

**An Analytical Study of Paritta Recitation Events with Reference to  
Religious Literature: Views on the Impacts of Paritta Chanting**

Ven. Ashin Ariya Vamsa<sup>1</sup>

*Paritta* Chanting is the recital of some of the *Suttas* uttered by the Buddha for the blessings and protection of the devotees. It is worthy to note that each paritta sutta has a specific function, though any paritta can be recited for general protective measure. This research analysed paritta recitation events to investigate the benefits of Paritta chanting and provide an exhaustive overview into the practice followed in Theravada nations, Myanmar in particular. It also explored the views/ perceptions of Venerable sayardaws and laypeople on the impacts of Paritta chanting. A mixed method was used: a descriptive analysis of Paritta recitation events with reference to religious literature and qualitative in-depth interviews for exploring views on the impacts of Paritta chanting. The finding reveals that benefits of chanting parittas as found in the descriptive analysis of experiences by monks and laypeople include freedom from dangers and better health along with confidence in daily life as well as individual perceptions by interviewed participants. It is hoped that this study will provide an insight prevalent socio-religious features inherent in the practice of chanting parittas.

Key words: Paritta, chanting, recitation, perceptions

## **I. Introduction**

The paritta, a selection of suttas from Ti-Pitaka, is extracted from the canon with certain modifications and adaptations but keeping the essence and spirit of the original text. Lately, paritta chanting has been more functional in nature than understanding of the text itself and has played an important role in the Buddhist society. Paritta chanting is based on the text of the canon and understanding and practice. Lord Buddha expounded thus: "yo dhammam passati, so mam passati" (ye who seekth the doctrine, will see me – If you see my teaching, you will see me). An understanding of the parittas will facilitate the understanding of the Buddha's teaching and subsequent practice. Parittas have been chanted even during the time of the Lord Buddha. Chanting of protective verses and discourses stretch back thousands of years. Recorded history mentions the chanting of parittas during the Suvanna Bhumi and Bagan dynasties after Theravada Buddhism made its entry into Myanmar. The chanting of parittas is a very popular practice in Buddhist nations with the length and the choices and varieties differing with different locations. Paritta chanting ceremonies in Buddhist societies are significant as a ritual practice (Thondara, 2010). In spite of the divergences, the source is the same as all the parittas that are extracted from the Buddhist canon. The purposes of chanting may be different but the main aim is the same: to keep the Sangha and the lay devotees familiar with the teaching of Lord Buddha. This familiarity and practice in chanting can possibly perpetuate the Sasana for hundreds and thousands of years to come. Long-term sustainability of a Sasana – Sīla, Samādhi and Paññā, depends on the deep faith of the practitioners which can improve by means of deep understanding of the texts and principles of a religion and subsequent practice.

Chanting parittas is done at homes, public places, monasteries, pagodas and other religious venues. The followers of Buddhism have strong faith in the protective power of parittas and the chanting is associated with social and religious events. Individuals chant parittas for others or for themselves. Monks recite parittas at religious ceremonies and social occasions with a religious overtone to bless the laypeople in their undertakings of daily lives.

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<sup>1</sup> PhD student of University of Global Peace, Mandalay

On the other hand, monks themselves recite the parittas individually or in groups as part of their daily routines ending with dissemination of loving kindness and merits. On the part of the lay devotees, paritta incantation is also done either individually or in groups in Dhammayons (prayer halls), at monasteries or pagodas as part of their regular activities. People young and old participate in the chanting events. parittas are chanted based on different types of events – social or religious. Group recitations of parittas happen in different times of the year: they are chanted in the new year in order for the devotees to be free from harms and have a prosperous life for the entire year. The locations of paritta chanting range from houses, public places, crossroads, to the four corners of the ward or village or towns after building pandals or pavilions near houses where donation ceremonies are taking place. The events for paritta chanting range from groundbreaking ceremonies, housewarming ceremonies, alms-offering ceremonies, birthday parties, baby showers to initiation of new vehicles. They are also recited during natural disasters, pandemics and famines or before disasters. Above all, parittas are recited when particular householders invite the Sanghas to recite parittas at their houses to ward off specific dangers such as evil spirits. It is believed that parittas have powers to ward off dangers and help people prosper in various spheres of life – be it business, social, health among others. It is believed that chanting or listening to sounds of chanting helped the development of treatment for the patient's health (Sannamo and Bamrungbhakd, 2017)

Venerable monks are invited to chant parittas at a specific location, e.g. the home of a new house owner. The most preferred paritta for many auspicious occasions is the Mangala Sutta for inauguration ceremonies and metta sutta is equally preferred. The introduction to paritta beginning with 'samantā cakkavālesu atrā gacchāntu devatā' which is intended for invitation of the deities and devas takes the first part of the paritta chanting ceremony followed by texts appropriate for the occasion. e.g. mangala sutta and metta sutta for inauguration ceremonies, ratana sutta in cases of diseases, pandemic or famines, bojjhanga sutta for invalids to recover from their diseases. In case of difficult births 'angulimala sutta' is recited and Āṭānāṭiya sutta and khandā sutta for protection from poisonous creatures. Mora sutta is recited to be free from detention and vuṭṭa sutta to ward off fire hazards. Āṭānāṭiya sutta is recited on occasions when formidable evil spirits possess individuals or locations. It is believed that this sutta can win the love and protection of beings visible and invisible. Out of all parittas, dhajagga sutta expounds the qualities of the three gems. All parittas are meant for protection from dangers and they are meant to be recited either in groups or individually, depending on the needs of individual persons and cases.

Laypeople and monks do not just chant the text but also follow the teaching, for example, in the Mangala Sutta, there are 38 auspicious activities to be learnt and followed. The first verse explains the importance of disassociation from fools and association with the wise – which is a very important rule to follow for success in life. Also, equally important is respects for those worthy of respect. Therefore, parittas are not just meant to be chanted but also practiced. In Metta Sutta, to escape the harms caused by evil spirits, one needs to disseminate loving kindness which is a very virtuous practice leading to the attainment of the Nibbana in the end. Other parittas also have their own individual significance. It is a tradition to chant parittas but, for the most part, there is little awareness of its value. While chanting ceremonies are held following set rites and rituals, there is also a need to appreciate the value

of the parittas themselves and their positive impacts on the listeners' lives. It is believed that chanting of sacred texts from the Buddhist canons can bring wellbeing and prosperity to the listeners. Numerous writers present experiences of various people along with canonical evidences to claim the effectiveness of reciting parittas. However, there are mostly personal, anecdotal accounts which have not yet been organized into systematic data to be used as research evidence. It is therefore necessary to present an organized and consistent account of the impacts of parittas on people's lives with Buddhist canonical literature and accounts by scores of practitioners serving as the primary sources to deliver as a reliable basis to synthesize the experiences and evidences, organize them into relevant different types or classification, analyse the data and use the findings as a manifestation of the Myanmar Buddhist belief system which plays an important role in the religion. To the researcher's knowledge, there have been no researches done on analysis of parittas events so far. Therefore, it is crucial to explore how the chanting of parittas affects the lives of practitioners and their views on the practice of paritta chanting. This study aims to investigate paritta chanting events in Myanmar with reference to the Buddhist canon with a focus on the various views of practitioners concerning the impacts of the paritta on their lives and the importance of this belief in the religion. With this aim, this study tries to achieve the following objectives:

- To explore the role of paritta chanting by lay people in Myanmar with particular reference to literature
- To investigate the opinions of practitioners (bhikkhus/laypeople) on the impacts of chanting parittas

The scope of this research will be restricted to the study of parittas and the impacts of their chanting on the belief system and lives of the practitioners – both monks and laypeople. A strong faith is essential to subscribe to a religion and people expect something remarkable to keep their belief in a certain system. The research is analytical in nature analyzing texts, accounts of practitioners who experienced positive impacts from chanting Parittas.

## **II. Literature Review**

Parittas represent the teaching of Lord Buddha and they are extracts of sacred texts from the Buddhist canon. The understanding and practice as presented in the parittas which have elements of sacca (truth), metta (loving-kindness) and practice (patipatta) which are believed to be main pillars of Buddhist teaching essential for the preservation of Sasana.

### **2. 1 Theoretical Background**

Paritta chanting when recited in the traditional classic Theravada forms following rules and specifications with the chanting monks endowed with sila, Samadhi and panna, and the listeners having pure Saddha in the power of the three gems, and free from heinous crimes<sup>2</sup> and fixed wrong views<sup>3</sup> is believed to have positive impacts on the lives of the laypeople.

The Buddha initiated the tradition of Paritta incantation with the chanting of Āṭānāṭiya Sutta. The Buddha exhorted His monks to learn the Āṭānāṭiya Sutta for their protection and thus began the tradition of chanting the Sutta (discourses) for protection and good results. The Sutta chanted for protection, etc., is also known as Paritta which means “the Sutta that

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<sup>2</sup> 1. patricide 2. matricide 3. killing of arahat 4. causing injury to Lord Buddha 5. sedition of the Sangha

<sup>3</sup> niyata miccha ditthi

protects those who chant and who listen to it against dangers, calamities, etc., from all around.” Through the ages, other Suttas were added to the list of 'Suttas for chant-ing.' Thus we find in Milindapañha and the Commentaries by the Venerable Buddhaghosa the following nine Suttas mentioned as Parittas: Ratana Sutta, Metta Sutta, Khandha Sutta, Mora Sutta, Dhajagga Sutta, Āṭānāṭiya Sutta, Arigulimala Sutta, Bojjhaṅga Sutta and Isigili Sutta U Sīlānanda (1998).

Ven. Sīlānanda, U (1998) stated that Eleven Suttas are chanted every day in every monastery and nunnery and in some houses of lay people in all Theravada Buddhist countries. This collection is known in Myanmar as 'The Great Paritta', not because the Suttas in this collection are long ones, but probably because they have great power, if chanted and listened to in a correct way, and could ward off dangers and bring in results.

Since the Paritta discourses are meant for protection and well-being they need to be recited and listened to in a correct way. According to Ven. Mingun Sayadaw (1990), it is necessary that the reciter as well as the listener should have the four accomplishments each as set out below in order to bring about such beneficial effects.

(a) Four accomplishments of a reciter

1. The reciter must be capable of reciting passages, phrases, syllables of the Pali text with correct mode of articulation, enunciation, and accent.
2. He must have full and exact understanding of the Pāli text he is reciting.
3. The reciter should chant *paritta* without expectation of gifts or presents.
4. *Paritta* should be recited with a pure heart full of loving-kindness and compassion.

*Paritta* should be recited only with the fulfilment of these conditions so as to be really effective in warding off and dispelling the impending dangers to the listener. Unless these conditions are fulfilled by the reciter, no beneficial results will accrue and no advantages gained as intended by reciting a *paritta*.

(b) Four Accomplishments of a listener

1. The listener should be free from the guilt of five grave transgressions which bring immediate retribution (*pañcanantariya kamma*), namely (i) killing father (ii) killing mother (iii) killing an *arahat* (iv) causing bleeding in an attempt on Buddha's life (v) causing schism amongst the disciples of a Buddha.
2. The listener should be free from wrong views with fixed destiny (*Niyatamicchaditthi*).
3. The listener should possess unshakable faith in the efficacy and beneficial results of *paritta*.
4. The listener should listen to the *paritta* recitation with due diligence, full attention and profound respect.

Only when these conditions are fulfilled, do people get full benefits from the Parittas. Therefore, it is important that when the Parittas are being chanted, people should listen to the chanting with confidence, respect and attentiveness. Moreover, the chanting of Parittas for benefits is a two-way action. Those who chant are like those who give out something, and those who listen are like those who take what is given; if they do not take what is given, they will not get the thing. In the same way, if people do not listen to the chanting, but just let other people chant and themselves do something else, they surely are not taking what is given and so they will not get the benefits of the chanting.

According to Ledi Sayadaw (1983), paritta should be recited daily though it is not a must to recite all eleven parittas and we can recite at least only one paritta rhythmically, with correct intonation, pronunciation, accent and punctuation every day to strengthen the power of paritta and to be free from dangers. All evil things disappear.

Sao Htun Hmat Win (1991) stated that Paritta is not a protection to everybody. Just like medicine or food keep some people alive but kill others who consume too much of them, thus even life-giving drug or food may become poisonous by over-indulgence in it. So also, there are Three reasons for the failure of Paritta to protect some people:

1. the obstruction of Kamma
2. the result of evil deeds and
3. unbelief

That paritta, which is a protection to beings, loses its power by evil deeds done by those sinners themselves. Instead of helping, the recital sometimes may be futile to such unbelievers. So, the parittas should be recited or should be listened most reverently and in full faith.

Among the categories of spells, the most important one is the collection of eleven Paritta suttas. These Paritta suttas are recited either individually or collectively in unison. Some or all of these are recited as part of regular Buddhist devotions, to protect against dangers and calamities, whether they are natural or supernatural. To prevent oncoming unhappy events and to eradicate the hazards which have already happened are two main purposes of recitation on special occasions.

It is worthy to note that each Paritta sutta has a specific function, though any paritta can be recited for general protective measure. Thus, for example, Angulimala paritta must be chanted in case of difficult child-birth; Khandha paritta against snake bites and poisoning; Vatta paritta to calm down the burning fire; Mora paritta to release oneself from imprisonment; Bojjanga paritta to cure the illness of critical patients; and so on.

Paritta suttas become therefore the indispensable element in the security system of the Myanmar Buddhist world. Without this core of Myanmar ritual, no crisis can be confronted, and almost all problematic crises are solved by them. The Myanmar monks are responsible to perform the recitation ritual on behalf of lay devotees. It is inconceivable for a member of the Myanmar Buddhist monastery to refuse to perform such paritta recitation when requested by his devotees.

All Eleven Paritta Suttas are prescribed in the traditional Myanmar monastic education, and the young scholars, neophytes, novices and deacons are trained to memorize them right from the original Pali Texts.

Ven. Mingun Sayadaw (1990) suggested that it is necessary to recite paritta according to the conditions laid down, with a heart full of loving-kindness, and compassion and resolute inclination towards release from the samsāra and curbing one's desire to receive offerings.

## **2.2 Related Research**

Since the present study focuses on the effects of Paritta chanting on people, a review of related research is provided in this section.

The study "A Critical Study of the Various Paritta Chanting with Special Reference to Myanmar Tradition" was carried out by Thondara, U (2010) for his PhD dissertation at University of Pune, India. In this study, he proved the significant role of Paritta Ceremony in

Buddhist societies as a ritual practice. He also examined the Buddhist society in three Theravada Buddhist countries namely Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Thailand focusing on how the Paritta ceremony fulfilled the psychological and day-to-day religious needs of the Buddhists. He looked at history of Paritta and discussed Eleven Paritta suttas, occasions of recitation for each sutta and advantages of reciting the sutta. He made a comparative analysis on similarities and differences of the texts of paritta suttas, procedures and occasions in these three countries. He also revealed that paritta, a ritual with a very long recorded history, is rich in symbolism, and it communicates a powerful message of well-being, peace, and prosperity to the Buddhists in Theravada countries he studied: Myanmar, Sri Lanka and Thailand.

In the study, "A Study of Disease Treatment by Buddhist Chanting in Development Aspect" Sannamo and Bamrungbhakd (2017) examined the diseases and a Buddhist way of disease treatment and analysed how diseases are treated by Buddhist chanting in the developmental aspect. As it was a qualitative research, the descriptive analysis was made based on Tipitaka, academic books and related researches. The findings revealed that chanting or listening to sounds of chanting helped the development of treatment for the patient's health because the sounds of chanting or listening to it had great positive effect on his mental health. The development of disease treatment through recent chanting was Bojjhanga Paritta or morning-evening chanting. It was found that the disease treatment by Buddhist chanting was a way to grow diligence against suffering. As a result, those who suffered from Kamma diseases were cured which consequently brought peace of mind. It was also found that the pronunciation of Pali had a powerful atom of Gāthā or trembling of Gāthā to send its energy through all bodily parts and make them self-adjustment through releasing illness and developing good health.

Another study "The Protective Buddha: On the Cosmological Logic of Paritta" was conducted by Shulman (2019) who examined Paritta, a central institution in Theravada Buddhism and provided a convincing framework for how the protective potency of the Buddha and his words is understood. The researcher observed earlier studies which highlighted the psychological aspects of ritual chanting that were thought to have a positive effect on participants as well as studies which emphasized the role of paritta in the training of monks. He argued that these studies do not explain "how paritta works," that is, for example, why, according to the views encapsulated in the texts themselves, bringing the Buddha to mind can act against demons or change reality. He offered a close reading of the central texts of the genre in order to conceptualize the metaphysical understanding they employ. It thus provides insights regarding the unique ontological position and cosmological function of the Buddha according to the texts.

In the book "The Practical Experiences of Powerful Parittas" by Aung Thein Myat, U (2020), the author has had experiences with poisonous creatures for years. Scorpions, snakes, centipedes, ant nests and others. His wife was bitten by a snake and killing of the creatures did not reduce their numbers but increased many folds. At last, he asked his son to recite the Khandha sutta after learning it by heart. After another year, there were little of the poisonous creatures left.

From what has been presented, it should be apparent that the amount of research related to the analysis of Paritta chanting has grown considerably in the past decade. All these studies show that Paritta chanting plays a significant role in Buddhist societies for the religious, social and cultural reasons as a ritual practice. These studies have a direct relevance to the present study which investigated the effects of Paritta chanting on people and their views on its impact.

### **III. Research Methodology**

In the present research, a mixed method, a combined quantitative-qualitative approach was applied based on descriptive and analytical methodology, which measured the occurrences of paritta chanting with a focus on the location, time, person, the paritta chanted and the reasons for chanting of the paritta.

#### **Research Procedures**

Firstly, the data from verified experiences of people benefitting from Parittas written in numerous books (20) but not studied in an organized and systematical manner, were taken, organized and presented with the analysis. The experiences of people were randomly selected from fifty accounts of paritta chanting.

Secondly, experiences of selected people were surveyed, categorized, interpreted, triangulated with interview data and analysed to measure the degree of faith in the Dhamma. The data were presented in the tabulated forms supported by quantitative data from the questionnaire survey and qualitative data from interviews.

Thirdly, conclusion is drawn on the impacts of paritta chanting on the lives of the practitioners thereby measuring qualitatively the impacts of paritta chanting on the perpetuation of Sasana.

This research is a scientific description which includes investigation and analysis of chanting of the paritta to find out the relation between people's faith and the impact of paritta recitation which is important for the perpetuation and propagation of Sasana.

The selection of sources (books) for discussion on the experiences of people were made using the following criteria:

- the credibility of the author
- the reliability of events

The following criteria were used in selecting the research respondents for the interview:

Buddhists (or non-Buddhists)

- who believe in the power of Parittas and its benefits
- who believe in paritta
- who have listened to paritta
- who have benefitted from paritta recitation
- who have strong faith in Buddhism

#### **Data Collection and Data Analysis**

Experiences and personal accounts of Venerable Sayardaws and laymen on Paritta recitation events taken from religious literature are described in the tabulated form.

**Table 1: Descriptions of Paritta recitation events with reference to religious literature**

Sr.	Type of	Who?	When?	Why?	How?	What	How does it	Reference
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No	events					happened after recitation?	affect the practitioners?	
1	Suffering from child-birth	Daughter of U Ohn Kyaing		She could not give her birth	Recited Angulimala sutta	Easy delivery		Metta Shin Shwe Pyi Tha, (2008) A Profitable
2	Chronic asthma – many years though treated with traditional and modern methods	U Waing (Yenangyaung)		Hospitalized – not recovered. taken back home. <u>L</u> ost consciousness.	Bojjhanga sutta. Taught methods to do satipatthana (daily recitation by family)	Recovered within a few days and went back to work		U Khin Maung Mya, Writer no. 1796, No. 189, Ywathit ward, Yenangyaung
3	Flatulent stomach	Maung Sein Lwin (Pynmana)	1984	Chronic abdomen problems	Bojjhanga Sutta recited by Sangha and daily by son	Complete recovery		Maung Sein Lwin (Pynmana)
4	Haunted place, putrid smells	Ashin Pandita (Shwe Hinthar Taik)		Monks got sick and died frequently	Metta sutta recited by the new abbot	No more diseases and deaths at the monastery		Myat Mingalar (Board of editors)
5	Moved to lower Myanmar Because of bad weather and no rain	Mingalar Po Chit Shwebo (Nyaung Bin Thar)		Bad weather and poor economy Worked for a landowner in lower Myanmar Lost all the lands during the civil war	Followed teaching in Mangala Sutta	Got 30 acres of farmland from landowner Recovered after a year of losing all the lands		Takkatho Shin Thiri (1998) Page-165
6	Bee stings	U Uttamma Sara	During stay at hill region missionary (20 years ago)	A monk on missionary	Daily practice and recitation of metta sutta	Freedom from all dangers – wild beasts, bees and humans		U Uttama Sara - 1994 (The practical powers of Metta). Shwe La Win: <u>Y</u> angon
7	Blood clot in brain	Chaung Sone Ohn Thwin	Diagnosis of blood clot in brain	To avoid surgery	Seven times a day/ each times seven times of bojjhanga sutta	Relief from disease after reciting Recovery without surgery		Myat Mingalar (Board of editors)
8	Baby crying every evening	Daw Kywe Kywe	1949 (daily practice)	To stop the baby crying	Reciting Yatana Sutta Metta Sutta Atanatiya Sutta for 3-4 days	Baby stop crying and return to normal self	Strong faith in the sutta for worldly and supra-mundane welfare	Ma Kywe Kywe (2015) Various powers of Parittas. Lin Lun Khin: Yangon
9	Angulimala sutta For easy delivery	Khaing Zin Thet	1982	Mother recites the sutta regular for pregnant daughter Worried	Recited Angulimala sutta many times per day by the lady	Easy and early delivery Lots of presents for the baby		Khaing Zin Thet (2018) Remarkable results of Parittas, Gathas and



				because other expecting mothers are wailing in agony	herself and her mother			Mantas in 30 years. Phoenix Kingdom: Yangon
10	Mora sutta recitation	U Shu Aung as told to U Khin Maung Mya	Daily	Daily routines	Recited Mora sutta regularly, followed by dissemination of metta	Never faced any danger, disturbances and rapid prosperity		Min Thurein (2018) Powerful Buddha Gunas and personal experiences. Seik Ku Cho Cho: Yangon

As shown in Table 1, a total of ten events of paritta recitation taken from 9 texts (two events from Myantmingalar magazine) were observed. Of eleven suttas, bojjhanga suttas and metta suttas were recited most and there are 2 examples of reciting angulamala suttas, 1 mora sutta and 1 mangala sutta. **Mora sutta, for instance, was recited regularly every day once in the morning and once in the afternoon without expecting any outcomes just out of faith. Still, he gained favourable outcomes in personal health and wealth.** The first most frequently recited sutta is Bojjhanga sutta. U Waing of Yenangyaung recovered from asthma after the family recited the sutta daily. He was taught satipathana. He had chronic asthma for many years though treated with traditional and modern methods. He was hospitalized but did not recover. He was taken back home and lost consciousness. A monk taught him methods to do satipathana and his family recited the sutta daily. He recovered and there were clear skies after a week of overcast skies. He recovered within a few days and went back to work. It is believed that bojjhanga sutta can help sick people recover from diseases. The second person benefiting from bojjhanga sutta was Mg Sein Lwin of Pyinmana. He was suffering from a flatulent stomach for some time in 1984. He had chronic abdomen problems for a long time. He had a complete recovery from the disease because of the Bojjhanga Sutta recited by Sangha and by his son daily. The third person benefiting from Bojjhanga Sutta was Chaung Sone Own Thwin. He had a blood clot in brain. He did not have any surgery. He recited the paritta for seven times a day with the bojjhanga sutta recited seven times each. He got relief from the disease after reciting (Myat Mingalar Board of editors 1996)

**Table 2: Descriptions of Paritta recitation events with reference to questionnaire surveys**

Sr. No	Respondent	What Paritta	How	Frequency	Why	What happened after recitation	How does it affect respondent
1.	U Visuddha	Ratana, Metta, Dhajagga, Bojjhanga Paritta.	Recite and listen	Many times	Because I like the Dhamma of the Buddha and believe it.	Physical and mental happiness and become rapture	I perceive the perfection of the Buddha and people and deities come to love me and concentration is becoming more powerful
2.	Daw Thu Ma Lar	Metta Paritta	Recite faithfully and	Many times	Because I have a deep faith in	Many people come to love me and I feel	<b>Come to clear my mind and I get what I want two third.</b>

			respectfully		Paritta?	as if I am free from dangers	
3.	Daw Myo Mi Khaing	Metta Paritta and other Parittas	Recite and listen	Many times	To avoid and to prevent dangers	I feel safe when I worry about something	I believe that I can be free from dangers by reciting and listening to the parittas
4.	Daw Mitta Theri	Metta, Khandha, Ratana, Bojjhanga Parittas	Recite	One time a day and daily	Because I believe the qualities of the Buddha	I am free from snake bites	I believe in parittas and I take meditation
5.	Daw Chaw Nge Nge	Metta Paritta	Recite after pay homage to the Buddha	Daily	To be free from dangers and to develop wealth	I have mental happiness	Be I am free from dangers and have mental happiness
6.	Ma Seinn Tha Zin	Metta and Mahasamaya Paritta	Recite and listen	Daily	To be protective and for loving-kindness meditation	I live with loving-kindness and become optimistic	I believe in parittas more and become generous
7.	Daw Thae Phyu Phyu Myo	Metta Paritta	Recite and listen	Daily	To build self-confidence	I become peaceful and calm	Physical and mental power become stronger
8.	Daw Mi Mi Than	Angulimala, Khandha, Vatta and Metta Paritta	Recite and listen	Daily and (108) times a day	To protect dangers and diseases from inside and outside my body	I am free from dangers and diseases	I become wealthy and can make right decision
9.	Daw Mi Mi Khaing	Metta Paritta	Recite and listen	Many times	To avoid and prevent the dangers	I can remove the heat out of my mind	I am free from dangers and believe in the parittas more
10.	U Vicitta	Ratana, Metta Paritta	Recite	Daily without fail	Due to faith	I am free from dangers	I got a lot of benefits

In Table 2, the responses of ten selected practitioners were presented. As seen in the table, metta paritta was recited by all people (100%) which is followed by Ratana Sutta (30%), followed by Bojjhanga Paritta and Khandha Paritta (20% each). There is one example of Vatta Sutta, Dhajagga Suta and Angulimala Sutta (10% each). One striking point is that one of the respondents recited Angulimala Sutta 108 times a day. All the respondents recited Paritta suttas daily for different reasons, such as to be free from dangers.

**Table 3: Descriptions of Paritta recitation events with reference to Interview results**

Sr. No	Respondent	What Paritta	How	Frequency	Why	What happened after recitation	How does it affect respondent
1	Daw Khemanandi	First Angulimala at 36 years old Later all eleven parittas when son had	Recited Angulimala Paritta daily herself and listened on TV.	Before and during child-birth And every day	To be free from difficulties of child-birth and to be safe	I could give birth three children easily. I fulfill my wishes and	I have a great wish that is seeing the wise saint persons and

		surgery for kidney transplant				live comfortably	to be free from sufferings and got those wishes. I can meditate peacefully.
2	Daw Khin San	Metta, Ratana and Bojjanga Parittas	Recite and listen	Once in morning, once in evening	To be from dangers and pandemic and to achieve well-beings	During the reciting and listening to Parittas, I feel peaceful and secure.	I was free from dangers and achieved well-beings.
3	Daw Ae Moe Ko	Metta Paritta, Bojjanga and other Parittas	Recite some Parittas and listen to eleven Parittas	Once every evening and once listen every morning	To be free from dangers and diseases	After reciting Bojjanga paritta, I was free from severe migraine attacks.	I receive blessings from others, become healthy and free from dangers and so on.
4	Daw Thar Dhu	Mingala, Metta and Khandha Parittas	Recite as well as listen	Many times, as much as possible from young hood to now	I was free from dangers and safe.	I recited them at the young age to gain and fame and later due to faith in the Buddha.	I recovered from bile surgery and have many beloved people
5	Daw Toe Sandar	Metta and Ratana Parittas	Recite and listen	From youth to until now	Once each in the morning and the evening		

Table 3 indicates all the interviewees' faith and beliefs in Paritta suttas. They experienced the full benefits of Paritta chant especially Mangala Sutta, Metta Sutta and Khandha Sutta, Ratana Sutta, Bojjanga Sutta and Angulimala Sutta. They recited Suttas mainly because they believed that reciting Suttas is considered to be a protection against dangers. Of these Suttas they have recited, Metta Sutta is the most common one for all the interviewees (80%), which is a multi-significant term meaning loving-kindness, friendliness, goodwill, inoffensiveness and non-violence. This shows that they wish for the welfare and happiness of others. The second most frequent is Ratana Sutta and Bojjhanga Sutta at 40% each, followed by Mangala Sutta, Khanda Sutta and Angulamala Sutta at 20% each.

#### IV. Findings and Discussion

Ten events of paritta recitation from the texts and the experiences of fifteen practitioners (25 events in total) have been studied in this sample data analysis. It is a common practice for

faithful practitioners to recite parittas on a daily basis but most practitioners in this study recite the suttas only when they faced some kinds of harm.

In response to Research Question 1 (Out of the Eleven Parittas, which one is most commonly recited?), the most frequently recited suttas is metta suttas (68%). The second most commonly recited sutta is bojjhanga sutta (28%), which is followed by Ratana sutta (24%), followed by Khandha and Mangala suttas respectively (12% and 8%) which are less frequent at 3 times and 2 times. The least frequent is the recitation of Atanatiya sutta, Mora sutta, Vatta sutta and Dhajagga sutta at one time each (1%). It was found that only one practitioner recited all Eleven Suttas daily.

It was found that the recitation of bojjhanga sutta for invalids to recover from their diseases and metta sutta usually for inauguration ceremonies but in the case of this study, Bojjhanga sutta and Metta Sutta were found to be most frequently recited individually. According to the data, a practitioner recovered from a disease without a surgery. Another lost consciousness after hospitalization but recovered after daily recitation by his family. The third person suffered from chronic flatulent stomach but recovered completely after recitation the Sangha and the patients' son. All three persons recovered completely just by reciting Bojjhanga sutta without medical attention. This finding is supported by the research "A Study of Disease Treatment by Buddhist Chanting in Development Aspect" by Sannamo and Bamrungbhakd (2017) who found that chanting or listening to bojjhanga sutta supported the cure because chanting parittas had great positive effect on the patients' physical and mental health.

Due to the study's focus on individual chanting, the recitation of the two suttas, Bojjhanga and Metta, are found to be most frequent. However, in the interviews, a different set of data is reported: the respondents reported that the recitation of Ratana sutta had become most popular during the last two years, in group chanting, since the first wave of COVID19 at monasteries, nunneries and meditation centres.

In response to Research Question 2 (What impacts does Paritta chanting have on people's lives?) the data highlights benefits gained by the practitioners after frequent or regular recitation of parittas on occasions where they suffer from unfortunate events. A new abbot recited Metta Paritta because monks residing in the monastery often got sick and passed away frequently. After reciting Metta Sutta no more diseases and deaths at the monastery occurred. The recitation of Bhojjhanga Sutta has also been reported to help people get relief from various health complaints in most cases life threatening as in the cases of Respondents 3, 4 and 7 (Table 1). Some practitioners recited parittas out of faith in the Buddha. Ratana Sutta is reliable for warding off harms (respondents 1, 4 and 10 the questionnaire survey and 2 and 5 in the interviews) (Tables 2 & 3). All practitioners reported faith in the religion and its power to protect them from dangers and thus regular chanting. As manifested by Daw Kywe Kywe's (Book 8: Table 1) experience, recitation of Ratana sutta can also stop babies crying – who are probably suffering from invisible beings' disturbances. By reciting Mangala Paritta, practitioners are able to gain worldly benefits and become free from dangers and disturbances as proved by Respondent 4 in the interviews and Book 5 of data collected (Tables 1 & 3). As for the recitation of Angulimala sutta, Respondents 1, 8 and 9 of questionnaire surveys and 1 of interviews reported freedom from pains and dangers, inside and outside, after reciting the Parittas. Regular chanting of all 11 Parittas was done by some individuals but certain Parittas are found to be preferred for certain occasions – Bhojjhanga Sutta for recovery from diseases,

and Metta Sutta for freedom from harms. Such recitations no doubt stemmed from the inherent faith by the practitioners in the Buddha's teaching and also a strong belief that they have the power to cure, to protect and to facilitate prosperity in one's life.

Research Question 3 deals with the impacts of Paritta chanting: How do the practitioners (bhikkhus/laypeople) of Buddhism view the impacts of chanting parittas? Considerable impacts were detected on the personality, practice and mindset of the people who recite Parittas for various reasons stated above. Respondents reported deep faith in the Dhamma, with Respondent 1 reporting he 'likes the Dhamma of the Buddha and believe it.' This is supported by others who claim good social relation (Respondent 2), safety from dangers (Respondent 3) and benefits (Respondents 8 & 10). Above all, it is believed that parittas can develop self-confidence as reported by 3 respondents to the Questionnaire Survey. This is also supported by the interview data who have peace of mind, feeling peaceful and secure and healthy. Good social relations, being surrounded by loved ones and meeting wise ones are benefits claimed by the interviewees apart from recovery from diseases.

From the findings, it can be concluded that the recitation with various purposes all resulted in wellbeing and peace of mind and health of body as experienced by the practitioners. Though paritta chanting happens relatively later in the lives of the faithful, some recited from their youth 'due to gain and fame' but later 'due to faith in Lord Buddha' (Respondent 4, Table 3). This undoubtedly leads to a stronger faith in the religion and more intensive practice by the practitioners which will again lead to more benefits, physical and mental, worldly and religious, mundane and supra mundane.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the experiences and personal accounts of Venerable Sayardaws and laypeople on Paritta recitation events taken from religious literature, Paritta recitation events with reference to questionnaire surveys and interviews, the present study explored most commonly recited suttas, impacts Paritta chanting have on people's lives and views of the practitioners on the impacts of chanting parittas. In spite of different frequencies in the chanting of Suttas, Metta Sutta and Bojjhanga Sutta being most often recited, followed by different frequencies of other suttas. The outstanding fact from this study is that though people chant different suttas to different degrees, there is a unifying factor, namely deep faith in the Buddha and His Dhamma along with the belief that they can ward off harms. This will certainly help develop stronger faith in the religion and development of practitioners who will contribute to the inner peace and peace in the wider society.



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