

A Conceptual Framework for Integrating Buddhist Ethical Principles into AI-Assisted Negotiation for Sustainable and Human-Centred Dispute Resolution

Amila N. K. K. Gamage^{1*}

¹Assistant Professor, LIGS University, US

*Corresponding author: Amila N. K. K. Gamage

| Received: 23.07.2026 | Accepted: 07.09.2026 | Published: 09.09.2026 |

Abstract: Nowadays, it is common to see the increasing use of artificial intelligence (AI) in negotiation and dispute resolution of project disputes. Emerging AI-assisted systems and online dispute resolution (ODR) platforms provide decision support and negotiation assistance. However, they often lack ethical sensitivity, human judgment, and contextual understanding. On the other hand, these are essential in resolving complex disputes. Therefore, this highlights the need to integrate human-centred ethical frameworks into AI-supported negotiation processes to enhance the effectiveness of alternative dispute resolution (ADR). This study explores on how Buddhist ethical principles can contribute to improving AI-assisted negotiation to resolve project disputes effectively. Further, this study illustrates how these principles can support more balanced, ethical, and constructive negotiation practices through key Buddhist teachings such as Mindfulness, Right Speech, Equanimity, and Fairness. These values encourage awareness, reduce emotional escalation, and promote fair and mutually beneficial outcomes in dispute situations. This study uses a conceptual approach based on secondary sources. The secondary data sources uses include academic literature, case studies, and Buddhist texts. It examines how Buddhist ethical principles can be integrated into AI-assisted negotiation systems in project dispute resolution. The study discusses how these ethical principles improve the design of AI tools to enhance communication, reduce bias, and support better decision-making. It further highlights the importance of sustainable dispute resolution by preserving long-term relationships and collaboration in project environments. The paper further proposes a conceptual framework for integrating Buddhist ethics into AI-assisted negotiation, contributing to more ethical and human-centred alternative dispute resolution practices.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence (AI), AI-assisted negotiation, Project dispute resolution, Buddhist ethics, Sustainable alternative dispute resolution (ADR).

INTRODUCTION

Disputes are common in project-based environments such as in construction and infrastructure development, due to complexity, uncertainty, and the involvement of multiple stakeholders with competing interests (Nada & Othman, 2025). Most of these disputes require litigation as dispute resolution mechanism (Kalogeraki & Antoniou, 2024). However, there are also alternative dispute resolution (ADR) mechanisms to resolve project disputes. Negotiation, mediation, arbitration and adjudication are some of the most common ADR techniques to resolve such conflicts (Thi Hoa & Linh, 2023). ADR mechanisms have become more popular among industry to resolve disputes due to cost and resource commitments required in litigation. According to Mota *et al.*, (2023), alternative dispute

resolution (ADR) provides an effective approach to handling disputes outside formal court processes. Further, ADR techniques offer greater flexibility, reduce costs, and help maintain working relationships that may be strained in adversarial legal proceedings. At the same time, litigation needs more time to reach a resolution.

On the other hand, the rapid growth of artificial intelligence (AI) is transforming various domains. Negotiation and other alternative dispute resolution techniques are among the domains that are affected by the influence of AI. There is a rise on AI-assisted platforms where disputant parties can use to get help and consultation for their dispute resolutions. Therefore, there is a shift towards more data-driven, automated, and efficient approaches to managing disputes due to such

Quick Response Code



Journal homepage:
<https://saspublishers.com/>

Copyright © 2026 The Author(s): This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY-NC 4.0) which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium for non-commercial use provided the original author and source are credited.

Citation: Gamage, A. N. K. K. (2026). A Conceptual Framework for Integrating Buddhist Ethical Principles into AI-Assisted Negotiation for Sustainable and Human-Centred Dispute Resolution. *Cross Current Int Peer Reviewed J Human Soc Sci*, 12(8), 168-178.
<https://doi.org/10.36344/ccijhss.2026.v12i08.002>

emerging AI-assisted systems. Further, research on AI in negotiation has expanded to include different technologies. These areas include machine learning, natural language processing (NLP) and deep learning. Researchers even research on AI assisted negotiation based on computer vision and even robotics (Filho ,2024).

Among different ADR techniques available, negotiation is one of the most effective ways to resolve disputes before it becomes a major dispute that need other dispute resolution mechanisms to resolve.

Therefore, AI-assisted negotiation systems are increasingly used in online dispute resolution (ODR) platforms and decision support tools. These systems analyse data, predict outcomes, and suggest optimal solutions, thereby enhancing efficiency and reducing time and cost. Despite these advantages, concerns have been also raised regarding the ethical limitations of such systems. As per study done by Alessa (2022), AI based ODR systems may overlook important factors such as emotional responses that are important for dispute resolution outcomes. AI often lacks human judgement, contextual sensitivity, emotional intelligence, and moral reasoning. According to Sabri (2025), AI can generate accurate, data-driven insights. However, he emphasizes that successful negotiation depends on more than information alone. It requires emotional awareness, strategic decision-making, and strong interpersonal skills (Sabri, 2025). These are essential for resolving complex project disputes. Therefore, this creates a gap between technological capability and ethical decision-making in dispute resolution.

In this context, there is a growing need to integrate human-centred ethical frameworks into AI-assisted negotiation processes. Ethical considerations such as fairness, empathy, transparency, and sustainability are crucial for achieving not only efficient but also just and acceptable outcomes (Awang ,2024). Although ethical concerns such as bias and fairness are widely discussed in AI systems, particularly in areas requiring human judgement, there are also different arguments. Some scholars argue that the challenge extends beyond ethics to the underlying epistemology of AI (Lewis *et al.*, 2025).

This perspective highlights the need for broader knowledge frameworks beyond conventional AI design. In this regard, one promising approach is the incorporation of indigenous knowledge systems or ancient wisdom to current practices to improve ethics and humanity. According to Ray and Ray (2026), incorporating indigenous knowledge into AI governance frameworks can help shape technologies that are both ethically responsible and culturally aware. Further, this integration will better align with the goal of achieving fair and sustainable outcomes.

Another study by Maldonado and Córdova-Pintado (2026) highlights that indigenous ethics, specially the principle of reciprocity, go beyond being a cultural alternative to Western frameworks. They offer a broader way of understanding knowledge and decision-making. This perspective of Maldonado and Córdova-Pintado (2026) helps rethink how artificial intelligence is developed and applied.

Therefore, by integrating ethical values from ancient wisdom, it is expected to improve the effectiveness of integrating AI in to dispute resolution mechanisms, specially in complex construction projects.

Compassion (*karuṇā*) is the key principle in Buddhist ethics which highlights the importance of easing the suffering of all living beings (Wanarathana, 2023). Buddhist ethical principles emphasise mindfulness, compassion, right speech, and non-attachment among other principles which are useful in dispute resolution. Therefore, this paper explores how Buddhist ethical principles can be integrated into AI-assisted negotiation for project dispute resolution. It aims to develop a conceptual framework that bridges modern AI technologies with traditional ethical wisdom, thereby enhancing ethical, human-centred, and sustainable ADR practices.

Research Objectives

The primary objective of this study is to examine how Buddhist ethical principles can enhance AI-assisted negotiation in project dispute resolution. The specific objectives are:

- To identify the ethical limitations of AI-assisted negotiation systems in project dispute resolution
- To explore key Buddhist ethical principles relevant to negotiation and conflict resolution
- To develop a conceptual framework integrating Buddhist ethics into AI-supported negotiation processes
- To analyse how such integration can improve fairness, communication, and decision-making
- To evaluate the potential for achieving sustainable and human-centred ADR outcomes

LITERATURE REVIEW

Importance of Negotiation in Project Disputes

Project disputes are common in construction and infrastructure development projects due to the inherent complexity of projects. Multiple stakeholders, including contractors, clients, subcontractors, and suppliers, often have overlapping responsibilities, differing priorities, and competing interests. Additionally, there are many other causes of disputes in construction projects. Factors such as contract variations, delays, unforeseen site conditions, and resource constraints frequently give rise to disagreements. These conditions make disputes almost inevitable in every

project that makes it essential for effective dispute resolution mechanisms.

On the other hand, traditional litigation presents several drawbacks in project disputes although it is legally binding. Legal proceedings are often time-consuming. Sometimes it takes months or even years to reach a final decision. Litigation proceedings are also expensive where significant costs associated with legal fees, expert witnesses, and administrative processes. Furthermore, litigation tends to be adversarial, where parties try to be against one another in a win-lose scenario that can damage professional relationships. This also hinders future collaboration. Therefore, such outcomes can be highly detrimental.

In contrast, negotiation and alternative dispute resolution (ADR) mechanisms offer a more effective approach to managing project conflicts (Talib *et al.*, 2024). Negotiation allows parties to engage in direct dialogue even without spending money on third parties (Lin *et al.*, 2023). Further, according to Lin & Cheung (2022), negotiation is recognised as most common and economical dispute resolution method in resolving construction disputes. However, they also mention that negotiation process is not always rational. This is because of the reason that negotiators are often influenced by subjective judgments and emotions. As a result, negotiation can even break down although when there are settlement options presented (Lin and Cheung, 2022).

Negotiation aims at reaching mutually acceptable solutions while retaining control over the outcome. ADR methods, including mediation and collaborative negotiation, are generally faster. Therefore, that enables disputes to be resolved in a fraction of the time required for litigation. They are also cost-effective that reduce the financial burdens on both parties.

Importantly, negotiation and other ADR practices preserve long-term relationships (Talib *et al.*, 2024). This helps in fostering trust and ongoing collaboration among stakeholders. Therefore, these ADR methods encourage win-win solutions, where all parties' interests are considered and balanced. When it comes to negotiation, it is always a collaborative approach. Therefore, negotiation not only resolves immediate conflicts but also strengthens stakeholder engagement for the duration of the project and in future ventures. Overall, negotiation as an ADR mechanism is particularly suitable to providing efficient, equitable, and sustainable pathways to dispute resolution in projects.

AI-Assisted Negotiation in Project Dispute Resolution

Negotiation and ADR offer fast, cost-effective, and collaborative ways to resolve project disputes. Increasingly, organisations are turning to artificial intelligence (AI) to support these processes. Further, AI

tools can improve efficiency, consistency, and decision-making in complex disputes.

AI-assisted tools include predictive analytics, decision support systems, and online dispute resolution (ODR) platforms. Other than ODR platforms, there are AI-assisted negotiation systems including Negotiation Support Systems (NSS), intelligent negotiation agents, and training-based software tools (Agua *et al.*, 2024). More advanced AI-driven systems now incorporate predictive analytics and automated decision-making capabilities. This enables real-time support during negotiations (Agua *et al.*, 2024). This evolution reflects a shift from simple support tools towards more autonomous and intelligent negotiation agents that can actively participate in or guide negotiation processes.

These systems can analyse large volumes of project data in a short period of time. Such historical data include past disputes, contracts, costs, and timelines. On the other hand, using these historical data, AI tools can help negotiators to evaluate their claims, assess risks, and develop strategies to better resolve disputes (Zelevnikov, 2021).

AI tools also speeds up negotiation by streamlining information and reducing manual work. It can minimise errors and also support consistent decision-making. This is especially useful in projects with many stakeholders and large amounts of data.

However, AI tools have limits as well. It relies on algorithms and historical data. It cannot understand human emotions, ethical dilemmas, or the context of each dispute. According to recent studies on these intelligent systems, AI systems still face challenges in capturing human moral reasoning and context-sensitive judgement. Because it differs from human decision-making processes (Barabadi *et al.*, 2025).

This is why even though we use AI platforms or tools to assist in negotiation, human involvement is crucial. On the other hand, many project conflicts involve trust, communication breakdowns, and perceived fairness. AI alone may suggest efficient solutions, but these are not always fair or sustainable. Nowadays there are many studies on ethical AI. Ethical AI research highlights ongoing challenges related to bias, emotional understanding, and contextual limitations in algorithmic systems. On the other hand, Emotional artificial intelligence is still an emerging area that faces various ethical challenges and limitations. This is due to complexity of human emotions. Human emotions are complex, context-dependent, and shaped by cultural and individual differences. However, AI systems have a limited ability to accurately recognise and interpret them (Smrithy *et al.*, 2026). This shows the need for human-centred, ethical guidance in AI-assisted negotiation. Integrating ethical principles ensures that technology

supports not just efficiency, but also fairness, collaboration, and long-term relationships.

Ethical Challenges in AI-Assisted Negotiation

We know that AI can improve efficiency and consistency in negotiation. However, it also raises important ethical challenges. AI systems rely on algorithms and historical data. If the data is biased, the system may reproduce unfair patterns or favour certain parties (Zafar, 2024). This can worsen inequalities rather than resolve disputes fairly. In a recent study, Ferrara (2024) explains that AI systems are composed of elements such as data, algorithms, and user interactions. As a result, even minor changes or biases within these components can significantly affect the fairness and bias of AI systems. The same study mentions this sometimes occur in unexpected ways (Ferrara, 2024).

AI also lacks understanding of human relationships. It further lacks empathy and moral reasoning (Srinivasan and González, 2022). It can produce solutions that are technically correct but ethically questionable. For example, a recommendation might maximise cost efficiency but ignore fairness, emotional impacts, or long-term stakeholder relationships. In project disputes, such outcomes can harm trust and collaboration. According to Srinivasan and González (2022), AI researchers often overlook the “problem of plenty” and the “problem of parts” when dealing with emotional data. Emotions are typically inferred from multiple signals such as facial expressions, voice tone, and body gestures. However, these signals may not fully capture the complexity of human emotions.

Another challenge is transparency. AI decisions are often difficult to explain. Negotiators may not understand why a recommendation was made. This can reduce trust in both the AI system and the negotiation process itself. Thalpage (2023) highlights that the lack of transparency and interpretability in black-box AI models can result in serious errors. This can even lead to potentially harmful decision-making outcomes. As highlighted in the author’s previous studies, excessive reliance on AI may reduce ADR to a mechanistic process. However, human oversight is necessary to ensure ethical, empathetic, and fair outcomes in dispute resolution processes (Gamage, 2025a).

Considering these we can see that human oversight is crucial for AI assisted negotiations. Negotiators must interpret AI recommendations carefully, considering context, emotions, and ethics. Without human guidance, AI can dominate decisions and compromise fairness.

Human-centred approaches to AI focus on designing and using technology in ways that align with human values. Human values such as fairness, accountability, inclusivity, and respect for relationships can enhance AI assisted negotiation processes.

Therefore, ethical frameworks are essential to guide AI tools in making decisions that support both efficiency and morality.

Ethical guidance becomes even more critical in complex project disputes, where multiple stakeholders interact under pressure. AI systems may unintentionally reproduce biases present in historical data if not carefully designed. For example, an AI trained on past project claims might favour contractors over clients, or prioritise cost savings over fairness if it identified similar pattern in historical data. Bias can also arise from incomplete data, cultural assumptions, or over-reliance on quantitative measures, which overlook qualitative and relational aspects of disputes.

To address these challenges, it is essential to design AI tools that actively reduce bias, improve fairness, and support transparent decision-making. Human oversight should ensure that AI recommendations consider not only efficiency and data patterns, but also ethical outcomes, stakeholder relationships, and long-term sustainability. Integrating structured ethical principles into AI design can help achieve these goals.

Buddhist ethical teachings offer a valuable framework for this purpose. According to Makhumtup et al (2024), Buddhist teachings provide a comprehensive framework based on non-violence, compassion, and ethical conduct. Buddhist teachings offer guidance for resolving conflicts and restoring relationships between parties. Principles such as mindfulness, compassion, right speech, and non-attachment provide practical guidance for balancing efficiency with human-centred and ethical decision-making. By using these teachings as a foundation, AI developers and negotiators can design tools that not only analyse data effectively but also encourage fairness, empathy, and constructive outcomes. This integration ensures that AI-assisted negotiation remains both technologically advanced and ethically responsible.

Buddhist Ethical Principles for AI-Assisted Negotiation

According to Buddhist teachings, the mind is viewed as the foundation of all verbal and physical actions that shapes human behaviour. Therefore, every action taken by human is driven by mind and intention. Mind gives rise to speech and bodily conduct. In the absence of such intention, actions do not normally occur, except in rare unintentional situations (Gunalankara, 2026).

Buddha emphasised compassion and kindness in place of violence. Buddhism aims to promote both inner peace and a peaceful society. It also teaches that human views shape motivation and influence all aspects of behaviour and life (Somananda & Gohori, 2022). On the other hand, Buddhist ethics offers a rich framework

for understanding human behaviour, decision-making, and conflict resolution. These principles provide guidance not only for negotiators but also for designing AI-assisted systems that are fair, ethical, and human-centred. Key principles include:

Mindfulness (Sati)

Mindfulness encourages awareness of one's thoughts, emotions, and actions in the present moment. Mindfulness promotes self-awareness and emotional regulation. That enables individuals to respond to conflicts with greater clarity and compassion (Sharma, 2025). In negotiation; this helps participants recognise their biases, emotional triggers, and habitual reactions. For AI-assisted negotiation, mindfulness can inspire the design of tools that encourage reflective decision-making rather than purely reactive, data-driven outcomes.

Compassion (Karuna)

Compassion emphasises concern for the well-being of others. Buddhist philosophy provides useful guidance for addressing structural injustice and promoting social justice. Based on compassion (*karuṇā*) and interdependence, it highlights the importance of addressing both individual and systemic causes of suffering. This includes inequality and oppression (Sharma, 2025). Negotiators guided by compassion are more likely to consider the interests of all parties and seek mutually beneficial solutions. AI systems can be designed to factor in fairness and relational impacts, promoting solutions that do not advantage one party at the expense of another.

Right Speech (Samma Vaca):

The Buddhist approach to peace and conflict resolution is grounded in the practice of the Noble Eightfold Path, which integrates ethical conduct, mental discipline, and wisdom. Further, it begins with right speech, right action, and right livelihood as part of ethical training. Then it is supported by the cultivation of mindfulness (Gurung, 2023). Therefore, according to Buddhist principles, right speech promotes communication that is truthful, respectful, and constructive. In negotiation, this principle fosters transparency and reduces misunderstandings, which are often the root causes of disputes. AI-assisted platforms can adopt this principle by ensuring clarity in communication, avoiding misleading suggestions, and providing explanations for recommendations.

Equanimity (Upekkha):

A recent study highlights that equanimity (*upekkhā*) is a core principle linked to human rights and has the potential to drive meaningful social transformation (Pasan, 2025). Equanimity (*upekkhā*) refers to a state of inner balance, emotional stability, and mental clarity that remains relatively unaffected by external circumstances (Kelly, 2025). Therefore, equanimity refers to maintaining a balanced and impartial attitude towards all parties in a negotiation. It

supports emotional stability, fairness, and objectivity in decision-making. In AI-assisted negotiation, this principle can guide system design towards reducing bias and ensuring that recommendations remain neutral and balanced, supporting equitable outcomes for all stakeholders.

Together, these principles promote ethical conduct, emotional regulation, and harmonious relationships, which are essential for effective negotiation. Integrating such values into AI-assisted negotiation helps address the limitations of purely algorithmic systems. By embedding mindfulness, compassion, right speech, and equanimity, AI tools can support fair, transparent, and human-centred dispute resolution while preserving trust and collaboration among project stakeholders.

Integrating Buddhist Ethics with Modern Negotiation Theory

Modern negotiation theory provides structured approaches to understand how parties interact and reach agreements in conflict situations. One widely used framework is integrative negotiation (Fisher *et al.*, 2011). This framework often described as a win-win approach, where the objective is to create value and achieve mutually beneficial outcomes for all parties. In contrast, distributive negotiation often referred to as a win-lose approach where it focuses on dividing fixed resources. In distributive negotiation, one party's gain is typically another party's loss (Fisher *et al.*, 2011; Lewicki *et al.*, 2020).

In project dispute resolution, particularly in construction and infrastructure projects, negotiation is not only about financial settlement. It also focuses on maintaining relationships, managing risk, and ensuring long-term collaboration. (Wessler *et al.*, 2024). In such contexts, purely distributive approaches may escalate conflict and damage stakeholder relationships. Integrative negotiation is therefore more aligned with sustainable project outcomes, as it encourages cooperation, problem-solving, and shared value creation.

However, while integrative negotiation provides a useful structural framework, it does not always address the ethical and human dimensions of decision-making. This is where Buddhist ethical principles offer meaningful support. Buddhist teachings provide a value-based foundation that complements modern negotiation theory by guiding how decisions are made, not only what outcomes are achieved.

For example, compassion (Karuna) strengthens integrative negotiation by encouraging parties to consider the interests and well-being of all stakeholders, rather than focusing solely on individual gains. This supports the creation of fair and balanced solutions. Mindfulness (Sati) enhances negotiation by improving awareness of emotions, biases, and assumptions that may

influence decision-making. This leads to more rational and reflective negotiation behaviour.

Similarly, right speech (Samma Vaca) supports clear, respectful, and constructive communication between parties. This reduces misunderstandings and helps maintain trust during negotiation processes. Equanimity (Upekkha) further contributes by promoting emotional balance and impartiality, allowing negotiators to evaluate options objectively without being influenced by anger, pressure, or personal bias. In this way, equanimity strongly supports the logic of win-win outcomes in integrative negotiation.

When viewed together, Buddhist ethical principles act as a moral and behavioural enhancement layer to modern negotiation theory. While integrative negotiation explains how value can be created, Buddhist ethics guides how negotiators should behave to ensure that value creation is fair, balanced, and sustainable.

In the context of AI-assisted negotiation, this integration becomes even more significant. AI systems can support data-driven decision-making aligned with integrative negotiation models. However, if there is no ethical grounding available, these AI systems may still produce biased or one-sided recommendations. Therefore, by embedding Buddhist ethical principles into AI-supported negotiation frameworks, it is possible to design systems that ensure fairness, transparency, and human-centred decision-making.

On the other hand, integrating Buddhist ethics with modern negotiation theory offers a more comprehensive framework that combines procedural efficiency with ethical responsibility. This will ensure that AI-assisted negotiation in project dispute resolution remains both effective and socially sustainable. In this study, Buddhist ethical principles are therefore used as a conceptual foundation to inform AI-assisted negotiation, providing a human-centred perspective that complements the technical capabilities of AI. This integration supports decision-making that is ethically grounded, context-aware, and oriented towards mutually beneficial outcomes.

METHODOLOGY

Research design is very important for any study as it acts as the overall plan of a study. It outlines the methods, procedures, and strategies used to collect and analyse data in order to address the research objectives (Gamage, 2025b).

This study adopts a qualitative conceptual research design based on secondary data analysis. The research does not involve primary fieldwork data collection. Instead, it relies on a combination of recent academic literature and classical textual sources to

develop a conceptual understanding of AI-assisted negotiation in project dispute resolution.

Recent academic literature published within the last five years (2021–2026) is reviewed to establish the background on artificial intelligence in negotiation, alternative dispute resolution, ethical challenges in AI systems, and human-centred decision-making frameworks. These sources are primarily obtained from academic databases, with Google Scholar used as the main search platform. This literature supports the theoretical foundation of the study and is discussed in the literature review. It is not used as the primary data source for analysis.

The primary data for this study is derived from classical Buddhist teachings found in the Dhammapada, analysed through published English translations. A qualitative textual analysis approach is employed to examine selected verses and extract ethical principles relevant to negotiation and conflict resolution. A purposive selection of verses is undertaken, focusing on themes such as mindfulness, right speech, equanimity, fairness, and ethical decision-making in negotiation contexts.

The data is analysed through a qualitative thematic and conceptual approach, where key ethical principles derived from the Dhammapada are interpreted and systematically mapped to stages of AI-assisted negotiation. This process supports the development of a conceptual framework that integrates Buddhist ethical guidance into AI-supported decision-making, promoting more human-centred and sustainable dispute resolution outcomes.

Analysis of Selected Buddhist Teachings (Dhammapada)

This section presents selected teachings from the Dhammapada (Tipitaka, Khuddaka Nikaya) that are relevant to negotiation and dispute resolution (Buddharakkhita 1996; Path Nirvana Foundation n.d.). Ten teachings have been purposively identified based on their relevance to ethical decision-making, communication, and conflict resolution in negotiation contexts. The interpretation of selected verses is primarily based on the English translation (Buddharakkhita, 1996), with reference to the original Pali text to ensure consistency of meaning (Path Nirvana Foundation, n.d.).

The selected teachings are summarised in Table 1. Readers are requested to refer to the table for key verse references, ethical themes, negotiation relevance, and implications for AI-assisted negotiation. The analysis focuses on identifying common ethical themes such as mindfulness, right speech, equanimity, and non-attachment, which form the basis for developing an ethical framework for AI-assisted negotiation.

Table 1: Summary of Selected Dhammapada Teachings and Their Relevance to AI-Assisted Negotiation

No	Dhammapada Reference	Key Teaching (Paraphrased)	Ethical Theme	Negotiation Relevance	AI-Assisted Negotiation Implication
1	Verse 1–2 (Buddharakkhita, 1996).	Mind precedes all actions; thoughts shape outcomes	Mindfulness	Encourages reflection before reaction	Supports fair and bias-aware AI decisions
2	Verse 5 (Buddharakkhita, 1996).	Hatred is not ended by hatred, but by non-hatred	Conflict resolution	Promotes non-escalation in disputes	Encourages de-escalation strategies in AI outputs
3	Verse 8 (Buddharakkhita, 1996).	Unshaken mind under praise/blame is wise	Equanimity	Reduces emotional bias in negotiation	Encourages neutral AI recommendations
4	Verse 19 (Buddharakkhita, 1996).	The wise are not disturbed by desire	Non-attachment (practical)	Reduces rigid positions in negotiation	Supports flexible AI decision pathways
5	Verse 100 (Buddharakkhita, 1996).	Better than a thousand words is one that brings peace	Constructive communication	Focus on solution-oriented dialogue	Encourages AI to support solution-oriented and conflict-reducing communication
6	Verse 103 (Buddharakkhita, 1996).	Victory breeds hatred; the defeated live in pain	Win–win thinking	Avoids win-lose negotiation mindset	Supports AI-driven win–win negotiation strategies
7	Verse 133 (Buddharakkhita, 1996).	One should not speak harshly to others	Right Speech	Promotes respectful negotiation communication	Supports respectful and transparent AI communication in negotiation processes
8	Verse 183 (Buddharakkhita, 1996).	Avoid evil, do good, purify the mind	Ethical conduct	Supports ethical negotiation behaviour	Guides ethical and value-based AI decision-making in negotiation
9	Verse 223 (Buddharakkhita, 1996).	Conquer anger by non-anger	Emotional regulation	Prevents escalation in disputes	Prevents escalation by promoting non-aggressive and balanced AI decision-making
10	Verse 279 (Buddharakkhita, 1996).	All conditioned things are unstable	Impermanence	Encourages flexibility in negotiation positions	Supports adaptive AI negotiation models

Thematic Interpretation of Selected Teachings (Dhammapada)

The data presented in Table 1 is further analysed through thematic categorisation, where similar ethical concepts are grouped into broader interpretive themes. These themes are then interpreted to understand their conceptual relevance to AI-assisted negotiation in project dispute resolution.

A key theme is mindfulness and awareness, where several teachings emphasise the importance of reflection before action. This supports careful and balanced decision-making in negotiation and helps reduce impulsive responses that may escalate conflict.

Another important theme is communication and right speech. The teachings highlight the value of truthful, respectful, and constructive communication. In negotiation contexts, this promotes trust, reduces misunderstandings, and supports clearer exchange of information between parties. In AI-assisted negotiation,

this further implies the need for transparent and non-harmful communication outputs.

The theme of equanimity and emotional balance is also strongly reflected. These teachings encourage a calm and unbiased mindset, even in difficult situations. In negotiation, this helps parties evaluate options more objectively and avoid emotionally driven decisions. In AI systems, it supports the design of neutral and bias-resistant decision support mechanisms.

A further recurring theme is fairness, non-violence, and win–win orientation. The teachings discourage harmful or adversarial responses and instead promote peaceful and balanced resolution of disputes. This aligns closely with integrative negotiation approaches that prioritise mutual benefit over competitive outcomes.

Overall, these themes demonstrate a consistent emphasis on balanced thinking, ethical behaviour, adaptability, and constructive engagement. These

insights provide a strong conceptual foundation for integrating ethical principles into AI-assisted negotiation systems, which is developed further in the following section.

Integrating Buddhist Ethical Principles into AI-Assisted Negotiation Framework

The ethical themes identified from the analysis of selected teachings from the Dhammapada provide a foundation for integrating human-centred values into AI-assisted negotiation processes in project dispute resolution.

In AI-assisted negotiation systems, decision-making is typically driven by data patterns, optimisation models, and predictive analytics. While these approaches improve efficiency and consistency, they may not always capture ethical judgement, contextual sensitivity, or fairness considerations. Therefore, integrating ethical principles into AI design becomes essential to ensure balanced and responsible outcomes.

The principle of mindfulness and awareness can inform AI systems that support reflective decision-making. Instead of providing immediate optimisation-based recommendations, AI tools can be designed to present multiple alternatives with explanations, enabling users to make more informed and considered decisions.

Right speech and communication clarity can guide the design of AI-generated outputs in negotiation processes. This implies that AI systems should generate transparent, respectful, and non-biased communication, thereby reducing misunderstanding and enhancing trust between disputing parties.

Equanimity and emotional balance can be translated into algorithmic neutrality. This requires AI systems to avoid favouring any party and to base recommendations on balanced evaluation criteria rather than biased or incomplete historical data.

Fairness and non-violence in conflict resolution further support the development of integrative, win-win negotiation models. AI systems should therefore prioritise solutions that reduce conflict escalation and promote mutually beneficial outcomes rather than purely competitive results.

Overall, integrating these ethical principles into AI-assisted negotiation systems shifts the focus from efficiency-driven optimisation to a more human-centred and ethically grounded decision-making approach. This ensures that AI contributes not only to technical accuracy but also to fairness, trust, and sustainability in project dispute resolution contexts.

DISCUSSION

This study highlights the growing importance of integrating ethical considerations into AI-assisted

negotiation for project dispute resolution. While AI technologies improve efficiency, prediction accuracy, and decision support, they still face limitations in handling ethical judgement, contextual understanding, and human emotions. These limitations become critical in complex project disputes where relationships, fairness, and long-term collaboration are essential.

In the context of emerging discussions on decolonising knowledge systems and revisiting traditional wisdom frameworks, this study positions ethical insights derived from the Dhammapada as a form of traditional knowledge that can inform contemporary AI applications. This aligns with broader efforts to recognise indigenous and philosophical knowledge systems as valuable sources for addressing modern technological and societal challenges.

The findings of this study show that ethical principles derived from the Dhammapada provide a useful foundation for addressing key limitations in AI-assisted negotiation. The identified themes such as mindfulness, right speech, equanimity, and fairness support more balanced and human-centred decision-making processes. These principles help reduce bias, improve communication quality, and encourage more reflective and responsible negotiation outcomes.

The study also shows that current AI-assisted negotiation systems tend to focus primarily on optimisation and efficiency. However, without ethical guidance, such systems may produce outcomes that are technically correct but socially or ethically inappropriate. By integrating traditional ethical frameworks, AI systems can move beyond purely data-driven logic and support more context-sensitive and sustainable dispute resolution approaches.

From a practical perspective, the integration of Buddhist ethical principles into AI-assisted negotiation can improve trust between parties, reduce conflict escalation, and support long-term collaboration in project environments. It also encourages a shift from adversarial win-lose outcomes towards more integrative and cooperative win-win solutions.

Overall, this study contributes to the growing discourse on human-centred AI and decolonised knowledge systems by demonstrating how traditional wisdom can inform modern technological applications in negotiation and dispute resolution. It highlights the relevance of ethical and philosophical frameworks in shaping more responsible, fair, and sustainable AI-assisted decision-making systems.

Conceptual Framework of AI-Assisted Ethical Negotiation

Based on the thematic findings and discussion, this study proposes a conceptual framework for integrating Buddhist ethical principles into AI-assisted

negotiation systems in project dispute resolution. The framework is structured around three interconnected layers: ethical input, AI-assisted negotiation process, and dispute resolution outcomes.

At the input layer, Buddhist ethical principles derived from the Dhammapada, such as mindfulness, right speech, equanimity, fairness, and non-violence serve as guiding values for ethical decision-making. These principles provide a traditional wisdom foundation that informs how negotiation processes should be shaped in a human-centred manner.

At the process layer, AI-assisted negotiation systems operate using data analytics, predictive modelling, and decision-support algorithms. In this framework, these systems are conceptually enhanced with ethical considerations. This means AI outputs are not treated as final decisions but as guided recommendations that incorporate transparency, fairness, and contextual awareness. Human oversight

remains an essential component in interpreting and validating AI-generated negotiation options.

At the outcome layer, the integration of ethical principles and AI support leads to improved negotiation results. These outcomes include fairer decision-making, improved communication between parties, reduced conflict escalation, and a shift from adversarial win-lose approaches towards more integrative win-win solutions. Ultimately, this contributes to more sustainable and human-centred dispute resolution practices in project environments.

Overall, the proposed framework demonstrates how traditional ethical wisdom and modern AI technologies can be integrated to support more balanced, responsible, and sustainable negotiation processes. Figure 1 shows proposed conceptual framework for integrating Buddhist ethical principles into AI-assisted negotiation for project dispute resolution

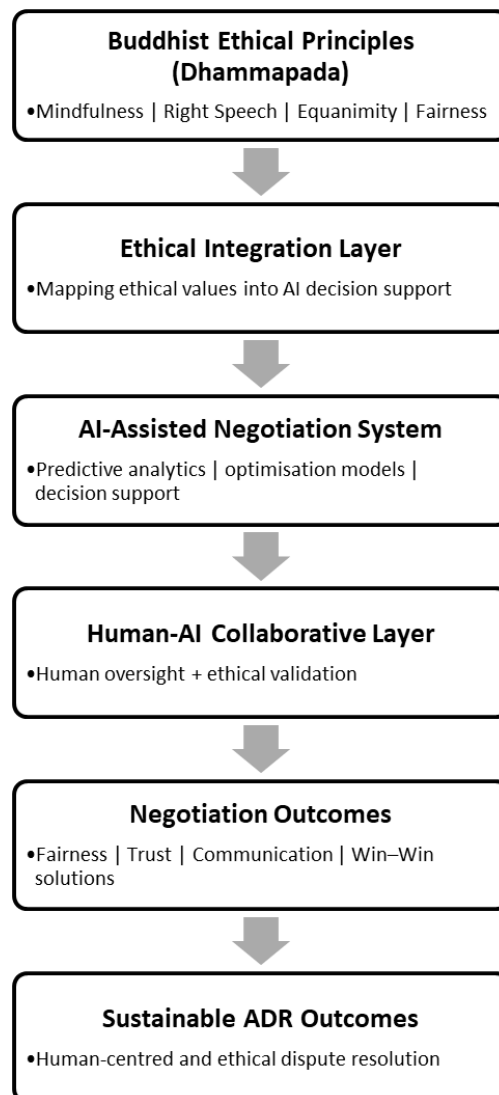


Figure 1: Conceptual framework for integrating Buddhist ethical principles into AI-assisted negotiation for project dispute resolution

CONCLUSION

This paper explored the integration of ethical principles derived from the Dhammapada into AI-assisted negotiation for project dispute resolution. The study began by examining the role of negotiation in managing project disputes and the increasing use of AI in supporting decision-making processes. It further identified key ethical challenges in AI systems, particularly related to bias, lack of transparency, and limited capacity for contextual and human judgement.

Using a qualitative conceptual approach, the study analysed selected Buddhist teachings and identified key ethical themes such as mindfulness, right speech, equanimity, and fairness. These themes were then systematically mapped onto AI-assisted negotiation processes to develop a conceptual framework for ethical integration in decision-making systems.

The findings suggest that integrating traditional ethical principles into AI-assisted negotiation can enhance fairness, improve communication quality, and support more balanced and reflective decision-making. This contributes to the development of more human-centred, ethically grounded, and sustainable approaches to alternative dispute resolution in project environments.

The study also highlights the importance of combining technological advancement with traditional wisdom systems and philosophical insights to address the limitations of AI in complex negotiation contexts. In particular, it demonstrates how ethical frameworks rooted in classical teachings can complement modern AI capabilities in promoting responsible decision-making.

Future research may further validate the proposed conceptual framework through empirical studies, simulation-based negotiation environments, or real-world AI-assisted dispute resolution systems, to enhance its practical applicability and effectiveness.

REFERENCES

- Agua, Pedro B., Anacleto Correia, and Armindo Frias. 2024. "Artificial Intelligence and Automation Impacts for the Future of Negotiation." In *Proceedings of the International Conference on Opportunities and Challenges in Management, Economics and Accounting*, 1(1): 15–22.
- Alessa, Hibah. 2022. "The Role of Artificial Intelligence in Online Dispute Resolution: A Brief and Critical Overview." *Information & Communications Technology Law* 31 (3): 319–342.
- Awang, N. A. 2024. "Contract Law and Artificial Intelligence: Examine the Implications of AI on Contract Negotiation and Execution, Including the Challenges of Automated Contracting." *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences* 14 (11).
- Barabadi, Elyas, Zahra Fotuhabadi, Amanollah Arghavan, and James R. Booth. 2025. "Comparing AI and Human Moral Reasoning: Context-Sensitive Patterns beyond Utilitarian Bias." *Frontiers in Artificial Intelligence* 8: 1710410.
- Buddhharakkhita, Acharya, trans. 1996. *The Dhammapada*. Access to Insight. <https://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/kn/dhp/dh.p.01.budd.html>.
- Falcão Filho, Horacio Arruda. 2024. "Making Sense of Negotiation and AI: The Blossoming of a New Collaboration." *International Journal of Commerce and Contracting* 8 (1–2): 44–64.
- Ferrara, Emilio. 2024. "The Butterfly Effect in Artificial Intelligence Systems: Implications for AI Bias and Fairness." *Machine Learning with Applications* 15: 100525.
- Fisher, Roger, William L. Ury, and Bruce Patton. 2011. *Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement without Giving In*. New York: Penguin.
- Gamage, Amila N. K. K. 2025a. "Algorithmic Fairness and Ethical Challenges in AI-Powered Dispute Resolution: A Framework for ADR in Construction Disputes." *Advanced and Sustainable Technologies (ASET)* 4 (2): 40–53.
- Gamage, A. N. K. K. 2025b. "Research Design, Philosophy, and Quantitative Approaches in Scientific Research Methodology." *Sch J Eng Tech* 2 (1): 91–103.
- Gunalankara, Gomila. 2026. "Apology and Forgiveness: Buddhist Psychological Approach to Peace, Conflict Resolution, and Reconciliation." *International Journal of Research and Innovation in Social Science (IJRISS)* 9 (12).
- Gurung, Puspa Bahadur. 2023. "Review on Buddhism for Peace and Conflict Resolution." *Research Nepal Journal of Development Studies* 6 (1): 64–70.
- Kalogeraki, Marianna, and Fani Antoniou. 2024. "Claim Management and Dispute Resolution in the Construction Industry: Current Research Trends Using Novel Technologies." *Buildings* 14 (4): 967.
- Kelly, Brendan. 2025. "Equanimity in Buddhism and Psychiatry." In *Buddhism and Psychiatry: Moving Beyond Mindfulness in Mental Health Care*, 65–82. Cham: Springer Nature Switzerland.
- KM Theekshana Pasan, Deepaloka. 2025. "Exploring the Intersection of Buddhist Ethics and Human Rights Legislation through Compatibility and Contradictions."
- Lewicki, Roy J., Bruce Barry, and David M. Saunders. 2020. *Essentials of Negotiation*. 7th ed. New York: McGraw-Hill Education.
- Lewis, Jason Edward, Hēmi Whaanga, and Ceyda Yolgörmez. 2025. "Abundant Intelligences: Placing AI within Indigenous Knowledge Frameworks." *AI & Society* 40 (4): 2141–2157.
- Lin, Sen, Keyao Li, and Sai On Cheung. 2023. "Managing Disputes for a Sustainable Construction:

- A Perspective of Settlement Facilitating Elements in Negotiations.” *Buildings* 13 (10): 2578.
- Lin, Sen, and Sai On Cheung. 2022. “Exploring the Concept of Psychological Distance and Its Impact on Intention to Settle in Construction Dispute Negotiation.” *Journal of Construction Engineering and Management* 148 (12): 04022133.
 - Makhumtup, Nattawut, Chetnitipath Promchin, Sirot Tonggon, and Phrapalad Thana Aggadhammo Pimparat. 2024. “Buddhism and Political Conflicts: Understanding the Role of Religion in Peacebuilding and Reconciliation.” *Journal of Dhamma for Life* 30 (3): 404–412.
 - Maldonado, Milton, and Daniela Córdova-Pintado. 2026. “Indigenous Ethics and Artificial Intelligence.” *AI and Ethics* 6 (1): 70.
 - Mota, Fabio Batista, Luiza Amara Maciel Braga, and Bernardo Pereira Cabral. 2023. “Alternative Dispute Resolution Research Landscape from 1981 to 2022.” *Group Decision and Negotiation* 32 (6): 1415–1435.
 - Nada, N., and A. A. E. Othman. 2025. “Smart Contracts towards Reducing Disputes in Construction Projects in Egypt.” In *IOP Conference Series: Earth and Environmental Science* 1530 (1): 012039. Bristol: IOP Publishing.
 - Path Nirvana Foundation. n.d. “Dhammapada (Pali Version, Khuddaka Nikaya).” <https://pitaka.lk/main/?n=38100>.
 - Ray, Shawn, and Ram L. Ray. 2026. “Incorporating Indigenous Knowledge Systems into AI Governance: Enhancing Ethical Frameworks with Maori and Navajo Perspectives.” *AI and Ethics* 6 (1): 114.
 - Sabri, Omar K. 2025. “Strategic Negotiation in Construction Disputes: Overcoming Power Imbalances and Enhancing Resolution through Structured Approaches.” *Frontiers in Built Environment* 11: 1580300.
 - Somananda, Omalpe, and Josef Gohori. 2022. “New Strategies of Conflict Resolution in Social Work: A Consideration on Buddhist Social Work Approach Based on Sutta Pitaka.” *Open Journal of Philosophy* 12 (2): 199–213.
 - Sharma, Vivek. 2025. “The Impact of Buddhist Philosophy on Global Peace-Building Efforts.” *Bodhi Path* 29: 17–23.
 - Smrithy, G. S., Balaji Chandrasekaran, and J. Omana. 2026. “Ethics and Bias in Emotional AI.” *Frontiers in Artificial Intelligence* 9: 1768696.
 - Srinivasan, Ramya, and Beatriz San Miguel González. 2022. “The Role of Empathy for Artificial Intelligence Accountability.” *Journal of Responsible Technology* 9: 100021.
 - Talib, Muhammad Farhan, Omer Mahmood Watto, and Muhammad Islam. 2024. “Harmonizing Conflict: Exploring Global Applications of Alternative Dispute Resolution Methods.” *Pakistan Journal of Criminal Justice* 4 (1): 77–90.
 - Thalpage, Nipuna. 2023. “Unlocking the Black Box: Explainable Artificial Intelligence (XAI) for Trust and Transparency in AI Systems.” *Journal of Digital Art and Humanities* 4 (1): 31–36.
 - Thi Hoa, Nguyen, and Tran Hoang Tu Linh. 2023. “Alternative Dispute Resolution and the Application of the Multitiered Dispute Resolution Clause in the International Construction Sector.” *Journal of Legal Affairs and Dispute Resolution in Engineering and Construction* 15 (1): 04522049.
 - Wanarathana, Rideegama. 2023. “Buddhist Ethics and Social Responsibility: Exploring the Contributions of Buddhist Values to Community Development.” *Pravacana* 14 (2).
 - Wessler, Janet, David D. Loschelder, Johannes C. Fendel, and Malte Frieese. 2024. “The Too-Much-Mimicry Effect: Strong (vs. Subtle) Mimicry Impairs Liking and Trust in Distributive Negotiations.” *Journal of Nonverbal Behavior* 48 (2): 253–276.
 - Zafar, Ammar. 2024. “Balancing the Scale: Navigating Ethical and Practical Challenges of Artificial Intelligence (AI) Integration in Legal Practices.” *Discover Artificial Intelligence* 4 (1): 27.
 - Zeleznikow, John. 2021. “Using Artificial Intelligence to Provide Intelligent Dispute Resolution Support.” *Group Decision and Negotiation* 30 (4): 789–812.