhikkhus, which is more: a little of the siṁsapā leaf that I took in My hand or the siṁsapā leaf on the head in this forest?"

"Your Majesty, the leaves of siṁsapā that the Blessed One takes in His hands are few, but the leaves of siṁsapā overhead in this forest are plentiful."

"Similarly, bhikkhus (2020), the things that I directly know but do not teach you are many, while the things that I teach you are few. And why, bhikkhus, do I not teach many of those things? Because they are useless, they are not in touch with the basics of the holy life, and they do not lead to disgust, to boredom, to vanity, to peace, to direct knowledge, to enlightenment, to Nibbāna. Therefore I do not teach it. … (SN 56.31 Sīsapāvana Sutta)

Authentic identity alone is what is sought in Early Buddhist Studies. This study seeks to explore the essential, cross-sectarian, and fundamental characteristics of Buddhism, which are at the root of all Buddhist traditions. The principles of Early Buddhism themselves are the 'foundation', 'foundation', or 'foundation' of any Buddhist tradition, and can also be a 'middle ground' in bridging existing debates. This is because this identity is present in all or most of the Buddhist traditions in general. When this study stagnates, these fundamental limitations will disappear more and more, the logical consequence is that information obesity will worsen due

to the increasingly unstoppable flood of waste information as expressed by EBSI resource persons.

… But this community will become more and more of a minority, why? Because in this era of social media, so much knowledge has emerged. There is a lot of waste knowledge. There are so many social media distractions. So actually it's not just Early Buddhism but also a distraction for all kinds of science that is also very numerous. We can see that these hoaxes are even more than pure science. … (Stevenson, question 14)

… Even the most popular ones in today's world can be restored. People don't want to check out the data. … (Franky Yodi, 9th question)

Loss of the Deradicalization Process

Since authentic identity is what is sought in Early Buddhism Studies, it means that it seeks to unearth the 'common thread' of each Buddhist tradition. The 'common thread' referred to here are the Buddhist teachings that have essential, cross-sectarian, and fundamental characteristics, which are at the root of all Buddhist traditions. The principles of Early Buddhism themselves are the 'foundation', 'foundation', or 'foundation' of any Buddhist tradition, and can also be a 'middle ground' in bridging existing debates. This is because this identity is present in all or most of the Buddhist traditions in general.

… It was precisely this Early Buddhism that finally brought these debates together. Uniting those differences. So from there, some people argue that this is the way it is, so according to other schools, we finally show the evidence that it was originally like this. Yaudah is done. And each of them will usually be what has happened so far, some will receive, some will not accept either. Those who are too fanatical about the latter sect, they will reject it. But yes, we will return it to each one. But according to Early Buddhism, it is like that. Yes, it is undeniable. … (Indra Anggara, question 12)

… Yes, actually, right, even if, for example, the development is stuck there because there are no more materials. But it still has to be maintained, why? Because of the name, what is it, that person should not be too fanatical about his own religion. He must be there to see how the earliest source is. Although he did not deny the current trend, he had to see what the original source was like. … (Seno Prajnadeva, 2nd question)

From a healthy discussion process, Early Buddhism Studies itself will lead us to a more holistic perspective in responding to various discussions. It is this study that ultimately leads Buddhists to realize the differences and respect those differences without insisting on saying 'My Buddhism is the truest'.

… So when people, even though they don't belong to this community, even though they only read from the outside, they get a new knowledge. Where Early Buddhism, the biggest impact was that it reduced people's bigotry. So when, for example, the flow is different, it's okay to have a different flow, just relax. … (Seno Prajnadeva, 14th question)

When this study stagnates, the logical consequence that occurs is the loss of the deradicalization effect due to the development of fanatical views along with the stagnation or even regression of Early Buddhist Studies.

… Yes (the impact of deradicalization disappears). For example, if there is no regeneration and then the materials are all on the internet. If, for example, Facebook closes, the forum closes, it all disappears, right? … (Seno Prajnadeva, 14th question)

Cultural Negotiations That Erode the Fundamental Principles of Buddhism

These fundamental principles themselves are of course very important, especially in their role as the 'heart' or 'breath' of Buddhism. They play a major role as 'attitude calibration', 'guidelines', and 'benchmarks' in determining where Buddhism is headed. If the stagnation of Early Buddhist Studies continues, the logical consequence is that the flood of information will further bury this study and obscure the basic principles. There is a possibility that these fundamental principles will be changed or even ignored.

If these principles are damaged, then this is what Piliang (2011) says is 'damaging the paper'. Piliang himself theorizes that the 'world' is like folded paper. When a person folds paper, he creates folds until the limit of the paper can no longer be folded.

In this case, the principles contained in Early Buddhism are the furthest limit of the folds of paper itself. Surely one can force it by folding it back in various ways. Suppression, compaction, even destruction as in the case of the Bei Dou ritual which equates the seven northern stars with Bhaisajyaguru Buddha, where it is impossible to have the same seven Buddhas. However, by going beyond his limits, the person is damaging the paper itself. The same is true of ignoring the principles in Early Buddhism. When one ignores it, and even tends to impose the 'model' of Buddhism as he wishes, then what happens is that the person has damaged the 'paper' which in this case is "Buddhism" itself.

Hindering Integration into Formal Education

In this study, it is known that in Indonesia, especially in Greater Jakarta, Buddhists in Indonesia began to get to know Early Buddhism Studies since 2008 through the DhammaCitta forum until 2013 where the discussion of Early Buddhism Studies became more serious which was marked by the emergence of a special topic section on Early Buddhism in the DhammaCitta forum (See appendices 1.14 and 1.15) But until now, It has been 18 years since Early Buddhism began to be known in Indonesia, there has not been any form of integration of this study into formal education. This proves that this stagnation phenomenon hinders the process of integrating Early Buddhist Studies into Formal Education.

If this stagnation continues, then the longer it will take for the Study of Early Buddhism to be integrated into Formal Education, or even just a discourse without any realization at all. Today, Buddhist scholars tend to say that this is quite difficult to do and they are still struggling to keep this study alive.

… I strongly agree that Early Buddhism should be an academic study, brought to more formal pulpits, but this definitely requires resources. ... This will not be easy. But this discourse should not be allowed to pass. This discourse must also continue to be discussed. Yes, this discourse is like a candle. … Yes, it's okay as long as the fire still has the fuel. So the fire is still maintained. … Until one day when we meet with qualified resources, this fire only needs to grow to explain those who are suitable. … So for the person who is indeed suitable... Hopefully this light can be enlarged and beneficial for them. The trick is that we keep this fire from ever going out. At least there is. Only when the resources have been found will this fire be able to grow on its own. … (Stevenson, 15th question)

Formulation of Assumptions and Their Implications in the Development of Religious and Cultural Sciences

In this sub-chapter, the researcher seeks to compile assumptions in connection with the stagnation of Early Buddhist Studies in Greater Jakarta based on the research conducted. In addition, the researcher also seeks to explain the implications of this research on the development of Religious and Cultural Sciences.

1. Assumption Formulation

This study opens the veil on the stagnation of Early Buddhist studies that occurred in Greater Jakarta based on case studies in the DhammaCitta and EBSI communities. Stagnation occurs due to eighteen factors, consisting of eight major factors and ten minor factors.

Major factors consist of (1) Low interest, (2) Trolling of negative discussions, (3) Busyness/time constraints, (4) Lack of adaptation to technological developments, (5) Indonesian Buddhism ecosystem, (6) Natural nature of Early Buddhism, (7) Rule enforcement, (8) Antipathy to rejection.

Meanwhile, minor factors consist of (1) Not wanting expansion, (2) Covid-19 Pandemic, (3) Information Flood, (4) Running out of discussion materials, (5) Lack of Bhikkhu-based, (6) Imposing Early Buddhism, (7) Competent speakers, (8) No formal organization, (9) Saturation points, and finally (10) Lack of socialization.

The process of stagnation of Early Buddhist Studies itself occurred with the social exchanges that took place in both communities from the beginning often involving negative emotions as evidenced by the many rejections received by both communities. Coupled with the presence of obstacles, both in terms of internal such as the nature of Early Buddhism itself, time and absence of member regeneration, and also external obstacles such as the proliferation of Buddhist communities, the flow of information, technological advances. This combination resulted in a stagnation in the quality of self-propagation and gradually resulted in the decline or even cessation of the role of all members as the primary custodians of their traditions in the study and propagation of Early Buddhist Studies.

There are five impacts that occurred on the study of Buddhism in Jabotebatek as a result of this stagnation.

(1) The first is the loss of clarity between the early and later traditions, this is because Early Buddhist Studies itself prioritizes the honesty between the early traditions and later developments. The study of Early Buddhism does not consider that early traditions are always good and later traditions are worse, they prioritize the honesty that one concept arose in one time and another concept arose in another. As a result of this stagnation, there has been a process of excessive cultural negotiation, as a result of the blurring of the boundaries between the Early Buddhist tradition and later developments. The concrete example is the implementation of the Bei Dou ritual at Ekayana Arama Temple, Jakarta which turns out to be sourced from apocryphal texts.

(2) The second is to exacerbate information obesity, where today everything is dwarfed, reduced, and shallow. The various 'reality images' contained in the information are present at a high speed. Making people experience 'Information Obesity'. Piliang called the information 'poor intake', which in this case was full of spectacle images and dry of authenticity. In line with Piliang, the Buddha also did not teach all things to his people, in the Sisapavana Sutta, he only taught 'a handful of Dhamma leaves' that lead to the attainment of Nibbana. Authentic identity alone is what is sought in Early Buddhist Studies. This study seeks to explore the

essential, cross-sectarian, and fundamental characteristics of Buddhism, which are at the root of all Buddhist traditions. As these studies stagnate, these fundamental limitations will disappear more and more, the logical consequence of which is that information obesity will worsen due to the increasingly unstoppable flood of information waste.

(3) The third is the loss of the process of deradicalization, Early Buddhist Studies focuses on the authentic identity found in all Buddhist traditions. That is, the study itself looks for a 'common thread' in the form of Buddhist teachings that have essential, cross-sectarian, and fundamental characteristics, which are at the root of all Buddhist traditions. From a healthy discussion process, this study brings Buddhists to be aware of the differences that exist and to respect those differences without insisting on saying 'my Buddhism is the most right'. When this study stagnates, the logical consequence that occurs is the loss of the deradicalization effect due to the development of fanatical views along with the stagnation or even regression of Early Buddhist Studies.

(4) Fourth, the process of cultural negotiation that erodes the fundamental principles of Buddhism. If the stagnation of Early Buddhist Studies continues, the flood of information will further bury this study and obscure the basic principles. As a result, these fundamental principles will be changed and even ignored.

When these principles are damaged, this is what is called (Piliang, 2011) as 'damaging the paper'. When a person folds paper, he creates folds until the limit of the paper can no longer be folded. In this case, the principles contained in Early Buddhism are the furthest limit of the folds of paper itself. Of course, one can force it by folding it back in various ways such as suppression, compaction, and even destruction. However, by going beyond his limits, the person is damaging the paper itself. The same is true of ignoring the principles in Early Buddhism. When one ignores it, and even tends to impose the 'model' of Buddhism as he wishes, then what happens is that the person has damaged the 'paper' which in this case is "Buddhism" itself.

(5) Hindering integration into formal education, in Indonesia, especially in Greater Jakarta, Buddhists in Indonesia began to get to know Early Buddhism Studies since 2008 through the DhammaCitta forum. However, until now, 18 years since Early Buddhism began to be known in Indonesia, there has not been any form of integration of this study into formal education. This proves that this stagnation phenomenon hinders the process of integrating Early Buddhist Studies into Formal Education. If this stagnation continues, then the longer it will take for the Study of Early Buddhism to be integrated into Formal Education, or even just a discourse without any realization at all.

2. Implications for the Development of Religious and Cultural Sciences

Early Buddhist Studies is one of the scientific branches of Buddhist Studies, which in this case is part of Religious and Cultural Studies. The existence of this research which examines the stagnation of Early Buddhist Studies in Greater Jakarta certainly has implications or involvement in the development of Religious and Cultural Sciences. Moreover, this research is a pioneering study carried out within the scope of the Greater Jakarta area. This itself enriches the treasures of Religious and Cultural Studies in Indonesia, especially in the Greater Jakarta area and is expected to be a reference and reference for future research.

Limitations in Research Conducted

In this sub-chapter, the researcher presents the limitations contained in the research conducted by the researcher. The limitations expressed in this study are in relation to the research locus and research sources.

1. Limitations of the Research Scope Locus

In this study, the research location used was only in the Greater Jakarta area. In this region there are two communities that study the study of Early Buddhism. This research has not reached other regions in Indonesia. In this case, the researcher really hopes that there will be efforts from other scholars to conduct further research, which can depart from the findings in this study.

2. Limitations of Research Sources

In this case, the researcher admitted that the sources in this study were limited to parties who could be interviewed by the sources. In his research, the interviewees found obstacles in obtaining information that occurred because there were several interviewees who could not be interviewed for various reasons, such as refusing to be interviewed and having converted religions, and had died.

CONCLUSION

Based on the research findings and analysis, it can be concluded that Early Buddhist Studies in the Jabodetabek area have experienced stagnation, characterized by the slow development of scholarly and community-based studies, limited integration into formal education, and the small number of communities that consistently engage in this field, particularly DhammaCitta and the Early Buddhist Society of Indonesia (EBSI). This study identified 18 factors contributing to stagnation, comprising eight major and ten minor factors, with the primary factors including low levels of interest, negative discussion dynamics, time constraints, inadequate adaptation to technological developments, and the characteristics of the Buddhist ecosystem in Indonesia. This stagnation occurred through social processes shaped by internal and external barriers, which reduced the quality of dissemination and member regeneration. The study also generated theoretical insights concerning the limits of cultural negotiation within hybridity theory and the inclusion or incompleteness of ideas in the development of Buddhist traditions. In addition, the study provided empirical findings regarding the historical development of Early Buddhist Studies in Jabodetabek, the conditions of Buddhist higher education institutions, and the effects of stagnation on distinctions among Buddhist traditions, information overload, deradicalization efforts, the preservation of fundamental Buddhist principles, and integration into formal education. Therefore, greater support from government institutions, Buddhist higher education institutions, the DhammaCitta and EBSI communities, and researchers is needed to advance Early Buddhist Studies through stronger academic scholarship, curriculum development, improved dissemination practices, and further research.

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